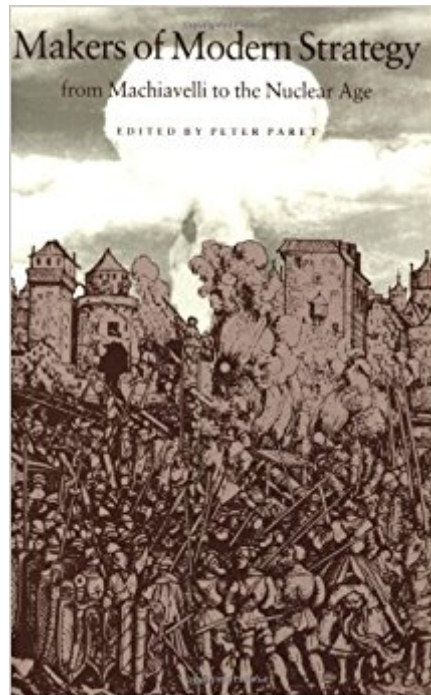


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Makers Of Modern Strategy From Machiavelli To The Nuclear Age



Synopsis

The essays in this volume analyze war, its strategic characteristics and its political and social functions, over the past five centuries. The diversity of its themes and the broad perspectives applied to them make the book a work of general history as much as a history of the theory and practice of war from the Renaissance to the present. *Makers of Modern Strategy* from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age takes the first part of its title from an earlier collection of essays, published by Princeton University Press in 1943, which became a classic of historical scholarship. Three essays are reprinted from the earlier book; four others have been extensively revised. The rest--twenty-two essays--are new. The subjects addressed range from major theorists and political and military leaders to impersonal forces. Machiavelli, Clausewitz, and Marx and Engels are discussed, as are Napoleon, Churchill, and Mao. Other essays trace the interaction of theory and experience over generations--the evolution of American strategy, for instance, or the emergence of revolutionary war in the modern world. Still others analyze the strategy of particular conflicts--the First and Second World Wars--or the relationship between technology, policy, and war in the nuclear age. Whatever its theme, each essay places the specifics of military thought and action in their political, social, and economic environment. Together the contributors have produced a book that reinterprets and illuminates war, one of the most powerful forces in history and one that cannot be controlled in the future without an understanding of its past.

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Customer Reviews

"Makers of Modern Strategy" is a scholarly collection of high quality papers on strategy since Machiavelli to the present nuclear age. The beauty of the book is that one can focus on the era that one is interested in. There is no need to read the book cover to cover as the various essays are stand alone although they are presented sequentially and related papers are adjacent to each other. I have read and re-read some of the papers. The book is about strategy and the realities of war. The essays are clearly balanced and not biased. The phenomenon of war was clearly explained from the studies of past wars. It is clear that war has been a fundamental reality of social and political existence from an early stage of political organisation to the present times. The tragic aspects of war and the intellectual and emotional disturbances it creates could be discerned from the essays. The book is divided into the following five parts: Part One: The Origins of Modern War. Part Two: The Expansion of war. Part Three: From the Industrial Revolution to the First World War. Part Four: From the First to the Second World War. Part Five: Since 1945. The eminent contributors include Peter Paret, Felix Gilbert, John Shy, Gordon A. Craig, Maurice Matloff, Condoleezza Rice, Lawrence Freedman, Michael Carver and D. Clayton James. Their essays showed the role of force in the relations between states. It is now very clear to me that war has always been a compound of many elements ranging from politics to technology, to human emotions under extreme stress. Strategy is one of the critical elements of war. The various essays trace the ideas and actions of past generations, as they used war to achieve their national goals, an analysis of military thought and policy in the recent past and present. My favourite part is Part Two. Here three great historical figures are highlighted namely Napoleon, Jomini and Clausewitz. I can now see the genius of Napoleon as one of the greatest soldiers in history in its proper strategic context. I think history need to rescue Jomini from the obscurity he is now relegated since it is largely him who has clearly related the greatness of Napoleon and the attempt to reduce war to some sort of science. Makers of Modern Strategy add immense value to any study of warfare and strategy. I recommend it to Army Staff Colleges and those studying military history at postgraduate level.

Although I agree with the reviewer preceding me that this might not be as strong of a book as was the masterpiece which preceded it (by Earle), it is still a strong book and does (generally) what it sets out to do: to provide an accounting of major developments in military thought (i.e. western military thought) from the Renaissance to the modern age. As a text or as a reference, this is still a powerful and useful book. Each of the chapters discusses a major figure's thought in a fashion that can be dealt with easily in a sitting: for those people who don't want to sit and sort through Jomini

(though everyone reading this should sit down with Clausewitz!) or Douhet, to see their rights and wrongs....I like this book. I bought my copy for \$8.00 in NYC and have had it with me through a number of moves since....

As the title indicates, the Army's Command & General Staff College requires students to read *Makers of Modern Strategy* in the core history class. Professors can make best use of this book as a supplement. As other reviewers have noted, the chapters are disjointed with each other. Taken separately, however, many of the chapters help the history student or enthusiast to develop a depth of understanding on a particular subject. Authors such as John Shy, Douglas Porch, Michael Howard, and Condoleeza Rice, just to name a few, explore many of the strategic issues involved with the evolution of military thought. From Machiavelli and Clausewitz to strategies of world wars and colonial wars, *Makers of Modern Strategy* adds value to any serious study of warfare. The high quality academic research and thought that underlies many of the articles is worth the price of the book. Highly recommended.

I purchased this book as it was required for USMC Command and Staff Course, but it is a good resource for anyone who wants a selection of articles and pieces from a wide range of time periods who has an interest in military strategy. The book is divided into eras and within each era there are a number of articles. As a result, it is fairly easy to find what you want without a huge hassle. It doesn't go into extreme detail on any one topic or era, but is a great resource for a general overview and enough of an understanding that you feel pretty good about the topic.

In my experience, anthologies are always a sort of toss with essays being either very good or very bad, due to the fact that its a collection different authors with different ideas and different styles. It's rare to find one where all the essays are great and interesting reads, but this book is one of those. A collection of essays on military history, strategy, and strategies starting with Machiavelli in the 16th century all the way to the end of the Cold War. Every major military leader and thinker in Western history during this time period is there and topics are varied enough so that it is not always Army tactics that are covered. It also includes essays on the Navy and Air power that are fascinating. It even includes a chapter on modern revolutionary wars, or insurgencies as we would call them today, that is not to be missed. And, I have to say, there wasn't one essay that I felt was superfluous or boring., an achievement for an anthology of this size. The only thing that I would say is that, since this was most recently updated in 1986, it does need to add a few new chapters on

robotics and cyberwarfare. In spite of its age and length, this was a great read and I highly recommend it to anyone interested in the development of modern, Western military strategy over the centuries.

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