

# Red cliff movie review example

[Business](#), [Strategy](#)



The film Red Cliff was directed by John Woo and released in 2009. The historical event depicted in the film is the Battle of Red Cliffs which took place at the Red Cliff in 208-209 AD (Woo, 2010). Historically, the Battle of the Red Cliffs was fought at the end of the rule of the Han Dynasty, which formally ended in 220 AD. The war had been fought 8 years earlier (208 AD) between the numerically superior forces of Cao Cao, who was the Northern warlord and the southernly allied forces of Liu Bei and Sun Quan (Woo, 2010).

The political struggle was between the warlords who ruled regions of the former Hans Empire. Cao Cao was among the many warlords controlling regional regimes that had been formed under the reign of Emperor Xian-the last ruler of the Han Dynasty's reign (Woo, 2010). Cao Cao was able to reunify the Han Empire in the North. He was battling the Southern forces in order to unify the Northern and Southern states of the Hans Empire completely. Cao Cao and his forces were defeated in this battle. Sun Quan and Liu Bei victory at the Red Cliffs gave them control over the Yangtze and secured them the southern states of Shu Han and Eastern Wu respectively (Woo, 2010).

Political disunity in China started in the early years of China's formation. Rulers of the ancient Chinese Empires did not unite their people. This led to the formation of rebel groups led by warlords and who presided over regions and clans. Successive empires have gradually reunited the once divided country and their efforts have significantly united the Chinese people. The film shows leaders using different military and political strategies. In spite of his defeat at the battle at the Red Cliffs, Cao Cao was one of the best

military and political strategists. He used ruthlessness to instill fear among his subjects. He was a scheming and merciless tyrant who was suspicious of everybody. Failure to trust anybody was one of the strategies he used best to unite the northern states and bring them under his control. Cao Cao also surprised people by appearing unannounced. The Chinese have a phrase, "Speak of Cao Cao, and he appears" which is equivalent to the English phrase "Speak of the devil" Cao Cao used Machiavellian (use of any means possible to maintain power) strategies.

In order to defeat the allied forces of Cao Cao, The southern forces led by Sun Quan and Liu Bei used very effective military strategies. They dwelt on proper military organization and high numbers to defeat Cao Cao's army (Woo, 2010). Sun and Liu marshaled 800, 000 men to fight Cao Cao's 50, 000 men! (Woo, 2010) They used the strategy of surprise attacks that occurred at the Red Cliffs. Through Commander Huang Gai, they filled "fire ships" with dry reeds, bundles of kindling and fatty oil. He sent the ships to pursue Cao Cao's men whose ships had been chained stem-stem (Woo, 2010). Gai's sailors set the ships on fire and then fled on small boats and leaving the "fire ships" to sail towards Cao Cao's men. Cao Cao's fleet was set ablaze, and all his men died (Woo, 2010). Cao Cao retreated and surrendered soon after this incident.

The leaders in the Battle at the Red Cliffs used many of the military and political strategies by Sun Tzu in the book "Art of war" Sun Tzu. Cao Cao's strategies were effective as they secured him obedience among the subjects and minimal resistance in many of the states that he unified and conquered. Sun-Liu military strategy to finish off Cao Cao's men in one instance was

effective as it perfectly explains what Sun Tzu meant by saying “ The skillful leader subdues the enemy’s troops without any fighting He overthrows their kingdom without lengthy operations in the field “(Sun & Lionel, 5). Their strategy of using a high number of men in the war was also effective as they completely outnumbered Cao Cao’s army. Regardless of the number of men that Cao Cao’s men killed, Sun and Liu always had more men to attach their enemies. Sun Tzu confirms this to be a good military strategy by stating, “ Though an obstinate fight may be made by a small force, in the end it must be captured by the larger force” (Sun & Lionel, 6). Sun and Liu had the larger army which they used well, and this assured them of victory.

Cao Cao was a ruthless character. In one scene, he mistook a plan to slaughter a pig in his honor as an assassination plot and killed everyone including all women and children in sight. Zhao Yun is depicted as a dedicated warrior. He is shown fighting bravely in order to rescue Liu Bei’s trapped family, but he only manages to rescue Liu’s young son. Zhuge Liang was an ingenious character. He allowed his enemies to shoot 20 boats on his side that were covered in straw and this brought 100, 000 arrows to his side! The enemies though they were shooting at Liang’s men! (Woo, 2010) The characters and values of these three characters are depicted as such in these and other numerous scenes.

## **Works Cited**

Red cliff. Dir. John Woo. Perf. Tony Leung Takeshi Kaneshiro & Zhang Fengyi. Magnolia Home Entertainment, 2010. DVD.

Sun, Bin, and Lionel Giles. Sun Tzu on the art of war the oldest military treatise in the world. Champaign, Ill.: Project Gutenberg, 199. Print.

<https://assignbuster.com/red-cliff-movie-review-example/>