**Classical Military Strategies and Cyber Warfare**

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# Introduction

Modern warfare and military strategies have evolved significantly in the last few decades with improved capabilities being showcased by different nations. Modern military might is determined to a large extent by the ability to use technology in development of weaponry and strategies used in different military missions [1]. Even thought the current scope of military activity is limited when compared to the 1940 during World War II, most nations continue to invest heavily in military technology and development of cyber warfare [3]. Some of these developments have been tested in recent times like during the Gulf war with lethal consequences and utmost precision [5]. Even as the world seeks to eliminate weapons of mass destruction nations like North Korea remain adamant and continue to develop and test them to the outrage of world at large. The art of war has been around for centuries since medieval times. There are multiple reasons why people or nations go to war [1]. Most independents nations have constitutions which allow them to engage in warfare when it is perceived that their interests are jeopardized or threatened. In addition to this, different nations with similar interests are also known in history to form alliances against common enemies. As a result and military action have always been there and will continue to be there in future [3]. In fact war and military activities have created one of the largest and most lucrative industries in the world today. Lessons from the past continue to inform military action and strategies that are employed in the present. With war being part of humanity, different theories have been developed in history in bid decipher the military strategy and perspective [13], [14]. The principles and concepts of these theories are still applicable in the modern scope of warfare. This paper will analyze and evaluate classical theories on war and military strategy, develop a personal perspective and explain the relationship with current defense against cyber warfare.

# Classical Theorist’ Perspective on War and Military Strategies

## Sun Tzu Theory

Classical theories of war and military strategy continue to form the foundations of modern warfare. The theories are based on the main concepts of war which include annihilation, intimidation, obliteration subversion and exhaustion [13]. One of the fundamental of war lies in strategy. Most wars and battles are won based on strategy other than military might or capabilities. This principle is well entrenched in the classical Sun Tzu theory of strategy [2]. Sun Tzu theorized that the skill of war is not in winning battles or wars but is in the subduing an enemy without fighting. The theory was developed in China when there were interstate wars in the country [6]. This approach to war and military strategies aimed at minimizing the cost of the conquest while at the same time maximizing benefits. According to this strategic theory, the main was to keep a state intact with minimal damages [13]. The second strategy was to capture then army of the enemy as opposed to destroying it. These strategies required an in-depth understanding of the enemy and their strategies in order to outdo them. Other strategies that Sun Tzu put in the hierarchy include disruption of enemy alliances, carrying out attacks on enemy armies and finally attacking their cities as a last resort [6]. The Sun Tzu strategy also depended on psychological warfare of intimidation by overawing an enemy to the extent that they believe that any resistance is futile [13]. The Sun Tzu way also believed in changing the allegiance of captured enemy military and strengthening the attacker’s army.

## Carl Von Clausewitz: Theory

Napoleon Bonaparte is regarded as one of the greatest French generals in history due to his decisiveness and quest for results in the battlefield. Carl von Clausewitz is one of the theorists who studied napoleons art of war with fascination and developed a theory based on the

general’s military ways [2]. Napoleon is regarded as one of the greatest annihilators in the history of war. The theory by Carl von Clausewitz is based on the perception that no one seeks to start a war without having a clear perception of the intended achievements as well as how they intend to conduct the war and win it altogether [6], [7]. He appreciated that wars occurred at different times under different scopes and circumstances which guided strategy and decision making. The events of every war or conflict should therefore be held in light of their own peculiarities. The strategy to any military engagement finds its basis or foundations in the aim of the war and determines the consequent series of actions taken. The dynamics of warfare at any age hence require leaders who are capable of keeping in mind the essence of the war and all strategic plans put in place [6]. As a result, Carl von Clausewitz theorized five elements necessary for a strategic warfare. They include moral, physical, mathematical, geographical and statistical. The moral element of psychology is concerned with the psychological and intellectual aspects. The physical element was concerned with issues as such as the size of the army, military composition, and the level of armament [2]. The mathematical elements are concerned with the calculation aspects of concepts such as angles, convergence and divergence while the geographical elements relates to the terrain [7]. The moral and physical elements were considered to be significantly critical to any warfare. The moral element convinced the armies and the public the need for importance of the war and the need to win it [6]. The will to fight was strengthened by the military might in numbers and level of armament that yielded high confidence before and during the actual war. This not only crated superior armies but also strengthened them progressively with growing numbers. Carl von Clausewitz identified concentration of military forces as a strong point in any warfare. This involved using all the military power to decisively and comprehensively tackle an enemy to finality. Conquering and

destroying enemy power is also a key principle of the theory. Von Clausewitz’ theory also focused on appealing politically to the public as a way of ensuring optimal support in all military action taken the theory also viewed defense as the strongest form of offense and as an effective strategy to win any war.

# Perspective

From history, war will always be part of humanity. Conflicts between countries are bound to emerge as each nation fights for its interests. Over the years, the art of war has gained significant traction from scholars and theorist who have analyzed different wars based on how they were won or lost. It has often emerged that wit in war is greater than might. The ability to outsmart the enemy always wins a war. In this regard, war is psychological, physical and political in nature. From the classical approaches of strategies, annihilation, exhaustion and subversion, strategy merges as the strongest and most viable approach [6]. The Chinese who were master strategists won wars without going to a single battle or raising a weapon. In this regard, it is important to understand the enemy as and strategize on how to overcome them. Subduing an enemy without combat is the smartest way to win a war. This is increasingly being applied in modern warfare where intimidated rivals opt to conform to the demands of other nations instead of resulting to armed conflict. However, even though strategy is critical, there in need for the physical power to back the theoretical strategy. The presence of big armies with heavy weaponry is equally important, especially where intimidation is the intended war strategy. The physical presence is also important as it comes in handy if armed conflict becomes inevitable. In this regard employing the two strategies hand in hand is recommended. Having top strategists as well as military capabilities can win any war. This combination is synonymous with the strongest military powers in the world today. With the modern society being more civilized

than during the classical time, politics play a critical role in the emergence or avoidance of war. Political decision and public interests play are imparts in determining the direction a conflict between two countries take. The modern societal context would rather settle for apolitical other than a military solution to conflicts

# Relationship between Classical Warfare and Cyber Warfare

Classical war and military strategy theories have evolved over the years to sophisticated modern day approaches that are heavily aided by technology. The experience of humanity with war that has been well documented over the years continues to inspire modern day military intentions and strategies [9]. Cyber warfare has been the most recent approach to military strategies and has a huge potential in achieving multiple goals of war. Even through the modern world is more civilized with war being the last resort, military expenditure continues to increase for most nations who progressively enhance the capabilities of the military personnel and equipment [4]. The concept applied by cyber warfare uses computer technology to increase the precision, stealth, intelligence capabilities as well as direct combat. Cyber warfare enhances, land, water and air capabilities of any military [8]. The modern cyber warfare concept is based on information and systems used or held by a country. In the age of advanced computer capabilities, war has shifted from the battlefields to the cyberspace. Rival countries use information in the cyberspace to destabilize their enemies in order to have an advantage or power over them [8]. Cyber warfare entails the use of computer or network based powers to manipulate, destroy or disrupt the systems of a rival country. This may result in political, economic, social and military destabilization which may result in weakening of the rival in manner that the attacker yields advantage [4]. Unlike physical combat which was common during the time of classical theorists, cyber warfare relies heavily on information and intelligence. The ability to

decipher the plans of the enemy and use them against them is pivotal in waging cyber warfare. Superpowers like the United States have been accused of spying on multiple countries all over the world which has been seen as a way to always stay ahead. In the modern collection of accurate and useful information is significantly critical [6]. Countries no longer engage in armed combat when compared to classical times. Like the Sun Tzu theory works on collection of information and intelligence, modern warfare is significantly based on this.

Modern militaries use both human and computer intelligence to collect information which used to carry out the cyber warfare [12]. For instance, economic and political sanctions have become the order of modern day warfare where rival countries are denied these fundamental aspects of living [10]. Cyber warfare is carried out with in a manner that either focuses on strategic objectives, technical objectives or the political systems of a country [4]. Cyber attacks with as strategic focus seek to have an impact on information and communication systems, as well as the civil security of a country [9]. On the other hand, technical targets in cyber warfare seek to gain advantages such as weapon control and military communications and strategies. Cyber warfare that is politically focused seeks to have an influence on the governing of a country by altering the balance of power and diplomatic relations. These forms of cyber attacks have the potential to compel any country to adhere to the demands of another without using any military power or defense [4]. These actions of cyber warfare have a similar intention as viewed by theorists Von Clausewitz. Von Clausewitz views war as a political even that eventually shapes the relationships between the rivals involved. This assertion which was applicable in the classical times still remains the same in the cyber warfare context. With modern warfare shifting to the cyberspace, defense has become a key area of concern as countries embark on protecting themselves from countries regarded as rivals [9]. Like Clausewitz,

theorized, defense is the best form of attack as it aids in determining the capabilities of the attacker [7]. This aspect is being increasingly applied in cyber warfare as expenditure into research and national security in the cyberspace for most countries continues to intensify. Considering the moral and physical aspects of warfare that Von Clausewitz focused on, superior physical technological infrastructure and personnel capabilities are paramount [11], [12]. Even though cyber warfare may be carried out in secrecy, it is important to have the political goodwill and support of the public regarding why such actions are necessary.

# Conclusion

The modern art of warfare borrows significantly from classical warfare and theories that were developed therein. The scope of warfare in the past resulted in depth interest on how such wars were planned, won and lost. The circumstances surrounding each conflict were analyzed in a bid to have superior strategies capable of winning the next war. Different personalities like Napoleon Bonaparte gained popularity due to application of war strategies that always gave them victory and an advantage over their rivals. Even though modern conflict in cyber warfare is significantly different, the concepts and principles of war are similar in many ways. Modern military intelligence and information gathering technologies have been used significantly to subdue rivals. Similarly, the political aspects of war also continue to play a major role as every nation fights for the interests of its people. Strategic alliances have been formed in a bid to consolidate individual powers and capabilities as well as gain military and intelligence advantage.

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