



The Tao Of War

Ralph D. Sawyer

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Wang Chen, a ninth-century military commander, was sickened by the carnage that had plagued the glorious T'ang dynasty for decades. "All within the seas were poisoned," he wrote, "and pain and disaster was rife throughout the land." Wang Chen wondered, how can we end conflicts before they begin? How can we explain and understand the dynamics of conflict? For the answer he turned to a remarkable source-the *Tao Te Ching*. Here is Wang Chen's own rendering of and commentary on the ancient text, insightfully expanded and amplified by translator Ralph D. Sawyer, a leading scholar of Chinese military history. Although the *Tao* long influenced Chinese military doctrine, Wang Chen's interpretations produced the first reading of it as a martial text-a "tao of war." Like Sun-tzu's *Art of War*, certainly the most famous study of strategy ever written, the *Tao* provides lessons for the struggles of contemporary life. In the way that the ancient *Art of War* provides inspiration and advice on how to succeed in competitive situations of all kinds, even in today's world, Wang Chen's *The Tao of War* uncovers action plans for managing conflict and promoting peace. A book to put on the shelf next to *Art of War*, Wang Chen's *The Tao of War* is a reference of equally compelling and practical advice.

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