
Most sections in this lesson are taken from articles published in Paret, Peter, ed. _Makers of Modern Strategy_. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. Authors and titles of specific articles are given in the headings. Page references within the outline, unless specifically indicated, all come from this work.

I. "Men Against Fire: The Doctrine of the Offensive in 1914," Michael Howard

a. Technical factors leading to heavier losses in battle
   i. Substitution of smokeless high explosive for gunpowder leads to increased range, accuracy, and camouflage
   ii. Smaller calibers, brass cartridges, and magazines give infantry a higher rate of fire
   iii. Recoilless gun carriages, permitting rapid and continuous artillery fire
   iv. Offensive Formations
      (1) Remained Napoleonic due to the use of largely peasant conscripts

   i. Russian subject, self-made man, an economist and civilian
   ii. Conclusions on the future of war: better firearms result in
      (1) "the opening of battles from much greater distances;
      (2) "loose formation in attack;
      (3) "the strengthening of the defense;
      (4) "the increase in the area of the battlefield;
      (5) "the increase in casualties" [qtd in Ropp, 219]
   iii. "The first thing every man will have to do . . . will be to dig a hole in the ground. . . . When you must dig a trench before you can make any advance, your progress is necessarily slow. Battles will last for days, and at the end it is very doubtful whether any decisive victory can be gained."
      "Every great State would . . . be in the position of a besieged city, and the factor which always decides sieges is the factor which will decide the modern war. . . . The ultimate is in the hand of famine. . . . I am not speaking so much of the armies, as . . . of the population . . . which is apt to control the policy of which the armies are the executive instrument. . . . Upon this highly excitable, sensitive population you are going to inflict . . . hunger . . . and war. At the same time you will . . . expose your governing . . . classes to more than decimation at the hands of the enemy's sharpshooters. How long do you think your social fabric will remain stable under such
iv. "War . . . has become impossible except at the price of suicide." [qtd in Ropp, 220]

c. Ardant du Picq--chief (but by no means the only) advocate of the moral element of war
   i. "We have to . . . cultivat[e] with passion everything that bears the stamp of the offensive spirit. We must take it to excess" Louis de Grandmaison, 1911 (520)
   ii. "The French Army, returning to its traditions, recognizes no law save that of the offensive" de Grandmaison, 1913 (520)
   iii. "All that trash written by M. de Bloch before 1904 about zones of fire across which no living being could pass, heralded nothing but disaster. War is essentially the triumph, . . . not of a line of men entrenched behind entanglements and fire swept zones over men exposing themselves in the open but of one will over the weaker will . . . the best defense to a country is an army formed, trained, inspired by the idea of attack." Sir Ian Hamilton, 1911 (521)

d. Armies went to war in 1914 expecting not only to fight for their country, but to die for it.

e. Strategy of Attrition that results from tactical deadlock following the Marne
   i. "The tactical deadlock, in short, was utilized to serve a strategy of attrition, in which the manpower and morale not only of armies but the entire nation was put to the test. To those brought up in an atmosphere of Social Darwinism, . . . this came as no surprise." (525, emphasis added)

2. Blitzkrieg

   a. Theory developed by J.F.C. Fuller and B.H. Liddell Hart, two British veterans of World War I, who sought to break the tactical deadlock
      i. Liddell Hart's vision more encompassing, more influential
      ii. Liddell Hart, in particular, studied intensively by the Germans (Guderian, Manstein, Rommel, Rundstedt), and in later years, by the Israeli Defense Forces
      iii. Began by trying to wed the tank developed by the Allies in the latter stages of World War I with the infantry assault tactics developed by the Germans

   b. Highly mobile, mechanical all-arms formations used as spearheads
      i. Medium and heavy tanks concentrated
      ii. Mechanized infantry
iii. Mechanized artillery
iv. Ideally, all armored fighting vehicles (tanks, carriers, self-propelled guns) would combine the gasoline engine with caterpillar treads for maximum off-road capability and operational flexibility

c. Typical Blitzkrieg attack:
   i. Selection of a relatively narrow area of front that is weak
   ii. Feint attacks launched at other points of the front to deceive the enemy
      (1) On a strategic level, this could include diplomatic overtures designed to lull an opponent
   iii. Strategic isolation of the area by air attack on rear areas, accompanied by long-range artillery to seal the area off from assistance
   iv. Holding attacks launched to either side of the assault to pin enemy forces in place
   v. Heavy tactical air support to assist break through by heavy tanks accompanied by armored infantry
   vi. Air, artillery, and possibly air-borne attacks on communications and transportation centers to rear of the front in order to create confusion and fear
   vii. Tactics of by-passing strong points and infiltrating to the rear
   viii. Once a break through has been achieved, the armored formations race ahead, spreading out in an expanding torrent, threatening multiple objectives, while motorized infantry (truck driven [now obsolete]) and infantry on foot fill in the spear head and hold the flanks against counterattack
   ix. Air support acts here as a highly mobile artillery
   x. Tanks are also nothing other than highly mobile gun platforms
   xi. Armored spearheads must include all arms, since tanks without infantry, infantry without tanks, and both without artillery are vulnerable

   i. Grand Strategy: "grand strategy looks beyond the war to the subsequent peace. It should not only combine the various instruments, but so regulate their use as to avoid damage to the future state of peace--for its security and prosperity." (322)
   ii. Military Strategy: "Strategy depends for success... on a sound calculation co-ordination of the end and the means. (322)
   iii. Elements and Conditions of Strategy: "Its purpose is to diminish the possibility of resistance, and it seeks to fulfill this purpose by exploiting the elements of movement and surprise. (323)
   iv. Aim of Strategy: A commander's "true aim is not so much to seek battle as to seek a strategic situation so advantageous that if it does not of itself produce the decision, its continuation by a battle is sure to achieve this. (325)
v. Action of Strategy: "it takes the line of least resistance. The equivalent in the psychological sphere is the line of least expectation." (327)

vi. Concentrated Essence of Strategy and Tactics:

1. Adjust your end to your means.
2. Keep your object always in mind.
3. Choose the line (or course) of least expectation.
4. Exploit the line of least resistance.
5. Take a line of operation which offers alternative objectives.
6. Ensure that both plan and dispositions are flexible—adaptable to circumstances.
7. Do not throw your weight into a stroke whilst your opponent is on guard.
8. Do not renew an attack along the same line (or in the same form) after it has once failed (335-337).

vii. "The object of war is to attain a better peace—even if only from your own point of view. Hence it is essential to conduct war with constant regard to the peace you desire. . . . A State which expends its strength to the point of exhaustion bankrupts its own policy, and future." (353)

viii. "Victory in the true sense implies that the state of peace, and of one's people, is better after the war than before. Victory in this sense is only possible if a quick result can be gained or if a long effort can be economically proportioned to the national resources. Failing a fair prospect of such a victory, wise statesmanship will miss no opportunity for negotiating peace." (357)