

- All warfare is based on deception.
- Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.
- 22. If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant.
- cleverness has never been seen associated with long delays.
- There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare.
- to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.
- "A kingdom should not be governed from without, and army should not be directed from within.
- He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.
- If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.
- "Knowing the enemy enables you to take the offensive, knowing yourself enables you to stand on the defensive.
- "Attack is the secret of defense; defense is the planning of an attack.
- To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself.
- "He who only sees the obvious, wins his battles with difficulty; he who looks below the surface of things, wins with ease.
- Hence the skillful fighter puts himself into a position which makes defeat impossible, and does not miss the moment for defeating the enemy.
- The control of a large force is the same principle as the control of a few men: it is merely a question of dividing up their numbers.
- Fighting with a large army under your command is nowise different from fighting with a small one: it is merely a question of instituting signs and signals.
- In all fighting, the direct method may be used for joining battle, but indirect methods will be needed in order to secure victory.
- The clever combatant looks to the effect of combined energy, and does not require too much from individuals.
- When you surround an army, leave an outlet free.
- The object, as Tu Mu puts it, is

- "to make him believe that there is a road to safety, and thus prevent his fighting with the courage of despair." Tu Mu adds pleasantly: "After that, you may crush him.
- "No town should be attacked which, if taken, cannot be held, or if left alone, will not cause any trouble.
- "It is a great mistake to waste men in taking a town when the same expenditure of soldiers will gain a province.
- "The art of giving orders is not to try to rectify minor blunders and not to be swayed by petty doubts.