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978-0-521-56627-8 - The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War

Edited by Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox and Alvin Bernstein

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Most writing about strategy – the balancing of ends and means by rulers and states in conflict with their adversaries – has focused on individual theorists or great military leaders. That approach has its uses, but it normally ignores the messy process through which rulers and states have actually framed strategy. Understanding how that process has worked or failed to work in the past is nevertheless of vital practical importance to strategists, and of the greatest interest to students of strategy and statecraft.

The Making of Strategy is about the strategic process. It consists of seventeen case studies that range from fifth-century Athens and Ming China to Hitler's Germany, Israel, and the post-1945 United States. The studies analyze, within a common interpretive framework, precisely how rulers and states have made strategy. The introduction emphasizes the constants in the rapidly shifting world of the strategist. The conclusion tries to understand the forces that have driven the transformation of strategy since 400 B.C. and seem likely to continue to transform it in the future.

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Rulers, states, and war

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**To those – comrades, friends, acquaintances, and
strangers – who died in Vietnam because their leaders had
no patience with history or with the imponderables that are
the stuff of history.**

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We believe we have achieved a coherence within this volume that is un-

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usual in collective works. But we readily accept responsibility for whatever errors and weaknesses may have crept in during the book's long gestation. This volume's strengths are those of its contributors. Its weaknesses are above all our own.

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