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978-0-521-19968-1 - The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present

Beatrice Heuser

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## *The Evolution of Strategy*

Is there a ‘Western way of war’ which pursues battles of annihilation and single-minded military victory? Is warfare on a path to ever greater destructive force? This magisterial new account answers these questions by tracing the history of Western thinking about strategy – the employment of military force as a political instrument – from antiquity to the present day. Assessing sources from Vegetius to contemporary America, and with a particular focus on strategy since the Napoleonic Wars, Beatrice Heuser explores the evolution of strategic thought, the social institutions, norms and patterns of behaviour within which it operates, the policies that guide it and the culture that influences it. Ranging across technology and warfare, total warfare and small wars as well as land, sea, air and nuclear warfare, she demonstrates that warfare and strategic thinking have fluctuated wildly in their aims, intensity, limitations and excesses over the past two millennia.

BEATRICE HEUSER holds the Chair of International History at the School of Politics and International Relations, University of Reading. Her publications include *Reading Clausewitz* (2002); *Nuclear Mentalities?* (1998) and *Nuclear Strategies and Forces for Europe, 1949-2000* (1997), both on nuclear issues in NATO as a whole, and Britain, France, and Germany in particular.

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*In memory of Julian Chrysostomides*

1928–2008

*scholar, teacher, friend*

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page xi</i>
<i>A note on referencing</i>	<i>xiii</i>
 <b>Part I Introduction</b>	
1 What is strategy?	3
Art of war or science of war, and technical definitions of ‘strategy’	3
The articulation of different dimensions of Strategy	9
What is this book examining?	29
 <b>Part II Long-term constants</b>	
2 Warfare and mindsets from Antiquity to the Middle Ages	39
Technology and warfare	39
Causes, aims and ethics of war from the Roman Empire to the late Middle Ages	42
3 Warfare and mindsets in early modern Europe	54
Causes, aims and practice of war in early modern Europe	54
The ethics of war in early modern Europe	64
4 Themes in early thinking about Strategy	76
Sieges and static defences from Troy to Basra	76
Feudal levies, mercenaries or militia?	82
Battle avoidance or decisive battles?	89
Limited and unlimited wars	97
The enduring quest for eternal principles governing warfare	100
 <b>Part III The Napoleonic paradigm and Total War</b>	
5 The age and mindset of the Napoleonic paradigm	113
Causes of wars, world-views and war aims 1792–1914	113
The influence of Social Darwinism and racism	123
	 vii

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-19968-1 - The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present

Beatrice Heuser

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

*Contents*

6	The Napoleonic paradigm transformed: from total mobilisation to total war	137
	The quest for total victory	139
	The centrality of the battle	142
	Annihilation of the enemy	145
	The universal cult of the offensive	146
	Total mobilisation or professional military elites?	152
7	Challenges to the Napoleonic paradigm versus the culmination of Total War	171
	Mars mechanised: the Napoleonic paradigm versus technological innovation	171
	The dissenters: Corbett's limited wars and Jaurès's defensive army	176
	Lessons of the First World War	179
	Strategy responses to the First World War	181
	The Second World War: culmination of Total War	194
	<b>Part IV Naval and maritime Strategy</b>	
8	Long-term trends and early maritime Strategy	201
	Strategy on land, at sea and in the air	201
	Writing in the age of oar and sail	207
9	The age of steam to the First World War	216
	The 'Anglo-Saxon' writers in the age of steam	216
	French naval theorists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries	233
	Germany before the First World War	245
	Conclusions	247
10	The World Wars and their lessons for maritime Strategists	248
	The First World War	248
	British lessons	250
	French lessons	256
	The second-tier powers	260
	US lessons from the Second World War	266
	Conclusions	267
11	Maritime Strategy in the nuclear age	268
	The Cold War framework	268
	Multiple roles for navies	276



<i>Contents</i>	ix
Strategies for second-tier powers	286
Change of world-views and principles in conducting international affairs	290
Conclusions	291
<b>Part V Air power and nuclear Strategy</b>	
12 War in the third dimension	297
Child and grandchild of naval Strategy	297
The beginnings of air power	298
13 Four schools of air power	313
The strategic or city bombing school	314
The military targets school: denial	336
The leadership targeting school: decapitation	342
The political signalling school: games theories	345
Conclusions	350
14 Nuclear Strategy	351
Targets	351
Deterrence	357
Nuclear war-fighting Strategy	366
War taken to its absurd extreme	382
<b>Part VI Asymmetric or 'small' wars</b>	
15 From partisan warfare to people's war	387
Two meanings of 'small war'	387
The mosquito and the lion: tactics	397
Hearts and minds I	414
Defence in depth	416
16 Counterinsurgency	419
The legal status of insurgents	419
Brutal repression	422
Hearts and minds II	427
Conclusions	436
<b>Part VII The quest for new paradigms after the World Wars</b>	
17 Wars without victories, victories without peace	441
The First World War as turning point?	441

x		<i>Contents</i>
	Causes, conduct and ethics of wars since 1945	444
	The relinquishment of the Napoleonic paradigm	453
	The return of limited wars	456
	Coercion	463
	Defensive defence and the relinquishment of victory	467
18	No end of history: the dialectic continues	472
	The Napoleonic paradigm strikes back: Summers's Clausewitzian critique	472
	Major war since 1945	477
	The return of small wars	480
	Future developments	486
19	Epilogue: Strategy-making versus bureaucratic politics	488
	Policy and Strategy in practice	488
	The frailty of human logic	498
20	Summaries and conclusions	500
	<i>Bibliography</i>	506
	<i>Index</i>	571

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Beatrice Heuser

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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[More information](#)

## *A note on referencing*

For the purposes of this book, I needed to adapt Harvard-style referencing, as it was not designed with archival or internet sources in mind, nor for ancient or medieval manuscripts that were first printed centuries after they were written, and translated later still. My references serve as a shorthand for indicating the original date when a text was written; any additional date refers to the translation I have used, so that for example (Anon. 6th c./1985: 10–135) refers to the sixth-century anonymous text *Peri Strategias* translated and edited by George Dennis in *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1985), pp. 10–135; this full information can be found in the bibliography. Where only a later edition was available to me, this is indicated in the bibliography; nevertheless, the earlier date is given as the in-text references in order keep these short, even where the page reference applies to the later edition. With key texts which have been reprinted many times, however, I have adopted the classicists' convention of referring to book, chapter and verse rather than to page numbers. Finally, 'q.i.' stands for 'quoted in'; 't.i.' stands for 'text printed in'.