

## Book review

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**Davor Ćutić**

**Peter Layton, *Grand Strategy USA, Columbia, SC, 2018, 267 pages.*  
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This is a highly valuable book that can also be used as a textbook that answers the question of how to formulate a strategy. In addition to discussing what grand strategy comprises, the book also provides case studies as evidence for these theories. Even today, developing a strategy is a big challenge for many organizations. This book highlights the author's expertise in the field of strategies and strategic thinking because he communicates in a professional and grounded way how to understand and apply the principles of analysis and formulation of grand strategy.

There are a large number of authors who have written about strategies. Here, as an example, we can mention Gray, Freedman, Heuser, and Grant. Some authors focused more on the historical development of strategic thinking and the application of strategies over time with successes and failures.

Of course, it is important and helpful to know where everything starts in order to understand what the strategies are. Since the time context is crucial, most practitioners are more inclined to look at recent experiences in designing strategies in general and then at grand strategies. Technological advances require changes in the approach to formulating strategies.

Dr Layton first builds the foundations and basics, while discussing theory and the forms that strategies have taken. Next he presents a practical development process to help guide and direct the efforts of strategy development teams. Given the often cited pressure of increased uncertainty

and a seemingly more dynamic context, this book could not come at a better time for those tasked with designing pathways to future advantage.

Through its chapters, the book analyses failures, and argues for a deeper understanding and formulation of better future grand strategies to avoid such failures. In the eighth chapter, the issue of grand strategy is examined and elaborated in detail.

For a better understanding of the concept itself, the second chapter deals with the evolution and development of the idea of grand strategy. The comparison with the strategy shows the wider scope that the grand strategy covers because it requires the use of different tangible and intangible resources and their exemplary use over time.

In the third chapter, the author writes about the application and construction of power through the approach of three types of grand strategies: denial, engagement and reform.

The next chapter, chapter four, discusses and explains a practical approach to formulating grand strategies by providing explanations of each of the three grand strategies along with the conditions for success.

The next three chapters present nine case studies, three case studies each illustrating successes and failures of each of the three grand strategies.

The final chapter offers alternatives to grand strategy. While conditionally risk management focuses on controlling losses, opportunism focuses on taking advantage of opportunities. The book ends with the problems of grand strategy.

This book supports the conceptual development and understanding of the idea of grand strategy. One of the book's main contributions is that it makes grand strategy practically applicable. However, in an effort to help busy people gain practical benefit, the book simplified grand strategy as a "problem-solving method," but not all goals pursued are necessarily problems.

Finally, this book represents the new approach to the concept of grand strategy and contributes to the scientific and professional literature clarifying

how a policy maker can think about conceptualizing and then implementing grand strategy. The extensive list of literature from which Dr Layton drew examples is a clear indication of the author's personal expertise in this field. Therefore, this book is one of the few from which one needs to study and understand the concept of grand strategy.

The book is divided into eight chapters. In the first chapter, the author justified the need for a better understanding of grand strategy by presenting three grand strategic catastrophes: the UK's attempt to avoid a major war with Germany after World War I, the USSR's attempt to be an equal partner to the US during the Cold War, and the attempt by the US to bring democracy to the Middle East in the post-Cold War era. In this way, the book argues for a deeper understanding and formulation of better future grand strategies to avoid such failures.

In order to clarify a better understanding of the concept, the book deals with the evolution and development of the idea of grand strategy in the second chapter. By giving a brief comparison with strategy, the book shows that grand strategy has a wider scope, requires the use of various means (e.g. economic, military, diplomatic, informational, etc.), and considers developing the necessary means over time. The book briefly discusses a few common misconceptions about grand strategy and emphasizes the grand strategic synthesis (p. 26), the significance of integrating ends, means and especially ways for successful grand strategy formulation. The book reminds the readers that grand strategy has a life cycle. The second chapter also provides a clear definition: "grand strategy is the art of developing and applying diverse forms of power in an effective and efficient way to try to purposefully change the order existing between two or more intelligent and adaptive entities" (p. 35, para 3).

The third chapter discusses the application and development of power and offers three types of grand strategies: denial, engagement, and reform. This chapter provides the theoretical foundation associating the three grand strategies of denial, engagement, and reform respectively with international relations mainstream theories of realism, liberalism and constructivism.

The fourth chapter describes a practical approach to formulating grand strategies by providing explanations of each of the three grand strategies along with conditions for success.

In the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters, a total of nine case studies are illustrated, three case studies exemplifying each type of grand strategy. The cases are a mix of successes and failures. The fifth chapter contains cases of Denial Grand Strategy: US's Iraq War Grand Strategy (1991-1992), The LTTE Grand Strategy (1990-2002), and USSR's Detente Grand Strategy (1965-1980). The sixth chapter describes cases of Engagement Grand Strategy: US's European Recovery Grand Strategy (1947-1952), Iranian Hezbollah Grand Strategy (1982-2006), and British Appeasement Grand Strategy (1934-1939) to illustrate the Engagement Grand Strategy. The seventh chapter illustrates cases of Reform Grand Strategy: British Malayan Emergency Grand Strategy (1948-1960), Landmines Ban Campaign Grand Strategy (1992-1999), and US's Iraq Regime Change Grand Strategy (2002-2003).

The final chapter presents alternatives to grand strategy. While reactive "Risk Management" focuses on loss control, "Opportunism" focuses on taking advantage of opportunities. The book necessarily concludes with problems of grand strategy.

The book contributes to the conceptual development and understanding of the idea of grand strategy. Making grand strategy practically applicable remains one of the major contributions of the book. However, in trying to assist busy people to get practical benefit, the book simplified grand strategy as a "problem-solving method" but all the objectives sought need not necessarily be problems. Moreover, a little more attention and explanation on the "expansive goal" would enrich the book since that is the fundamental reason which necessitated the formulation of grand strategy.

The book is well articulated, well organized and nicely balanced. It is highly recommended.

This is a praiseworthy script that effectively addresses all the concepts, principles, stages and procedures related to joint operations. Readers can recognize the author's extensive personal experience gained through participation in the Homeland War, multinational operations, different

exercises and international courses. The script can be recommended to commanders and staffs from tactical to operational and strategic levels who are engaged in the planning of a different spectrum of operations. It is also recommendable to all officers who want to learn more about joint operations in order to be able to carry out their command and staff duties in national and international commands. In order to publish this type of literature, several years of study of relevant international and national professional literature as well as practical experience in delivering lectures on the subject are indisputably required.