Victorious Warriors// Searching the games played in the Romance of the three Kingdoms

Peter van Emde Boas

ILLC, FNWI, Universiteit van Amsterdam, PO Box 94242, 1090 GE Amsterdam
Bronstee.com Software & Services B.V., Heemstede
Dept. Comp. Sci. University of Petroleum, Chang Ping, Beijing, P.R. China
`peter@bronstee.com`

Abstract. Your speaker has been invited to contribute a chapter in the forthcoming handbook of History of Logic in China on the logical and game theoretical perspectives on ancient Chinesee strategic theory. In preparation I have studied the ancient masters like Sun Tzu and Sun Bin, but also history texts and last but not least, the historic novel *Romance of the three Kingdoms*.

Game theory is a mathematical theory aimed at describing the behavior of agents in strategic interaction. The sources used give both strategic guidelines, and examples of instances where those guidelines were either used or violated. They contain many examples of stratagems - tricks used during warfare to fool or mislead your enemy.

However, in order to analyse such a story from a game theoretical perspective we better first find out what game actually has been played. And this is a question which is hard if not impossible to answer, based on the available information. *How to reconstruct a game from a textual description of a single instance where the game has been played?*

The problem is related to the literature study area called narratology. There one wants to produce a formal representation of the events described in a text. This is a non-trivial task. Our question adds another dimension to this problem.

In the talk I present an introduction where the problem area is described. Next I will give some examples of strategic recommendations of Sun Tzu, and compare these with the teachings given by von Clausewitz 2300 years later. I conclude with some illustrative examples of stories, and how they relate to the rules of Sun Tzu, and how they relate to games.

The bibliography below lists most of the sources I have used in my project at this stage; it is more extensive than needed for this presentation.

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