

# What is military geography?

[Government](#), [Military](#)



Long before the history of military being recorded, conflicts among humans existed. There will always be different kind of views, ideology, perspectives, needs and greed in every part of the world. The most crucial moment is, when greed overcomes mind. Authority, territory and fame are the common pursued purposes. From those days onwards, military was founded under circumstances that to expand and to conquer others, to defend and to offend; it has indeed became a very important aspect in building an empire or a nation.

Today, speaking about military geography clearly stands for the study on the combination between the knowledge of warfare and the knowledge on earth. In the ancient China, there is a proverb saying that " anyone who controls/ predicts the weather accurately will conquer the world. " There were a lot of wars or conflicts lost or won because of the geography aspect. It can simply means the weather, terrain, seasons, temperature, water, direction of wind, type of forest and so on so forth. Plenty of examples in the world that show how important is it to master the knowledge of geography and use it in warfare strategy.

A very good example will be Vietnam. A small and used to be underdeveloped country defeated two world developed countries, France at first and next the United States of America. During the two wars, the Viet Congs were armed with much outdated weapons compared to the two countries; however, weapon's technology was not really their strategy in winning but the guerilla tactic. As we can see on the globe, the location of France and USA are different from Vietnam, every aspects regard the

geography mentioned above are different. Vietnam has much thicker and damp forests.

Besides that, the outsiders are not familiar with the geography of Vietnam, the heavy machineries such as tanks and artilleries cannot be transported well and were lacking of warfare experience in thick forests. A few more examples of how important geography is in military are the two most recent wars, which happened in the Twentieth First Century, Afghanistan War and Gulf War Two. Although the USA won in both wars at the beginning, the failure in convincing and to channel liberal ideology to the locals prove the failure of USA in mastering the human and culture geography.

There is another proverb in Chinese says, " Respects were earned through sincerity, no through force. " The military in both Middle East countries are super high technology and powerful, it still could not stop the ambushes and attacks from the enemies, who are equipped with outdated weapons. The reason behind is, failure in countering the terrain. It is very hard to overcome a person who lives in a mountainous desert, perhaps we can after ten or fifteen years of researches and studies but that will take up millions of dollar just to keep the war going.

It is a very highly risky war. Since the ancient time, our ancestors had make use of knowledge in geography to encounter different obstacles, especially weather. Transporting and travelling on air, water or land, all need to depend on weather's condition. Furthermore, weather had been used as weapons to jeopardize enemies and even now it can be soon created, like the man made rain, has huge potential to be integrated as storm and send it to the enemy's

location. However, another contradicting example was the Japanese Empire military during World War Two.

The Japanese had gathered a lot of information, sent and placed their spies in the countries or locations they plan to attack like Pearl Harbor, The Peninsula of Malaya, Manchuria, Southern China, Philippines and Australia. Moreover, the spies had been sent to their locations for years, much long before the World War Two starts. This indicates on how much they value about the local geography to make sure their offensive missions will succeed, other than just collecting enemy's military information.

In the same time, on the other side of the world, the landing date for D-Day mission on Normandy, France had been change a few times due to bad weather. In addition, company of paratroopers were drop far behind enemy line so that they can survey enemy's activities. All these are not just gathering intelligent information of the enemy but also the local's weather or terrain that had been altered by the enemy. It is undeniable that geographic information is essential in military warfare tactics.

Even in this peaceful time, long before the Gulf War Two and Afghanistan War, USA had already positioned NMD-National Missile Defense, around the world in the allied countries' land. The reason is simple, to protect USA. But how we determine where to put it? Just right besides the potential enemy. Most recent example, Ukraine-USA-Russia issue on last two years, when USA wanted to install missiles in Ukrainian land. However, USA also has Her missiles standby in Greenland too.

All these are of course, to protect the beloved nation-state within a certain perimeter, but where and why they put it there will be more to a geographically questions; because it is strategic. In a nutshell, Geography is the study of the earth. It studies humanization, history, nature, environment, weather; it is like another term for science, but broader. Military Geography will be the study of earth in order with the study of military tactics, so that mistakes, casualties and losses can be lessened.