

Sūn Zǐ Bīng Fǎ

Sun Zi's Art of War

Pinyin Transcription, Gloss, and English Translation

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For Lawrence Moore,  
whose contributions were many.

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Chapter 1

**Jì**

STRATEGY

**STRATEGIC Fundamentals**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:

SUN ZI SAY:

**SUN ZI SAID:**

bīng zhě, guó zhī dà shì,  
WARFARE [PART], STATE OF GREAT AFFAIR,  
**"WARFARE is the GREAT AFFAIR OF the STATE,**

sǐ shēng zhī dì, cún wáng zhī dào.  
DEATH LIFE OF PLACE, SURVIVE PERISH OF PATH.  
**the REALM OF LIFE and DEATH, the PATH OF SURVIVAL or EXTINCTION.**

bù kě bù chá yě.  
NOT CAN NOT INVESTIGATE [PART].  
**You MUST NOT FAIL to INVESTIGATE this.**

gù jīng zhī yǐ wǔ;  
THUS WARP IT TAKE FIVE;  
**As the GUIDELINES of warfare, ATTEND to FIVE aspects;**

jiào zhī yǐ jì ér suǒ qí qíng.  
COMPARE THEM TAKE STRATEGY AND INTERTWINE THEIR NATURE.  
**REFER to THEM in FORMING your STRATEGY AND INTERTWINE THEIR ESSENCES.**

yī yuē dào; èr yuē tiān;  
ONE CALL WAY; TWO CALL HEAVEN;  
**The FIRST aspect is the WAY; the SECOND is WEATHER;**

sān yuē dì; sì yuē jiàng; wǔ yuē fǎ.  
THREE CALL EARTH; FOUR CALL GENERAL; FIVE CALL LAW.  
**the THIRD is EARTH; the FOURTH is the GENERALS; the FIFTH is ORGANIZATION.**

dào zhě, lìng mín yǔ shàng tóng yì zhě yě.  
WAY [PART], CAUSE PEOPLE WITH RULER SAME INTENTION [PART] [PART].  
**The WAY MAKES the PEOPLE of ONE MIND WITH the RULER.**

kě yǔ zhī sǐ, kě yǔ zhī shēng:  
CAN WITH HIM DIE, CAN WITH HIM LIVE:  
**Thus they are WILLING to LIVE or DIE WITH HIM:**

mín bù guǐ yě.  
PEOPLE NOT DECEITFUL [PART].  
**the PEOPLE will NEVER commit TREACHERY.**

tiān zhě, yīn yáng; hán shǔ; shí zhì yě.  
HEAVEN [PART], LIGHT DARK; WINTER SUMMER; TIME CONTROL [PART].  
**WEATHER comprises SUNNY or DARK skies; WINTER cold and SUMMER heat; the EFFECTS of the SEASON.**

dì zhě, gāo xià; yuǎn jìn;  
EARTH [PART], HIGH LOW; FAR NEAR;  
**EARTH determines the battleground: HIGH or LOW; FAR or NEAR;**

xiǎn yì; guǎng xiá; sǐ shēng yě.  
BARRIER EASY; WIDE NARROW; DIE LIFE [PART].  
**RUGGED or EASY; WIDE or NARROW; and thus LIFE or DEATH.**

sǐ shēng yě.  
DIE LIFE [PART].  
**Herein lie LIFE and DEATH.**

jiàng zhě, zhì, xìn, rén, yǒng, yán yě.  
GENERAL [PART], WISE, TRUST, BENEVOLENT, BRAVE, STRICT [PART].  
**In the GENERALS, one must consider their WISDOM, TRUSTWORTHINESS, BENEVOLENCE, COURAGE, and STRICTNESS.**

fǎ zhě, qū zhì; guān dào; zhǔ yòng yě.  
LAW [PART], UNIT CONTROL; OFFICER PATH; RULER USE [PART].  
**ORGANIZATION comprises CONTROL over UNITS; the CHAIN of COMMAND; the UTILIZATION by the RULER.**

fán cǐ wǔ zhě, jiàng mò bù wén.  
ALL THIS FIVE [PART], GENERAL NOT NOT HEAR.  
**As for THESE FIVE things, there must be NO GENERAL who has NOT HEARD of them.**

zhī zhī zhě shèng; bù zhī zhě bú shèng.  
KNOW THESE THOSE-WHO WIN; NOT KNOW THOSE-WHO NOT WIN.  
**THOSE WHO KNOW THESE things will WIN; THOSE WHO do NOT KNOW them will NOT WIN.**

gù jiào zhī yǐ jì ér suǒ qí qíng.  
THUS COMPARE THEM TAKE STRATEGY AND SEARCH THEIR NATURE.  
**COMPARE the five aspects in FORMING your STRATEGY AND INVESTIGATE THEIR NATURE.**

yuē: zhǔ shú yǒu dào?  
SAY: SOVEREIGN WHO HAVE WAY?  
**That is to SAY: Among the SOVEREIGNS, WHO follows the WAY?**

jiàng shú yǒu néng?  
GENERAL WHO HAVE ABILITY?  
**Among the GENERALS, WHO HAS ABILITY?**

tiān dì shú dé?  
HEAVEN EARTH WHICH GAIN?  
**As for WEATHER and TERRAIN, WHICH side is in a BETTER position?**

fǎ lìng shú xíng?  
REGULATION ORDER WHICH EXECUTE?  
**As for REGULATIONS and ORDERS, on WHICH side are they better EXECUTED?**

bīng zhòng shú qiáng?  
ARMY HEAVY WHICH STRONG?  
**As for MILITARY MIGHT, WHICH side is STRONGER?**

shì zú shú liàn?  
OFFICER TROOP WHO TRAIN?  
**As for the OFFICERS and TROOPS, on WHICH side are they better TRAINED?**

shǎng fá shú míng?  
REWARD PUNISH WHICH BRIGHT?  
**As for REWARDS and PUNISHMENTS, on WHICH side is there more ENLIGHTENMENT?**

wú yǐ cǐ zhī shèng fù yǐ.  
I TAKE THIS KNOW WIN OVERTURN [PART].  
**BASED on THESE things I KNOW who will WIN and who will be DEFEATED.**

jiàng tīng wú jì, yòng zhī bì shèng; liú zhī!  
GENERAL LISTEN I STRATEGY, USE HIM MUST WIN; RETAIN HIM!  
**As for the GENERAL who HEEDS MY STRATEGIES, if you UTILIZE HIM, you WILL WIN; RETAIN HIM!**

jiàng bù tīng wú jì, yòng zhī bì bài; qù zhī!  
GENERAL NOT LISTEN I STRATEGY, USE HIM MUST DEFEAT; REMOVE HIM!  
**As for the GENERAL who does NOT HEED MY STRATEGIES, if you UTILIZE HIM, you WILL be DEFEATED; DISMISS HIM!**

jì lì yǐ tīng;  
CALCULATE ADVANTAGE TAKE HEAR;  
**In CALCULATING the relative ADVANTAGES, TAKE HEED;**

nǎi wéi zhī shì, yǐ zuǒ qí wài.  
THEN ACT IT FORCE, TAKE ASSIST THE EXTERNAL.  
**THEN you must ACT accordingly in applying FORCE, while TAKING ADVANTAGE of THE SURROUNDINGS.**

shì zhě, yīn lì ér zhì quán yě.  
FORCE [PART], BASED-ON ADVANTAGE AND ARRANGE POWER [PART].  
**In applying FORCE, ARRANGE the ARMY so as to GAIN the most ADVANTAGES.**

bīng zhě, guǐ dào yě.  
WARFARE [PART], DECEIT WAY [PART].  
**WARFARE is the WAY of DECEIT.**

gù néng ér shì zhī bù néng.  
THUS POWERFUL AND SHOW IT NOT POWERFUL.  
**If you are in a position of STRENGTH, make IT APPEAR that you are WEAK.**

yòng ér shì zhī bú yòng.  
USE AND SHOW IT NOT USE.  
**If you are preparing to ATTACK, make IT APPEAR that you will NOT ATTACK.**

jìn ér shì zhī yuǎn; yuǎn ér shì zhī jìn.  
NEAR AND SHOW IT FAR; FAR AND SHOW IT NEAR.  
**If you are NEAR, make IT APPEAR that you are FAR; if you are FAR, make IT APPEAR that you are NEAR.**

lì ér yòu zhī; luàn ér qǔ zhī.  
ADVANTAGE AND LURE HIM; DISORDER AND TAKE HIM.  
**When the enemy has the ADVANTAGE, LURE HIM into a trap; when he is in DISORDER, CONQUER HIM.**

shí ér bèi zhī, qiáng ér bì zhī.  
SOLID AND PREPARE HIM, STRONG AND AVOID HIM.  
**When his forces are SOLID, PREPARE in advance to oppose HIM; when his forces are STRONGER than yours, AVOID HIM.**

nù ér náo zhī; bēi ér jiāo zhī.  
ANGER AND DISTURB HIM; INFERIOR AND ARROGANT HIM.  
**When he is ANGRY, PROVOKE HIM; when he is INFERIOR, lure HIM into ARROGANCE.**

yì ér lǎo zhī. qīn ér lí zhī.  
CAREFREE AND FATIGUE HIM. CLOSE AND SEPARATE THEM.  
**When he is RELAXED, FATIGUE HIM. When his forces are UNITED, DIVIDE THEM.**

gōng qí bú bèi, chū qí bú yì.  
ATTACK HE NOT PREPARE, EXIT HE NOT EXPECT.  
**ATTACK when HE is NOT PREPARED, MOVE forward when HE does NOT EXPECT it.**

cǐ bīng jiā zhī shèng, bù kě xiān chuán yě.  
THIS WARFARE EXPERT OF VICTORY, NOT CAN FIRST CONVEY [PART].  
**THESE STRATEGIST'S tactics for VICTORY CANNOT be ANNOUNCED BEFORE the battle.**

fú wèi zhàn ér miào suàn shèng zhě,  
FOR NOT-YET BATTLE AND TEMPLE COUNT WIN THE-ONE,  
**BEFORE the BATTLE, in the ancestral TEMPLE, THE ONE who can COUNT on WINNING**

dé suàn duō yě.  
ACHIEVE COUNT MORE [PART].  
**is the one who HAS COUNTED MORE advantages.**

wèi zhàn ér miào suàn bú shèng zhě,  
NOT-YET BATTLE AND TEMPLE COUNT NOT WIN THE-ONE,  
**BEFORE the BATTLE, in the ancestral TEMPLE, THE ONE who can COUNT on LOSING**

dé suàn shǎo yě.  
ACHIEVE COUNT FEW [PART].  
**is the one who HAS COUNTED FEWER advantages.**

duō suàn shèng; shǎo suàn bú shèng;  
MORE COUNT WIN; FEW COUNT NOT WIN;  
**The one who COUNTS MORE advantages will WIN; the one who COUNTS FEWER advantages will LOSE;**

ér kuàng wú suàn hū?  
AND MOREOVER NOT COUNT [PART]?  
**this holds all the MORE for the one who COUNTS NO advantages!**



wú yǐ cǐ guān zhī, shèng fù xiàn yǐ.

I TAKE THIS OBSERVE IT, WIN OVERTURN VISIBLE [PART].

**When I USE THESE factors to OBSERVE the situation, it is CLEAR who will WIN and who will be DEFEATED."**

Chapter 2

Zuò Zhàn  
DO BATTLE  
**DOING BATTLE**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán yòng bīng zhī fǎ:  
COMMON USE ARMY OF RULE:  
**"The GENERAL RULE IN DEPLOYING an ARMY is as follows:**

chí chē qiān sì,  
GALLOP CHARIOT THOUSAND TEAM-OF-FOUR,  
**you will require one THOUSAND SWIFT CHARIOTS with TEAMS OF FOUR,**

gé chē qiān chéng, dài jiǎ shí wàn;  
LEATHER CHARIOT THOUSAND VEHICLE, WEAR ARMOR TEN TEN-THOUSAND;  
**one THOUSAND LEATHER-armored CHARIOTS, and one HUNDRED THOUSAND ARMORED soldiers;**

qiān lǐ kuì liáng.  
THOUSAND LI FEED PROVISION.  
**PROVISIONS will need to be transported one THOUSAND LI<sup>1</sup>.**

zé nèi wài zhī fèi,  
THUS INTERNAL EXTERNAL [PART] EXPENSE,  
**THUS EXPENSES at HOME and ABROAD,**

bīn kè zhī yòng, jiāo qī zhī cái,  
GUEST GUEST OF USE, GLUE LACQUER [PART] MATERIAL,  
**including COSTS FOR EMISSARIES and ADVISORS, various MATERIALS such as GLUE and LACQUER,**

chē jiǎ zhī fèng, rì fèi qiān jīn.  
CHARIOT ARMOR OF RESPECT, DAY EXPENSE THOUSAND GOLD.  
**and the MAINTENANCE OF CHARIOTS and ARMOR, will be one THOUSAND GOLD coins per DAY.**

rán hòu shí wàn zhī shī jǔ yǐ.  
SO AFTER TEN TEN-THOUSAND [PART] SOLDIER RAISE [PART].  
**Only AFTER you have secured this amount, can one HUNDRED THOUSAND SOLDIERS be ENGAGED.**

qí yòng zhàn yě guì shèng.  
ONE USE BATTLE [PART] VALUE VICTORY.  
**When YOU ENGAGE in BATTLE, the GOAL is VICTORY.**

jiǔ zé dùn bīng cuò duì.  
LONG THEN DULL WARFARE SUBDUE LANCE.  
**If battle is PROLONGED, your FIGHTING skills will grow DULL and your LANCES will grow BLUNT.**

gōng chéng zé lì qū.  
ATTACK CITY THEN ENERGY SUBDUE.  
**If you ATTACK a fortified CITY, your ENERGY will be CONSUMED.**

jiǔ bào shī zé guó yòng bù zú.  
LONG VIOLENT ARMY THEN STATE USE NOT SUFFICIENT.  
**If the ARMY is LONG ENGAGED, the SUPPLIES brought from HOME will be INSUFFICIENT.**

fú dùn bīng cuò duì, qū lì, dān huò,  
SO DULL WARFARE SUBDUE LANCE, SUBDUE ENERGY, EXHAUST SELL,  
**IF your FIGHTING skills are DULL and your LANCES are BLUNT, if your ENERGY is CONSUMED, if your resources are EXHAUSTED and SPENT,**

zé zhū hóu chéng qí bì ér qǐ.  
THEN VARIOUS PRINCE TAKE-ADVANTAGE YOUR DISADVANTAGE AND RISE.  
**THEN feudal PRINCES will TAKE ADVANTAGE of YOUR WEAKNESS AND RISE up.**

suī yǒu zhì zhě, bù néng shàn qí hòu yǐ.  
ALTHOUGH HAVE RESOURCEFUL ONES, NOT CAN GOOD [PART] AFTER [PART].  
**EVEN if you HAVE RESOURCEFUL advisors, you will be UNABLE to make things turn out WELL in the END.**

gù bīng wén zhuō sù, wèi dǔ qiǎo zhī jiǔ yě.  
THUS WARFARE HEAR CLUMSY SWIFT, NOT SEE SKILLFUL [PART] LONG [PART].  
**You may HEAR of CLUMSY but SWIFT ATTACKS, but you have NEVER SEEN a SKILLFUL attack that lasts LONG.**

fú bīng jiǔ ér guó lì zhě, wèi zhī yǒu yě.  
THUS WARFARE LONG AND COUNTRY ADVANTAGE [PART], NOT IT BE [PART].  
**When WARFARE is PROLONGED, the home COUNTRY'S ADVANTAGE CEASES to EXIST.**

gù bú jìn zhī yòng bīng zhī hài zhě,  
THUS NOT FULLY KNOW USE ARMY OF HARM THOSE-WHO,  
**THOSE WHO do NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND the HARM IN DEPLOYING an ARMY**

zé bù néng jìn zhī yòng bīng zhī lì yě.  
THUS NOT CAN FULLY KNOW USE ARMY OF ADVANTAGE [PART].  
**CANNOT FULLY UNDERSTAND the GAINS to be had IN DEPLOYING an ARMY.**

shàn yòng bīng zhě yì bú zài jí;  
WELL USE ARMY THOSE-WHO CONSCRIPTION NOT AGAIN REGISTER;  
**THOSE WHO SKILLFULLY USE the ARMY require NO SECOND DRAFT,**

liáng bù sān zài.  
GRAIN NOT THREE CARRY.  
**and NO THIRD SHIPMENT of GRAIN from home.**

qǔ yòng yú guó, yīn liáng yú dí.  
TAKE USE FROM COUNTRY, PERPETUATE GRAIN FROM ENEMY.  
**BRING ARMS FROM your own COUNTRY, but REPLENISH your GRAIN FROM the ENEMY.**

gù jūn shí kě zú yě.  
THUS ARMY EAT CAN ENOUGH [PART].  
**THEN the ARMY WILL have ENOUGH to EAT.**

guó zhī pín yú shī zhě yuǎn shū:  
COUNTRY OF POOR FROM ARMY [PART] DISTANT TRANSPORT:  
**The POVERTY OF the COUNTRY will result FROM long-DISTANCE MILITARY SHIPMENTS:**

yuǎn shū zé bǎi xìng pín.  
DISTANT TRANSPORT THEN HUNDRED SURNAME POOR.  
**if the army relies on TRANSPORTING domestic provisions to DISTANT places, THEN the NOBLES will become IMPOVERISHED.**

jìn shī zhě guì mài.  
NEAR ARMY THOSE-WHO EXPENSIVE SELL.  
**THOSE living NEAR the ENCAMPMENT SELL provisions at HIGH prices.**

guì mài, zé bǎi xìng jié,  
EXPENSIVE SELL, THEN HUNDRED SURNAME EXHAUST,  
**When provisions are SOLD at HIGH prices, THEN the resources of the NOBLES will be EXHAUSTED.**

cái jié zé jí yú qiū yì.  
RESOURCE EXHAUST THEN URGENT FROM HIGH LEVY.  
**If these RESOURCES are EXHAUSTED, THEN the common people will be in DISTRESS FROM further HIGH LEVIES imposed on them.**

lì qū, cái dān, zhōng yuán nèi xū yú jiā.  
STRENGTH SUBDUE, RESOURCE EXHAUST, MIDDLE FIRST IN EMPTY AT HOUSE.  
**When the army's STRENGTH has been DEPLETED and its RESOURCES EXHAUSTED, then the HALLS of the MODERATELY wealthy and the WEALTHIEST will be BARE.**

bǎi xìng zhī fèi, shí qù qí qī.  
HUNDRED SURNAME OF EXPENSE, TEN GO THEIR SEVEN.  
**The NOBLES' war TAXES will BE SEVEN TENTHS of all THEY own.**

gōng jiā zhī fèi, pò chē<sup>2</sup> pí mǎ,  
PUBLIC HOUSEHOLD OF EXPENSE, WORN CHARIOT EXHAUSTED HORSE,  
**GOVERNMENT EXPENSES for WORN-out CHARIOTS, EXHAUSTED HORSES,**

jiǎ zhòu shǐ nǚ, jǐ dùn bì lǚ,  
ARMOR HELMET ARROW CROSSBOW, HALBERD SHIELD SHELTER SHIELD,  
**ARMOR, HELMETS, ARROWS, CROSSBOWS, HALBERDS, small SHIELDS, and large PROTECTIVE SHIELDS,**

qiū niú dà chē, shí qù qí liù.  
HILL OX LARGE CART, TEN GO ITS SIX.  
**STRONG OXEN and LARGE supply CARTS, will BE SIX TENTHS of the budget.**

gù zhì jiàng wù shí yú dí.  
THUS WISE GENERAL PURSUE FOOD FROM ENEMY.  
**The WISE GENERAL TAKES FOOD FROM the ENEMY.**

shí dí yì zhōng<sup>3</sup>, dāng wú èr shí zhōng.  
FOOD ENEMY ONE POT, EQUIVALENT OUR TWO TEN POT.  
**ONE POT of FOOD from the ENEMY is WORTH TWENTY of OUR own.**

qí gān yí dàn<sup>4</sup>, dāng wú èr shí dàn.  
BEAN-STALK STAL ONE MEASURE, EQUIVALENT OUR TWO TEN MEASURE.  
**ONE LOAD of BEAN STALKS<sup>5</sup> from the enemy is WORTH TWENTY of OUR own.**

gù shā dí zhě, nù yě;  
THUS KILL ENEMY WHAT, ANGER [PART];  
**WHAT KILLS the ENEMY is the ANGER of your troops;**

qǔ dí zhī lì zhě, huò yě.  
TAKE ENEMY OF PROFIT WHAT, GOODS [PART].  
**WHAT is employed in PLUNDERING the ENEMY'S WEALTH is your troops' desire for GAIN.**

gù chē zhàn, dé chē shí shèng yǐ shàng,  
THUS CHARIOT BATTLE, GAIN CHARIOT TEN WAR-CHARIOT TAKE MORE,  
**In CHARIOT BATTLE, when MORE than TEN CHARIOTS are CAPTURED,**

shǎng qí xiān dé zhě, ér gēng qí jīng qí.  
REWARD THE FIRST GAIN ONES, AND REPLACE THEIR BANNER FLAG.  
**REWARD THE FIRST unit to CAPTURE them; REPLACE the ENEMY'S BANNERS and FLAGS with those of the unit.**

chē zá ér chéng zhī.  
CHARIOT MIX AND RIDE THEM.  
**MIX the captured CHARIOTS among your own AND put THEM to good USE.**

zú shàn ér yǎng zhī.  
TROOP KIN AND PROVIDE-FOR THEM.  
**As for captured TROOPS, TREAT THEM KINDLY.**

shì wèi shèng dí ér yì qiáng.  
BE CALL VICTORY ENEMY AND INCREASE STRONG.  
**This IS CALLED DEFEATING the ENEMY AND INCREASING your STRENGTH.**

gù bīng guì shèng, bú guì jiǔ.  
THUS WAR VALUE VICTORY, NOT VALUE LONG.  
**In WAR VALUE VICTORY -- NOT PROLONGED fighting.**

gù zhī bīng zhī jiàng, mǐn zhī sī mìng.  
THUS KNOW WAR [PART] GENERAL, PEOPLE OF MANAGE FATE.  
**The GENERAL WHO UNDERSTANDS WAR is in CHARGE of the FATE OF the PEOPLE.**

guó jiā ān wēi zhī zhǔ yě.  
COUNTRY HOME PEACE DANGER OF MASTER [PART].  
**INDEED, he is MASTER of the PEACE or ENDANGERMENT OF the STATE."**

1. One thousand li = about 300 miles.
2. OR: jūn 'troop'.
3. zhōng: may simply refer to a pot without handles, or may refer to a unit of dry measure (640 shēng).
4. dàn: a unit of dry measure (100 shēng).
5. Bean stalks served as fodder for draft animals.

Chapter 3

Mòu Gōng  
PLAN ATTACK  
**PLANNING The ATTACK**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán yòng bīng zhī fǎ:  
COMMON USE ARMY OF RULE:  
**"The GENERAL RULE IN DEPLOYING an ARMY is as follows:**

quán guó wéi shàng, pò guó cì zhī.  
WHOLE STATE BE SUPERIOR, BROKEN STATE INFERIOR IT.  
**It IS BETTER to take a WHOLE STATE; a BROKEN remnant of a STATE is LESS DESIRABLE.**

quán jūn<sup>1</sup> wéi shàng, pò jūn cì zhī.  
WHOLE ARMY BE SUPERIOR, BROKEN ARMY INFERIOR IT.  
**It IS BETTER to capture an ENTIRE ARMY; a BROKEN remnant of an ARMY is LESS DESIRABLE.**

quán lǚ<sup>2</sup> wéi shàng, pò lǚ cì zhī.  
WHOLE DIVISION BE SUPERIOR, BROKEN DIVISION INFERIOR IT.  
**It IS BETTER to capture an ENTIRE DIVISION; a BROKEN remnant of a DIVISION is LESS DESIRABLE.**

quán zú<sup>3</sup> wéi shàng, pò zú cì zhī.  
WHOLE BATTALION BE SUPERIOR, BROKEN BATTALION INFERIOR IT.  
**It IS BETTER to capture an ENTIRE BATTALION; a BROKEN remnant of a BATTALION is LESS DESIRABLE.**

quán wǔ<sup>4</sup> wéi shàng, pò wǔ cì zhī.  
WHOLE SQUAD BE SUPERIOR, BROKEN SQUAD INFERIOR IT.  
**It IS BETTER to capture an ENTIRE SQUAD; a BROKEN remnant of a SQUAD is LESS DESIRABLE.**

shì gù bǎi zhàn bǎi shèng fēi shàn zhī shàn yě;  
BE WHY HUNDRED BATTLE HUNDRED VICTORY NOT GOOD OF GOOD [PART];  
**THUS gaining a HUNDRED VICTORIES in a HUNDRED BATTLES is NOT the VERY BEST;**

bú zhàn ér qū rén zhī bīng, shàn zhī shàn zhě yě.  
NOT BATTLE AND SUBDUE PERSON OF ARMY, GOOD OF GOOD [PART] [PART].  
**SUBJUGATING the ENEMY'S ARMY WITHOUT doing BATTLE is the VERY BEST.**

gù shàng bīng fá mǒu; qí cì fá jiāo;  
THUS SUPERIOR WARFARE ATTACK PLAN ITS INFERIOR ATTACK ALLIANCE;  
**The BEST TECHNIQUE is to FOIL your enemy's PLANS; UNDERMINING his ALLIANCES is LESS desirable;**

qí cì fá bīng; qí xià gōng chéng.  
ITS INFERIOR ATTACK ARMY; ITS INFERIOR ATTACK CITY.  
**ATTACKING his ARMY is even LESS desirable; ATTACKING his fortified CITY is the LEAST desirable.**

gōng chéng zhī fǎ wéi bù dé yǐ.  
ATTACK CITY [PART] WAY BE NOT OBTAIN [PART].  
**ATTACK a fortified CITY only when you HAVE NO CHOICE.**

xiū lǚ fén wēn, jù qì xiè,  
CONSTRUCT SHIELD COVER CART, PROVIDE IMPLEMENT WEAPON,  
**The CONSTRUCTION of large SHIELDS, ARMORED attack CARTS, and other MATERIEL**

sān yuè ér hòu chéng.  
THREE MONTH AND AFTER COMPLETE.  
**will be COMPLETED IN THREE MONTHS.**

jù yīn yòu sān yuè ér hòu yǐ.  
REACH EARTHWORKS ADDITIONAL THREE MONTH [PART] AFTER [PART].  
**The CONSTRUCTION of EARTHWORKS beside the city walls will REQUIRE an ADDITIONAL THREE MONTHS.**

jiàng bú shèng qí fèn ér yǐ fù zhī,  
GENERAL NOT CONQUER HIS ANGER AND ANT LIKE THEM,  
**If a GENERAL CANNOT CONTROL his TEMPER, AND sends in his men LIKE ANTS,**

shā shì sān fēn zhī yì ér chéng bù bá zhě.  
KILL SOLDIER THREE PART OF ONE YET CITY NOT TAKE [PART].  
**ONE THIRD of the SOLDIERS will be KILLED, YET the CITY will NOT be TAKEN.**

cǐ gōng zhī zāi yě.  
THIS ATTACK [PART] DISASTER [PART].  
**THIS kind of ATTACK is DISASTROUS.**

gù shàn yòng bīng zhě,  
THUS WELL USE ARMY THOSE-WHO,  
**THUS THOSE WHO SKILLFULLY USE the ARMY**



qū rén zhī bīng ér fēi zhàn yě;  
SUBDUE PERSON OF ARMY AND NOT BATTLE [PART];  
**SUBJUGATE the ENEMY'S ARMY WITHOUT doing BATTLE;**

bá rén zhī chéng ér fēi gōng yě;  
TAKE PERSON OF CITY AND NOT ATTACK [PART];  
**they TAKE the ENEMY'S fortified CITY WITHOUT ATTACKING it;**

pò rén zhī guó ér fēi jiǔ yě.  
DESTROY PERSON OF STATE AND NOT LONG [PART].  
**they DESTROY the ENEMY'S STATE WITHOUT PROLONGED warfare.**

bì yǐ quán zhēng yú tiān xià.  
MUST TAKE INTACT FIGHT AT HEAVEN UNDER.  
**When FIGHTING for TERRITORY, you MUST TAKE it INTACT.**

gù bīng bú dùn ér lì kě quán.  
THUS WARFARE NOT DULL AND BENEFIT CAN COMPLETE.  
**THEN your FIGHTING skills will NOT grow DULL AND your GAINS WILL be COMPLETE.**

cǐ mào gōng zhī fǎ yě.  
THIS PLAN ATTACK OF METHOD [PART].  
**THIS is the METHOD OF PLANNING an ATTACK.**

gù yòng bīng zhī fǎ:  
THUS USE ARMY OF WAY:  
**DEPLOY your ARMY in this WAY:**

shí zé wéi zhī.  
TEN THEN SURROUND THEM.  
**If your army is TEN times larger than the enemy forces, THEN SURROUND THEM.**

wǔ zé gōng zhī.  
FIVE THEN ATTACK THEM.  
**If your army is FIVE times larger than the enemy forces, THEN ATTACK THEM.**

bèi zé fēn zhī.  
TWICE THEN DIVIDE THEM.  
**If your army is TWICE as large as the enemy forces, THEN DIVIDE THEM.**

dí zé néng zhàn zhī.  
ENEMY THEN CAN BATTLE THEM.

**If your army is equal to the ENEMY forces, THEN you CAN do BATTLE against THEM.**

shǎo zé néng táo zhī.  
FEW THEN CAN FLEE THEM.

**If your army is SMALLER than the enemy forces, THEN be ABLE to RETREAT.**

bú ruò zé néng bì zhī.  
NOT LIKE THEN CAN EVADE THEM.

**If your army is INFERIOR in skill to the enemy forces, THEN be ABLE to EVADE THEM.**

gù xiǎo dí zhī jiān, dà dí zhī qín yě.  
THUS SMALL ENEMY [PART] FIRM, LARGE ENEMY [PART] CAPTURE [PART].

**If a SMALLER FORCE tries to stand FIRM, it will be CAPTURED by a LARGER FORCE.**

fú jiàng zhě guó zhī fǔ<sup>5</sup> yě.  
FOR GENERAL [PART] STATE OF GUARD-POLE [PART].

**The GENERAL is the GUARD-POLE OF the STATE.**

fǔ zhōu, zé guó bì qiáng;  
GUARD-POLE COMPLETE, THEN STATE MUST STRONG;

**When the GUARD-POLE is FIRM, THE STATE WILL BE STRONG;**

fǔ xì, zé guó bì ruò.  
GUARD-POLE THIN, THEN STATE MUST WEAK.

**when the GUARD-POLE is THIN, the STATE WILL BE WEAK.**

gù jūn zhī suǒ yǐ huàn yú jūn zhě sān:  
THUS RULER [PART] HOW TAKE DISASTER UPON ARMY [PART] THREE:

**There are THREE WAYS the RULER can BRING DISASTER UPON the ARMY:**

bù zhī jūn zhī bù kěyǐ jìn ér wèi zhī jìn,  
NOT KNOW ARMY [PART] NOT CAN ADVANCE YET ORDER IT ADVANCE,

**first, if he does NOT KNOW that the ARMY SHOULD NOT ADVANCE, YET ORDERS IT to ADVANCE,**

bù zhī jūn zhī bù kěyǐ tuì ér wèi zhī tuì,  
NOT KNOW ARMY [PART] NOT CAN RETREAT YET ORDER IT RETREAT,

**or if he does NOT KNOW that the ARMY SHOULD NOT RETREAT, YET ORDERS IT to RETREAT,**

shì wéi mí jūn.  
BE ACT ENTANGLE ARMY.  
**this FETTERS the ARMY.**

bù zhī sān jūn zhī shì,  
NOT KNOW THREE ARMY OF AFFAIR,  
**Second, if he does NOT KNOW the AFFAIRS OF his THREE ARMIES,**

ér tóng sān jūn zhī zhèng zhě,  
YET WITH THREE ARMY OF ADMINISTRATE [PART]  
**YET INCLUDES ADMINISTRATION OF the THREE ARMIES among his duties,**

zé jūn shì huò yǐ.  
THEN ARMY OFFICER CONFUSE [PART].  
**THEN the OFFICERS will be CONFUSED.**

bù zhī sān jūn zhī quán,  
NOT KNOW THREE ARMY OF WEIGHT,  
**Third, if he does NOT KNOW the STRENGTHS OF his THREE ARMIES,**

ér tóng sān jūn zhī rèn,  
YET WITH THREE ARMY OF RESPONSIBILITY,  
**YET INCLUDES RESPONSIBILITY FOR the THREE ARMIES among his duties,**

zé jūn shì yí yǐ.  
THEN ARMY OFFICER DOUBT [PART].  
**THEN the OFFICERS will have DOUBTS.**

sān jūn jì huò qiě yí,  
THREE ARMY BOTH CONFUSE AND DOUBT,  
**If the THREE chief OFFICERS are CONFUSED AND have DOUBTS,**

zé zhū hóu zhī nán zhì yǐ.  
THEN VARIOUS PRINCE OF DIFFICULTY TOWARD [PART].  
**THEN ATTACKS BY other feudal PRINCES will RESULT.**

shì wèi luàn jūn yǐn shèng.  
BE CALL DISORDER ARMY CAUSE VICTORY.  
**It IS SAID: DISORDER in one ARMY BRINGS VICTORY for the other.**

gù zhī shèng yǒu wǔ.  
THUS KNOW VICTORY HAVE FIVE.  
**There ARE FIVE factors by which VICTORY can be PREDICTED.**

zhī kěyǐ zhàn yǔ bù kěyǐ zhàn zhě shèng.  
KNOW CAN BATTLE AND NOT CAN BATTLE HE-WHO WIN.  
**THE ONE WHO KNOWS when he SHOULD FIGHT AND when he SHOULD NOT FIGHT will WIN.**

shí zhòng guǎ zhī yòng zhě shèng.  
KNOW HEAVY FEW OF USE HE-WHO WIN.  
**THE ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS how to USE either a LARGE or a SMALL force will WIN.**

shàng xià tóng yù zhě shèng.  
UPPER LOWER TOGETHER DESIRE HE-WHO WIN.  
**THE ONE WHOSE UPPER and LOWER ranks are UNITED in their THIRST for victory will WIN.**

yǐ yú dài bù yú zhě shèng.  
TAKE PREPARE AWAIT NOT PREPARE HE-WHO WIN.  
**The PREPARED opponent WHO ANTICIPATES an UNPREPARED opponent will WIN.**

jiàng néng ér jūn bú yù zhě shèng.  
GENERAL CAN AND RULER NOT RESIST HE-WHO WIN.  
**THE SIDE WHOSE GENERAL is EMPOWERED AND NOT CONSTRAINED by the RULER will WIN.**

cǐ wǔ zhě, zhī shèng zhī dào yě.  
THIS FIVE [PART], KNOW VICTORY OF WAY [PART].  
**THESE FIVE factors are the WAY TO PREDICT VICTORY.**

gù yuē: zhī jǐ zhī bǐ, bǎi zhàn bù yí.  
THUS SAY: KNOW SELF KNOW OTHER, HUNDRED BATTLE NOT LEAVĒBEHIND.  
**It is SAID: The one who KNOWS both HIMSELF and his OPPONENT will NEVER be DEFEATED in a HUNDRED BATTLES.**

bù zhī bǐ ér zhī jǐ, yí shèng yí fù.  
NOT KNOW OTHER BUT KNOW SELF, ONE VICTORY ONE DEFEAT.  
**The one who does NOT KNOW his OPPONENT BUT KNOWS HIMSELF will suffer ONE DEFEAT for EVERY VICTORY.**

bù zhī bǐ, bù zhī jǐ, měi zhàn bì yí.  
NOT KNOW OTHER, NOT KNOW SELF, EVERY BATTLE MUST LEAVĒBEHIND.  
**The one who KNOWS NEITHER his OPPONENT NOR HIMSELF WILL LOSE EVERY BATTLE."**

1. jūn: 11,200 men (10 lǚ + 100 additional command personnel).
2. lǚ: 1,100 men (10 zú).
3. zú: 110 men (10 wǔ).
4. wǔ: 10 men + 1 officer.
5. fū: one of two wooden poles guarding each wheel of a chariot.

Chapter 4

Xíng

FORM

**Military FORM**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:

SUN ZI SAY:

**SUN ZI SAID:**

xī zhī shàn zhàn zhě,  
ANCIENT [PART] GOOD BATTLE THOSE-WHO,  
**"In ANCIENT times, THOSE SKILLED in BATTLE**

xiān wéi bù kě shèng, yǐ shì dí zhī kě shèng.  
FIRST ACT NOT CAN CONQUER, TO WAIT ENEMY [PART] CAN CONQUER.  
**FIRST MADE themselves INVINCIBLE, and THEN WAITED until the ENEMY was VULNERABLE.**

bù kě shèng zài jǐ; kě shèng zài dí.  
NOT CAN CONQUER ON SELF; CAN CONQUER ON ENEMY.  
**If you are INVINCIBLE, the outcome depends ON YOURSELF; if you are VULNERABLE, the outcome depends ON the ENEMY.**

gù shàn zhàn zhě néng wéi bù kě shèng,  
THUS GOOD BATTLE THOSE-WHO CAN BE NOT CAN CONQUER,  
**THOSE SKILLED in BATTLE CAN BECOME INVINCIBLE,**

bù néng shǐ dí zhī bì kě shèng.  
NOT CAN CAUSE ENEMY [PART] MUST CAN CONQUER.  
**but CANNOT FORCE the ENEMY to become VULNERABLE.**

gù yuē: shèng kě zhī ér bù kě wéi.  
THUS SAY: VICTORY CAN KNOW BUT NOT CAN ACT.  
**THUS it is SAID: VICTORY CAN be POSTULATED, BUT CANNOT always be PRODUCED.**

bù kě shèng zhě shǒu yě; kě shèng zhě gōng yě.  
NOT CAN CONQUER [PART] DEFEND [PART]; CAN CONQUER [PART] ATTACK [PART].  
**Faced with an INVINCIBLE OPPONENT, DEFEND; faced with a VULNERABLE OPPONENT, ATTACK.**

shǒu zé bù zú; gōng zé yǒu yú.  
DEFEND THEN NOT SUFFICIENT; ATTACK THEN HAVE SURPLUS.  
**DEFEND WHEN your strength is INSUFFICIENT; ATTACK WHEN your strength is ABUNDANT.**

shàn shǒu zhě, cáng yú jiǔ dì zhī xià.  
GOOD DEFEND THOSE-WHO, HIDE IN NINE EARTH OF BELOW.  
**THOSE WHO are GOOD at DEFENSE HIDE as if IN the NINEFOLD DEPTHS OF the EARTH.**

shàn gōng zhě, dòng yú jiǔ tiān zhī shàng;  
GOOD ATTACK THOSE-WHO, MOVE IN NINE HEAVEN OF OVER;  
**THOSE WHO are GOOD at ATTACKING MOVE as if IN the NINEFOLD REACHES OF the HEAVENS;**

gù néng zì bǎo ér quán shèng yě.  
THUS CAN SELF PRESERVE AND ALL VICTORY [PART].  
**both CAN PRESERVE THEMSELVES AND gain TOTAL VICTORY.**

jiàn shèng bú guò zhòng rén zhī suǒ zhī;  
SEE VICTORY NOT SURPASS MASS PERSON OF WHAT KNOW;  
**PREDICTING VICTORY is NOT BEYOND the KNOWLEDGE OF the COMMON PEOPLE;**

fēi shàn zhī shàn zhě yě.  
NOT GOOD OF GOOD [PART] [PART].  
**this is NOT the GREATEST feat.**

zhàn shèng ér tiān xià yuē shàn;  
BATTLE VICTORY AND HEAVEN UNDER SAY GOOD;  
**When you win VICTORY in BATTLE, everyone UNDER HEAVEN SAYS "EXCELLENT!";**

fēi shàn zhī shàn zhě yě.  
NOT GOOD OF GOOD [PART] [PART].  
**yet this still is NOT the GREATEST feat.**

gù jǔ qiū háo bù wéi duō lì;  
THUS LIFT AUTUMN HAIR NOT BE MUCH STRENGTH;  
**LIFTING a HAIR from an animal's AUTUMN coat does NOT REQUIRE MUCH STRENGTH;**

jiàn rì yuè bù wéi míng mù;  
SEE SUN MOON NOT BE BRIGHT EYE;  
**SEEING the SUN and MOON does NOT REQUIRE SHARP EYES;**

wén léi tíng bù wéi cōng ěr.  
HEAR THUNDER CLAP NOT BE SMART EAR.  
**HEARING the THUNDER CLAP does NOT REQUIRE SENSITIVE EARS.**

gǔ zhī suǒ wèi shàn zhàn zhě,  
ANCIENT [PART] WHO CALL GOOD BATTLE THOSE-WHO,  
**In ANCIENT times, THOSE CONSIDERED SKILLED in BATTLE**

shèng yú yì shèng zhě yě.  
CONQUER OVER EASY CONQUER THOSE-WHO [PART].  
**DEFEATED opponents WHO were EASY to DEFEAT.**

gù shàn zhàn zhī shèng yě,  
THUS GOOD BATTLE OF VICTORY [PART],  
**The VICTORIES OF those SKILLED in BATTLE**

wú zhì míng, wú yǒng gōng.  
NOT WISE NAME, NOT BRAVE ACHIEVEMENT.  
**were NOT due to their REPUTATION for WISDOM in battle, NOR to their BRAVE EXPLOITS in battle.**

gù qí zhàn shèng bú tè.  
THUS THEIR BATTLE VICTORY NO ERROR.  
**In gaining THEIR VICTORIES in BATTLE, they simply made NO ERRORS.**

bú tè zhě qí suǒ cuò bì shèng;  
NO ERROR THOSE-WHO THEY WHAT DO MUST VICTORY;  
**As for THOSE WHO make NO ERROR, WHATEVER THEY DO MUST lead to VICTORY;**

shèng yǐ bài zhě yě.  
CONQUER TAKE DEFEAT THOSE-WHO [PART].  
**they are merely gaining the VICTORY over THOSE WHO are already DEFEATED.**

gù shàn zhàn zhě, lì yú bú bài zhī dì,  
THUS GOOD BATTLE THOSE-WHO, STAND IN NOT DEFEAT [PART] EARTH,  
**THOSE SKILLED in BATTLE STAND ON GROUND where they CANNOT be DEFEATED**

ér bù shī dí zhī bài yě.  
AND NOT LOSE ENEMY [PART] DEFEAT [PART].  
**AND LOSE NO opportunity to DEFEAT the ENEMY.**

shì gù shèng bīng xiān shèng ér hòu qiú zhàn.  
BE WHY VICTORY ARMY FIRST WIN AND THEN SEEK BATTLE.  
**THUS the VICTORIOUS ARMY FIRST WINS AND THEN ENTERS the BATTLE.**



bài bīng xiān zhàn ér hòu qiú shèng.  
DEFEAT ARMY FIRST BATTLE AND THEN SEEK VICTORY.  
**The DEFEATED ARMY FIRST enters the BATTLE AND THEN TRIES to WIN.**

shàn yòng bīng zhě, xiū dào ér bǎo fǎ.  
WELL USE ARMY THOSE-WHO, CULTIVATE WAY AND PRESERVE METHOD.  
**THOSE WHO SKILLFULLY USE the ARMY CULTIVATE the WAY AND FOLLOWS the METHOD.**

gù néng wéi shèng bài zhī zhèng.  
THUS CAN ACT VICTORY DEFEAT OF POLICY.  
**THUS they are ABLE to MANIPULATE VICTORY and DEFEAT.**

bīng fǎ, yī yuē dù.  
WARFARE METHOD, ONE CALL MEASURE.  
**In WARFARE, the FIRST factor IS the ANALYSIS of the terrain.**

èr yuē liàng.  
TWO CALL ASSESS.  
**The SECOND IS the general ASSESSMENT of the situation.**

sān yuē shǔ.  
THREE CALL COUNT.  
**The THIRD IS COUNTING the numbers.**

sì yuē chēng.  
FOUR CALL WEIGH.  
**The FOURTH IS WEIGHING the strengths of the forces.**

wǔ yuē shèng.  
FIVE CALL VICTORY.  
**The FIFTH IS VICTORY.**

dì shēng dù.  
GROUND PRODUCE MEASURE.  
**The GROUND DICTATES the ANALYSIS of the terrain.**

dù shēng liàng.  
MEASURE PRODUCE ASSESS.  
**The ANALYSIS of the terrain LEADS to the general ASSESSMENT of the situation.**

liàng shēng shǔ.  
ASSESS PRODUCE COUNT.

**The general ASSESSMENT of the situation LEADS to COUNTING the numbers.**

shǔ shēng chēng.  
COUNT PRODUCE WEIGH.

**COUNTING the numbers LEADS to WEIGHING the strengths of the forces.**

chēng shēng shèng.  
WEIGH PRODUCE VICTORY.

**Correctly WEIGHING the strengths of the forces LEADS to VICTORY.**

gù shèng bīng ruò yǐ yì chēng zhū<sup>1</sup>.  
THUS VICTORY ARMY LIKE TAKE YI WEIGH ZHU.

**The VICTORIOUS ARMY is LIKE a TON WEIGHED against an OUNCE.**

bài bīng ruò yǐ zhū chēng yì.  
DEFEAT ARMY LIKE TAKE ZHU WEIGH YI.

**The DEFEATED ARMY is LIKE an OUNCE WEIGHED against a TON.**

shèng zhě zhī zhàn mǐn yě,  
VICTORY [PART] OF BATTLE PEOPLE [PART],

**The VICTOR'S BATTLE TROOPS**

ruò jué jī shuǐ yú qiān rèn<sup>2</sup> zhī xī zhě.  
LIKE BURST ACCUMULATE WATER AT THOUSAND REN [PART] GORGE [PART].

**are LIKE a DAMBURST of WATER rushing THROUGH A MILLE-DEEP GORGE.**

xíng yě.  
FORM [PART].

**Such is the FORM of the victorious army."**

1. zhū: unit of weight, about 1/24 oz.; 576 zhū = 1 yì.
2. rèn: unit of length, about 2 meters.

Chapter 5

Shì  
FORCE  
**FORCE**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán zhì zhòng rú zhì guǎ:  
COMMON ADMINISTER MANY LIKE ADMINISTER FEW:  
**"GENERALLY, ADMINISTERING the MANY is LIKE ADMINISTERING the FEW:**

fēn shù shì yě.  
DIVIDE NUMBER BE [PART].  
**this IS a matter of DEGREE.**

dòu zhòng rú dòu guǎ:  
BATTLE MANY LIKE BATTLE FEW:  
**Sending the MANY into BATTLE is LIKE sending the FEW into BATTLE:**

xíng míng shì yě.  
FORM NAME BE [PART].  
**this IS a matter of CONFIGURING the COMMANDS.**

sān jūn zhī zhòng,  
THREE ARMY OF MASS,  
**As for the THREE ARMIES,**

kě shǐ bì shòu dí ér wú bài:  
CAN CAUSE MUST RECEIVE ENEMY AND NOT DEFEAT:  
**it CAN be MADE INEVITABLE that they will TAKE on the ENEMY WITHOUT being DEFEATED:**

qí zhèng shì yě.  
STRANGE STRAIGHT BE [PART].  
**this IS a matter of the EXTRAORDINARY versus the CONVENTIONAL.**

bīng zhī suǒ jiā,  
ARMY [PART] [PART] ADD,  
**SENDING in the ARMY**

rú yǐ duàn tóu luǎn zhě:  
LIKE TAKE STONE THROW EGG [PART]:  
**is LIKE TAKING a STONE and THROWING it at an EGG:**

xū shí shì yě.  
FRAGILE SOLID BE [PART].  
**this IS a matter of the FRAGILE versus the SOLID.**

fán zhàn zhě yǐ zhèng hé; yǐ qí shèng.  
ALL BATTLE [PART] USE STRAIGHT MATCH; USE STRANGE SURPASS.  
**WHEN in BATTLE, USE the CONVENTIONAL to MATCH the enemy; USE the EXTRAORDINARY to OVERPOWER him.**

gù shàn chū qí zhě,  
THUS GOOD PRODUCE STRANGE THOSE-WHO,  
**THOSE WHO are GOOD at PRODUCING the EXTRAORDINARY**

wú qióng rú tiān dì,  
NOT LIMIT LIKE HEAVEN EARTH,  
**are as UNLIMITED AS HEAVEN and EARTH,**

bù jié rú jiāng hé.  
NOT EXHAUST LIKE RIVER RIVER.  
**as INEXHAUSTIBLE AS the great RIVERS.**

zhōng ér fù shǐ: rì yuè shì yě.  
END AND AGAIN BEGIN: SUN MOON BE [PART].  
**They reach the END AND AGAIN BEGIN: they ARE like the SUN and MOON.**

sǐ ér fù shēng: sì shí shì yě.  
DIE AND AGAIN BORN: FOUR TIME BE [PART].  
**They DIE AND are BORN AGAIN: they ARE like the FOUR SEASONS.**

shēng bú guò wǔ,  
NOTE NOT EXCEED FIVE,  
**There are ONLY FIVE musical TONES,**

wǔ shēng zhī biàn, bù kě shèng tīng yě.  
FIVE NOTE OF TRANSFORM, NOT CAN CONQUER HEAR [PART].  
**yet the TRANSFORMATIONS OF these FIVE TONES COULD NEVER ALL be HEARD<sup>1</sup>.**

sè bú guò wǔ,  
COLOR NOT EXCEED FIVE,  
**There are ONLY FIVE primary COLORS<sup>2</sup>,**

wǔ sè zhī biàn, bù kě shèng guān yě.  
FIVE COLOR OF TRANSFORM, NOT CAN CONQUER SEE [PART].  
**yet the TRANSFORMATIONS OF these FIVE COLORS COULD NEVER ALL be SEEN.**

wèi bú guò wǔ,  
FLAVOR NOT EXCEED FIVE,  
**There are ONLY FIVE basic FLAVORS,**

wǔ wèi zhī biàn, bù kě shèng cháng yě.  
FIVE FLAVOR OF TRANSFORM, NOT CAN CONQUER TASTE [PART].  
**yet the TRANSFORMATIONS OF these FIVE FLAVORS COULD NEVER ALL be TASTED.**

zhàn shì bú guò qí zhèng,  
BATTLE FORCE NOT EXCEED STRANGE STRAIGHT,  
**Among BATTLE STRATEGIES there are ONLY the EXTRAORDINARY and the CONVENTIONAL,**

qí zhèng zhī biàn, bù kě shèng qióng zhī yě.  
STRANGE STRAIGHT OF TRANSFORM, NOT CAN CONQUER LIMIT THEM [PART].  
**yet the TRANSFORMATIONS OF the EXTRAORDINARY and the CONVENTIONAL COULD NEVER be EXHAUSTED.**

qí zhèng xiāng shēng, rú huán zhī wú duān.  
STRANGE STRAIGHT MUTUAL PRODUCE, LIKE CYCLE [PART] NOT STOP.  
**The EXTRAORDINARY and the CONVENTIONAL MUTUALLY PRODUCE one another LIKE an UNENDING CYCLE.**

shú néng qióng zhī?  
WHO CAN LIMIT THEM?  
**WHO COULD EXHAUST THEM?**

jī shuǐ zhī jí, zhì yú piāo shí zhě.  
SURGE WATER OF SWIFT, UNTIL AT DRIFT STONE [PART].  
**The SWIFTNESS OF the SURGING WATER ENABLES it to DRIVE BOULDERS.**

shì yě.  
FORCE [PART].  
**This is brought about by its FORCE.**

zhì niǎo zhī jí, zhì yú huǐ zhé zhě.  
FEROCIOUS BIRD OF SWIFT, UNTIL AT DESTROY BREAK [PART].  
**The SWIFTNESS OF the SNATCHING BIRD ENABLES it to KILL and BREAK its victim.**

jié yě.  
DIVISION [PART].  
**This is brought about by its TIMING.**

shì gù shàn zhàn zhě, qí shì xiǎn, qí jié duǎn.  
BE WHY GOOD BATTLE THOSE-WHO, THEIR FORCE NARROW, THEIR DIVISION SHORT.  
**THUS as for THOSE SKILLED in BATTLE, THEIR FORCE is CONCENTRATED and THEIR TIMING is PERFECT.**

shì rú nǚ; jié rú fā jī.  
FORCE LIKE CROSSBOW; DIVISION LIKE DISPATCH MACHINE.  
**Their FORCE is LIKE that of a CROSSBOW; their TIMING is LIKE the use of the TRIGGER.**

fēn fēn yún yún!  
TANGLE TANGLE CONFUSED CONFUSED!  
**How TANGLED! How CONFUSED!**

dòu luàn ér bù kě luàn yě.  
BATTLE CHAOS BUT NOT CAN CHAOS [PART].  
**The BATTLE may be CHAOTIC, BUT those skilled in battle CANNOT be DISORDERED.**

hùn hùn dùn dùn!  
MUDDY MUDDY MURKY MURKY!  
**How TURBULENT! How MURKY!**

xíng yuán ér bù kě bài yě.  
FORM CIRCLE BUT NOT CAN DEFEAT [PART].  
**The FORMATIONS may WHIRL about, BUT those skilled in battle CANNOT be SHATTERED.**

luàn shēng yú zhì;  
CHAOS BORN FROM CONTROL;  
**The illusion of CHAOS is BORN OF CONTROL;**

qiè shēng yú yǒng;  
COWARDLY BORN FROM BRAVE;  
**the illusion of COWARDICE is BORN OF BRAVERY;**

ruò shēng yú qiáng.  
WEAK BORN FROM STRONG.  
**the illusion of WEAKNESS is BORN OF STRENGTH.**

zhì luàn shù yě.  
CONTROL CHAOS NUMBER [PART].  
**CONTROL versus CHAOS is a matter of how one's NUMBERS are apportioned.**

yǒng qiè shì yě.  
BRAVE COWARDLY FORCE [PART].  
**BRAVERY versus COWARDICE is a matter of FORCE.**

qiáng ruò xíng yě.  
STRONG WEAK FORM [PART].  
**STRENGTH versus WEAKNESS is a matter of FORM.**

gù shàn dòng dí zhě,  
THUS GOOD MOVE ENEMY THOSE-WHO,  
**As for THOSE WHO are GOOD at MOVING the ENEMY,**

xíng zhī, dí bì cóng zhī;  
FORM THEM, ENEMY MUST FOLLOW THEM;  
**they fall into FORMATION and the ENEMY MUST FOLLOW;**

yǔ zhī, dí bì qǔ zhī.  
GIVE IT, ENEMY MUST TAKE IT.  
**they GIVE and the ENEMY MUST TAKE.**

yǐ lì dòng zhī, yǐ zú dài zhī.  
USE GAIN MOVE HIM, USE TROOP AWAIT HIM.  
**They USE the enemy's desire for GAIN to MOVE HIM, and USE their TROOPS to AMBUSH HIM.**

gù shàn zhàn zhě, qiú zhī yú shì;  
THUS GOOD BATTLE THOSE-WHO, SEEK IT AT FORCE;  
**THOSE SKILLED in BATTLE SEEK victory THROUGH the skillful application of FORCE;**

bù zé yú rén.  
NOT DEMAND AT PERSON.  
**they do NOT SEEK it merely THROUGH the prowess of individual WARRIORS.**

gù néng zé rén ér rèn shì.  
THUS CAN SELECT PERSON AND ASSUME FORCE.

**They are ABLE to SELECT the best WARRIORS AND to CONTROL the application of FORCE.**

rèn shì zhě, qí zhàn rén yě, rú zhuǎn mù shí.  
ASSUME FORCE THOSE-WHO, THEY BATTLE PERSON [PART], LIKE ROLL WOOD STONE.

**As for THOSE WHO CONTROL the application of FORCE, THEY use their WARRIORS in BATTLE as IF ROLLING LOGS or STONES.**

mù shí zhī xìng:  
WOOD STONE OF NATURE:

**This is the NATURE OF LOGS or STONES:**

ān zé jìng, wēi zé dòng;  
CALM THEN STILL, TOWERING THEN MOVE;

**on FLAT ground they are STILL, but on STEEP ground they MOVE;**

fāng zé zhǐ, yuán zé xíng.  
SQUARE THEN STOP, ROUND THEN PROCEED.

**if SQUARE they remain at REST, but if ROUND they ROLL.**

gù shàn zhàn rén zhī shì,  
THUS GOOD BATTLE PERSON OF FORCE,

**The FORCE OF those SKILLED in BATTLE**

rú zhuǎn yuán shí yú qiān rèn<sup>3</sup> zhī shān zhě.  
LIKE ROLL ROUND STONE AT THOUSAND REN [PART] MOUNTAIN [PART].

**is like that of ROUND STONES ROLLING FROM atop a TOWERING MOUNTAIN.**

shì yě.  
FORCE [PART].

**This is FORCE.**"

1. FIVE TONES: Traditional Chinese music uses a pentatonic scale. On a piano, melodies can be composed in the Chinese pentatonic scale by using the white notes except for E and B (yielding C, D, F, G, A).

2. FIVE primary COLORS: In the traditional Chinese scheme, these are red, yellow, blue, black, and white.

3. rèn: unit of length, about 2 meters.



Chapter 6

Xū Shí  
EMPTY SOLID  
**EMPTINESS And SUBSTANCE**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán xiān chǔ zhàn dì ér dài dí zhě yì.  
COMMON FIRST OCCUPY BATTLE GROUND AND AWAIT ENEMY THOSE-WHO EASE.  
**"GENERALLY, THOSE WHO FIRST REACH the BATTLEFIELD AND AWAIT the ENEMY will be at EASE.**

hòu chǔ zhàn dì ér qū zhàn zhě láo.  
LATER OCCUPY BATTLE GROUND AND RUSH BATTLE THOSE-WHO FATIGUE.  
**THOSE WHO REACH the BATTLEFIELD LATER AND must RUSH into BATTLE will be FATIGUED.**

gù shàn zhàn zhě, zhì rén ér bú zhì yú rén.  
THUS GOOD BATTLE THOSE-WHO, SEND PERSON AND NOT SEND BY PERSON.  
**THOSE SKILLED in BATTLE make OTHERS COME to them; they are NOT FORCED into battle BY OTHERS.**

néng shǐ dí zì zhì zhě,  
CAN CAUSE ENEMY SELF REACH [PART],  
**They CAN MAKE the ENEMY ADVANCE of his OWN accord**

lì zhī yě.  
ADVANTAGE HIM [PART].  
**by offering HIM apparent ADVANTAGES.**

néng shǐ dí bù dé zhì zhě,  
CAN CAUSE ENEMY NOT ACHIEVE REACH [PART],  
**Then they CAN MAKE the ENEMY FAIL in his ADVANCE**

hài zhī yě.  
HARM HIM [PART].  
**by HARMING HIM.**

gù dí yì néng láo zhī;  
THUS ENEMY EASE CAN FATIGUE HIM;  
**When the ENEMY is RELAXED they CAN FATIGUE HIM;**

bǎo néng jī zhī;  
SATIED CAN STARVE HIM;  
**when the enemy is SATIED they CAN STARVE HIM;**

ān néng dòng zhī.  
STILL CAN MOVE HIM.  
**when the enemy is STILL they CAN make HIM MOVE.**

chū qí suǒ bù qū;  
PENETRATE HE WHICH NOT RUSH;  
**They PENETRATE the place to WHICH HE has NOT yet RUSHED;**

qū qí suǒ bú yì.  
RUSH HE WHERE NOT EXPECT.  
**They RUSH to the PLACE HE does NOT EXPECT.**

xíng qiān lǐ ér bù láo zhě,  
TRAVEL THOUSAND LI AND NOT FATIGUE [PART],  
**They can TRAVEL a THOUSAND LI<sup>1</sup> WITHOUT FATIGUE**

xíng yú wú rén zhī dì yě.  
TRAVEL IN NOT PERSON [PART] GROUND [PART].  
**by TRAVELING THROUGH UNOCCUPIED TERRITORY.**

gōng ér bì qǔ zhě,  
ATTACK AND MUST TAKE [PART],  
**They ATTACK a target AND ALWAYS TAKE it**

gōng qí suǒ bù shǒu yě.  
ATTACK HE WHAT NOT DEFEND [PART].  
**by ATTACKING WHAT the enemy does NOT DEFEND.**

shǒu ér bì gù zhě,  
DEFEND AND MUST FIRM [PART],  
**They DEFEND AND ALWAYS stand FIRM**

shǒu qí suǒ bù gōng yě.  
DEFEND HE WHAT NOT ATTACK [PART].  
**by DEFENDING WHAT the enemy does NOT ATTACK.**

gù shàn gōng zhě, dí bù zhī qí suǒ shǒu;  
THUS GOOD ATTACK THOSE-WHO, ENEMY NOT KNOW HE WHAT DEFEND;  
**THUS faced with THOSE SKILLED at ATTACKING, the ENEMY does NOT KNOW WHAT to DEFEND;**

shàn shǒu zhě, dí bù zhī qí suǒ gōng.  
GOOD DEFEND THOSE-WHO, ENEMY NOT KNOW HE WHAT ATTACK.  
**and faced with THOSE SKILLED at DEFENDING, the ENEMY does NOT KNOW WHAT to ATTACK.**

wēi hū wēi hū, zhì yú wú xíng.  
VAGUE [PART] VAGUE [PART], REACH AT NOT FORM.  
**They are VAGUE and MYSTERIOUS, VERGING ON the FORMLESS.**

shén hū shén hū, zhì yú wú shēng.  
SPIRIT [PART] SPIRIT [PART], REACH AT NOT SOUND.  
**They are as GHOSTLY and SHADOWY, VERGING ON the INAUDIBLE.**

gù néng wéi dí zhī sī mìng.  
THUS CAN ACT ENEMY OF CONTROL LIFE.  
**THUS they CAN CONTROL the FATE OF the ENEMY.**

jìn ér bù kě yù zhě,  
ENTER AND NOT CAN RESIST [PART],  
**They PENETRATE AND CANNOT be RESISTED,**

chōng qí xū yě.  
CHARGE HIS EMPTY [PART].  
**for they CHARGE the enemy's UNDEFENDED ground.**

tuì ér bù kě zhuī zhě,  
RETREAT AND NOT CAN PURSUE [PART],  
**They RETREAT AND CANNOT be PURSUED,**

sù ér bù kě jí yě.  
QUICK AND NOT CAN REACH [PART].  
**for they are so QUICK THAT they CANNOT be OVERTAKEN.**

gù wǒ yù zhàn, dí suī gāo lěi shēn gōu,  
THUS I WISH BATTLE, ENEMY EVEN HIGH RAMPART DEEP TRENCH,  
**THUS if I WISH to do BATTLE, EVEN if the ENEMY has HIGH RAMPARTS and DEEP TRENCHES**

bù dé            bù yǔ    wǒ zhàn    zhě,  
NOT ACHIEVE NOT GIVE ME BATTLE [PART],  
**he CANNOT AVOID DOING BATTLE with ME**

gōng    qí suǒ    bì    jiù    yě.  
ATTACK HE WHERE MUST SAVE [PART].  
**if I ATTACK GROUND that HE MUST SAVE.**

wǒ bú yù    zhàn,    suī    huà    dì    ér    shǒu    zhī,  
I NOT WISH BATTLE, EVEN DRAW GROUND AND DEFEND IT,  
**If I do NOT WISH to do BATTLE, EVEN if I DRAW a line on the GROUND AND DEFEND IT**

dí    bù    dé            yǔ    wǒ    zhàn    zhě,  
ENEMY NOT ACHIEVE GIVE ME BATTLE [PART],  
**the ENEMY will be UNABLE to DO BATTLE with ME**

guāi            qí    suǒ    zhī    yě.  
CONTRARY HIS WHAT MOVE [PART].  
**if I FOIL HIS every MOVE.**

gù    xíng    rén            ér    wǒ    wú    xíng,  
THUS FORM PERSON BUT I NOT FORM,  
**When the ENEMY fights in FORMATION, BUT I do NOT,**

zé    wǒ    zhuān            ér    dí            fēn.  
THEN I CONCENTRATE AND ENEMY DIVIDE.  
**THEN I can CONCENTRATE my forces WHILE the ENEMY is DISTRIBUTED.**

wǒ    zhuān            wéi    yì,    dí            fēn            wéi    shí,  
I CONCENTRATE AS ONE, ENEMY DIVIDE AS TEN,  
**If I CONCENTRATE my forces AS ONE, while the ENEMY is DISTRIBUTED INTO TEN,**

shì    yǐ    shí    gōng    qí    yì    yě.  
BE TAKE TEN ATTACK HIS ONE [PART].  
**it IS like USING TEN men to ATTACK each ONE of HIS.**

zé    wǒ    zhòng            ér    dí            guǎ.  
THEN I NUMEROUS AND ENEMY FEW.  
**In effect MY forces become NUMEROUS AND the ENEMY'S FEW.**

néng yǐ zhòng jī guǎ zhě,  
CAN TAKE NUMEROUS STRIKE FEW [PART],  
**When I CAN USE the NUMEROUS to STRIKE the FEW,**

zé wú zhī suǒ yǔ zhàn zhě yuē yǐ.  
THEN I [PART] WHO GIVE BATTLE THOSE-WHO SUBDUE [PART].  
**THEN THOSE WHO DO BATTLE with ME will be SUBDUE.**

wú suǒ yǔ zhàn zhī dì bù kě zhī:  
I WHERE GIVE BATTLE [PART] PLACE NOT CAN KNOW:  
**The PLACE WHERE I will DO BATTLE CANNOT be DISCERNED:**

bù kě zhī, zé dí suǒ bèi zhě duō.  
NOT CAN KNOW, THEN ENEMY WHERE PREPARE [PART] MANY.  
**if it CANNOT be DISCERNED, THEN the ENEMY must PREPARE on MANY fronts.**

dí suǒ bèi zhě duō,  
ENEMY WHERE PREPARE [PART] MANY,  
**If the ENEMY must PREPARE on MANY fronts,**

zé wú zhī suǒ zhàn zhě guǎ yǐ.  
THEN I [PART] WHO BATTLE THOSE-WHO FEW [PART].  
**THEN THOSE with WHOM I do BATTLE on any one front will be FEW.**

gù bèi qián zé hòu guǎ;  
THUS PREPARE FORWARD THEN REAR FEW;  
**If the enemy PREPARES to fight at the FORE, there will be FEW men at the REAR;**

bèi hòu zé qián guǎ.  
PREPARE REAR THEN FORWARD FEW.  
**if he PREPARES to fight at the REAR, there will be FEW men at the FORE.**

gù bèi zuǒ zé yòu guǎ;  
THUS PREPARE LEFT THEN RIGHT FEW;  
**If he PREPARES to fight at the LEFT, there will be FEW men at the RIGHT;**

bèi yòu zé zuǒ guǎ.  
PREPARE RIGHT THEN LEFT FEW.  
**if he PREPARES to fight at the RIGHT, there wil be FEW men at the LEFT.**

wú suǒ bú bèi, zé wú suǒ bù guǎ.  
NOT WHERE NOT PREPARE, THEN NOT WHERE NOT FEW.  
**If there is NOWHERE he does NOT PREPARE to fight, THEN NOWHERE will his men be NUMEROUS.**

guǎo zhě, bèi rén zhě yě;  
FEW [PART], PREPARE PERSON [PART] [PART];  
**The FEW must PREPARE to fight the ENEMY;**

zhòng zhě, shǐ rén bèi jǐ zhě yě.  
NUMEROUS [PART], CAUSE PERSON PREPARE SELF [PART] [PART].  
**the NUMEROUS FORCE the ENEMY to PREPARE to fight THEM.**

gù zhī zhàn zhī dì, zhī zhàn zhī rì,  
THUS KNOW BATTLE OF PLACE, KNOW BATTLE OF DAY,  
**If the DATE and LOCATION OF the BATTLE are KNOWN,**

zé kě qiān lǐ ér huì zhàn.  
THEN CAN THOUSAND LI AND MEET BATTLE.  
**THEN you CAN march a THOUSAND LI AND DO BATTLE.**

bù zhī zhàn zhī dì, bù zhī zhàn zhī rì,  
NOT KNOW BATTLE OF PLACE, NOT KNOW BATTLE OF DAY,  
**If the DATE and LOCATION OF the BATTLE are UNKNOWN,**

zé zuǒ bù néng jiù yòu, yòu bù néng jiù zuǒ,  
THEN LEFT NOT CAN AID RIGHT, RIGHT NOT CAN AID LEFT,  
**THEN the LEFT CANNOT AID the RIGHT and the RIGHT CANNOT AID the LEFT;**

qián bù néng jiù hòu, hòu bù néng jiù qián,  
FRONT NOT CAN AID REAR, REAR NOT CAN AID FRONT,  
**the FRONT CANNOT AID the REAR and the REAR CANNOT AID the FRONT.**

ér kuàng yuǎn zhě shǔ shí lǐ,  
AND SITUATION FAR [PART] COUNT TEN LI,  
**This applies WHETHER the distance is as FAR as TEN LI**

jìn zhě shǔ lǐ hū!  
CLOSE [PART] COUNT LI [PART]!  
**or as CLOSE as one LI!**

yǐ wú duó zhī, Yuè rén zhī bīng suī duō,  
AS I ESTIMATE IT, YUE PEOPLE OF SOLDIER THOUGH MANY,  
**AS I SEE IT, ALTHOUGH the state of YUE<sup>2</sup> has MANY SOLDIERS,**

yì xī yì yú shèng bài zāi?  
ALSO WHAT BENEFIT TO VICTORY DEFEAT [PART]?  
**of WHAT BENEFIT will this be with respect TO VICTORY or DEFEAT?**

gù yuē shèng kě wéi yě.  
THUS SAY VICTORY CAN DO [PART].  
**THUS it can be SAID that VICTORY CAN be ACHIEVED.**

dí suī zhòng, kě shǐ wú dòu.  
ENEMY THOUGH NUMEROUS, CAN CAUSE NOT BATTLE.  
**THOUGH the ENEMY may be NUMEROUS, you CAN PREVENT the BATTLE.**

gù cè zhī ér zhī dé shī zhī jì.  
THUS ANALYZE HIM AND KNOW GAIN LOSE [PART] STRATEGY.  
**ANALYZE HIM AND you will be able to DISTINGUISH SUCCESSFUL and UNSUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES.**

zuò zhī ér zhī dòng jìng zhī lǐ.  
ACT HIM AND KNOW MOVE REST OF LOGIC.  
**PROVOKE HIM AND you will KNOW his PATTERNS OF MOVEMENT and REST.**

xíng zhī ér zhī sǐ shēng zhī dì.  
FORM HIM AND KNOW DEATH LIFE [PART] GROUND.  
**Make him show HIS FORMATIONS AND you can DISCERN the SAFE versus FATAL TERRAINS.**

jué zhī ér zhī yǒu yú bù zú zhī chǔ.  
CONTEND HIM AND KNOW HAVE EXCESS NOT SUFFICIENT [PART] PLACE.  
**CONTEND with HIM AND you will KNOW WHERE his forces ARE in EXCESS and where they are INSUFFICIENT.**

gù xíng bīng zhī jí, zhì yú wú xíng.  
THUS FORM ARMY OF PINNACLE, REACH AT NOT FORM.  
**The PINNACLE OF MILITARY FORMATION VERGES ON the FORMLESS.**

wú xíng zé shēn jiān bù néng kǔi,  
NOT FORM SO DEEP SPY NOT CAN DISCERN,  
**Faced with the FORMLESS, the most PENETRATING SPY CAN DISCERN NO pattern,**

zhì zhě bù néng móu.  
INTELLIGENT [PART] NOT CAN PLAN.  
**and INTELLIGENCE CAN make NO PLANS.**

yīn xíng ér cuò shèng yú zhòng,  
BASED-ON FORM AND MAKE VICTORY OVER NUMEROUS,  
**BASED ON such FORMS, you can ACHIEVE VICTORY OVER the NUMEROUS,**

zhòng bù néng zhī.  
NUMEROUS NOT CAN KNOW.  
**yet the NUMEROUS will be UNABLE to UNDERSTAND.**

rén jiē zhī wǒ suǒ yǐ shèng zhī xíng,  
PERSON ALL KNOW I WHICH VICTORY [PART] FORM,  
**ALL PEOPLE UNDERSTAND the FORMATIONS through WHICH I have just gained VICTORY,**

ér mò zhī wú suǒ yǐ zhì shèng zhī xíng.  
BUT NOT KNOW I WHICH CREATE VICTORY [PART] FORM.  
**BUT they do NOT UNDERSTAND how I spontaneously adapt my FORMATIONS to CREATE VICTORY.**

gù qí zhàn shèng bú fù, ér yìng xíng yú wú qióng.  
THUS ONE BATTLE VICTORY NOT REPEAT, BUT CORRESPOND FORM TO NOT LIMIT.  
**ONE must NEVER REPEAT one's strategy for VICTORY in BATTLE: one must ADAPT one's FORMATIONS INFINITELY.**

fú bīng xíng xiàng shuǐ.  
FOR ARMY FORM RESEMBLE WATER.  
**FOR MILITARY FORMATIONS should be LIKE WATER.**

shuǐ zhī xíng bì gāo ér qū xià;  
WATER OF FORM AVOID HIGH AND RUSH DOWN;  
**It is the FORM OF WATER to AVOID the HIGH AND RUSH DOWN;**

bīng zhī xíng, bì shí ér jī xū.  
ARMY [PART] FORM, AVOID SOLID AND STRIKE EMPTY.  
**in using MILITARY FORMATIONS, AVOID the SUBSTANTIAL and STRIKE at the EMPTY.**

shuǐ yīn dì ér zhì liú,  
WATER FOLLOW LAND AND MAKE FLOW,  
**When WATER CONTOURS to the LAND, it FLOWS,**



bīng yìng dí ér zhì shèng.  
ARMY SUIT ENEMY AND MAKE VICTORY.  
**and when an ARMY ADAPTS to the ENEMY, it TRIUMPHS.**

gù bīng wú cháng shì;  
THUS ARMY NOT FIXED POWER;  
**THUS an ARMY maintains NO FIXED arrangement of its POWER;**

shuǐ wú cháng xíng,  
WATER NOT FIXED FORM,  
**Just as WATER maintains NO FIXED FORM,**

néng yīn dí biàn huà ér qǔ shèng zhě,  
CAN FOLLOW ENEMY CHANGE TRANSFORM THUS TAKE VICTORY THOSE-WHO,  
**THOSE WHO CAN CONTOUR to the ENEMY to CHANGE and TRANSFORM, THUS GAINING VICTORY,**

wèi zhī shén.  
CALL THEM GOD.  
**are worthy to be CALLED GODLIKE.**

gù wǔ xíng wú cháng shèng;  
THUS FIVE FORM NOT CONSTANT VICTORY;  
**Of the FIVE ELEMENTS<sup>3</sup>, NONE is ALWAYS DOMINANT;**

sì shí wú cháng wèi;  
FOUR TIME NOT CONSTANT THRONE;  
**of the FOUR SEASONS, NONE has a CONSTANT THRONE;**

rì yǒu duǎn cháng;  
DAY HAVE SHORT LONG;  
**the DAY IS SHORT or LONG;**

yuè yǒu sǐ shēng.  
MOON HAVE DEATH BIRTH.  
**the MOON WANES or WAXES."**

1. One thousand li = about 300 miles.

2. A feudal state in the Spring and Autumn Period. Yue was conquered by Wu in 494 B.C., but defeated Wu in 473 B.C.

3. In traditional Chinese philosophy, these are metal, wood, water, fire, and earth.

Chapter 7

Jūn Zhēng  
ARMY FIGHT

**Doing BATTLE**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán yòng bīng zhī fǎ:  
COMMON USE ARMY OF RULE:  
**"The GENERAL RULE IN DEPLOYING an ARMY is as follows:**

jiàng shòu mìng yú jūn.  
GENERAL RECEIVE COMMAND FROM RULER.  
**The GENERAL RECEIVES COMMANDS FROM the RULER.**

hé jūn jù zhòng; jiāo hé ér shè.  
UNITE ARMY ASSEMBLE MASS; JOIN HARMONIOUS AND CAMP.  
**He must UNITE the ASSEMBLED MASS of the ARMY; he must JOIN it together HARMONIOUSLY and establish a CAMP.**

mò nán yú jūn zhēng.  
NOT DIFFICULT AS ARMY FIGHT.  
**There is NOTHING as DIFFICULT AS doing BATTLE.**

jūn zhēng zhī nán zhě, yǐ yū wéi zhí;  
ARMY FIGHT IN DIFFICULT [PART], TAKE CROOKED DO STRAIGHT;  
**The DIFFICULTY IN doing BATTLE is to TAKE the CROOKED and MAKE it STRAIGHT;**

yǐ huàn wéi lì.  
TAKE DISASTER DO ADVANTAGE.  
**to TAKE DISASTER and TURN it to your own ADVANTAGE.**

gù yū qí tú, ér yòu zhī yǐ lì;  
THUS CROOKED HIS PATH, AND LURE HIM TAKE ADVANTAGE;  
**Force your enemy to take a CROOKED PATH, AND LURE HIM with illusory ADVANTAGE;**

hòu rén fā, xiān rén zhì.  
AFTER PERSON DEPART, FIRST PERSON ARRIVE.  
**be the LAST ONE to SET OUT, but the FIRST ONE to ARRIVE.**

cǐ zhī yū zhí zhī jì zhě yě.  
THIS KNOW CROOKED STRAIGHT OF STRATEGY [PART] [PART].  
**THIS is to UNDERSTAND the STRATEGY OF the CROOKED and the STRAIGHT.**

gù jūn zhēng wéi lì, jūn zhēng wéi wēi.  
THUS ARMY FIGHT BE ADVANTAGE, ARMY FIGHT BE DANGER.  
**Doing BATTLE can BE ADVANTAGEOUS, but also DANGEROUS.**

jǔ jūn ér zhēng lì, zé bù jí.  
ENTIRE ARMY AND FIGHT ADVANTAGE, THEN NOT ATTAIN.  
**If you use the ENTIRE ARMY TO FIGHT for an ADVANTAGE, you will NOT ATTAIN it.**

wěi jūn ér zhēng lì, zé zī zhòng juān.  
REDUCE ARMY AND FIGHT ADVANTAGE, THEN CART SUPPLY ABANDON.  
**If you use only a PORTION of the ARMY TO FIGHT for an ADVANTAGE, CARTS and SUPPLIES will have to be LEFT behind.**

shì gù juǎn jiǎ ér qū, rì yè bù chǔ,  
BE WHY ROLL ARMOR AND RUSH, DAY NIGHT NOT STAY,  
**THUS if you ROLL up your ARMOR AND RUSH forward WITHOUT STOPPING DAY or NIGHT,**

bèi dào jiān xíng, bǎ lǐ ér zhēng lì,  
DOUBLE WAY DOUBLE WALK, HUNDRED LI AND FIGHT ADVANTAGE,  
**DOUBLING your PACE and going a HUNDRED LI TO FIGHT for an ADVANTAGE,**

zé qín sān jiàng jūn.  
THEN CAPTURE THREE GENERAL ARMY.  
**THEN the GENERALS of the THREE ARMIES will be CAPTURED.**

jìn zhě xiān, pí zhě hòu.  
STRENGTH ONE FIRST, EXHAUSTED ONE LATER.  
**The STRONG SOLDIERS will arrive FIRST, and the EXHAUSTED ONES will arrive LATER.**

qí fǎ shí yì ér zhì.  
THIS METHOD TEN ONE [PART] ARRIVE.  
**Using THIS METHOD, only ONE soldier in TEN will ARRIVE on time.**

wǔ shí lǐ ér zhēng lì,  
FIVE TEN LI AND FIGHT ADVANTAGE,  
**If you go FIFTY LI TO FIGHT for an ADVANTAGE,**

zé jué shàng jiàng jūn.  
THEN THWART VANGUARD GENERAL ARMY.  
**THEN the GENERAL in the VANGUARD will be THWARTED.**

qí fǎ bàn zhì.  
THIS METHOD HALF ARRIVE.  
**Using THIS METHOD, only HALF of your soldiers will ARRIVE on time.**

sān shí lǐ ér zhēng lì,  
THREE TEN LI AND FIGHT ADVANTAGE,  
**If you go THIRTY LI TO FIGHT for an ADVANTAGE,**

zé sān fēn zhī èr zhì.  
THEN THREE PART IN TWO ARRIVE.  
**THEN only TWO men IN THREE will ARRIVE on time.**

shì gù jūn wú zī zhòng zé wáng;  
BE WHY ARMY NOT CART SUPPLY THEN PERISH;  
**THUS if an ARMY has NO SUPPLIES it WILL PERISH;**

wú liáng shí zé wáng;  
NOT GRAIN FOOD THEN PERISH;  
**if it has no FOOD it WILL PERISH;**

wú wěi jī zé wáng.  
NOT RELY STORE THEN PERISH  
**if it has no STOCKPILES it WILL PERISH.**

gù bù zhī zhū hóu zhī móu zhě,  
THUS NOT KNOW VARIOUS PRINCE OF PLAN THOSE-WHO,  
**THOSE WHO do NOT KNOW the PLANS OF the feudal PRINCES**

bù néng yù jiāo.  
NOT CAN PARTICIPATE ALLIANCE.  
**CANNOT PARTICIPATE in ALLIANCES.**

bù zhī shān lín, xiǎn zǔ,  
NOT KNOW MOUNTAIN FOREST, STEEP BARRIER,  
**THOSE WHO do NOT KNOW the FORM of MOUNTAINS and FORESTS, STEEP BARRIERS,**

jǔ zé zhī xíng zhě,  
MARSH SWAMP OF FORM THOSE-WHO,  
**and MARSHES and SWAMPS**

bù néng xíng jūn.  
NOT CAN PROCEED ARMY.  
**CANNOT lead the ADVANCE of an ARMY.**

bú yòng xiāng dǎo zhě,  
NOT USE REGION GUIDE THOSE-WHO,  
**THOSE WHO do NOT USE LOCAL GUIDES**

bù néng dé dì lì.  
NOT CAN GAIN GROUND ADVANTAGE.  
**CANNOT GAIN the ADVANTAGES afforded by the TERRAIN.**

gù bīng yǐ zhà lì;  
THUS WARFARE USE DECEPTION ESTABLISH;  
**In WARFARE, USE DECEPTION as the BASIS of your strategy;**

yǐ lì dòng;  
USE ADVANTAGE MOVE;  
**MOVE to gain ADVANTAGE;**

yǐ fēn hé wéi biàn zhě yě.  
USE DISPERSE UNITE DO CHANGE [PART] [PART].  
**DISPERSE or UNITE your forces to CHANGE the situation.**

gù qí jí rú fēng; qí xú rú lín.  
THUS ITS SWIFT LIKE WIND; ITS SLOW LIKE FOREST.  
**Moving SWIFTLY, the army is LIKE the WIND; moving SLOWLY, IT is LIKE a FOREST.**

qīn lüè rú huǒ; bú dòng rú shān.  
INVADE PLUNDER LIKE FIRE; NOT MOVE LIKE MOUNTAIN.  
**INVADING and PLUNDERING, it is LIKE FIRE; STATIONARY, it is LIKE a MOUNTAIN.**

nán zhī rú yīn; dòng rú léi zhèn.  
HARD KNOW LIKE DARK; MOVE LIKE THUNDER SHAKE.  
**It is as HARD to FATHOM AS the DARKNESS; MOVING, it is LIKE the ROLLING THUNDER.**

lè xiāng fēn zhòng.  
PLUNDER REGION DIVIDE MASS.  
**When PLUNDERING the REGION, DIVIDE your FORCES.**

kuò dì fēn lì.  
EXPAND TERRITORY DIVIDE PROFIT.  
**When EXPANDING your TERRITORY DIVIDE the PROFITS.**

xuán quán ér dòng.  
CONSIDER WEIGH AND MOVE.  
**CONSIDER and WEIGH the situation: THEN MOVE.**

xiān zhī yū zhí zhī jì zhě shèng:  
FIRST KNOW CROOKED STRAIGHT OF STRATEGY ONE VICTORY:  
**The FIRST ONE to UNDERSTAND the STRATEGY OF the CROOKED and the STRAIGHT will gain VICTORY:**

cǐ jūn zhēng zhī fǎ yě.  
THIS ARMY FIGHT OF LAW [PART].  
**THIS is the LAW OF doing BATTLE.**

Jūn Zhèng yuē: yán bù xiāng wén, gù wéi jīn gǔ;  
ARMY ADMINISTER SAY: SPEECH NOT MUTUAL HEAR, THUS ACT METAL DRUM;  
**The Book of MILITARY ADMINISTRATION SAYS: 'When the VOICE CANNOT be HEARD, USE GONGS and DRUMS;**

shì ér bú jiàn, gù wéi jīng qí.  
LOOK BUT NOT SEE, THUS ACT BANNER FLAG.  
**when there is NO VISIBILITY, USE BANNERS and FLAGS.'**

fú jīn gǔ jīng qí zhě,  
THUS METAL DRUM BANNER FLAG [PART],  
**THUS GONGS, DRUMS, BANNERS, and FLAGS**

suǒyǐ yì rén zhī ěr mù yě.  
TO UNIFY PERSON OF EAR EYE [PART].  
**should be used TO UNIFY the EYES and EARS OF your TROOPS.**

rén jì zhuān yì, zé yǒng zhě bù dé dú jìn,  
PERSON NOW CONCENTRATE UNIFY, BUT BRAVE ONE NOT CAN ALONE ADVANCE,  
**Even WHEN your TROOPS are CONCENTRATED and UNIFIED, the BRAVE ONES will be UNABLE to ADVANCE ALONE,**

qiè zhě bù dé dú tuì.  
COWARDLY ONE NOT CAN ALONE RETREAT.  
**and the COWARDLY ONES will be UNABLE to RETREAT ALONE.**

cǐ yòng zhòng zhī fǎ yě.  
THIS USE MASS OF LAW [PART].  
**THIS is the LAW OF USING your FORCES.**

gù yè zhàn duō huǒ gǔ, zhòu zhàn duō jīng qí,  
THUS NIGHT BATTLE MANY FIRE DRUM, DAYLIGHT BATTLE MANY BANNER FLAG,  
**THUS in NIGHT BATTLES use MANY FIRES and DRUMS, and in DAYLIGHT BATTLES use MANY BANNERS and FLAGS**

suǒyǐ biàn rén zhī ěr mù yě.  
TO CHANGE PERSON OF EAR EYE [PART].  
**TO AFFECT what your TROOPS SEE and HEAR.**

gù sān jūn kě duó qì; jiàng jūn kě duó xīn.  
THUS THREE ARMY CAN SNATCH ENERGY; GENERAL ARMY CAN SNATCH HEART.  
**The vital ENERGY of the THREE ARMIES CAN be SNATCHED away; the COURAGE of the GENERALS CAN be SNATCHED away.**

shì gù zhāo qì rùi; zhòu qì duò; mù qì gūi.  
BE WHY MORNING ENERGY ACUTE; DAY ENERGY LETHARGIC; EVENING ENERGY RECEDE.  
**THUS ENERGY is ACUTE in the MORNING; ENERGY becomes LETHARGIC during the DAY; ENERGY RECEDES in the EVENING.**

gù shàn yòng bīng zhě, bì qí ruì qì,  
THUS WELL USE ARMY THOSE-WHO, AVOID THEIR ACUTE ENERGY,  
**THUS THOSE WHO SKILLFULLY USE THE ARMY AVOID the ENEMY'S ENERGY when it is ACUTE,**

jī qí duò gūi.  
ATTACK THEIR LETHARGIC RECEDING.  
**but ATTACK when the ENEMY'S energy is LETHARGIC and RECEDING.**

cǐ zhì qì zhě yě.  
THIS MANAGE ENERGY THOSE-WHO [PART].  
**THIS is the strategy of THOSE WHO MANAGE the ENERGY of the enemy.**

yǐ zhì dài luàn; yǐ jìng dài huá.  
TAKE ORDER AWAIT DISORDER; TAKE CALM AWAIT CLAMOR.  
**BE ORDERLY while AWAITING DISORDER; BE CALM while AWAITING CLAMOR.**

cǐ zhì xīn zhě yě.  
THIS MANAGE MIND THOSE-WHO [PART].  
**THIS is the strategy of THOSE WHO MANAGE the MIND.**

yǐ jìn dài yuǎn; yǐ yì dài lǎo;  
TAKE NEAR AWAIT DISTANT; TAKE RESTED AWAIT EXHAUSTED;  
**NEAR the battlefield, AWAIT the DISTANT enemy; RESTED, AWAIT the EXHAUSTED enemy;**

yǐ bǎo dài jī.  
TAKE SATED AWAIT HUNGRY.  
**SATED, AWAIT the HUNGRY enemy.**

cǐ zhì lì zhě yě.  
THIS MANAGE STRENGTH THOSE-WHO [PART].  
**THIS is the strategy of THOSE WHO MANAGE physical STRENGTH.**

wú yāo zhèng zhèng zhī qí;  
NOT INTERCEPT ORDERLY ORDERLY [PART] BANNERS;  
**Do NOT INTERCEPT ORDERLY BANNERS;**

wú jī táng táng zhī zhèn;  
NOT ATTACK GREAT GREAT [PART] FORMATION;  
**Do NOT ATTACK GREAT battle FORMATIONS;**

cǐ zhì biàn zhě yě.  
THIS MANAGE CHANGE THOSE-WHO [PART].  
**THIS is the strategy of THOSE WHO MANAGE CHANGING circumstances.**

gù yòng bīng zhī fǎ: gāo líng wù xiàng;  
THUS USE ARMY [PART] RULE: HIGH HILL NOT FACE;  
**THUS the RULE in USING the ARMY is: do NOT FACE HIGH HILLS;**

bèi qiū wù nì; yáng bèi wù cóng;  
BACK HILL NOT OPPOSE; FEIGN BACK NOT PURSUE;  
**do NOT OPPOSE an enemy with HILLS BEHIND him; do NOT PURSUE an enemy who FEIGNS a RETREAT;**

ruì zú wù gōng; ěr bīng wù shí;  
SHARP TROOP NOT ATTACK; FEED ARMY NOT SWALLOW;  
**do NOT ATTACK TROOPS at the PEAK of their energy; do NOT SWALLOW BAIT;**



guī shī wù è; wéi shī bì quē;  
RETURNING ARMY NOT BLOCK; SURROUND ARMY MUST OPENING;  
**do NOT BLOCK an ENEMY that is RETURNING home; if you SURROUND the ENEMY, you MUST leave him an OPENING;**

qióng kòu wù pò.  
EXHAUSTED BANDIT NOT PRESS.  
**do NOT PRESS an EXHAUSTED ENEMY.**

cǐ yòng bīng zhī fǎ yě.  
THIS USE ARMY OF LAW [PART].  
**THIS is the LAW OF USING the ARMY."**

Chapter 8

Jiǔ Biàn  
NINE FACTOR

**The NINE FACTORS**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán yòng bīng zhī fǎ:  
COMMON USE ARMY OF RULE:  
**"The GENERAL RULE IN DEPLOYING an ARMY is as follows:**

jiàng shòu mìng yú jūn, hé jūn jù zhòng;  
GENERAL RECEIVE ORDER FROM RULER, ASSEMBLE ARMY GATHER MASSES;  
**the GENERAL RECEIVES ORDERS FROM the RULER to ASSEMBLE the ARMY and GATHER the MASSES;**

pǐ dì wú shě; qú dì jiāo hé;  
DIFFICULT TERRAIN NOT CAMP; BORDER TERRAIN DIPLOMACY TOGETHER;  
**do NOT CAMP on DIFFICULT TERRAIN; at the BORDERS ESTABLISH DIPLOMACY;**

jué dì wù liú; wéi dì zé móu;  
ISOLATED TERRAIN NOT REMAIN; SURROUNDED TERRAIN THEN PLAN;  
**do NOT REMAIN in ISOLATED TERRAIN; when you are SURROUNDED, PLAN carefully;**

sǐ dì zé zhàn.  
DEATH TERRAIN THEN FIGHT.  
**on MORTAL TERRAIN, FIGHT.**

tú yǒu suǒ bù yóu; jūn yǒu suǒ bù jī;  
ROUTE HAVE ITS NOT FOLLOW; ARMY HAVE ITS NOT ATTACK;  
**SOME ROUTES should NOT be FOLLOWED; SOME ARMIES should NOT be ATTACKED;**

chéng yǒu suǒ bù gōng; dì yǒu suǒ bù zhēng;  
FORTIFICATION HAVE ITS NOT ASSAIL; TERRAIN HAVE ITS NOT FIGHT;  
**SOME FORTIFICATIONS should NOT be ASSAILED; some TERRAIN should NOT be FOUGHT over;**

jūn mìng yǒu suǒ bú shòu.  
RULER ORDER HAVE ITS NOT OBEY.  
**SOME ORDERS from the RULER should NOT be OBEYED.**

gù jiàng tōng yú jiǔ biàn zhī lì zhě  
THUS GENERAL CLEAR ABOUT NINE FACTOR OF ADVANTAGE WHO  
**THUS the GENERAL WHO is CLEAR ABOUT the ADVANTAGES OF the NINE FACTORS**

zhī yòng bīng yǐ.  
KNOW USE ARMY [PART].  
**KNOWS how to USE the ARMY.**

jiàng bù tōng yú jiǔ biàn zhī lì zhě,  
GENERAL NOT CLEAR ABOUT NINE FACTOR OF ADVANTAGE WHO,  
**The GENERAL WHO is NOT CLEAR ABOUT the ADVANTAGES OF the NINE FACTORS,**

suī zhī dì xíng, bù néng dé dì zhī lì yǐ.  
THOUGH KNOW TERRAIN NATURE, NOT CAN ACHIEVE TERRAIN OF ADVANTAGE [PART].  
**THOUGH he may KNOW the NATURE of the TERRAIN, CANNOT UTILIZE the ADVANTAGES OF the TERRAIN.**

zhì bīng bù zhī jiǔ biàn zhī shù,  
COMMAND ARMY NOT KNOW NINE FACTOR OF ART,  
**Those who COMMAND the ARMY WITHOUT KNOWING the ART OF the NINE FACTORS,**

suī zhī wǔ lì, bù néng dé rén zhī yòng yǐ.  
THOUGH KNOW FIVE ADVANTAGE, NOT CAN ACHIEVE PERSON OF USE [PART].  
**THOUGH they may KNOW the FIVE ADVANTAGES, CANNOT achieve optimal USE OF their FORCES.**

shì gù zhì zhě zhī lǜ, bì zá yú lì hài.  
BE WHY WISE PERSON OF CONTEMPLATION, MUST MIX WITH ADVANTAGE HARM.  
**THUS the CONTEMPLATIONS OF the WISE MUST ENTAIL both ADVANTAGES and HARM.**

zá yú lì ér wù kě xìn yě.  
MIX WITH ADVANTAGE AND UNDERTAKING CAN RELIABLE [PART].  
**If they CONTEMPLATE the ADVANTAGES, UNDERTAKINGS WILL be RELIABLE.**

zá yú hài ér huàn kě jiě yě.  
MIX WITH HARM AND MISFORTUNE CAN RESOLVE [PART].  
**If they CONTEMPLATE HARM, MISFORTUNES WILL be RESOLVED.**

shì gù qū zhū hóu zhě yǐ hài;  
BE WHY BEND VARIOUS PRINCE THOSE-WHO TAKE HARM;  
**This IS WHY THOSE WHO wish to SUBJUGATE the feudal PRINCES USE HARM;**

yì zhū hóu zhě yǐ yè;  
LABOR VARIOUS PRINCE THOSE-WHO TAKE AFFAIR;  
**THOSE WHO wish to BELABOR the feudal PRINCES USE various AFFAIRS;**

qū zhū hóu zhě yǐ lì.  
PRESS VARIOUS PRINCE THOSE-WHO TAKE ADVANTAGE.  
**THOSE WHO wish to PRESS the feudal PRINCES USE ADVANTAGE.**

gù yòng bīng zhī fǎ: wú shì qí bù lái;  
THEREFORE USE ARMY OF RULE: NOT RELY HIS NOT COME;  
**THEREFORE the RULE FOR USING the ARMY is: do NOT RELY on the ENEMY'S NOT COMING;**

shì wú yǒu yǐ dài yě.  
RELY I HAVE TAKE DEAL [PART].  
**RELY on HAVING a WAY to DEAL with him.**

wú shì qí bù gōng;  
NOT RELY HIS NOT ATTACK;  
**Do NOT RELY on HIS NOT ATTACKING;**

shì wú yǒu suǒ bù kě gōng yě.  
RELY I HAVE WHICH NOT CAN ATTACK [PART].  
**RELY on HAVING a position WHICH CANNOT be ATTACKED.**

gù jiàng yǒu wǔ wéi:  
THUS GENERAL HAVE FIVE DANGER:  
**There ARE FIVE characteristics which are DANGEROUS in a GENERAL:**

bì sǐ, kě shā yě;  
MUST DIE, CAN KILL [PART];  
**if he LONGS do DIE in battle, he CAN be KILLED;**

bì shēng, kě lǔ yě;  
MUST LIVE, CAN CAPTURE [PART];  
**if he LONGS to LIVE, he CAN be CAPTURED;**

fèn sù, kě wǔ yě;  
ANGRY RASH, CAN INSULT [PART];  
**if he is ANGRY and RASH, he CAN be INSULTED;**

lián jié, kě rǔ yě;  
HONEST PURE, CAN SHAME [PART];  
**if he is HONEST and PURE, he CAN be SHAMED;**

ài mín, kě fán yě.  
LOVE PEOPLE, CAN VEX [PART].  
**if he LOVES the MASSES, he can be VEXED.**

fán cǐ wǔ zhě, jiàng zhī guò yě,  
ALL THESE FIVE THINGS, GENERAL [PART] EXCESS [PART],  
**ALL FIVE of THESE are EXCESSES in a GENERAL,**

yòng bīng zhī zāi yě.  
USE ARMY OF DISASTER [PART].  
**DISASTERS in the USE of an ARMY.**

fù jūn shā jiàng, bì yǐ wǔ wéi;  
DESTROY ARMY KILL GENERAL, MUST TAKE FIVE DANGERS;  
**The DESTRUCTION of the ARMY and the DEATH of the GENERAL WILL be CAUSED by these FIVE DANGERS;**

bù kě bù chá yě.  
NOT CAN NOT INVESTIGATE [PART].  
**you MUST NOT FAIL to INVESTIGATE this.**

Chapter 9

Xíng Jūn  
MOVE ARMY  
**DEPLOYING The ARMY**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán chǔ jūn, xiàng dí:  
WHENEVER POSITION ARMY, OBSERVE ENEMY:  
**"WHENEVER you POSITION the ARMY to OBSERVE the ENEMY:**

jué shān yī hōu; shì shēng chǔ gāo;  
CROSS MOUNTAIN ENTER AFTER; OBSERVE FLOURISHING POSITION HIGH;  
**after CROSSING the MOUNTAINS, ENTER the VALLEYS; then SEEK out FAVORABLE  
terrain and POSITION the army on HIGH ground;**

zhàn lóng wú dēng.  
FIGHT DEEP NOT ASCEND.  
**FIGHT DOWNWARD and do NOT ASCEND further.**

cǐ chǔ shān zhī jūn yě.  
THIS POSITION MOUNTAIN OF ARMY [PART].  
**THIS is the way to POSITION the ARMY in the MOUNTAINS.**

jué shuǐ bì yuǎn shuǐ.  
CROSS WATER MUST DISTANCE WATER.  
**After CROSSING the RIVERS you MUST place the army FAR from them.**

kè jué shuǐ ér lái, wù yíng zhī yú shuǐ nèi.  
ENEMY CROSS WATER AND COME, NOT MEET HIM IN WATER INTERIOR.  
**If the ENEMY is CROSSING a RIVER to ADVANCE, do NOT ENGAGE HIM IN the WATER.**

lìng bàn jì ér jī zhī, lì.  
ALLOW HALF CROSS AND ATTACK IT, ADVANTAGE.  
**ALLOW HALF the enemy army to CROSS AND then ATTACK: this is ADVANTAGEOUS.**

yù zhàn zhě, wú fù yú shuǐ ér yíng kè.  
DESIRE FIGHT WHEN, NOT ENTER IN WATER AND MEET ENEMY.  
**WHEN you DESIRE to FIGHT, do NOT ENTER the WATER TO MEET the ENEMY.**

shì shēng chǔ gāo; wú yíng shuǐ liú.  
OBSERVE FLOURISHING POSITION HIGH; NOT FACE WATER CURRENT.  
**SEEK out FAVORABLE terrain and POSITION the army on HIGH ground; do NOT fight FACING the CURRENT of the RIVER.**

cǐ chǔ shuǐ shàng zhī jūn yě.  
THIS POSITION WATER ON OF ARMY [PART].  
**THIS is the way to POSITION the ARMY NEAR WATER.**

jué chī zé, wéi jí qù wú liú.  
CROSS SALT MARSH, ONLY HASTEN EXIT; NOT TARRY.  
**When CROSSING a SALT MARSH, SIMPLY HASTEN to PASS though; do NOT TARRY.**

ruò jiāo jūn yú chī zé zhī zhōng,  
IF MEET ARMY IN SALT MARSH OF MIDDLE,  
**IF you ENCOUNTER the ENEMY IN a SALT MARSH,**

bì yī shuǐ cǎo ér bèi zhòng shù.  
MUST ENTER WATER GRASS AND BACK MULTITUDE TREE.  
**you MUST ENTER the REEDS AND keep your BACK to the GROVES of TREES.**

cǐ chǔ chī zé zhī jūn yě.  
THIS POSITION SALT MARSH OF ARMY [PART].  
**THIS is the way to POSITION the ARMY in a SALT MARSH.**

píng lù chǔ yì, ér yòu bèi gāo;  
EVEN TERRAIN POSITION EASY, AND RIGHT BACK HIGH;  
**On EVEN TERRAIN POSITION the army in a FAVORABLE spot, AND on your RIGHT keep your BACK to HIGH ground;**

qián sǐ hòu shēng.  
BEFORE DEATH BEHIND LIFE.  
**keep the field of DEATH BEFORE you and SAFE ground BEHIND you.**

cǐ chǔ píng lù zhī jūn yě.  
THIS POSITION EVEN TERRAIN OF ARMY [PART].  
**THIS is the way to POSITION the ARMY on EVEN TERRAIN.**

fán cǐ sì jūn zhī lì,  
ALL THESE FOUR ARMY OF ADVANTAGE,  
**As for ALL FOUR of THESE types of MILITARY ADVANTAGE,**

Huáng Dì<sup>1</sup> zhī suǒ yǐ shèng sì dì yě.  
YELLOW EMPEROR [PART] [PART] USE CONQUER FOUR EMPEROR [PART].  
**the YELLOW EMPEROR USED them to CONQUER the FOUR EMPERORS.**

fán jūn hào gāo ér è xià;  
ALL ARMY PREFER HIGH AND ABHOR LOW;  
**AN ARMY PREFERS HIGH ground AND ABHORS LOW ground;**

guì yáng ér jiàn yīn;  
VALUE SUNLIGHT AND DESPISE SHADE;  
**it VALUES SUNLIGHT AND DESPISES SHADE;**

yǎng shēng ér chǔ shí.  
PREFER LIFE AND POSITION SOLID.  
**it PREFERS SAFE ground AND should be POSITIONED in a SOLID place.**

jūn wú bǎi jí, shì wèi bì shèng.  
ARMY NOT HUNDRED ILLNESS, BE SAY MUST VICTORY.  
**When an ARMY is NOT plagued by NUMEROUS ILLNESSES, it IS SAID that it WILL gain VICTORY.**

qiū líng tí fāng, bì chǔ qí yáng ér yòu bèi zhī.  
MOUND HILL EMBANKMENT DEFEND, MUST POSITION ITS SUNNY AND RIGHT BACK IT.  
**When DEFENDING a MOUND, HILL, or EMBANKMENT, you MUST POSITION the army on THE SUNNY side, and on your RIGHT keep your BACK to IT.**

cǐ bīng zhī lì, dì zhī zhù yě.  
THIS ARMY OF ADVANTAGE, TERRAIN OF HELP [PART].  
**THIS type of MILITARY ADVANTAGE utilizes the ASSISTANCE OF the TERRAIN.**

shàng yǔ, shuǐ mò zhì, yù shè zhě, dài qí dìng yě.  
UP RAIN, WATER SWIRL COME, WISH FORD THOSE-WHO WAIT IT SETTLE [PART].  
**If it RAINS UPSTREAM and RAGING WATERS COME, THOSE WHO WISH to FORD the water should WAIT until IT SETTLES.**

fán dì yǒu jué jiàn, tiān jǐng, tiān láo,  
ANY TERRAIN HAVE SEVER RAVINE, NATURAL PITFALL, NATURAL ENCLOSURE,  
**In ANY TERRAIN where there ARE ISOLATED RAVINES, NATURAL PITFALLS, NATURAL ENCLOSURES,**

tiān luó, tiān xiàn, tiān xì,  
NATURAL SNARE, NATURAL TRAP, NATURAL CLEFT,  
**NATURAL SNARES, NATURAL TRAPS, or NATURAL CLEFTS,**



bì jí qù zhī; wù jìn yě.  
MUST HASTEN EXIT IT; NOT ENTER [PART].  
**you MUST HASTEN to PASS through; do NOT ENTER these natural dangers.**

wú yuǎn zhī, dí jìn zhī. wú yíng zhī, dí bèi zhī.  
I FAR THEM, ENEMY ENTER THEM. I FACE THEM, ENEMY BACK THEM.  
**I keep FAR from THEM so that the ENEMY will ENTER THEM. I FACE THEM so that the ENEMY will have his BACK to THEM.**

jūn xíng yǒu xiǎn zǔ, huáng jǐng jiā wěi,  
ARMY MOVE HAVE DANGEROUS OBSTRUCTION, WETLAND POND REED RUSH,  
**If the ARMY is MOVING near DANGEROUS OBSTRUCTIONS, WETLAND PONDS with REEDS and RUSHES,**

shan lín yì huì zhě, bì jǐn fù suǒ zhī:  
MOUNTAIN FOREST LUXURIANT GROW [PART], MUST CAREFUL THOROUGH SEARCH THESE:  
**or MOUNTAIN FORESTS that GROW LUXURIANTLY, you MUST SEARCH THESE CAREFULLY and THOROUGHLY:**

cǐ fú jiān zhī suǒ chǔ yě.  
THESE HIDE SPY OF WHERE POSITION [PART].  
**THESE are places WHERE HIDDEN SPIES can be POSITIONED.**

dí jìn ér jìng zhě, shì qí xiǎn yě.  
ENEMY NEAR BUT QUIET [PART], RELY HIS STRATEGIC [PART].  
**When the ENEMY is NEAR BUT QUIET, he is RELYING on HIS STRATEGIC position.**

yuǎn ér tiǎo zhàn zhě, yù rén zhī jìn yě.  
FAR BUT PROVOKE BATTLE [PART], WANT PERSON [PART] ENTER [PART].  
**When the enemy is FAR BUT PROVOKES a BATTLE, he WANTS YOU to ENTER the trap.**

qí suǒ jū yì zhě, lì yě.  
HE WHERE OCCUPY EASY [PART], ADVANTAGE [PART].  
**If the trap HE OCCUPIES provides EASY access, this is to his ADVANTAGE.**

zhòng shù dòng zhě, lái yě.  
MULTITUDE TREE MOVE [PART], COME [PART].  
**If MANY TREES are RUSTLING, the enemy is COMING.**

zhòng cǎo duō zhàng zhě, yí yě.  
MULTITUDE GRASS MANY OBSTACLE [PART], SUSPICION [PART].  
**If there are MANY OBSTACLES in the THICK GRASS, be SUSPICIOUS.**

niǎo qǐ zhě, fú yě.  
BIRD RISE [PART], HIDE [PART].  
**If BIRDS FLY away, the enemy is HIDDEN.**

shòu hài zhě, fù yě.  
ANIMAL AFRAID [PART], OVERTURN [PART].  
**If the ANIMALS are AFRAID, the enemy plans to OVERWHELM you.**

chén gāo ér ruì zhě, chē lái yě.  
DUST HIGH AND SHARP [PART], CHARIOT COME [PART].  
**If the DUST rises HIGH AND in a DISTINCT line, battle CHARIOTS are ADVANCING.**

bēi ér guǎng zhě, tú lái yě.  
LOW AND WIDE [PART], FOOTSOLDIER COME [PART].  
**If the DUST rises LOW AND WIDE, FOOTSOLDIERS are ADVANCING.**

sǎn ér tiáo dá zhě, qiáo cǎi yě.  
DISPERSED AND THIN RISE [PART], GATHER FIREWOOD [PART].  
**If the dust RISES DISPERSED AND THIN, the enemy is GATHERING FIREWOOD.**

shǎo ér wǎng lái zhě, yíng jūn yě.  
SPARSE AND GO COME [PART], CAMP ARMY [PART].  
**If there is SPARSE dust COMING and GOING, the ENEMY is pitching CAMP.**

cí bēi ér yì bèi zhě, jìn yě.  
WORD HUMBLE BUT INCREASE PREPARATION [PART], ADVANCE [PART].  
**If the enemy's WORDS are HUMBLE BUT he INCREASES PREPARATIONS, he will ADVANCE.**

cí qiáng ér jìn qū zhě, tuì yě.  
WORD STRONG BUT ADVANCE GALLOP [PART], RETREAT [PART].  
**If the enemy's WORDS are STRONG BUT he ADVANCES too HASTILY, he will RETREAT.**

qīng chē xiān chū jū qí cè zhě, chén yě.  
LIGHT CHARIOT FIRST EMERGE OCCUPY HIS FLANK [PART], BATTLE [PART].  
**If LIGHT CHARIOTS EMERGE FIRST and OCCUPY the ENEMY'S FLANK, there will be a BATTLE.**

wú yuē ér qǐng hé zhě, móu yě.  
NOT TREATY BUT REQUEST TRUCE [PART], PLOT [PART].  
**If the enemy REQUESTS a TRUCE BUT NOT a TREATY, there is a PLOT.**

bēn zǒu ér chén bīng zhě, qī yě.  
QUICK MARCH AND ALIGN TROOP [PART], SCHEDULE [PART].  
**If the enemy MARCHES QUICKLY AND ALIGNS his TROOPS, he is following a SCHEDULE.**

bàn jìn bàn tuì zhě, yòu yě.  
HALF ADVANCE HALF RETREAT [PART], LURE [PART].  
**If HALF his troops ADVANCE and HALF RETREAT, he is trying to LURE you into a trap.**

zhàng ér lì zhě, jī yě.  
LEAN AND STAND [PART], HUNGRY [PART].  
**If the enemy forces LEAN on their weapons while STANDING, they are HUNGRY.**

jí ér xiān yǐn zhě, kě yě.  
DRAW-WATER AND FIRST DRINK [PART], THIRSTY [PART].  
**If those who DRAW WATER DRINK FIRST, the enemy forces are THIRSTY.**

jiàn lì ér bú jìn zhě, láo yě.  
SEE ADVANTAGE BUT NOT ADVANCE [PART], EXHAUSTED [PART].  
**If they SEE an ADVANTAGE BUT do NOT ADVANCE, they are EXHAUSTED.**

niǎo jí zhě, xū yě.  
BIRD GATHER [PART], EMPTY [PART].  
**Where BIRDS GATHER, the terrain is EMPTY.**

yè hū zhě, kǒng yě.  
NIGHT CLAMOR [PART], AFRAID [PART].  
**If the enemy troops are CLAMOROUS at NIGHT, they are AFRAID.**

jūn rǎo zhě, jiàng bú zhòng yě.  
ARMY DISORDERLY [PART], GENERAL NOT HEAVY [PART].  
**If the enemy ARMY is DISORDERLY, this means the GENERAL is NOT STRICT.**

jīng qí dòng zhě, luàn yě.  
BANNER FLAG MOVE [PART], DISARRAY [PART].  
**If his BANNERS and FLAGS are MOVING excessively, the enemy is in DISARRAY.**

lì nù zhě, juàn yě.  
OFFICER IRRITABLE [PART], TIRED [PART].  
**If his OFFICERS are IRRITABLE, they are TIRED.**

sù mǎ ròu shí, jūn wú xuán fǒu,  
GRAIN HORSE MEAT EAT, ARMY NOT HANG POT,  
**If the enemy troops EAT HORSE MEAT as their FOOD, if they do not NOT USE POTS,**

bù fǎn qí shè zhě, qióng kòu yě.  
NOT RETURN THEIR QUARTERS [PART], EXHAUSTED INVADER [PART].  
**or if they do NOT RETURN to THEIR QUARTERS, the INVADER is EXHAUSTED.**

zhūn zhūn xī xī, xú yǔ rén yán zhě,  
RUDE RUDE GATHER GATHER, SLOW AT PERSON SPEECH [PART],  
**If the enemy troops COMPLAIN in GATHERINGS, and there are EXTENDED CONVERSATIONS among the TROOPS,**

shī zhòng yě.  
LOSE HEAVY [PART].  
**they have LOST their DETERMINATION.**

shù shǎng zhě, jiǒng yě.  
NUMEROUS REWARD [PART], DISTRESS [PART].  
**NUMEROUS REWARDS mean the enemy is in DISTRESS.**

shù fá zhě, kùn yě.  
NUMEROUS PUNISHMENT [PART], DIFFICULTY [PART].  
**NUMEROUS PUNISHMENTS mean the enemy is in DIFFICULTY.**

xiān bào ér hòu wèi qí zhòng zhě,  
FIRST BRUTAL AND THEN FEAR HIS TROOP HE-WHO,  
**HE WHO is BRUTAL at FIRST AND THEN FEARS HIS own TROOPS**

bù jīng zhī zhì yě.  
NOT SKILLED [PART] COMMAND [PART].  
**is NOT SKILLED at COMMANDING.**

lái wěi xiè zhě, yù xiūxi yě.  
COME EMISSARY BEAR-GIFT [PART], WISH REST [PART].  
**If EMISSARIES COME BEARING GIFTS, this means the enemy WISHES to REST.**

bīng nù ér xiāng yíng, jiǔ ér bù hé,  
ARMY ANGRY AND MUTUAL FACE, LONG AND NOT FIGHT,  
**If the ENEMY acts AGRESSIVELY AND FACES off against you, then remains for a LONG time WITHOUT FIGHTING,**

yòu bù xiāng qù, bì jǐn chá zhī.  
ALSO NOT MUTUAL WITHDRAW, MUST CAREFULLY INVESTIGATE THIS.  
**YET does NOT WITHDRAW, you MUST CAREFULLY INVESTIGATE THIS.**

bīng fēi yì duō yě, wéi wú wǔ jìn.  
ARMY NOT ADVANTAGE GREATER [PART], MERELY NOT AGGRESSIVE ADVANCE.  
**In an ARMY there is NO ADVANTAGE in having GREATER numbers MERELY to AVOID ADVANCING AGGRESSIVELY.**

zǔ yǐ bìng lì, liào dí, qǔ rén ér yǐ.  
SUFFICIENT TAKE COMBINE FORCE, OBSERVE ENEMY, TAKE PERSON [PART] [PART].  
**It is SUFFICIENT to COMBINE your FORCES, OBSERVE the ENEMY, and CONQUER HIM.**

fú wéi wú lù ér yì dí zhě,  
INDEED ONLY NOT PONDER AND EASY ENEMY THOSE-WHO,  
**INDEED, THOSE WHO do NOT PONDER carefully AND who consider the ENEMY EASY**

bì qín yú rén.  
WILL CAPTURE BY PERSON.  
**WILL be CAPTURED BY HIM.**

zú wèi qīn fù ér fá zhī, zé bù fú.  
TROOP NOT INTIMATE CLOSE AND PUNISH THEM, THEN NOT SERVE.  
**If your TROOPS are NOT personally ATTACHED to you, YET you PUNISH THEM, THEN they will NOT SERVE you.**

bù fú zé nán yòng yě.  
NOT SERVE THEN HARD USE [PART].  
**If they will NOT SERVE you, THEN they CANNOT be USED.**

zú yǐ qīn fù ér fá bù xíng,  
TROOP ALREADY INTIMATE CLOSE AND PUNISHMENT NOT ENFORCE,  
**If your TROOPS are ALREADY personally ATTACHED to you, YET the PUNISHMENTS are NOT ENFORCED,**

zé bù kě yòng yě.  
THEN NOT CAN USE [PART].  
**THEN they CANNOT be USED.**

gù lìng zhī yǐ wén; qí zhī yǐ wǔ.  
THEREFORE COMMAND THEM USE CIVIL; UNIFY THEM USE MARTIAL.  
**THEREFORE in COMMANDING THEM, USE CIVILITY; IN UNIFYING THEM, USE the MARTIAL.**

shì wèi bì qǔ.  
BE CALL MUST TAKE.  
**This IS CALLED CERTAIN VICTORY.**

lìng sù xíng yǐ jiào qí mín,  
ORDER ALWAYS ENFORCE TAKE INSTRUCT YOUR PEOPLE,  
**If ORDERS are ALWAYS ENFORCED IN INSTRUCTING YOUR TROOPS,**

zé mín fú.  
THEN PEOPLE SERVE.  
**THEN THEY will SERVE you.**

lìng bú sù xíng yǐ jiào qí mín,  
ORDER NOT ALWAYS ENFORCE TAKE INSTRUCT YOUR PEOPLE,  
**If ORDERS are NOT ALWAYS ENFORCED IN INSTRUCTING YOUR TROOPS,**

zé mín bù fú.  
THEN PEOPLE NOT SERVE.  
**THEN THEY will NOT SERVE you.**

lìng sù xíng zhě, yǔ zhòng xiāng dé yě.  
ORDER ALWAYS ENFORCE [PART], WITH MASS EACH-OTHER SATISFY [PART].  
**If ORDERS are ALWAYS ENFORCED, the commander AND the MASS of troops will be SATISFIED with EACH OTHER."**

1. Legendary Emperor, said to have reigned ca. 2500 B.C.

Chapter 10

Dì Xíng  
EARTH NATURE  
**TERRAIN**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

dì xíng yǒu tōng zhě; yǒu guà zhě;  
EARTH NATURE HAVE THROUGH [PART]; HAVE SUSPEND [PART];  
**"SOME TERRAIN is PASSABLE; SOME is SUSPENDED;**

yǒu zhī zhě; yǒu ài zhě;  
HAVE CONSTANT [PART]; HAVE NARROW [PART];  
**SOME is STALEMATED; SOME is NARROW;**

yǒu xiǎn zhě; yǒu yuǎn zhě.  
HAVE STEEP [PART]; HAVE WIDE [PART].  
**SOME is STEEP; SOME is WIDE.**

wǒ kěyǐ wǎng, bǐ kěyǐ lái, yuē tōng.  
I CAN ADVANCE, OTHER CAN COME, CALL PASSABLE.  
**If I CAN ADVANCE and the ENEMY CAN also COME, the terrain is CALLED PASSABLE.**

tōng xíng zhě, xiān jū gāo yáng;  
THROUGH NATURE [PART], FIRST OCCUPY HIGH SUNNY;  
**On PASSABLE terrain, FIRST OCCUPY the HIGH SUNNY side;**

lì liáng dào; yǐ zhàn zé lì.  
CONVENIENT PROVISION ROUTE; TAKE BATTLE THEN ADVANTAGE.  
**make the PROVISION ROUTES CONVENIENT; THEN you will have the ADVANTAGE in BATTLE.**

kěyǐ wǎng, nán yǐ fǎn, yuē guà.  
CAN ADVANCE, DIFFICULT TO RETURN, CALL SUSPEND.  
**If you CAN ADVANCE, but it is DIFFICULT TO RETREAT, the terrain is CALLED SUSPENDED.**

guà xíng zhě, dí wú bèi, chū ér shèng zhī.  
SUSPEND NATURE [PART], ENEMY NOT PREPARE, ADVANCE AND DEFEAT HIM.  
**On SUSPENDED TERRAIN, if the ENEMY is NOT PREPARED, you can ADVANCE AND DEFEAT HIM.**

dí ruò yǒu bèi, chū ér bú shèng,  
ENEMY IF HAVE PREPARE, ADVANCE AND NOT DEFEAT,  
**IF the ENEMY HAS PREPARED, yet you ADVANCE AND do NOT DEFEAT him,**

zé nán yǐ fǎn; bú lì.  
THEN DIFFICULT TO RETURN; NOT ADVANTAGE.  
**THEN it will be DIFFICULT TO RETREAT; there will be NO ADVANTAGE.**

wǒ chū ér bú lì, bǐ chū ér bú lì, yuē zhī.  
I ADVANCE BUT NO ADVANTAGE, OTHER ADVANCE BUT NO ADVANTAGE, CALL CONSTANT.  
**If I ADVANCE BUT gain NO ADVANTAGE, and the ENEMY ADVANCES BUT gains NO ADVANTAGE, the terrain is CALLED STALEMATED.**

zhī xíng zhě, dí suī lì wǒ, wǒ wú chū yě.  
CONSTANT NATURE [PART], ENEMY EVEN ADVANTAGE ME, I NOT ADVANCE [PART].  
**On STALEMATED terrain, EVEN if the ENEMY lures ME with an ADVANTAGE, I do NOT ADVANCE.**

yǐn ér qù zhī; lìng dí bàn chū ér jī zhī; lì.  
LURE AND GO HIM; CAUSE ENEMY HALF COME AND ATTACK HIM; ADVANTAGE.  
**I LURE HIM by RETREATING; I CAUSE the ENEMY to COME HALFWAY out AND then I ATTACK HIM; this is ADVANTAGEOUS.**

ài xíng zhě, wǒ xiān jū zhī,  
NARROW NATURE [PART], I FIRST OCCUPY IT,  
**On NARROW terrain, if I FIRST OCCUPY IT,**

bì yíng zhī yǐ dài dí.  
MUST FILL IT TO AWAIT ENEMY.  
**I MUST FILL IT TO AWAIT the ENEMY.**

ruò dí xiān jū zhī, yíng ér wù cóng, bù yíng ér cóng zhī;  
IF ENEMY FIRST OCCUPY IT, FILL AND NOT PURSUE, NOT FILL AND PURSUE HIM;  
**IF the ENEMY OCCUPIES IT FIRST, and if he FILLS it, I do NOT PURSUE him;**

bù yíng ér cóng zhī.  
NOT FILL AND PURSUE HIM.  
**if he does NOT FILL it, THEN I PURSUE HIM.**



xiǎn xíng zhě, wǒ xiān jū zhī,  
STEEP NATURE [PART], I FIRST OCCUPY IT,  
**On STEEP terrain, if I OCCUPY IT FIRST,**

bì jū gāo yáng yǐ dài dí.  
MUST OCCUPY HIGH SUNNY TO AWAIT ENEMY.  
**I MUST OCCUPY the HIGH SUNNY side TO AWAIT the ENEMY.**

ruò dí xiān jū zhī, yǐn ér qù zhī, wù cóng yě.  
IF ENEMY FIRST OCCUPY IT, LURE AND GO HIM; NOT PURSUE [PART].  
**IF the ENEMY OCCUPIES IT FIRST, I LURE HIM by RETREATING; I do NOT PURSUE him.**

yuǎn xíng zhě, shì jūn; nán yǐ tiǎo zhàn;  
WIDE NATURE [PART], FORCE EQUAL; DIFFICULT TO PROVOKE BATTLE;  
**On WIDE terrain, the opposing FORCES are EQUAL; it is DIFFICULT TO PROVOKE a BATTLE;**

zhàn ér bú lì.  
BATTLE BUT NO ADVANTAGE.  
**A BATTLE produces NO ADVANTAGE.**

fán cǐ liù zhě, dì zhī dào yě.  
ALL THESE SIX [PART], TERRAIN OF WAY [PART].  
**THESE SIX are the WAY OF the TERRAIN.**

jiàng zhī zhì rèn; bù kě bù chá yě.  
GENERAL OF HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY; NOT CAN NOT INVESTIGATE [PART].  
**This is the HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY of a GENERAL; he MUST NOT FAIL to INVESTIGATE this.**

gù bīng yǒu zǒu zhě; yǒu chí zhě;  
THEREFORE ARMY HAVE GO [PART]; HAVE LAX [PART];  
**THEREFORE SOME ARMIES GO to extremes; SOME are LAX;**

yǒu xiàn zhě; yǒu bēng zhě;  
HAVE SINK [PART]; HAVE COLLAPSE [PART];  
**SOME are SINKING; SOME are COLLAPSING;**

yǒu luàn zhě; yǒu běi zhě.  
HAVE CHAOS [PART]; HAVE ROUT [PART].  
**SOME are CHAOTIC; SOME are RUTED.**

fán cǐ liù zhě, fēi tiān zhī zāi: jiàng zhī guò yě.  
ALL THESE SIX [PART], NOT HEAVEN OF DISASTER: GENERAL OF FAULT [PART].  
**THESE SIX are NOT DISASTERS created BY HEAVEN: they are the FAULT OF the GENERAL.**

fú shì jūn, yǐ yī jī shí, yuē zǒu.  
INDEED FORCE EQUAL, USE ONE ATTACK TEN, CALL GO.  
**INDEED, if the opposing FORCES are EQUAL, yet ONE soldier is USED to ATTACK TEN, this is CALLED GOING to extremes.**

zú qiáng lì ruò, yuē chí.  
SOLDIER STRONG OFFICER WEAK, CALL LAX.  
**If the SOLDIERS are STRONG but the OFFICERS are WEAK, this is CALLED LAX.**

lì qiáng zú ruò, yuē xiàn.  
OFFICER STRONG SOLDIER WEAK, CALL SINK.  
**If the OFFICERS are STRONG but the SOLDIERS are WEAK, this is CALLED SINKING.**

dà lì nù ér bù fú, yù dí duì ér zì zhàn,  
GREAT OFFICER ANGRY AND NOT SERVE, MEET ENEMY SPITEFUL AND SELF FIGHT,  
**If the SENIOR OFFICERS are ANGRY AND do NOT FOLLOW orders, if they MEET the ENEMY out of SPITE AND FIGHT for THEMSELVES,**

jiàng bù zhī qí néng, yuē bēng.  
GENERAL NOT KNOW THEIR CAPABILITY, CALL COLLAPSE.  
**or if the GENERALS do NOT KNOW THEIR own CAPABILITIES, this is CALLED COLLAPSING.**

jiàng ruò bù yán, jiào dào bù míng,  
GENERAL WEAK NOT STRICT, INSTRUCTION RULE NOT CLEAR,  
**If the GENERALS are WEAK and NOT STRICT, if their ORDERS are UNCLEAR,**

lì zú wú cháng, chén bīng zòng héng,  
OFFICER SOLDIER NOT CONSISTENT, DISPLAY ARMY VERTICAL HORIZONTAL,  
**if the OFFICERS and SOLDIERS are INCONSISTENT, or if the ARMY is ARRAYED in a disorderly way,**

yuē luàn.  
CALL CHAOTIC.  
**this is CALLED CHAOTIC.**

jiàng bù néng liào dí, yǐ shǎo hé zhòng,  
GENERAL NOT CAN UNDERSTAND ENEMY, USE FEW WITH MASSIVE,  
**If the GENERALS CANNOT UNDERSTAND the ENEMY, if the FEW are USED to clash WITH a MASSIVE force,**

yǐ ruò jī qiáng, bīng wú xuǎn fēng, yuē běi.  
USE WEAK ATTACK STRONG, ARMY NOT SELECT FRONT, CALL ROUTED.  
**if the WEAK are USED to ATTACK the STRONG, or if the ARMY has NOT SELECTED its FRONT lines, this is CALLED ROUTED.**

fán cǐ liù zhě, bài zhī dào yě.  
ALL THESE SIX [PART], DEFEAT OF WAY [PART].  
**THESE SIX are the WAY OF DEFEAT.**

jiàng zhī zhì rèn; bù kě bù chá yě.  
GENERAL OF HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY; NOT CAN NOT INVESTIGATE [PART].  
**This is the HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY of a GENERAL; he MUST NOT FAIL to INVESTIGATE this.**

fú dì xíng zhě, bīng zhī zhù yě.  
INDEED EARTH NATURE [PART], ARMY OF AID [PART].  
**INDEED, the TERRAIN is an AID TO the ARMY.**

liào dí zhì shèng, jì xiǎn è, yuǎn jìn:  
ESTIMATE ENEMY DETERMINE VICTORY, CALCULATE DANGER DANGER, FAR NEAR:  
**To ESTIMATE the ENEMY so as to DETERMINE VICTORY, and to CALCULATE DANGERS and DISTANCES:**

shàng jiàng zhī dào yě.  
SUPREME GENERAL OF WAY [PART].  
**this is the WAY OF the SUPREME GENERAL.**

zhī cǐ ér yòng zhàn zhě bì shèng;  
KNOW THIS AND DO BATTLE THOSE-WHO MUST WIN;  
**THOSE WHO KNOW THIS AND DO BATTLE MUST WIN;**

bù zhī cǐ ér yòng zhàn zhě bì bài.  
NOT KNOW THIS AND DO BATTLE THOSE-WHO MUST LOSE.  
**THOSE WHO do NOT KNOW THIS AND DO BATTLE MUST LOSE.**

gù zhàn dào bì shèng, zhǔ yuē wú zhàn,  
THEREFORE WAR LAW MUST VICTORY, SOVEREIGN DECLARE NOT BATTLE,  
**THEREFORE if the LAWS of WAR predict CERTAIN VICTORY, yet the SOVEREIGN DECLARES that there must be NO BATTLE,**

bì zhàn kě yě.  
MUST BATTLE PERMISSIBLE [PART].  
**it is still PERMISSIBLE to do BATTLE.**

zhàn dào bú shèng, zhǔ yuē bì zhàn,  
WAR LAW NOT VICTORY, SOVEREIGN DECLARE MUST BATTLE,  
**If the LAWS of WAR predict that there will NOT be a VICTORY, yet the SOVEREIGN DECLARES that one MUST do BATTLE,**

wú zhàn kě yě.  
NOT BATTLE PERMISSIBLE [PART].  
**it is still PERMISSIBLE to REFRAIN from doing BATTLE.**

gù jìn bù qiú míng; tuì bú bì zùì.  
THEREFORE ADVANCE NOT SEEK FAME; RETREAT NOT AVOID BLAME.  
**THEREFORE ADVANCE WITHOUT SEEKING FAME; RETREAT WITHOUT AVOIDING BLAME.**

wéi rén shì bǎo, ér lì hé yú zhǔ,  
ONLY PEOPLE BE PROTECT, AND BENEFIT APPROPRIATE TO SOVEREIGN,  
**He who thinks ONLY of PROTECTING the PEOPLE, AND of securing BENEFITS APPROPRIATE to the SOVEREIGN**

guó zhī bǎo yě.  
NATION OF TREASURE [PART].  
**is the TREASURE OF the NATION.**

shì zú rú yīng ér, gù kě yǔ zhī fù shēn qī.  
REGARD SOLDIER AS INFANT CHILD, THEN CAN WITH HIM GO DEEP VALLEY.  
**If the general REGARDS his SOLDIERS AS his own CHILDREN, THEN they WILL ENTER DEEP VALLEYS WITH HIM.**

shì zú rú ài zǐ, gù kě yǔ zhī jū sǐ.  
REGARD SOLDIER AS BELOVED SON, THEN CAN WITH HIM ALL DIE.  
**If he REGARDS his SOLDIERS AS his own BELOVED SONS, THEN they WILL EVEN be willing to DIE WITH HIM.**

hòu ér bù néng shǐ, ài ér bù néng lìng,  
KIND BUT NOT CAN MANAGE, LOVE BUT NOT CAN COMMAND,  
**If he is KIND BUT CANNOT MANAGE them, if he LOVES them BUT CANNOT COMMAND them,**

luàn ér bù néng zhì, pì ruò jiāo zǐ;  
CHAOTIC AND NOT CAN CONTROL, COMPARE LIKE ARROGANT CHILD;  
**or if they are CHAOTIC AND CANNOT be CONTROLLED, then they will BE LIKE ARROGANT CHILDREN;**

bù kě yòng yě.  
NOT CAN USE [PART].  
**then they CANNOT be USED.**

zhī wú zú zhī kěyǐ jī,  
KNOW MY SOLDIER [PART] CAN ATTACK,  
**If I KNOW that MY SOLDIERS CAN ATTACK,**

ér bù zhī dí zhī bù kě jī,  
BUT NOT KNOW ENEMY [PART] NOT CAN ATTACK,  
**BUT do NOT KNOW that the ENEMY SHOULD NOT be ATTACKED,**

shèng zhī bàn yě.  
VICTORY [PART] HALF [PART].  
**I have only HALF the requirements FOR VICTORY.**

zhī dí zhī kě jī,  
KNOW ENEMY [PART] CAN ATTACK,  
**If I KNOW that the ENEMY CAN be ATTACKED,**

ér bù zhī wú zú zhī bù kěyǐ jī,  
BUT NOT KNOW MY SOLDIER [PART] NOT CAN ATTACK,  
**BUT do NOT KNOW that MY SOLDIERS CANNOT ATTACK,**

shèng zhī bàn yě.  
VICTORY [PART] HALF [PART].  
**I have only HALF the requirements FOR VICTORY.**

zhī dí zhī kě jī,  
KNOW ENEMY [PART] CAN ATTACK,  
**If I KNOW that the ENEMY CAN ATTACK,**

zhī wú zú zhī kěyǐ jī,  
KNOW MY SOLDIER [PART] CAN ATTACK,  
**AND KNOW that MY SOLDIERS CAN ATTACK,**

ér bù zhī dì xíng zhī bùkě yǐ zhàn,  
BUT NOT KNOW EARTH NATURE [PART] NOT CAN BATTLE,  
**BUT do NOT KNOW that the TERRAIN PRECLUDES doing BATTLE,**

shèng zhī bàn yě.  
VICTORY [PART] HALF [PART].  
**I have only HALF the requirements FOR VICTORY.**

gù zhī bīng zhě,  
THEREFORE KNOW MILITARY THOSE-WHO,  
**THEREFORE THOSE WHO KNOW MILITARY strategy**

dòng ér bù mí; jǔ ér bù qióng.  
MOVE BUT NOT CONFUSE; RISE BUT NOT EXHAUST.  
**MOVE BUT are NEVER CONFUSED; they RISE up BUT are NEVER EXHAUSTED.**

gù yuē: zhī bǐ zhī jǐ, shèng nǎi bú dài.  
THEREFORE SAY: KNOW OTHER KNOW SELF, VICTORY BE NOT DANGER.  
**THEREFORE it is SAID: 'KNOW the ENEMY, KNOW YOURSELF, and your VICTORY will NEVER BE in DANGER.**

zhī tiān zhī dì, shèng nǎi bù qióng.  
KNOW HEAVEN KNOW EARTH, VICTORY BE NOT EXHAUST.  
**KNOW HEAVEN, KNOW EARTH, and your VICTORY will BE INEXHAUSTIBLE.'**"

Chapter 11

Jiǔ Dì  
NINE GROUND

**The NINE BATTLEFIELDS**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

yòng bīng zhī fǎ, yǒu sǎn dì;  
USE ARMY OF LAW, HAVE DISPERSED GROUND;  
**"According to the LAW OF DEPLOYING an ARMY, SOME GROUND is DISPERSED;**

yǒu qīng dì; yǒu zhēng dì;  
HAVE LIGHT GROUND; HAVE DISPUTE GROUND;  
**SOME is LIGHT; SOME is DISPUTED;**

yǒu jiāo dì; yǒu qú dì;  
HAVE CONNECT GROUND; HAVE THOROUGHFARE GROUND;  
**SOME is CONNECTING; SOME is OPEN;**

yǒu zhòng dì; yǒu pǐ dì;  
HAVE HEAVY GROUND; HAVE POOR GROUND;  
**SOME is HEAVY; SOME is POOR;**

yǒu wéi dì; yǒu sǐ dì.  
HAVE SURROUND GROUND; HAVE FATAL GROUND.  
**SOME is SURROUNDED; SOME is FATAL.**

zhū hóu zì zhàn qí dì, wéi sǎn dì.  
VARIOUS PRINCE SELF FIGHT THEIR GROUND, CALL DISPERSED GROUND.  
**When feudal PRINCES FIGHT on THEIR own GROUND, this is CALLED DISPERSED GROUND.**

rù rén zhī dì ér bù shēn zhě, wéi qīng dì.  
ENTER PERSON OF TERRITORY BUT NOT DEEP [PART], CALL LIGHT GROUND.  
**When an invader ENTERS a RULER'S TERRITORY, BUT NOT DEEPLY, this is CALLED LIGHT GROUND.**

wǒ dé zé lì, bǐ dé yì lì zhě,  
I CAPTURE THEN ADVANTAGE, OTHER CAPTURE ALSO ADVANTAGE [PART],  
**When there is ground which if CAPTURED by ME will be to my ADVANTAGE and if CAPTURED by the ENEMY will be to his ADVANTAGE,**

wéi zhēng dì.  
CALL DISPUTE GROUND.  
**this is CALLED DISPUTED GROUND.**

wǒ kěyǐ wǎng, bǐ kěyǐ lái zhě, wéi jiāo dì.  
I CAN COME, OTHER CAN COME [PART], CALL CONNECT GROUND.  
**When I CAN COME and the ENEMY CAN COME, this is CALLED CONNECTING GROUND.**

zhū hóu zhī dì sān zhǔ,  
VARIOUS PRINCE OF TERRITORY THREE FACE,  
**When a feudal PRINCE'S TERRITORY is SURROUNDED on THREE sides,**

xiān zhì ér dé tiān xià zhòng zhě,  
FIRST REACH AND GAIN HEAVEN UNDER MASSES [PART],  
**and the FIRST to REACH it will GAIN the MASSES of all things UNDER HEAVEN,**

wéi qú dì.  
CALL THOROUGHFARE GROUND.  
**this is CALLED OPEN GROUND.**

rù rén zhī dì shēn, bèi chéng yì duō zhě,  
ENTER PERSON OF TERRITORY DEEP, BACK CITY TOWN MANY [PART],  
**When an invader ENTERS a RULER'S TERRITORY DEEPLY, PASSING MANY CITIES and TOWNS,**

wéi zhòng dì.  
CALL HEAVY GROUND.  
**this is CALLED HEAVY GROUND.**

xíng shān lín, xiǎn zǔ, jǔ zé,  
PASS MOUNTAIN FOREST, STEEP BARRIER, MARSH SWAMP,  
**When you must PASS through MOUNTAINS, FORESTS, STEEP BARRIERS, MARSHES and SWAMPS,**

fán nán xíng zhī dào zhě, wéi pǐ dì.  
ANY DIFFICULT GO [PART] ROUTE [PART], CALL POOR GROUND.  
**or ANY DIFFICULT ROUTE, this is CALLED POOR GROUND.**

suǒ yóu rù zhě ài, suǒ cóng guī zhě yū,  
ALL FOLLOW ENTER [PART] NARROW, ALL EXIT ROUTE [PART] CIRCUITOUS,  
**When all the ENTRY routes are NARROW and ALL the EXIT ROUTES are CIRCUITOUS,**



bǐ guǎ kěyǐ jī wǔ zhī zhòng zhě,  
OTHER SMALL CAN ATTACK MY [PART] NUMEROUS [PART],  
**so that a SMALLER ENEMY force CAN ATTACK MY more NUMEROUS forces,**

wéi wéi dì.  
CALL SURROUND GROUND.  
**this is CALLED SURROUNDED GROUND.**

jí zhàn zé cún, bù jí zhàn zé wáng zhě,  
INTENSE FIGHT THEN SURVIVE, NOT INTENSE FIGHT THEN PERISH [PART],  
**When you will SURVIVE if you FIGHT INTENSELY, but will PERISH if you do NOT FIGHT INTENSELY,**

wéi sǐ dì.  
CALL FATAL GROUND.  
**this is CALLED FATAL GROUND.**

shì gù sǎn dì zé wú zhàn; qīng dì zé wú zhǐ;  
BE WHY DISPERSE GROUND THEN NOT BATTLE; LIGHT GROUND THEN NOT STOP;  
**THUS on DISPERSED GROUND do NOT do BATTLE; on LIGHT GROUND do NOT STOP;**

zhēng dì zé wú gōng; jiāo dì zé wú jué;  
DISPUTE GROUND THEN NOT ATTACK; CONNECT GROUND THEN NOT CUT;  
**on DISPUTED GROUND do NOT ATTACK; on CONNECTING GROUND do NOT let your forces be CUT off;**

qú dì zé hé jiāo; zhòng dì zé lüè;  
THOROUGHFARE GROUND THEN TOGETHER DIPLOMACY; HEAVY GROUND THEN PLUNDER;  
**on OPEN GROUND ESTABLISH DIPLOMACY; on HEAVY GROUND PLUNDER;**

pǐ dì zé xíng; wéi dì zé móu;  
POOR GROUND THEN PASS; SURROUND GROUND THEN PLOT;  
**on POOR GROUND PASS through; on SURROUNDED GROUND use STRATEGY;**

sǐ dì zé zhàn.  
FATAL GROUND THEN FIGHT.  
**on FATAL GROUND FIGHT.**

suǒ wèi gǔ zhī shàn yòng bīng zhě,  
SO CALL ANCIENT THOSE-WHO EXPERT USE ARMY [PART],  
**THEREFORE THOSE WHO are CONSIDERED ANCIENT EXPERTS in DEPLOYING an ARMY**

néng shǐ dí rén qián hòu bù xiāng jí.  
CAN CAUSE ENEMY PERSON FRONT BACK NOT MUTUAL CONNECT.  
**COULD CAUSE the ENEMY to LOSE CONNECTION between FRONT and BACK ranks.**

zhòng guǎ bù xiāng shì.  
HEAVY SMALL NOT MUTUAL RELY.  
**LARGE and SMALL units did NOT RELY on EACH OTHER.**

guì jiàn bù xiāng jiù.  
NOBLE COMMON NOT MUTUAL RESCUE.  
**NOBLES and COMMONERS did NOT DEFEND EACH OTHER.**

shàng xià bù xiāng shōu.  
HIGH LOW NOT MUTUAL RECEIVE.  
**HIGHER and LOWER ranks did NOT SUPPORT EACH OTHER.**

zú lí ér bù jí.  
TROOP SEPARATE BUT NOT COLLECT.  
**When the TROOPS were SEPARATED they could NOT REGROUP.**

bīng hé ér bù qí.  
ARMY TOGETHER BUT NOT PARALLEL.  
**When the ARMY was TOGETHER, it could NOT make FORMATIONS.**

hé yú lì ér dòng; bù hé yú lì ér zhǐ.  
TOGETHER WITH ADVANTAGE AND MOVE; NOT TOGETHER WITH ADVANTAGE AND STOP.  
**As for the ancient experts, WHEN it was ADVANTAGEOUS they moved; WHEN it was NOT ADVANTAGEOUS to move, they STOPPED.**

gǎn wèn: dí zhòng zhěng ér jiāng lái,  
DARE ASK: ENEMY NUMEROUS ORDERLY AND WILL COME,  
**You MAY ASK: 'If a NUMEROUS and well-ORDERED ENEMY is ABOUT to ADVANCE,**

dài zhī ruò hé?  
HANDLE HIM LIKE HOW?  
**HOW should HE be HANDLED?'**

yuē: xiān duó qí suǒ ài; zé tīng yǐ.  
SAY: FIRST CAPTURE HIS THAT LOVE; THEN OBEY [PART].  
**It is SAID: FIRST CAPTURE something THAT is LOVED by HIM; THEN he will OBEY you.**

bīng zhī qíng zhǔ sù.  
MILITARY [PART] CIRCUMSTANCE MAIN SPEED.  
**In MILITARY AFFAIRS, the MAIN thing is SPEED.**

chéng rén zhī bù jí.  
TAKE-ADVANTAGE PERSON [PART] NOT REACH.  
**TAKE ADVANTAGE of the ENEMY'S UNPREPAREDNESS.**

yóu bù yú zhī dào; gōng qí suǒ bù jiè yě.  
FOLLOW NOT EXPECT [PART] ROUTE; ATTACK HIS THAT NOT GUARD [PART].  
**FOLLOW UNEXPECTED ROUTES; ATTACK the ENEMY'S UNGUARDED positions.**

fán wéi kè zhī dào: shēn rù zé zhuān;  
ALL ACT INVADER OF WAY: DEEP PENETRATE THEN CONCENTRATE;  
**The ESSENTIAL WAY OF the INVADER is: PENETRATE enemy territory DEEPLY and THEN CONCENTRATE your forces;**

zhǔ rén bú kè.  
SOVEREIGN PERSON NOT CAN.  
**the local SOVEREIGN will be UNABLE to resist.**

lüè yú ráo yě, sān jūn zú shí.  
PLUNDER IN ABUNDANT FIELD, THREE ARMY SUFFICIENT PROVISION.  
**PLUNDER the ABUNDANT FIELDS so that the THREE ARMIES will have SUFFICIENT PROVISIONS.**

jīn yàng ér wù láo; bìng qì jī lì.  
CAREFUL NOURISH AND NOT LABOR; COMBINE ENERGY ACCUMULATE STRENGTH.  
**CAREFULLY NOURISH your troops AND do NOT BELABOR them; COMBINE their ENERGIES and ACCUMULATE their STRENGTH.**

yùn bīng jì móu, wéi bù kě cè.  
MOVE ARMY CALCULATE PLAN, FOR NOT CAN FATHOM.  
**When MOVING the ARMY, MAKE PLANS which CANNOT be FATHOMED.**

tóu zhī wú suǒ wǎng: sǐ qiě bù bēi.  
THROW THEM NOT WHERE GO: DEATH EVEN NOT BACK.  
**THROW THEM into a situation with NOWHERE else to GO: EVEN unto DEATH they will NOT RETREAT.**

sǐ yān bù dé? shì rén jìn lì.  
DEATH WHAT NOT ACHIEVE? OFFICER PERSON CONCENTRATE STRENGTH.  
**Facing DEATH, WHAT can they NOT ACHIEVE? The OFFICERS and SOLDIERS will CONCENTRATE their STRENGTH.**

bīng shì shèn xiàn zé bú jù.  
ARMY OFFICER EXTREME DANGER THEN NOT FEAR.  
**When the ARMY and OFFICERS are facing EXTREME DANGER, they will NOT FEAR.**

wú suǒ wǎng zé gù; shēn rù zé jū.  
NOT WHERE GO THEN FIRM; DEEP PENETRATE THEN SOLID.  
**If there is NOWHERE to GO, THEN they will be FIRM; if you have PENETRATED enemy territory DEEPLY, THEN they will remain SOLID.**

bù dé yǐ zé dòu.  
NOT ACHIEVE ALTERNATIVE THEN FIGHT.  
**If there is NO ALTERNATIVE, THEN they will FIGHT.**

shì gù qí bīng:  
BE WHY YOUR SOLDIER:  
**THUS as for YOUR SOLDIERS:**

bù xiū ér jiè;  
NOT TRAIN BUT GUARD;  
**even WITHOUT TRAINING them, they will be on their GUARD;**

bù qiú ér dé;  
NOT ASK BUT OBTAIN;  
**even WITHOUT ASKING them, you will OBTAIN their cooperation;**

bù yuē ér qīn;  
NOT INVITE BUT AFFECTION;  
**even WITHOUT INVITING it, you will gain their AFFECTION;**

bú lìng ér xìn.  
NOT COMMAND BUT RELIABLE.  
**even WITHOUT COMMANDING them, they will be RELIABLE.**

jìn xiáng qù yí: zhì sǐ wú suǒ zhī.  
PROHIBIT OMEN ELIMINATE DOUBT: UNTO DEATH NOT [PART] LEAVE.  
**PROHIBIT OMENS and ELIMINATE DOUBTS: UNTO DEATH they will NOT PART from you.**

wú shì wú yú cái, fēi wù huò yě.  
MY OFFICER NOT EXCESS WEALTH, NOT DESPISE GOODS [PART].  
**MY OFFICERS do NOT possess EXCESSIVE WEALTH, but this is NOT because they DESPISE wordly GOODS.**

wú yú mìng, fēi wù shòu yě.  
NOT EXCESS DESTINY, NOT DESPISE LONG-LIFE [PART].  
**They do NOT have EXCESSIVE PROSPECTS of long life, but this is NOT because they DESPISE LONG LIFE.**

lìng fā zhī rì, shì zú zuò zhě tì zhān jīn;  
ORDER ISSUE [PART] DAY, OFFICER SOLDIER SIT [PART] TEAR SOAK GARMENT-FRONT;  
**On the DAY the ORDER is ISSUED, the TEARS of the SEATED OFFICERS and SOLDIERS will SOAK the FRONTS of their GARMENTS;**

yǎn wò zhě tì jiāo yí.  
RECLINE LIE [PART] TEAR MEET CHEEK.  
**the TEARS of those RECLINING will STREAK their CHEEKS.**

tóu zhī wú suǒ wǎng zhě,  
THROW THEM NOT WHERE GO [PART],  
**THROW THEM into a situation with NOWHERE else to GO,**

Zhū, Guì zhī yǒng yě.<sup>1</sup>  
ZHU, GUI OF BRAVE [PART].  
**and they will exhibit the BRAVERY OF Zhuan ZHU and Cao GUI.**

gù shàn yòng bīng zhě, pì rú shuàirán.  
THUS WELL USE ARMY THOSE-WHO, COMPARE LIKE SHUAI-RAN.  
**THUS THOSE WHO SKILLFULLY USE the ARMY make it LIKE the SHUAI-RAN.**

shuàirán zhě, Cháng Shān zhī shé yě.  
SHUAI-RAN [PART], CHANG MOUNTAIN OF SNAKE [PART].  
**The SHUAI-RAN is a SNAKE OF CHANG SHAN.**

jī qí shǒu zé wěi zhì; jī qí wěi zé shǒu zhì;  
ATTACK ITS HEAD THEN TAIL ARRIVE; ATTACK ITS TAIL THEN HEAD ARRIVE;  
**ATTACK ITS HEAD AND its TAIL LASHES out; ATTACK ITS TAIL AND its HEAD LASHES out;**

jī qí zhōng zé shǒu wěi jū zhì.  
ATTACK ITS MIDDLE THEN HEAD TAIL BOTH ARRIVE.  
**ATTACK ITS MIDDLE AND BOTH HEAD and TAIL LASH out.**

gǎn wèn: bīng kě shǐ rú shuàirán hū?  
DARE ASK: ARMY CAN CAUSE LIKE SHUAI-RAN REALLY?  
**You MAY ASK: 'CAN an ARMY REALLY BECOME LIKE the SHUAI-RAN?'**

yuē: kě.

SAY: CAN.

**It is SAID that it CAN.**

fū Wú rén yǔ Yuè rén xiāng wù yě,  
FOR WU PERSON AND YUE PERSON MUTUAL DESPISE [PART],

**FOR the PEOPLE of WU and the PEOPLE of YUE DESPISE ONE ANOTHER,**

dāng qí tóng zhōu ér jì, yù fēng,  
WHEN THEY SAME BOAT AND CROSS, MEET WIND,

**but WHEN THEY are CROSSING in the SAME BOAT and MEET a strong WIND,**

qí xiāng jiù yě rú zuǒ yòu shǒu.  
THEY MUTUAL HELP [PART] LIKE LEFT RIGHT HAND.

**THEY will HELP EACH OTHER LIKE the LEFT AND RIGHT HAND.**

shì gù fāng mǎ mái lún, wèi zú shì yě.  
BE WHY ARRANGE HORSE BURY WHEEL, NOT SUFFICIENT RELY [PART].

**THUS TYING the HORSES and BURYING the chariot WHEELS CANNOT be RELIED on to keep your formations immovable.**

qí yǒng rǔ yī, zhèng zhī dào yě.  
EQUAL BRAVE LIKE ONE, ADMINISTRATION OF WAY [PART].

**To make all EQUALLY BRAVE: this is the WAY OF military ADMINISTRATION.**

gāng róu jiē dé, dì zhī lǐ yě.  
HARD SOFT ALL GAIN, TERRAIN OF LOGIC [PART].

**To GAIN the advantages of BOTH the HARD and the SOFT: this is the LOGIC OF the TERRAIN.**

gù shàn yòng bīng zhě, xié shǒu ruò shǐ yì rén;  
THUS WELL USE ARMY HE-WHO, HOLD HAND LIKE DIRECT ONE PERSON;

**THUS HE WHO SKILLFULLY USES the ARMY LEADS his men by the HAND AS if DIRECTING ONE PERSON;**

bù dé yǐ yě.  
NOT ACHIEVE END [PART].

**they HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE.**

jiàng jūn zhī shì: jìng yǐ yōu, zhèng yǐ zhì.  
GENERAL ARMY OF TASK: SERENE AND MYSTERIOUS, UPRIGHT AND CONTROL.

**It is the TASK OF an GENERAL to be SERENE AND MYSTERIOUS, UPRIGHT AND in CONTROL.**

néng yú shì zú zhī ěr mù,  
ABLE STUPID OFFICER TROOP OF EAR EYE,  
**He is ABLE to make the EYES and EARS OF OFFICERS and TROOPS IGNORANT,**

shǐ zhī wú zhī.  
CAUSE THEM NOT KNOW.  
**NOT ALLOWING THEM to KNOW his plans.**

yì qí shì, gé qí móu, shǐ rén wú shì.  
CHANGE HIS ACTION, ALTER HIS PLAN, CAUSE PERSON NOT KNOW.  
**He CHANGES HIS ACTIONS and ALTERS HIS PLANS SO that OTHERS will NOT KNOW them.**

yì qí jū, yū qí tú, shǐ rén bù dé lù.  
CHANGE HIS POSITION, CIRCUITOUS HIS ROUTE, CAUSE PERSON NOT ACHIEVE ANALYZE.  
**He CHANGES HIS POSITION and makes HIS ROUTE CIRCUITOUS SO that OTHERS will be UNABLE to ANALYZE his behavior.**

shuài yǔ zhī qī, rú dēng gāo ér qù qí tī.  
COMMANDER GIVE BY DATE, LIKE CLIMB HIGH AND ABANDON THEIR LADDER.  
**On the DATE GIVEN BY the COMMANDER, his troops are committed AS if CLIMBING a HIGH fortification AND ABANDONING THEIR LADDERS.**

shuài yǔ zhī shēn rù zhū hóu zhī dì  
COMMANDER GIVE BY DEEP ENTER VARIOUS PRINCE OF TERRITORY  
**The COMMANDER ENTERS DEEPLY into the TERRITORY OF the FEUDAL PRINCES**

ér fā qí jī.  
AND EMIT HIS MACHINE.  
**AND RELEASES THE TRIGGER.**

fén zhōu pò fǔ; ruò qū qún yáng.  
BURN BOAT BREAK POT; LIKE DRIVE HERD SHEEP.  
**He BURNS his BOATS and BREAKS his POTS; he DRIVES his troops LIKE a HERD of SHEEP.**

qū ér wǎng, qū ér lái, mò zhī suǒ zhī.  
DRIVE AND GO, DRIVE AND COME, NO-ONE KNOW WHAT DO.  
**He DRIVES them HERE, he DRIVES them THERE, yet NO ONE KNOWS WHAT he is DOING.**

jù sān jūn zhī zhòng, tóu zhī yú xiǎn:  
ASSEMBLE THREE ARMY OF MASS, THROW THEM INTO DANGER:  
**To ASSEMBLE the MASS OF the THREE ARMIES and THROW THEM INTO DANGER:**

cǐ wèi jiàng jūn zhī shì yě.  
THIS CALL GENERAL ARMY OF TASK [PART].  
**THIS is CALLED the TASK OF the GENERAL.**

jiǔ dì zhī biàn, qū shēn zhī lì,  
NINE TERRAIN OF TRANSFORM, WITHDRAW EXTEND OF ADVANTAGE,  
**The NINE TRANSFORMATIONS OF TERRAIN, the ADVANTAGES OF WITHDRAWING and EXTENDING,**

rén qíng zhī lǐ: bù kě bù chá.  
PERSON EMOTION OF LOGIC: NOT CAN NOT INVESTIGATE.  
**the LOGIC OF HUMAN EMOTIONS: you MUST NOT FAIL to INVESTIGATE these.**

fán wéi kè zhī dào:  
ALL ACT INVADER OF WAY:  
**The ESSENTIAL WAY OF the INVADER is:**

shēn zé zhuān; qiǎn zé sǎn.  
DEEP THEN CONCENTRATE; SHALLOW THEN DISPERSE.  
**when your forces penetrate DEEPLY, CONCENTRATE them; when they penetrate only SHALLOWLY, DISPERSE them.**

qù guó yuè jìng ér shī zhě, jué dì yě.  
LEAVE COUNTRY CROSS BORDER AND ARMY [PART], CUT GROUND [PART].  
**When the ARMY LEAVES its own COUNTRY and CROSSES the BORDER, this is ISOLATED GROUND.**

sì dá zhě, qú dì yě.  
FOUR REACH [PART], THOROUGHFARE GROUND [PART].  
**When the battlefield can be REACHED from FOUR sides, this is OPEN GROUND.**

rù shēn zhě, zhòng dì yě.  
ENTER DEEP [PART], HEAVY GROUND [PART].  
**When one PENETRATES DEEPLY, this is HEAVY GROUND.**

rù qiǎn zhě, qīng dì yě.  
ENTER SHALLOW [PART], LIGHT GROUND [PART].  
**When one PENETRATES SHALLOWLY, this is LIGHT GROUND.**

bei gù qián ài zhě, wéi dì yě.  
BACK SOLID BEFORE NARROW [PART], SURROUND GROUND [PART].  
**When IMPASSABLE ground is at your BACK and NARROW ground is BEFORE you, this is SURROUNDED GROUND.**



wú suǒ wǎng zhě, sǐ dì yě.  
NOT WHERE GO [PART], FATAL GROUND [PART].  
**When there is NOWHERE else to GO, this is FATAL GROUND.**

shì gù sǎn dì, wú jiāng yī qí zhì.  
BE WHY DISPERSED GROUND, I WILL ONE THEIR WILL.  
**THUS on DISPERSED GROUND, I WILL make THEIR WILL ONE.**

qīng dì, wú jiāng shǐ zhī shǔ.  
LIGHT GROUND, I WILL CAUSE THEM TOGETHER.  
**On LIGHT GROUND, I WILL KEEP THEM TOGETHER.**

zhēng dì, wú jiāng qū qí hòu.  
DISPUTE GROUND, I WILL DRIVE THEIR REAR.  
**On DISPUTED GROUND, I WILL DRIVE THE REAR.**

jiāo dì, wú jiāng jǐn qí shǒu.  
CONNECT GROUND, I WILL CAREFUL THEIR DEFENSE.  
**On CONNECTING GROUND, I WILL CONCENTRATE on DEFENSE.**

qū dì, wú jiāng gù qí jié.  
THOROUGHFARE GROUND, I WILL SOLID THEIR TIE.  
**On OPEN GROUND, I WILL make ALLIANCES SOLID.**

zhòng dì, wú jiāng jì qí shí.  
HEAVY GROUND, I WILL CONTINUE THEIR PROVISION.  
**On HEAVY GROUND, I WILL supply PROVISIONS CONTINUOUSLY.**

pǐ dì, wú jiāng jìn qí tú.  
POOR GROUND, I WILL ENTER THEIR PATH.  
**On POOR GROUND, I WILL ADVANCE THEIR PATH.**

wéi dì, wú jiāng sāi qí quē.  
SURROUND GROUND, I WILL PLUG THEIR GAP.  
**On SURROUNDED GROUND, I WILL PLUG THEIR GAPS.**

sǐ dì, wú jiāng shì zhī yǐ bù huó.  
FATAL GROUND, I WILL SHOW THEM TAKE NOT LIVE.  
**On FATAL GROUND, I WILL SHOW THEM how to ACCEPT DEATH.**

gù bīng zhī qíng, wéi zé yù,  
THUS ARMY OF NATURE, SURROUND THEN RESIST,  
**THUS it is the NATURE OF the ARMY to RESIST when SURROUNDED,**

bù dé yǐ zé dòu, guò zé cóng.  
NOT ACHIEVE ALTERNATIVE THEN FIGHT, EXCEED THEN OBEY.  
**to FIGHT when there is NO ALTERNATIVE, and to OBEY when the situation is DESPERATE.**

shì gù bù zhī zhū hóu zhī móu zhě,  
BE WHY NOT KNOW VARIOUS PRINCE OF PLAN THOSE-WHO,  
**THUS THOSE WHO do NOT KNOW the PLANS OF the FEUDAL PRINCES**

bù néng yù jiāo.  
NOT CAN PREPARE DIPLOMACY.  
**CANNOT EFFECT DIPLOMACY.**

bù zhī shān lín, xiǎn zǔ, jǔ zé zhī xíng zhě,  
NOT KNOW MOUNTAIN FOREST, STEEP BARRIER, MARSH SWAMP OF FORM THOSE-WHO,  
**THOSE WHO do NOT KNOW the FORM OF MOUNTAINS, FORESTS, STEEP BARRIERS, MARSHES and SWAMPS,**

bù néng xíng jūn.  
NOT CAN GO ARMY.  
**CANNOT MOVE the ARMY.**

bú yòng xiāng dǎo zhě, bù néng dé dì lì.  
NOT USE REGION GUIDE THOSE-WHO, NOT CAN GAIN TERRAIN ADVANTAGE.  
**THOSE WHO do NOT USE LOCAL GUIDES CANNOT GAIN the ADVANTAGES of the TERRAIN.**

sì wǔ zhě, bù zhī yī, fēi bà wáng zhī bīng yě.  
FOUR FIVE [PART], NOT KNOW ONE, NOT FEUDAL KING OF ARMY [PART].  
**As for these FOUR or FIVE things, those who FAIL to KNOW even ONE CANNOT lead the ARMY OF a FEUDAL KING.**

fú bà wáng zhī bīng, fá dà guó,  
FOR FEUDAL KING OF ARMY, ATTACK GREAT COUNTRY,  
**FOR when the ARMY OF a FEUDAL KING ATTACKS a GREAT COUNTRY,**

zé qí zhòng bù dé jù.  
THEN ITS MASS NOT CAN ASSEMBLE.  
**that COUNTRY'S MASSES are UNABLE to ASSEMBLE.**

wēi jiā yú dí, zé qí jiāo bù dé hé.  
STRENGTH APPLY TO ENEMY, THEN HIS ALLIANCE NOT ACHIEVE JOIN.  
**When STRENGTH is APPLIED TO the ENEMY, THEN HIS ALLIES are UNABLE to JOIN him.**

shì gù bù zhēng tiān xià zhī jiāo.  
BE WHY NOT CONTEND HEAVEN UNDER [PART] ALLIANCE.  
**THUS the commander does NOT CONTEND with any ALLIANCES UNDER HEAVEN.**

bù yǎng tiān xià zhī quán.  
NOT NURTURE HEAVEN UNDER OF POWER.  
**He does NOT NURTURE the POWER OF anyone else UNDER HEAVEN.**

xìn jǐ zhī sī, wēi jiā yú dí.  
TRUST SELF OF SELF, STRENGTH APPLY TO ENEMY.  
**TRUST in your OWN SELF, and APPLY your STRENGTH TO the ENEMY.**

zé qí chéng kě bá, qí guó kě hūi.  
THEN HIS CITY CAN CAPTURE, HIS STATE CAN DESTROY.  
**THEN HIS CITIES CAN be CAPTURED, and HIS STATE CAN be DESTROYED.**

shī wú fǎ zhī shǎng; xuán wú zhèng zhī lìng.  
GRANT NOT LAW [PART] REWARD; ANNOUNCE NOT ADMINISTRATION [PART] COMMAND.  
**GRANT REWARDS NOT prescribed by the LAW; ANNOUNCE COMMANDS NOT prescribed by the ADMINISTRATION.**

fàn sān jūn zhī zhòng, ruò shǐ yì rén.  
USE THREE ARMY OF MASS, LIKE DIRECT ONE PERSON.  
**USE the MASS OF the THREE ARMIES AS if DIRECTING ONE PERSON.**

fàn zhī yǐ shì, wù gào yǐ yán.  
USE THEM TO ACT, NOT TELL TAKE WORD.  
**USE your TROOPS TO ACT, but do NOT TELL them a WORD of your plans.**

fàn zhī yǐ lì, wù gào yǐ hài.  
USE THEM TAKE PROFIT, NOT TELL TAKE HARM.  
**USE THEM by promising PROFIT, but do NOT TELL them about any HARM.**

tóu zhī wáng dì rán hòu cún.  
THROW THEM FATAL TERRAIN THEN AFTER SURVIVE.  
**THROW THEM into FATAL TERRAIN and they will SURVIVE.**

xiàn zhī sǐ dì rán hòu shēng.  
SINK THEM DEATH TERRAIN THEN AFTER LIVE.  
**SINK THEM into DEATHLY TERRAIN and they will LIVE.**

fú zhòng xiàn yú hài, rán hòu néng wéi shèng bài.  
FOR MASS SINK INTO DANGER, THEN AFTER CAN CREATE VICTORY DEFEAT.  
**FOR AFTER the MASS of the army SINKS INTO DANGER, it CAN CREATE VICTORY from DEFEAT.**

gù wéi bīng zhī shì, zài yú shùn xiáng dí zhī yì.  
FOR ACT MILITARY [PART] AFFAIR, DEPEND ON COMPLY DETAIL ENEMY OF INTENTION.  
**FOR CONDUCTING MILITARY AFFAIRS DEPENDS ON deceptively COMPLYING in DETAIL with the INTENTIONS of the ENEMY.**

bīng dí yí xiàng, qiān lǐ shā jiāng.  
COMBINE ENEMY ONE TOWARD, THOUSAND LI KILL GENERAL.  
**COMBINE your forces, make ONE thrust TOWARD the ENEMY, and you can KILL the GENERAL a THOUSAND LI away.**

shì wèi qiǎo néng chéng shì zhě yě.  
BE CALL SKILLFUL CAPABLE CONDUCT AFFAIR [PART] [PART].  
**This IS CALLED SKILL and ABILITY in CONDUCTING military AFFAIRS.**

shì gù zhèng jǔ zhī rì, yí guān, zhé fú,  
BE WHY GOVERNMENT BEGIN [PART] DAY, CLOSE GATE, DESTROY PASSPORT,  
**THUS on the DAY the GOVERNMENT BEGINS a military campaign, CLOSE all border GATES, DESTROY all PASSPORTS,**

wú tōng qí shǐ.  
NOT THROUGH HIS AMBASSADORS.  
**and do NOT ADMIT the ENEMY's AMBASSADORS.**

lì yú láng miào zhī shàng yǐ zhū qí shì.  
RIGOROUS FROM HALL TEMPLE [PART] ATOP TO DIRECT YOUR AFFAIR.  
**FROM ATOP the HALL of the TEMPLE RIGOROUSLY DIRECT YOUR AFFAIRS.**

dí rén kāi hé, bì jí rén rù zhī.  
ENEMY PERSON OPEN OPEN, MUST IMMEDIATELY ENTER IT.  
**When the ENEMY OPENS up a GAP, you MUST IMMEDIATELY ENTER IT.**

xiān qí suǒ ài. wēi yǔ zhī qī.  
FIRST HIS WHAT LOVE. SUBTLE GIVE [PART] DATE.  
**FIRST attack WHAT the ENEMY LOVES. DETERMINE the DATE with SUBTLETY.**

jiàn mò suí dí yǐ jué zhàn shì.  
ENACT PRINCIPLE ADAPT ENEMY TO DECIDE BATTLE AFFAIR.

**ENACT your PRINCIPLES and ADAPT to the ENEMY in DETERMINING your BATTLE STRATEGY.**

shì gù shǐ rú chǔ nǚ, dí rén kāi hù.  
BE WHY BEGINNING LIKE LOCATE MAIDEN, ENEMY PERSON OPEN DOOR.

**THUS at FIRST be LIKE a MAIDEN in her HOME, and the ENEMY will OPEN the DOOR.**

hòu rù tuō tù, dí bù jí jù.  
THEN LIKE RELEASE RABBIT, ENEMY NOT ACHIEVE RESIST.

**THEN be LIKE a RELEASED RABBIT, and the ENEMY will be UNABLE to RESIST you."**

1. Zhuān Zhū, Cáo Gù: military heroes of the Spring and Autumn Period.

Chapter 12

Huǒ Gōng  
FIRE ATTACK  
**ATTACKING with FIRE**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán huǒ gōng yǒu wǔ:  
ALL FIRE ATTACK HAVE FIVE:  
**"There ARE FIVE ways to ATTACK with FIRE:**

yī yuē huǒ rén; èr yuē huǒ jī;  
ONE CALL FIRE PERSON; TWO CALL FIRE SUPPLY;  
**the FIRST is using FIRE on PEOPLE; the SECOND is using FIRE on SUPPLIES;**

sān yuē huǒ zī; sì yuē huǒ kù;  
THREE CALL FIRE WAGON; FOUR CALL FIRE STOREHOUSE;  
**the THIRD is using FIRE on WAGONS; the FOURTH is using FIRE on STOREHOUSES;**

wǔ yuē huǒ suì.  
FIVE CALL FIRE TRANSPORT.  
**the FIFTH is using FIRE on systems of TRANSPORT.**

xíng huǒ bì yǒu yīn.  
USE FIRE MUST HAVE CONDITION.  
**To USE FIRE you MUST HAVE appropriate CONDITIONS.**

yān huǒ bì sù jù.  
KINDLE FIRE MUST ALWAYS POSSESS.  
**You MUST ALWAYS POSSESS KINDLING.**

fā huǒ yǒu shí; qǐ huǒ yǒu rì.  
EMIT FIRE HAVE TIME; START FIRE HAVE DAY.  
**There IS an appropriate TIME to USE FIRE; there IS an appropriate DAY to USE FIRE.**

shí zhě, tiān zhī zào yě.  
TIME [PART], WEATHER OF SCORCH [PART]  
**The TIME of SCORCHING WEATHER is appropriate.**

rì zhě, yuè zài Qí, Bì, Yì, Zhěn yě.

DAY [PART], MOON IN QI, BI, YI, ZHEN [PART]

**The DAY when the MOON is IN the constellation QI, BI, YI, or ZHEN is appropriate.**

fán cǐ sì sù zhě, qǐ fēng zhī rì yě.

ALL THESE FOUR STATION [PART], RISE WIND [PART] DAY [PART].

**ALL THESE FOUR STATIONS of the moon fall on DAYS when the WIND will RISE.**

fán huǒ gōng,

ALL FIRE ATTACK,

**In ALL ATTACKS using FIRE,**

bì yīn wǔ huǒ zhī biàn ér yìng zhī.

MUST ACCORDING FIVE FIRE OF TRANSFORM AND RESPOND IT.

**you MUST RESPOND to IT ACCORDING to the FIVE TRANSFORMATIONS OF FIRE.**

huǒ fā yú nèi, zé zǎo yìng zhī yú wài.

FIRE EMIT AT WITHIN, THEN SOON RESPOND IT FROM OUTSIDE.

**When FIRE BREAKS out WITHIN the enemy camp, THEN IMMEDIATELY ATTACK FROM OUTSIDE.**

huǒ fā bīng jìng zhě, dài ér wù gōng.

FIRE EMIT ARMY CALM [PART], WAIT AND NOT ATTACK.

**But if FIRE BREAKS out and the ENEMY remains CALM, WAIT AND do NOT ATTACK.**

jí qí huǒ lì, kě cóng ér cóng zhī;

EXTREME ITS FIRE INTENSITY, CAN FOLLOW THEN FOLLOW IT;

**When the FIRE reaches ITS most EXTREME INTENSITY, if you CAN FOLLOW up, THEN FOLLOW up;**

bù kě cóng ér zhǐ.

NOT CAN FOLLOW THEN DESIST.

**if you CANNOT FOLLOW up, THEN DESIST.**

huǒ kě fā yú wài, wú dài yú nèi;

FIRE CAN EMIT AT OUTSIDE, NOT WAIT AT INSIDE;

**If you CAN START a FIRE OUTSIDE, do NOT WAIT until it is INSIDE;**

yǐ shí fā zhī.

TAKE TIME EMIT IT.

**START the FIRE at the appropriate TIME.**

huǒ fā shàng fēng, wú gōng xià fēng.  
FIRE EMIT UPPER WIND, NOT ATTACK DOWN WIND.  
**If FIRE BREAKS out UP-WIND, do NOT ATTACK DOWN-WIND.**

zhòu fēng jiǔ, yè fēng zhǐ.  
DAY WIND LONG, EVENING WIND CEASE.  
**If the WIND blows for a LONG time during the DAY, it will CEASE in the EVENING.**

fán jūn bì zhī yǒu wǔ huǒ zhī biàn.  
ALL ARMY MUST KNOW HAVE FIVE FIRE OF TRANSFORM.  
**EVERY ARMY MUST KNOW that there ARE FIVE TRANSFORMATIONS OF FIRE.**

yǐ shù shǒu zhī.  
TAKE NUMBER DEFEND IT.  
**ACCORDING to the CATEGORY, DEFEND yourself against IT.**

gù yǐ huǒ zuǒ gōng zhě míng.  
THUS USE FIRE ASSIST ATTACK HE-WHO INTELLIGENT.  
**THUS HE WHO USES FIRE to ASSIST in the ATTACK is INTELLIGENT.**

yǐ shuǐ zuǒ gōng zhě qiáng.  
USE WATER ASSIST ATTACK HE-WHO STRONG.  
**HE WHO USES WATER to ASSIST in the ATTACK is STRONG.**

shuǐ kěyǐ jué, bù kěyǐ duó.  
WATER CAN CUT, NOT CAN SEIZE.  
**WATER CAN CUT off the enemy, but it CANNOT be used to SEIZE his possessions.**

fú zhàn shèng gōng qǔ,  
FOR BATTLE VICTORY ATTACK TAKE,  
**FOR gaining a VICTORY in BATTLE and MAKING an ATTACK,**

ér bù xiū qí gōng zhě xiōng.  
BUT NOT IMPLEMENT THESE ACHIEVEMENT [PART] UNLUCKY.  
**BUT NOT EXPLOITING THESE ACHIEVEMENTS is UNLUCKY.**

mìng yuē fèi liú.  
FATE SAY WASTEFUL LINGER.  
**One's FATE will be TERMED WASTEFUL and LINGERING.**



gù yuē: míng zhě lǜ zhī, liáng jiàng xiū zhī.  
THUS SAY: INTELLIGENT ONE CONTEMPLATE THEM, EXCELLENT GENERAL UTILIZE THEM.  
**THUS it is SAID that INTELLIGENT RULERS CONTEMPLATE plans, and EXCELLENT GENERALS IMPLEMENT THEM.**

fēi lì bú dòng; fēi dé bú yòng;  
NOT ADVANTAGE NOT MOVE; NOT GAIN NOT USE;  
**If there will be NO ADVANTAGE, do NOT ACT; if there will be NO GAIN, do NOT USE your troops;**

fēi wēi bú zhàn.  
NOT DANGER NOT BATTLE.  
**if you are NOT in DANGER do NOT do BATTLE.**

zhǔ bù kěyǐ nù ér xīng shī.  
SOVEREIGN NOT CAN ANGRY AND MOBILIZE ARMY.  
**The SOVEREIGN MUST NOT MOBILIZE the ARMY because he is ANGRY.**

jiàng bù kěyǐ yùn ér zhì zhàn.  
GENERAL NOT CAN IRRITATED AND DIRECT BATTLE.  
**The GENERAL MUST NOT DIRECT a BATTLE because he is IRRITATED.**

hé yú lì ér dòng; bù hé yú lì ér zhǐ.  
SUIT WITH ADVANTAGE AND MOVE; NOT SUIT WITH ADVANTAGE AND DESIST.  
**If there is an ADVANTAGE, ACT; if there is NO ADVANTAGE, DESIST.**

nù kěyǐ fù xǐ, yùn kěyǐ fù yuè,  
ANGRY CAN REVERT HAPPY, IRRITATED CAN REVERT JOY,  
**An ANGRY person CAN REVERT to HAPPINESS, an IRRITATED person CAN REVERT to JOY,**

wáng guó bù kěyǐ fù cún,  
DEFUNCT STATE NOT CAN REVERT EXIST,  
**but a DEFUNCT STATE CANNOT REVERT to EXISTENCE,**

sǐ zhě bù kěyǐ fù shēng.  
DEAD ONE NOT CAN REVERT LIFE.  
**and the DEAD CANNOT REVERT to LIFE.**

gù míng jūn shèn zhī; liáng jiàng jǐng zhī.  
THUS INTELLIGENT RULER CAREFUL [PART]; EXCELLENT GENERAL CAUTIOUS [PART].  
**THUS an INTELLIGENT RULER is CAREFUL; an EXCELLENT GENERAL is CAUTIOUS.**

cǐ ān guó quán jūn zhī dào yě.

THIS SAFE STATE INTACT ARMY OF WAY [PART].

**THIS is the WAY to keep the STATE SAFE and the ARMY INTACT."**

Chapter 13

Yòng Jiān  
USE SPIES  
**The USE of SPIES**

Sūn Zǐ yuē:  
SUN ZI SAY:  
**SUN ZI SAID:**

fán xīng shī shí wàn, chū zhēng qiān lǐ,  
ALL MOBILIZE ARMY TEN TEN-THOUSAND, EXIT CAMPAIGN THOUSAND LI,  
**"WHENEVER an ARMY of a HUNDRED THOUSAND is MOBILIZED and SENT on a CAMPAIGN  
at a distance of a THOUSAND LI,**

bǎi xìng zhī fèi, gōng jiā zhī fèng,  
HUNDRED SURNAME OF EXPENSE, STATE HOUSEHOLD OF CONTRIBUTE,  
**the EXPENSES OF the COMMONERS and the CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STATE TREASURY**

rì fèi qiān jīn.  
DAY EXPENSE THOUSAND GOLD.  
**will total one THOUSAND GOLD coins DAILY.**

nèi wài sāo dòng;  
IN OUT DISTURB MOVE;  
**INSIDE and OUTSIDE the borders, DISTURBANCES will ARRISE;**

dài yú dào lù,  
EXHAUST ON ROAD PATH,  
**Those who are EXHAUSTED ON the ROADWAYS,**

bù dé cāo shì zhě qī shí wàn jiā.  
NOT CAN CONDUCT AFFAIR THOSE-WHO SEVEN TEN TEN-THOUSAND HOUSEHOLD.  
**and THOSE WHO CANNOT CONDUCT their AFFAIRS will total SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND  
HOUSEHOLDS.**

xiāng shǒu shù nián, yǐ zhēng yī rì zhī shèng.  
MUTUAL MAINTAIN COUNT YEAR, TO FIGHT ONE DAY OF VICTORY.  
**Armies MAINTAIN their RESPECTIVE positions for YEARS, just TO WIN a VICTORY  
OF ONE DAY.**

ér ài jué lù bǎi jīn,  
BUT AVARICIOUS RANK EMOLUMENT HUNDRED GOLD,  
**BUT he who is SLOW to grant RANKS and EMOLUMENTS of a HUNDRED GOLD COINS,**

bù zhī dí zhī qíng zhě,  
NOT KNOW ENEMY OF CONDITION HE-WHO,  
**and therefore does NOT KNOW the CONDITION OF the ENEMY,**

bù rén zhī zhì yě.  
NOT HUMANITY [PART] GREATEST [PART].  
**commits the GREATEST INHUMANITY.**

fēi rén zhī jiàng yě.  
NOT HUMANITY [PART] GENERAL [PART].  
**He is NOT a HUMANE GENERAL.**

fēi zhǔ zhī zuǒ yě.  
NOT RULER OF ASSIST [PART].  
**He is NO ASSISTANT to the RULER.**

fēi shèng zhī zhǔ yě.  
NOT VICTORY OF HELP [PART].  
**He is of NO HELP in securing VICTORY.**

gù míng jūn xián jiàng, suǒyǐ dòng ér shèng rén,  
THUS INTELLIGENT RULER WORTHY GENERAL, WHENEVER MOVE AND CONQUER PERSON,  
**THUS the reason that the INTELLIGENT RULER and the WORTHY GENERAL CONQUER the ENEMY WHENEVER they MOVE,**

chéng gōng chū yú zhòng zhě, xiān zhī yě.  
PRODUCE ACHIEVEMENT EXCEL OVER MASS [PART], FIRST KNOW [PART].  
**and PRODUCE ACHIEVEMENTS EXCELLING OVER those of the MASSES, is FOREKNOWLEDGE.**

wú zhī zhě bù kě qǔ yú guǐ shén;  
NOT KNOW THOSE-WHO NOT CAN GAIN FROM SPIRIT GOD;  
**THOSE WHO do NOT KNOW CANNOT GAIN knowledge FROM SPIRITS and GODS;**

bù kě xiàng yú shì;  
NOT CAN SIMILAR TO EVENT;  
**it CANNOT be predicted from COMPARISON TO EVENTS;**

bù kě yàn yú dù.  
NOT CAN DEDUCE FROM CALCULATION.  
**it CANNOT be DEDUCED FROM CALCULATIONS.**

bì qǔ yú rén: zhī dí zhī qíng zhě yě.  
MUST GAIN FROM PERSON: KNOW ENEMY OF CONDITION THOSE-WHO [PART].  
**It MUST be GAINED FROM PEOPLE: from THOSE WHO KNOW the CONDITION OF the ENEMY.**

gù yòng jiān yǒu wǔ:  
THUS USE SPY HAVE FIVE:  
**THUS there ARE FIVE types of SPIES that can be USED:**

yǒu yīn jiān, yǒu nèi jiān, yǒu fǎn jiān,  
HAVE LOCAL SPY, HAVE INTERNAL SPY, HAVE REVERSE SPY,  
**There are LOCAL SPIES, INTERNAL SPIES, DOUBLE AGENTS,**

yǒu sǐ jiān, yǒu shēng jiān.  
HAVE DEAD SPY, HAVE LIVING SPY.  
**"DEAD" SPIES, and LIVING SPIES.**

wǔ jiān jū qǐ, mò zhī qí dào,  
FIVE SPY ALL USE, NO-ONE KNOW THEIR WAY,  
**If ALL FIVE types of SPIES are USED, and NO ONE KNOWS of THEIR ACTIVITIES,**

shì wèi shén jì.  
BE CALL MYSTERIOUS DISCIPLINE.  
**this IS CALLED MYSERIOUS DISCIPLINE.**

rén jūn zhī bǎo yě.  
PERSON SOVEREIGN OF TREASURE [PART].  
**This is the TREASURE OF the PEOPLES' SOVEREIGN.**

yīn jiān zhě, yīn qí xiāng rén ér yòng zhī.  
LOCAL SPY [PART], CAUSE THE REGION PERSON AND HIRE THEM.  
**As LOCAL SPIES, HIRE PEOPLE from THE REGION.**

nèi jiān zhě, yīn qí guān rén ér yòng zhī.  
INTERNAL SPY [PART], CAUSE HIS OFFICIAL PERSON AND HIRE THEM.  
**As INTERNAL SPIES, HIRE OFFICIALS from the ENEMY'S government.**

fǎn jiān zhě, yīn qí dí jiān ér yòng zhī.  
REVERSE SPY [PART], CAUSE YOUR ENEMY SPY AND HIRE THEM.  
**As DOUBLE AGENTS, HIRE YOUR ENEMY'S SPIES.**

sǐ jiān zhě, wéi kuáng shì yú wài;  
DEAD SPY [PART], ACT FALSE AFFAIR TO OUTSIDE;  
**"DEAD" SPIES SPREAD FALSE INFORMATION ABROAD;**

lìng wú jiān zhī zhī,  
ORDER MY SPY KNOW IT,  
**LET MY SPY KNOW the false information**

ér chuán yú dí jiān yě.  
AND TRANSMIT TO ENEMY SPY [PART].  
**AND TRANSMIT it to ENEMY SPIES.**

shēng jiān zhě, fǎn bào yě.  
LIVING SPY [PART], RETURN REPORT [PART].  
**LIVING SPIES RETURN to REPORT.**

gù sān jūn zhī shì, mò qīn yú jiān;  
THUS THREE ARMY OF AFFAIR, NOT CLOSE THAN SPY;  
**THUS among the AFFAIRS OF the THREE ARMIES, NOTHING is CLOSER THAN the relationship to SPIES;**

shǎng mò hòu yú jiān; shì mò mì yú jiān.  
REWARD NOT THICK THAN SPY; AFFAIR NOT SECRET THAN SPY.  
**NO REWARDS are RICHER THAN those given to SPIES; NO AFFAIRS are more SECRET THAN those of SPIES.**

fēi shèng zhì bù néng yòng jiān.  
NOT SAGE WISE NOT CAN USE SPY.  
**Those who are NOT WISE as a SAGE CANNOT USE SPIES.**

fēi rén yì bù néng shǐ jiān.  
NOT HUMANITY JUST NOT CAN USE SPY.  
**Those who are NOT HUMANE and JUST CANNOT USE SPIES.**

fēi wéi miào bù néng dé jiān zhī shí.  
NOT SUBTLE INGENIOUS NOT CAN GAIN SPY OF SUBSTANCE.  
**Those who are NOT SUBTLE and INGENIOUS CANNOT GAIN the SUBSTANCE in the reports OF SPIES.**

wéi zāi! wéi zāi!  
SUBTLE [PART]! SUBTLE [PART]!  
**How SUBTLE! How SUBTLE!**

wú suǒ bú yòng jiān yě.  
NO WHERE NOT USE SPY [PART].  
**There is NOWHERE that SPIES are NOT USED.**

jiān shì wèi fā, ér xiān wén zhě,  
SPY AFFAIR NOT EMIT, BUT FIRST HEAR [PART],  
**If a SECRET AFFAIR has NOT yet COMMENCED, BUT has ALREADY been HEARD of,**

jiān yǔ suǒ gào zhě jiē sǐ.  
SPY AND [PART] TELL THOSE-WHO ALL DIE.  
**the SPY AND THOSE WHOM he TOLD must ALL DIE.**

fán jūn zhī suǒ yù jī, chéng zhī suǒ yù gōng,  
ALL ARMY [PART] WHICH DESIRE STRIKE, CITY [PART] WHICH DESIRE ATTACK,  
**As for ALL the ARMIES WHICH you DESIRE to STRIKE, and the CITIES WHICH you DESIRE to ATTACK,**

rén zhī suǒ yù shā,  
PERSON [PART] WHOM DESIRE KILL,  
**and the PERSONS WHOM you DESIRE to KILL,**

bì xiān zhī qí shǒu jiàng,  
MUST FIRST KNOW HIS DEFEND GENERAL,  
**you MUST FIRST KNOW the NAMES OF the ENEMY'S DEFENSIVE GENERAL,**

zuǒ yòu, yè zhě, mén zhě,  
LEFT RIGHT, STAFF [PART], DOOR [PART],  
**his ASSISTANTS, his STAFF, his DOOR guards,**

shè rén zhī xìng míng.  
LODGING PERSON OF FAMILY-NAME PERSONAL-NAME.  
**and his ATTENDANTS.**

lìng wú jiān bì suǒ zhī zhī.  
ORDER MY SPY MUST SEARCH KNOW THIS.  
**ORDER OUR SPIES to SEARCH out and DISCOVER THIS information.**

bì suǒ dí rén zhī jiān lái jiān wǒ zhě;  
MUST SEARCH ENEMY PERSON OF SPY COME SPY ME [PART];  
**We MUST SEARCH out the SPIES OF the ENEMY who COME to SPY on ME;**

yīn ér lì zhī, dǎo ér shè zhī;  
CAUSE AND PROFIT THEM, GUIDE AND HOUSE THEM;  
**ATTRACT THEM with PROFITS, GUIDE and HOUSE THEM;**

gù fǎn jiān kě dé ér yòng yě.  
THUS REVERSE SPY CAN GAIN AND USE [PART].  
**THUS DOUBLE AGENTS CAN be GAINED AND USED.**

yīn shì ér zhī zhī, gù xiāng jiān,  
CAUSE FACT AND KNOW IT, THUS REGION SPY,  
**BECAUSE of the FACTS you will KNOW, REGIONAL SPIES**

nèi jiān kě dé ér shǐ yě.  
INTERNAL SPY CAN GAIN AND USE [PART].  
**and INTERNAL SPIES CAN be GAINED AND USED.**

yīn shì ér zhī zhī, gù sǐ jiān wéi kuáng shì,  
CAUSE FACT AND KNOW IT, THUS DEAD SPY ACT FALSE AFFAIR,  
**BECAUSE of the FACTS you will KNOW, "DEAD" SPIES can SPREAD FALSE INFORMATION,**

kě shǐ gào dí.  
CAN USE TELL ENEMY.  
**and CAN be USED to MISINFORM the ENEMY.**

yīn shì ér zhī zhī, gù shēng jiān  
CAUSE FACT AND KNOW IT, THUS LIVING SPY  
**BECAUSE of the FACTS you will KNOW, LIVING SPIES**

kě shǐ rú qī.  
CAN USE LIKE TIME.  
**CAN be USED ACCORDING to the TIME.**

wǔ jiān zhī shì, jūn bì zhī zhī.  
FIVE SPY OF AFFAIR, SOVEREIGN MUST KNOW THEM.  
**As for the FIVE ASPECTS OF SPYING, the SOVEREIGN MUST UNDERSTAND THEM.**

zhī zhī bì zài yú fǎn jiān.  
KNOW THEM MUST DEPEND ON REVERSE SPY.  
**UNDERSTANDING THEM DEPENDS ON DOUBLE AGENTS.**



gù fǎn jiān bù kě bú hòu yě.  
THUS REVERSE SPY NOT CAN NOT THICK [PART].  
**THUS you MUST NOT FAIL to be GENEROUS to DOUBLE AGENTS.**

xī Yīn zhī xīng yě, Yī Zhì zài Xià.  
ANCIENT YIN OF ARISE [PART], YI ZHI OF XIA.  
**In ANCIENT times, the ESTABLISHMENT OF the YIN dynasty was due to YI ZHI OF XIA.**

Zhōu zhī xīng yě, Lǚ Yá zài Yīn.  
ZHOU OF ARISE [PART], LÜ YA OF YIN.  
**The ESTABLISHMENT OF the ZHOU dynasty was due to LÜ YA OF YIN.**

gù wéi míng jūn xián jiàng,  
THUS UNIQUE INTELLIGENT SOVEREIGN WORTHY GENERAL,  
**THUS UNIQUELY INTELLIGENT SOVEREIGNS and WORTHY GENERALS**

néng yǐ shàng zhì wéi jiān zhě,  
CAN USE SUPREME WISE AS SPY WHO,  
**WHO CAN USE the SUPREMELY WISE AS SPIES**

bì chéng dà gōng.  
MUST COMPLETE GREAT ACHIEVEMENT.  
**WILL PRODUCE GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS.**

cǐ bīng zhī yào, sān jūn zhī suǒ shì ér dòng yě.  
THIS ARMY OF ESSENCE, THREE ARMY OF WHAT RELY AND MOVE [PART].  
**SPIES are the ESSENCE OF the ARMY, WHAT the THREE ARMIES RELY on TO MOVE."**