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Two Peoples Separated by a Common Language: Friend or Foe in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*

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For the most part, readers tend to accept Sun Tzu's uses of 'ren' (人) and 'min' (民) to refer to 'our men.' These two words are self-explanatory and straightforward. However, there are occasions in which Sun Tzu seems to use 'ren' and 'min' differently when the word is used singly, especially when he uses these two words one by one in the same paragraph. Li Ling claims that 'ren' refers to 'the enemy' while 'min' refers to 'our men.' Li Ling is the only scholar who claims Sun Tzu purposely differentiated between the uses of these terms, and leads us to a new understanding of the nuances Sun Tzu may wish to express when he purposely chooses these two different words in a single sentence. In so doing, however, he also twists the main theme of this masterpiece and transforms it into the art of another war in which a general fights against his own people instead of his enemy. It is interesting to read Sun Tzu through Li's

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lens which shows that friend and foe are more rigidly defined, but we must differentiate between the two terms to ensure we know what Sun Tzu really tries to convey. The lack of mutual understanding of the meaning of ‘min’ and ‘ren’ has significant consequences for interpreters and readers alike, for, if warfare is a matter of life and death, Sun Tzu would not have been so careless with his use of these important terms. It is a huge risk to assume he does it purposely and intends to mislead his readers; therefore, it is worthwhile to find out if Li is correct in his assumption about these two terms. This paper intends to explain firstly how Li retrieves the claimed nuances Sun Tzu would wish to express, and secondly to study the misleading relevance of Sun Tzu in Chinese strategic thinking.

Keywords: Sun Tzu, The Art of War, people, enemy, Li Ling

Introduction*

Historically, there was a hostile relationship between the Han Chinese farmers and the neighboring hordes, who invaded their territory and looted it. The same happened when the Han fought back and invaded territories. According to traditional Chinese military thinking, it is better to have battlefields in foreign countries because the generals would lead their men into unknown yet desperate territory, and the soldiers will fight ruthlessly to kill the enemy and escape hostile lands. Many believe Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* is a book on leadership for the reason that a general needs to account not only for the logistics of battle, but also the emotions and anxiety his soldiers will face, when entering battle, and after days of being away from loved ones. There are many important figures in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, according to the chain of command, ranging from generals to foot soldiers ('min'), or peasants. In ancient China, high ranking officers were basically the capital dwellers (國人), a group of people comprised mostly of male inhabitants of the capital to be in charge of protecting the country, while the peasants from the paddy fields are depicted as 'min' (民, the masses).[1] It is the capital dwellers' duty to be able to maintain morale for the soldiers so that the latter are inspired to continue fighting, for the peasants from the countryside have families and farms they yearn to return to, so they need as much inspiration and hope as possible during the dark and weary days they face. By the same token, Sun Tzu introduces different posts, such as jiang (將, the generals,) li (吏, officers,), bing (兵, soldiers) or zu (卒,

* English translations of passages of *The Spring and Autumn of Master Lu*, *The Documents*, *Chuang Tzu*, *Hsun Tzu*, *Meng Tzu*, *Lun Yu*, *Shuo yuan*, *Lao Tzu*, *Mo Tzu*, *Guan Tzu* and *The Book of Lord Shang* were quoted from Hsiao Kung-chuan, *A History of Chinese Political Thought, Volume One, from the Beginning to the Sixth Century AD*, translated by F. W. Mote (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1979.

1 Yuri Pines, *Envisioning Eternal Empire* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2009), 192-193.

soldiers) to guarantee a victory.

In Chapter Two, Sun Tzu correctly points out that the reason troops slay the enemy is because they are enraged, for anger functions as a social bond.[2] When soldiers' anger focuses collectively on their enemy, the shared anger ties individual soldiers together after they notice they have the enemy to fight against. It is natural to define the lines of "Us vs. Them." This "Us" vs. "Them" mentality is often encountered in ancient Chinese history.[3] It is the main theme in the treatise of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* to handle the fighting between soldiers of both sides for victory and loss. In Chinese, the characters 'ren' (人) and 'min' (民) have the same meaning: people. For example, Robin D. S. Yates argues that:

> "two groups of infantry were employed by the Shang king, the zhong (masses) and the 'ren' (people), who were mobilized for warfare, agriculture, and other forced labor projects."[4]

While most scholars accept these two words as sharing a meaning, Li Ling reminds us we need to work on differentiating between the two, for he thinks 'ren' means 'the enemy' while 'min' means 'our people,'[5] and this somehow twists the main theme of the book and makes the soldiers that died in *The Art of War* minor characters, and all of the glory ends up going to the generals. This paper intends to re-examine the works of Li and to clarify the confusing status of these soldiers as a result of their 'ren' and 'min' status.

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[2] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》(北京：中華書局，2007)，頁13。

[3] 許倬雲，《我者與他者：中國歷史上的內外分際》(臺北：時報出版企業股份有限公司，2009)，頁42。

[4] Robin D. S. Yates, "Early China" in Kurt Raaflau and Nathan Rosenstein eds. *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds: Asia, the Mediterranean, and Mesoamerica* (Cambridge: Center for Hellenic Studies, 1999), 13.

[5] 李零，《唯一的規則：孫子的鬥爭哲學》(香港：中文大學出版社，2010)，頁7、97；李零對此二字的改變是在最新出版的《唯一的規則：孫子的鬥爭哲學》。在此之前他都以「我方士兵」、「使人投入戰鬥」解；見李零，《孫子譯注》，頁51，以及《兵以詐立：我讀孫子》(北京：中華書局，2007)，頁200。

An Enemy Named ‘Ren’

There is a little episode in the *Zhan Guo Ce* (戰國策；*Strategies of the Warring States*) translated by Rebecca Zerby Byrne:

> The barbarian northern Jung tribe had invaded Ch’i, and this state then asked for assistance from Cheng. The son of the Earl of Cheng led a force and won a great victory over the Jung. Earlier the Marquis of Ch’i had offered one of his daughters in marriage to this prince of Cheng. He had refused on the grounds that the match would be too great for him. On the occasion of this victory the offer is repeated. This time the prince refused even more strongly and explained to someone (人) who asked about it: “Now, having hurried here by my ruler’s orders to succor Ch’i in its exigency, if I return with a wife it would be as if I had won her by arms. What would the people say of me?” Is it that the wife would be a constant reminder that he had participated in this campaign? Or is it that marriage and warfare should not be mixed? Apparently if the ruler has a regard for “the people’s” (‘min’ 民) opinions, he will stay away from things having to do with warfare, or at least separate these from the rest of his life.[6]

Byrne’s use of ‘min’ as “the people” and its meaning is self-evident, but her use of someone (‘ren’) to depict “the other person” differs from Li’s. If we were to follow Li’s theory, the translation of some passages would be very different depending on which word is used. The testing scenario is in Chapter Seven when Sun Tzu describes the way to employ the masses. He first quotes *the Book of Military Policies* (軍政) that states: “It is because commands cannot be heard in the din of battle that drums and gongs are used; it is because units cannot identify each other in battle that flags and pennants are used.” (言不相聞，故為金鼓；視而不見，故為旌旗。)[7] In this case, without doubt, the passage

[6] Rebecca Zerby Byrne, “Harmony and Violence in Classical China: A Study of the Battle of the Tso-Chuan,” (Chicago: Ph. D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1974), 4.

[7] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁51。

could be translated as, "Gong, drums, banners, and flags are to unify our people's ear and eyes. Once they are unified as one, the brave will not advance alone, the coward will not retreat alone – this is the way to employ the masses." (夫金鼓旌旗者，所以一民之耳目也；民既專一，則勇者不得獨進，怯者不得獨退，此用眾之法也。)[8] Although Li suggests that 'min' and 'ren' have specific connotations, scholars translate this sentence by sticking to the words as they appear in their Chinese version of *The Art of War*. These exegetes believe both 'min' and 'ren' represent 'our men':

> Drums, gongs, flags, and pennants are the way to coordinate the ears and eyes of the men ('min') and should be utilized to consolidate the men into one powerful force.[9] (Ames)
>
> (夫金鼓旌旗者，所以一民之耳目也)
>
> The same instruments and items can be used to focus and instill courage in the troops ('ren').[10] (Griffith)
>
> (夫金鼓旌旗者，所以一人之耳目也)
>
> When the people's ('ren') ears and eyes are united, the brave will not advance alone, the coward will not retreat alone-this is the way to employ the masses.[11] (Wei Ruling)
>
> (夫金鼓旌旗者，所以一人之耳目也)

Li believes that Sun Tzu was referring to the enemy here so that 'ren' is the appropriate and logical word, no matter how these Chinese versions vary. That is to say, if we use 'min,' we can say that flags are necessary because it is for the sake of our own men. There has to be something that is visible for all the troops to see so that they can coordinate their actions, and make the most out of their potential effectiveness on the battlefield. On the other hand, by using 'ren,'

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[8] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁51。

[9] Roger T. Ames, *Sun-Tzu: The Art of Warfare* (New York: Ballantine Book, 1993), 131.

[10] Samuel B. Griffith, *Sun Tzu the Art of War* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 106.

[11] 魏汝霖，《孫子今註今譯》(臺北：臺灣商務印書館，1984)，頁149。

the flags instead become an offensive weapon to deceive the troops of the enemy. If they are blind to our intentions, then we can lead them around like a mule by its nose. In this scenario, Sun Tzu can prevent the leakage of his top military secretes to the enemy's spies. Li's assumption ('ren' vs. 'min') also fits Sun Tzu's other usage of 'ren' when he reiterates that "the expert in battle moves the enemy, and is not moved by him" (故善戰者，致人而不致於人)[12] in Chapter Six.

But if we check other scholars' exegeses, there is no such evidence at all to suggest that this is what Sun Tzu meant. We find the three above mentioned translations are done by three prominent Sun Tzu experts: Roger Ames, Samuel Griffith, and Wei Ruling, and they represent the three most popular exiting versions of Sun Tuz's *The Art of War*: Ames' *the Bamboo Slips* version, which is currently the earliest edition, Griffith's *the Ten Masters* version, and Wei's *Seven Military Classics* version. Of these three, none of them imply that Sun Tzu mentions anything about using signals to deceive the enemy. To make things worse, this sentence cannot be found in the oldest bamboo slips version. Roger Ames' English translation, is based on *the Bamboo Slips* version, so alternating signals do not even exist in his translation, which significantly changes the structure of Sun Tzu's writing.

> This is the art of employing large numbers of troops. (Ames)
> (此用眾之法也。)
>
> This is the art of employing a host. In night fighting use many torches and drums, in day fighting use banners and flags in order to aid the sight and hearing of our troops. ('ren') (Griffith)
> (此用眾之法也。故夜戰多火鼓，晝戰多旌旗，所以變人之耳目也)
>
> Night battles utilize torches and drums and day battles utilize flags and banners. The alternating use of these signals helps communication with the soldiers. ('ren') (Wei Ruling)

[12] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁39。

(此用眾之法也。故夜戰多火鼓，晝戰多旌旗，所以變人之耳目也)

We accept that there is more than one way to translate a classic, but perhaps we should be hesitant to accept Li's explanation to be the ultimate authority on the topic. By the same token, Li's translation significantly changes the meaning of Chapter Five: "Therefore, the able general seeks victory by taking advantage of the force of momentum, not by giving his enemy ('ren') any chance to be in charge. Thus, the able general is able to target the right enemy ('ren') and overwhelm him by the power of momentum (故善戰者，求之於勢，不責於人，故能擇人而任勢).[13] In this case again, not every translator interprets 'ren' as 'the enemy,' making each translation very different from Li's. For example, Ames translates this sentence as: "The expert at battle seeks his victory from strategic advantage (shi, 勢) and does not demand it from his men. He is thus able to select the right men and exploit the strategic advantage (shi).[14] To him, like all the other exegetes, it makes much more sense to use 'friend' here, because an able general is expected to generate momentum. Sun Tzu teaches to avoid relying on the unreliable from his own staff or subordinates in the army ('ren'), otherwise it would not only give the wrong impression about who is in charge, but this would neglect the fact that the general is generating the momentum to win.

Li's definition of 'min' and 'ren' make sense when applied to *The Art of War* in the following case: He claims that 'ren' should refer to "the enemy" in the passage at the end of Chapter Four, for Li interprets these passages as a [depiction of or reference to] fighting the enemy; however, exegetes who stick to their own definition of 'ren' and depict it as maneuvering 'our men' also make sense in their own translations:

> He who exploits the strategic advantage (shi) sends his men ('ren') into battle like rolling logs and boulders. It is the nature of logs and boulders that on flat

[13] 李零，《唯一的規則：孫子的鬥爭哲學》，頁97-98。

[14] Roger T. Ames, *Sun-Tzu: The Art of Warfare*, 131.

> ground, they are stationary, but on steep ground, they roll; the square in shape tends to stop but the round tends to roll. Thus, that the strategic advantage (shi) of the expert commander in exploiting his men (‘ren’) in battle can be likened to rolling round boulders down a steep ravine thousands of feet high says something about his strategic advantage (shi). (Ames)
>
> (任勢者，其戰人也，如轉木石。木石之性，安則靜，危則動，方則止，圓則行。故善戰人之勢，如轉圓石於千仞之山者，勢也。)
>
> He who relies on the situation uses his men (‘ren’) in fighting as one rolls logs or stones. Now the nature of logs and stones is that on stable ground they are static; on unstable ground, they move. If square, they stop; if round, they roll. Thus, the potential of troops (‘ren’) skillfully commanded in battle may be compared to that of round boulders which roll down from mountain heights. (Griffith)
>
> Those who know how to use the force of momentum have their people (‘ren’) fight as if they were rolling logs and rocks. It is the nature of a log or stone to stand still on a stable place but to roll when it is on an incline. So if they have corners, they stand still and they are round-shaped, they roll. Thus the momentum released by an able general when he leads the people (‘ren’) into the battle is like that of round stones rolled down a thousand-fathom mountain. That is how much momentum he can generate. (Wei Ruling)

These interpretations remain the main-stream interpretations of Sun Tzu because they exist in the three most popular versions. In this particular passage for example, (‘ren’) can be used interchangeably and still make sense. Both sides make a good case and have strong arguments. Now, unusually, Sun Tzu specifically chooses the words of ‘min’ and ‘ren’ separately to conclude Chapters Four and Five. When describing Xing (形), Sun Tzu uses ‘min’, our men, to depict the strength of a victorious army: “The victorious army mobilizes its ‘min’ as if it was releasing pent-up water into a chasm a thousand fathoms deep. This is achieved through strategic positioning.” (勝者之戰民也，若

決積水於千仞之谿者，形也。)[15] He wants his 'min' to appear unstoppable because of their strategic positioning. Until now, Li and other exegetes agreed that 'min' meant 'our men.' But on the other hand, Sun Tzu clearly uses 'ren' for 'Shi' (勢) in Chapter Five, and at the end he concludes, "Thus the momentum released by an able general when he fights against 'ren' in the battle is like that of round stones rolled down a thousand-fathom mountain. That is how much momentum he can generate." (故善戰人之勢，如轉圓石於千仞之山者，勢也。)[16] Here we see a totally different concept: Sun Tzu is able to overpower the 'ren' by treating them like rolling stones or logs down a hill. While both uses of the term make sense according to Li, we should aim to convey the true essence of what Sun Tzu was trying to communicate.

Sun Tzu is famous for his down-to-earth ability of calculation and strategic thinking, and it is worthwhile to consider why he would have used the two different, but vital terms to explain his most important teachings on Xing and Shi. If he did it for the sake of introducing two different groups of people, then Li Ling is correct in revealing these nuances. Additionally, all the exegetes till now had misunderstood Sun Tzu by using them interchangeably which happens to appear in most current popular Chinese versions. Because there is no standard Chinese version of this text, new interpretations including the provocative ones are still developing today. Some said the confusion between 'min' and 'ren' is a result of the Tang Dynasty editors, who changed the word 'min' to 'ren' to avoid the name of Tai Zong Emperor of Tang Dynasty (李世民; Li Shi Min) as taboo substitutes (避諱).[17] Cao Cao (曹操), a famous exegete and general, along with many scholars who followed in his footsteps, all claim that 'min' and 'ren' can be used interchangeably, despite the issue of taboo

[15] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁29。
[16] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁37。
[17] 李零，《唯一的規則：孫子的鬥爭哲學》，頁97；李零，《兵以詐立：我讀孫子》，頁200。

substitutes. Furthermore, in this passage two of the three most important and popular versions of the text state the two words as one and use it as "people." If we accepted Li Ling's point, we might underestimate all the knowledge of those scholars who followed in Cao Cao's footsteps.

The lack of mutual understanding of the meaning of 'min' and 'ren' has significant consequences for interpreters and readers alike. This confusion in meaning that Li raises results in extensive misunderstanding of this valuable knowledge. How are we to know who has the final say in the correct interpretation of Sun Tzu, or, to put it another way, how much authority should we give someone like Li, when there are others who dispute his arguments? One may believe that the real work is in finding what the most authentic edition is. In this case, the discovery of a new edition of *The Art of War* could very well change our interpretations. However, we will always have to deal with the missing passages like that of in *the Bamboo Slips* version. Perhaps that fact that Sun Tzu used 'min' almost three times as much as he used 'ren' provides a clue to its meaning. Some would argue that at the heart of Sun Tzu's teachings is deception, and for Sun Tzu to clearly differentiate between the two would be a little ironic given this credo. However, it is unlikely that Sun Tzu would intentionally not clarify such an important aspect and risk his entire teachings being misunderstood. With that being said, it is best we look at the meaning of these terms during the time that Sun Tzu wrote this piece. We must return to the original meaning of these two terms in order to determine the accuracy of Li's claims.

In the Name of the People

The Chinese believe that 'ren' is typically a positive term and used to refer to the superiority of humans over all other species (人為萬物之靈). Therefore they honor the poet as 'shi-ren' (詩人) to be the only occupation titled with 'ren' for

his magical ability to depict the beauty of the universe through his words over the mediocre 'jia' (家 specialist) like hua-jia (畫家, painter) shufa-jia (書法家, calligrapher), etc. In its broadest sense 'ren' can be used to refer to any human being of any group, origin, etc. A man with highest morals is called sheng-ren (聖人; sage),[18] where the least cultivated are called ye-man-ren (野蠻人, barbarians). Contrary to the conduct of the sage, the latter group would commit the war crime: "when contentions about territory are the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men ('ren') until the fields are filled with them. When some struggle for a city is the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men ('ren') until the city is filled with them" (爭地以戰，殺人盈野。爭城以戰，殺人盈城).[19] The Chinese believe 'ren' is the heart-and-mind of the cosmos (人者天地之心也),[20] which demonstrates the human being's supreme status. Philosophers such as Confucius, Lao Tzu, and Mencius all share a different perspective on this topic. Mencius argues that human nature is good by saying: "All men ('ren') may be Yaos and Shuns" (人皆可以為堯舜),[21] while Hsun Tzu, or Xun Tzu, (荀子) essentially argues that, "Humans ('ren') are evil and fake" (人之性惡，其善者偽也).[22] Chapter Nineteen in *Hsun Tzu* says: "That kings were forced to create laws and rules to keep people ('ren') in order and maintain their desires" (禮論曰：禮起於何也？曰：人生而有欲。先王惡其亂也，故制禮義以分之，以養人之欲，給人之求。)[23]

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[18] Roger T. Ames, Henry Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998), 60.

[19] 焦循，《孟子正義》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈離婁上〉，頁278。

[20] David L. Hall, Roger T. Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 137.

[21] Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China* (Stanford Cali.: Stanford University Press, 1969), 12-13; From here I have used F. W. Mote's English translation of Kung-chuan Hsiao's A History of Chinese Political Thought, Volume One: From the Beginnings to the Sixth Century A.D. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), for the passages I quote from the classics of ancient Chinese philosophy.

[22] 王先謙注，《荀子》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈性惡〉，頁289。

[23] 王先謙注，《荀子》，〈禮論〉，頁231。

To Confucian philosophers, strong human relations are imperative to any strong and peaceful society. Confucius identified this as 'ren' (仁)[24], simply, "the need to love all men ('ren')". (樊遲問仁，子曰：愛人。)[25] Or, according to his answer to Chung-kung, treating one ('ren') the way we would like to be treated. (仲弓問仁，子曰：己所不欲，勿施於人)[26] Confucius explains 'ren' as, "Remembering our own faults when judging others ('ren') and lifting people ('ren') up spiritually." (夫仁者，己欲立而立人，己欲達而達人。)[27] On the other hand, Lao Tzu claims that "Men ('ren') are soft and weak at their birth, rigid and tough in death," (人之生也柔弱，其死也剛強。)[28] however, we should remain humble towards them. (善用人者為之下)[29] Although they differ in their beliefs of the human spirits, both Confucian and Lao Tzu treat people ('ren') as the end, not the means of their political philosophy when they use the term 'ren' to depict their ideal governing. During the chaotic pre-Qin period, philosophers argue that 'ren' is imperative to any sound government, although they each have a different approach to achieving it. As mentioned previously, the Confucian school promoted the idea of a person 'cultivating himself so as to ease the lot of other people ('ren') (修己以安人)[30]; Lao Tzu fears the government would bring more troubles to its people before it can solve any current problems. He insists on minimal government so as not to cause more distress for the people ('ren'). (五色令人目盲。五音令人耳聾。五味令人口爽。馳騁畋獵，令人心發狂。)[31] Mo Tzu, argues for choosing the most qualified and knowledgeable people ('ren') to run the government, since they are the ones

[24] Roger T. Ames, *Confucian Role Ethics, A Vocabulary* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 176-178.
[25] 劉寶楠著，《論語正義》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈顏淵〉，頁262。
[26] 劉寶楠著，《論語正義》，〈顏淵〉，頁262。
[27] 劉寶楠著，《論語正義》，〈雍也〉，頁111。
[28] 王鎮，王天海，《說苑》(臺北：臺灣古籍出版社，1996)，〈敬慎〉，頁465。
[29] 徐秀榮，《老子釋譯》(臺北：里仁書店，1980)，〈第六十八〉，頁176。
[30] 劉寶楠著，《論語正義》，〈憲問〉，頁300。
[31] 徐秀榮，《老子釋譯》，〈第十二〉，頁29。

serving the king. (事則不與，祿則不分，請問天下之賢人將何自至乎王公大人之側哉。)[32] Legalists believe 'ren' is the most important aspect of any government, and great measures should be taken to ensure plenty of (loyal) people are recruited. These are the people ('ren') who will follow orders and make the leader's dreams a reality, and reiterate that 'min' and 'ren' both serve different, but vitally important roles. It is the people who contribute to the might of a country and its ability to survive. In Chapter Sixteen of the *Guan Tzu*, *Fa Fa* (法法篇) explains that any ruler in charge of many will be far more esteemed than the ruler of few. Anyone leading men into battle to fight for land must first be willing to surround himself with good people ('ren') (爭天下者必先爭人).[33]

In Chinese, 'ren', refers then first of all to human beings as possessing culture and nationality. As such, human beings have cultural or biological links, which motivate them to form political units. To Han-ren (漢人; Han Chinese) Man-ren (滿人; Manchurian) are the other people; and to Zhong-guo-ren (中國人; the Chinese) Ri-ben-ren (日本人; the Japanese,) are foreigners. Our countrymen are guo-ren (國人), and foreigners Wai-guo-ren (外國人).[34] That is to say, 'ren' is the human beings that share something in common, and differ from other people. Those who are very friendly to us are our "you-ren" (友人; friends). In Chinese, those members in the family are jia-ren (家人), with those who we have no relationship are "lu-ren" (路人, people on the road) or ta-ren (他人, those people who we don't know) meaning strangers. Those who have conflicting interests are "di-ren" (敵人; the enemy), like Wu ren (吳人; Wu people) and Yue ren (越人, Yueh people)[35] who, in Sun Tzu's treatise, are hostile to each other.

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[32] 孫怡讓，《墨子閒詁》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈尚賢上〉，頁25。

[33] 戴望，《管子校正》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈霸言〉，頁141。

[34] Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the other in Antiquity* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011), 2; Roger T. Ames, "The Classic Chinese Self and Hypocrisy," in Roger T. Ames, Wimal Dissanayake, eds. *Self and Deception* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 233; David L. Hall, Roger T. Ames, *Anticipating China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 243.

[35] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁78。

Here, the second use of 'ren' may refer to "other person." *Han FeiTzu* (韓非子) and *the Discourses on Salt and Iron* (鹽鐵論) have this common sentence: "When one's strength is great, others ('ren') come to pay court; when one's strength is weak, one must pay court to others ('ren')" (力多則人朝，力寡則朝於人。).[36] While Li Ling's claim that 'ren' refers to 'the enemy' makes sense on the surface, for there are people within our own force who are different from other groups, (for example, soldiers and their officers see themselves as 'the other,' or friendly forces are 'the other' to each other even in one's own camp) but still they share similar goals, that is, to beat the other enemy.

As mentioned earlier, 'ren' and 'min' both may refer to 'people' in the Chinese language. The interchanging of these two terms began in the Han Dynasty (202BC-220AD).[37] For example, "Military affairs have developed for long periods of time. They are the result of human beings ('min')" (兵之所自來者上矣，與始有民俱。) as explained in *The Spring and Autumn of Master Lu* (呂氏春秋)[38]; and in Mao Zedong's famous quote, "If other people ('ren') do not attack me, I will not attack them ('ren')" (人不犯我，我不犯人。) in which 'ren' refers to 'the other people.' The character, 'min' (民), in its earliest form, refers to peasants who are lacking intellectual abilities and are not worthy of holding any political position or office (庶民; the plebeian),[39] and therefore was considered to be degrading in ancient Chinese political classics. Mo Tzu argues that humans are collectively evil, and since the beginning of time only aimed to

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[36] 蕭公權，《中國政治思想史(上)》(臺北：聯經出版事業公司，1980)，頁291；高佑注，《呂氏春秋》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈孟秋紀〉，頁65。

[37] The Book of History《尚書》includes a phrase "jing shou re shi." (敬授人時) meaning to give the people a calendar so are informed of the seasons changing and know how to adjust to time. However, Chronicles of Han Dynasty uses the phrase "jing shou min shi." (敬授民時) which has the same meaning.

[38] [秦]呂不韋著，收入王雲五主編，《呂氏春秋》(臺北：臺灣商務印書館，1968)，頁91。

[39] David L. Hall, Roger T. Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius*, 137-146.

harm each other (古者民始生未有刑政之時，天下百姓皆以水火毒藥相虧害。).[40] Taoists believed the best way to control such an evil and self-serving population was to keep them uneducated and living primitive lives (常使民無知欲) [41]and provided for themselves (民如野鹿).[42] Confucian scholars felt it was their responsibility to care for the 'min' since they were viewed as needy and helpless, yet still, they are the "root" of the country as described in *The Documents* (尚書：民為邦本，本固邦寧。).[43] While more attention was paid to the ruler of his time than his people, Mencius openly supported all peasants and argued essentially that they are the ones who hold the key to freedom (民為貴，社稷次之，君為輕。是故得乎丘民而為天子。).[44] According to Lao Tzu, the peasants do not fear death, so a ruler should not waste his energy to threaten them with it (民不畏死，奈何以死懼之。).[45]

In order to govern the 'min,' Confucius argues for leading the people by example and loving the people as we would want them to love us.[46] He also said: "If a superior loves propriety, the people ('min') will not dare not be reverent. If he loves righteousness, the people ('min') will not dare not to submit to his example. If he loves good faith, the people ('min') will not dare not to be sincere." (上好禮則民莫敢不敬，上好義則民莫敢不服，上好信則民莫敢不用情。)[47] Another Confucian master, Hsun Tzu, also promotes the idea of leading people by the example of good character rather than rewards and punishments. (故賞不用而民勸，罰不用而民服。)[48] On the contrary, Lao Tzu argues that it is the

[40] 孫怡讓，《墨子閒詁》，〈尚賢上〉，頁25。
[41] 徐秀榮，《老子釋譯》，〈第三〉，頁8；郭慶藩輯，《莊子集釋》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈天地〉，頁181。
[42] 郭慶藩輯，《莊子集釋》，〈在宥〉，頁165。
[43] 朱駿聲，《尚書古注便讀》(臺北：廣文書局，1977)，〈夏書．五子之歌〉，頁61。
[44] 焦循，《孟子正義》，〈盡心下〉，頁561。
[45] 徐秀榮，《老子釋譯》，〈第七十四〉，頁186。
[46] 劉寶楠著，《論語正義》，〈子路〉，頁279。
[47] 劉寶楠著，《論語正義》，〈子路〉，頁279。
[48] 王先謙注，《荀子》，〈君道〉，頁151。

people themselves who are capable of inspiring change amongst themselves, not the ruler. (故聖人云：我無為而民自化，我好靜而民自正，我無事而民自富，我無欲而民自樸。)[49] From these passages, we learn that the ruler has to be aware of the higher art of ruling, wu-wei (無為).

Ren, in terms of their sociability and character, are to lead these indeterminate masses of peasants (‘min’). Although ‘min’ constitutes the army, the low status of ‘min’ is clear in the classics where it is frequently contrasted with “those above” due to the fact that the ‘min’ as ‘min’ tend to be passive, and thus need to be utilized.[50] Shang Yang also makes a similar, but harsher, comment on the relations between ‘min’ and ‘ren’: “If indeed the people (‘min’) are not engaged in agriculture and warfare, it means that the ruler is fond of words and that the officials have failed in their regular duties”. (夫民之不農戰也，上好言而官失常也。)[51] *The Book of Lord Shang* (商君書), argues that the more people are united, in activities such as agriculture and war for example, the more likely it is that those people will care less about their jobs.

In Sun Tzu’s time, the Legalists aimed to enrich the state and strengthen the army, and this led to ‘min’ becoming viewed as a means, not an end in themselves. For example, the principles in the *Guan Tzu* guide the people (‘min’) to use their power to elevate the status of their rulers,[52] who in turn, loves them and provides for them. (計上之所以愛民者為用之，故愛之也。)[53]Since Guan Tzu and Sun Tzu both come from the state of Qi, they share similar beliefs that good leadership is the key to getting through to the people and convincing them to go to battle for you (道者，令民與上同意).[54] Guan Tzu

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[49] 徐秀榮，《老子釋譯》，〈第五十三〉，頁135。
[50] Roger T. Ames, *The Art of Rulership: A study in Ancient Chinese Political Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), 142-157.
[51] 嚴可均校，《商君書》(上海：新華書店，1986)，〈農戰〉，頁5。
[52] 戴望，《管子校正》，〈權修〉，頁6。
[53] 戴望，《管子校正》，〈法法〉，頁87。
[54] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁2。

argues that the people should be pleased with the commands of their ruler (人主之所令則行，禁則止者，必令於民之所好而禁於民之所惡也。民之情莫不欲生而惡死，莫不欲利而惡害。故上令於生利人則令行，禁於殺害人則禁止。令之所以行者必民樂其政也。).[55]

From their descriptions on the interpersonal relations between 'ren' and 'min,' we know a 'ren' is able to influence the minds of a thousand farmers and soldiers. (農戰之民千人，而有詩書辯慧者一人焉，千人者皆感於農戰矣。農戰之民百人，而有技藝者一人焉，百人者皆感於農戰矣。)[56] A general depends on the Xing (形), or national strength, composed by 'min', to fight the enemy. He must be able to do it in a way that "preserves both his and his enemy's army intact while achieving a complete victory," which necessitates having unconditional loyalty from his troops. If a general wants to have the cooperation of his troops, he cannot take the relationship between he and them for granted, and this is why Sun Tzu reiterates that "cultivating the Tao and strictly adhering to the Law" (修道而保法). It is absurd to believe that a general would have to spoil his men to get their attention; rather, it is the art of forming a bond of trust between himself and his men that will make them do his bidding.

Sun Tzu believes in the utilization of 'min' (用眾),[57] and the quickest way to achieve victory is by sending 'min' into battle where they are far from home. We must acknowledge what sorts of people are required to turn a simple peasant farmer into a warrior. We have to be careful and not jump to conclusions here and believe it is so simple when Sun Tzu says, "when the victorious get their people ('min') to go to battle," (勝者之戰民也) the people are practically invincible like water from a thousand feet high. We believe that Sun Tzu is not trying to show us how to be physically invincible, he is showing us how to maneuver the people to go to the abyss that is a thousand feet from

[55] 戴望，《管子校正》，〈形勢解〉，頁323。
[56] 嚴可均校，《商君書》，〈農戰〉，頁5。
[57] Roger T. Ames, *The Art of Rulership: A Study in Ancient Chinese Political Thought*, 142-157.

safety, and fight with all their might until their very last breath. So it is reasonable to allow Sun Tzu's use of 'min' here in Chapter Four, for the peasants ('min') are the building blocks of the army. They need to be motivated by an able general and his staff. But above all, at this stage of Chapter Four, they are not fighting in an actual war-they just constitute a formidable force like the pent-up water into a chasm a thousand fathoms deep.

In short, Sun Tzu discusses the strength of an army consisted of 'min.' Victory is not only achieved by the power of your men, but also by the number of mistakes your enemy will make. This last point is the focus of Chapter Five, which is on momentum. It is crucial that the general use his 'ren,' his loyal capital dwellers, to efficiently pass down orders to the 'min,' those mediocre peasants. These chapters look confusing because of the use of 'ren' and 'min' separately, yet when together we can see Sun Tzu's genius at work. We can see, when carried out appropriately, the power behind 'min' is enormous and capable of causing great damage. Sun Tzu refers to the power of the momentum as boulders or logs rolling down a steep hill and leaving damage in its wake. It is the 'ren' who should inspire the force behind the 'min.'

Conclusion:

Li Ling argues that 'ren' and 'min' possess friend/foe connotations in Sun Tzu's writing; however, we have no way to confirm this from the uses of them in other classics.

Byrne's, as well as those exegetes and other Chinese philosophers', use of 'min' as "the people," and their use of someone ('ren') to depict "the other person," leads us to some insight regarding the features of this person. The status of 'ren' must be high enough for him to talk to the prince and sometimes to be consulted with. When we scrutinize the philosophers that existed during the time *The Art of War* was written, we find that the use of 'ren' is set in

opposition to ‘min.’ ‘Ren’ in this case refers to the noble, while ‘min’ refers to the peasants.[58] Most of the passages we mentioned lead us to the conclusion that ‘ren’ is expected to be seen as the savior of ‘min.’ ‘Min’ must be saved because they are the crucial building blocks of the society. It is the duty of the benevolent government to feed them and to protect them. Legalists like Guan Tzu and his colleagues like Shang Yang, Han Fei Tzu, and Sun Tzu elevate the rulers and treat the ‘min’ as the means to enrich the country and strengthen the army. Both sides however, view ‘ren’, as intelligent and diligent officers in the government, who help the rulers accomplish the mission.

In these two confusing chapters in terms of the uses of ‘ren’ and ‘min,’ shi (勢, momentum) is to a general what a blueprint is to an engineer. A general’s momentum must be flexible and capable of adapting to changing needs. Shi cannot be seen or touched and is a compliment to Xing (形, disposition). ‘Ren’ are expected to maneuver and direct the ‘min.’ The enemy may have very good Xing, but we can force them to fight on their weaker side if a general can adapt himself and turn his Xing (disposition, consisted of ‘min’) into Shi (momentum, activated by ‘ren’). Xing is tangible but Shi is not, which makes it a powerful tool since the enemy cannot see it. The ‘ren’ should divide the army into appropriately sized units and be deployed to where they can inflict the most damage. The execution of this involves four steps: (1) how they are organized and establishing an appropriate chain of command, (2) the use appropriate signs and signals (gongs and flags), (3) separate troops into regulars and reservists (to ensure that an attack from the enemy can be sustained without defeat), and (4) the layout of the force-concentrating force where it is needed most.[59] All of these

[58] In Guan Tzu’s Chapter Three Quan Xiu 《管子・權修篇》, the author argues that “The preservation of arms depends on ‘ren’, and the preservation of ‘ren’ depends on grain.” (兵之守在人，人之守在粟) It means provisions in one’s favor decide the outcome of warfare because it enables the officers, the ‘ren’, to command the masses without worrying about the shortage of food.

[59] 李零譯註，《孫子譯注》，頁32。

steps are the same regardless of the size of your army. When all of these steps can be achieved, the army is prepared to move forward into battle with the force of boulders rolling downhill.

Li claims that 'ren' can be interpreted as "the enemy," but when we scrutinize its use in opposition to "the masses" ('min'), it does not make sense for peasants with no battle experience to be trained to fight in such dangerous conditions. In this case, 'ren' can be the enemy of 'min,' as the 'min' are forced into battle unwillingly. However, 'ren' and 'min' have the same goal, to win against the enemy, and it is the duty of the general to lay out the best Xing by placing his peasant soldiers in an undefeatable position, as Sun Tzu teaches in Chapter Four. Chapter Five discusses the role of the 'ren' to lead the 'min' once the general has properly positioned them.

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「人」與「民」語意的撕裂與誤導：孫子兵法的敵、我之辨

朱文章*

閱讀孫子兵法，讀者多半將內容中的「人」與「民」解讀為「我方人馬」。這兩個字相關字眼如國民、敵人，也明白易曉，不難解讀。但學者李零認為：孫子某些篇章，此二字單獨使用時有特殊涵義，他並將「人」與「民」分別解讀為「敵人」與「我方人馬」。李零是指出此二字在孫子兵法中有不同意義的唯一學者，如此帶領了我們了解孫子其實想在兵法中表達的微妙意圖。但此舉明顯地扭轉了兵法宗旨，甚至將此經典變成另類兵法，在其中「將」者所欲對付的對象變成了自己的人馬，而非敵人。李零將「人」與「民」二字做更精細定義，以此研究孫子兵法所牽涉的敵我，想法固然有趣，但我人也應對此二字有正確了解，以確保孫子學說真諦。既然兵者國之大事，孫子處理這兩個字定然不致草率，所以，假定他故意含糊其辭以誤導讀者，此說得失極大，因此我人認為有必要檢視李零說法是否正確，本論文將首先說明李零見人所未見的觀點，其次則檢討其說對中國戰略思維的誤導。

關鍵詞：孫子、孫子兵法、「人」、「民」、李零

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