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Debating the genesis of Clausewitz's *On War*

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ABSTRACT
Two different, albeit partial, versions of Carl von Clausewitz's masterpiece, On War*, have recently resurfaced, opening new avenues of research for those studying the genesis of* On War *and attempting to reconstruct the evolution of its author's theorising. Unfortunately, both texts are undated and the order in which they were written is not clear. This article therefore aims to discuss the chronology of the writing of these texts. In particular, we will examine the hypothesis put forward in the literature that one of these texts may in fact be the very first version of* On War *and argue that this is not the case.*

Introduction

Carl von Clausewitz's masterpiece, *On War*,[1] is a composite and unfinished work, incorporating texts written and rewritten over more than a decade. Its stratified character has long raised a fundamental question: does the book articulate a coherent theoretical vision, or does it juxtapose layers of thought from different stages of Clausewitz's intellectual development? Answering this question requires more than a close reading of the published text: it demands an understanding of how the work came into being. That is why scholars have long devoted significant attention to reconstructing its genealogy. For much of the twentieth century, however, they had to work with a remarkably thin documentary base. Beyond the published text itself, only a handful of primary sources shed light on the evolution of Clausewitz's

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[1]The standard translation of *Vom Kriege* in English was published by Michael Howard and Peter Paret in 1976 (Carl von Clausewitz, *On War,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976)). We also used for this article the complete German edition that is available on the website https://clausewitzstudies.org/. Accessed 22 May 2026, (this edition, which is based on modern scholars' reconstruction of Clausewitz's original text, can be downloaded and submitted to automated text processing, which allowed us to compare it with the two other versions of *On War* examined in this article.

theorising: three short notes reproduced by Marie von Clausewitz at the beginning of the first volume of her husband's *Posthumous Works*; an undated author's preface; two prefaces by Marie for the first and third volumes; and scattered clues in Clausewitz's correspondence and other writings.[2] These fragments, often obscure and sometimes undated, long limited efforts to understand how *On War* took shape and how its author's thinking developed over time.

The recent rediscovery, by the Dutch scholar Paul Donker, of two distinct, albeit partial, versions of *On War* therefore represents a major development. These manuscripts capture the work at different stages of its composition and offer unprecedented material for reconstructing its evolution. Yet their potential is complicated by a crucial difficulty: neither manuscript is dated, and the sequence in which they were written remains uncertain.

Donker's role in bringing these manuscripts back to light is, in itself, a major contribution to Clausewitz studies. But he also advances an audacious – indeed revolutionary – thesis, which he has developed in several publications, including one in this journal.[3] He claims that one of the documents may well be the very first version of *On War*, dating from Clausewitz's years in Coblenz (1816-1818), when he first began working on a book about war. He further contends that the other document represents the state of the manuscript in 1827, at the precise moment when Clausewitz decided to undertake a sweeping revision of his work. If correct, these

[2]*On War* is only one among several works by Clausewitz that his widow edited and published after his death in 1831. In total, ten volumes appeared under the collective title '*Hinterlassene Werke des Generals Carl von Clausewitz über Krieg und Kriegführung*' ('Works left behind by General Carl von Clausewitz on war and warfare'). The first three volumes, published between 1832 and 1834, contain the eight books that make up *On War*. The subsequent volumes consist mostly of Clausewitz's historical writings. The final volume was published in 1837. Several other writings by Clausewitz, as well as parts of his correspondence, have been transcribed and published by German historian Werner Hahlweg in Werner Hahlweg (ed.), *Carl von Clausewitz, Schriften – Aufsätze – Studiën – Briefe II*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 2 volumes.

[3]Paul Donker, '*Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* as the first version of Clausewitz's masterpiece', *Research Paper 108*, Publication of the Faculty of Military Sciences, Netherlands Defence Academy (May 2016); Paul Donker, 'The Genesis of Clausewitz's *On War* Reconsidered', *British Journal for Military History*, vol. 2, no. 3 (July 2016), pp.101-117; Paul Donker, 'The Evolution of Clausewitz's *Vom Kriege*: a reconstruction on the basis of the earlier versions of his masterpiece', *The Clausewitz Homepage*, 2019 https://clausewitzstudies.org/bibl/DonkerP-TheEvolutionOfClausewitzsVomKriege.pdf. Accessed 25 May 2026.

claims would compel us to reconsider almost everything we thought we knew about the composition of *On War* and the evolution of its author's theorising.

In this article, however, we argue that the available evidence does not support Donker's proposed dating. In our view, the manuscript he identifies as the first draft of *On War* was in fact written much later – possibly even after the publication of the first volume of *On War* in 1832, and perhaps by someone other than Clausewitz. There is also a strong, albeit not definitive, case to be made that the other manuscript is not the 1827 version of *On War*, but an earlier one. This article therefore seeks to reassess the place of these two manuscripts within the chronology of the composition of *On War* and examines what this revised chronology implies for understanding the evolution of Clausewitz's theorising.

Understanding *On War*: Why its genealogy matters

To understand what is at stake in this debate, it is first necessary to examine the composite nature of *On War* and the uncertainties surrounding its state of completion. *On War* was composed over a period of twelve to fourteen years.[4] Over that span, the project evolved from a 'small book' on war into a massive treatise that Clausewitz repeatedly took up, reworked, and expanded.[5] It was in the midst of a substantial new revision when its author died, in 1831, leaving the work unfinished. The surviving manuscript bears the imprint of this long and uneven process: rather than a single, continuous draft, it consists of materials produced at different moments – some retained unchanged across successive versions, others rewritten along the way. Yet we do not know which chapters belong to which stage, nor which ones Clausewitz regarded as finalised. This uncertainty raises a crucial question: does the manuscript's composite structure reflect a corresponding heterogeneity in Clausewitz's ideas, or merely a complex but coherent process of composition?

A central issue is whether Clausewitz's thinking remained stable throughout the long gestation of *On War*, or whether it evolved significantly over time. If he had, from the

[4]We cannot determine with certainty when Clausewitz began working on what would eventually become *On War*. His correspondence and Marie's testimony indicate that he started drafting a 'small book' about war in 1816. Yet Marie also writes, in her preface to the first volume, that her husband devoted 'the last twelve years of his life' to the project – an indication that would place the beginning of sustained work around 1818 or 1819, given Clausewitz's death in November 1831. What is clear, however, is that only after his move from Coblenz to Berlin in 1818 did the conditions become favourable for sustained work: his new position involved mainly routine administrative tasks, which afforded him far more time to concentrate on the manuscript.

[5]Letter to Gneisenau, dated 14 November 1816 (Werner Hahlweg (ed.), *Carl von Clausewitz, Schriften – Aufsätze – Studiën – Briefe II*)

outset, a firm grasp of the core ideas he wished to develop and remained consistently faithful to them, then the composite nature of the manuscript would have limited interpretive consequences: the book would still convey a broadly coherent argument. If, however, his thinking changed over the years, the unfinished and amalgamated state of the manuscript takes on a very different significance, suggesting that *On War* may juxtapose ideas formulated at different – and possibly contradictory – moments in his intellectual trajectory. Reconstructing the genealogy of the text is therefore not a marginal philological exercise but essential for assessing its coherence and determining how it should be read.

In fact, most scholars have long taken the view that Clausewitz's theorising did evolve in a fundamental way toward the end of his life. This opinion stems in large part from one of the three notes Marie transcribed at the beginning of *On War*. In this note, dated 10 July 1827, Clausewitz describes his manuscript – already comprising six of its eight books – as 'a rather formless mass that must be thoroughly reworked once more.'[6] The revision he envisaged was meant to help him integrate two key ideas: first, that there are two kinds of war – one in which peace is imposed after the enemy's defeat, and another in which a negotiated settlement can be reached without defeating the opponent; and second, the proposition that 'war is nothing but the continuation of [*Staatspolitik*] with other means'.[7] While some scholars have downplayed the importance of this note, most have interpreted it as evidence of a major intellectual shift that prompted Clausewitz to rewrite parts of his manuscript, giving the note a pivotal place in the standard narrative of his intellectual development.[8] According to this view, some of his most profound and enduring ideas were only formulated at a very late stage, after he had come to reject earlier positions.[9]

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[6]Carl von Clausewitz, 'Two notes by the author on his plans for revising *On War*' in Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, p.69

[7]*Ibid*., p.69

[8]Among the small number of authors who downplay the importance of this note are: Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Clausewitz & contemporary war,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Jon Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz,* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008)

[9]Raymond Aron, *Penser la guerre, Clausewitz,* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1976), t. I *L'âge* européen; Peter Paret, *Clausewitz and the State,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought from the Enlightenment to Clausewitz,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Beatrice Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz,* (London: Pimlico, 2002); Hugh Smith, *On Clausewitz,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Andreas Herberg-Rothe, *Clausewitz's Puzzle,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Hew Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War. A Biography,* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007),

If the July 1827 note does indeed signal a rupture in Clausewitz's thinking, it only heightens the problem of coherence within *On War*. Clausewitz was unable to complete his magnum opus. In 1830, he left his position at the *Kriegsakademie* and returned to active duty. Anticipating that he would no longer have time to pursue his writing, he sorted his papers and placed them in sealed folders before his departure. He died the following year, on 16 November, without having been able to resume his work. *On War* was thus left doubly incomplete: not only are Books VII and VIII unfinished, but it is also widely believed that Clausewitz did not revise the entire first six books as he had planned in 1827.[10] To complicate matters further, the available sources are contradictory regarding which chapters and books he actually had time to revise.[11] As a result, we cannot say with certainty which parts of the text reflect pre-1827 thinking and which reflect later revisions.

This uncertainty is highly problematic. It means that *On War* likely contains ideas formulated before 1827 – some of which Clausewitz may later have abandoned – as well as ideas developed afterwards, reflecting what he believed at the end of his life. The book may thus present two layers of thought. This is why Beatrice Heuser argues that *On War* contains both the ideas of 'Clausewitz the idealist' and 'Clausewitz the realist', while Hugh Smith describes the work as an interlacing of an 'Old Testament' and a 'New Testament.'[12] Understanding the nature of the post-1827 revision is therefore crucial for determining whether *On War* should be read as a coherent whole or as the juxtaposition of two potentially contradictory layers, and for identifying which parts reflect Clausewitz's final views and which parts do not.

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[10]There is some controversy about the status of Books VII and VIII. In her preface to the third volume, Marie von Clausewitz states that both books 'unfortunately remained unfinished and existed only in the form of rough sketches and preliminary drafts' (Marie von Clausewitz, 'Vorrede zum Dritter Teil' in Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, https://clausewitzstudies.org/readings/VomKriege1832/Book7.htm#7-Vorrede. Accessed 25 May 2026). Several authors, however – most notably Hew Strachan and Azar Gat – have challenged this assessment (Hew Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War*; Azar Gat, 'Clausewitz's final notes'). We take the view that the two books were indeed left unfinished. One of the strongest arguments supporting this conclusion is that chapter 9 of Book VIII twice announces future chapters that do not exist – chapter 9 being the final chapter of Book VIII (Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, p.625 and p.633). There is broad consensus in the literature that the revision initiated in 1827 remained unfinished.

[11]Two opposing positions in this debate are represented by Raymond Aron and Azar Gat (Raymond Aron, *Penser la guerre, Clausewitz*; Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought from the Enlightenment to Clausewitz*; Azar Gat, 'Clausewitz's final notes', *Militaergeschichtliche Zeitschrift*, vol. 45, no. 1 (1989)).

[12]Beatrice Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz*; Hugh Smith, *On Clausewitz*

It is against this background of uncertainty that the rediscovery of the two manuscripts takes on such importance. These documents offer new evidence that may help clarify long-standing debates about the genesis of *On War* and the evolution of its author's theorising.

Have we rediscovered the first draft of *on War*? Paul Donker's bold hypothesis

The first document, currently held at the State Library of Berlin, is without a doubt an earlier version of Books I and II of *On War*. Its proximity to the published version is unmistakable: the two books bear the same titles in both versions, and several paragraphs – and even some chapters – are almost identical. At the same time, the substantial differences that do exist clearly show that this text predates the published version and must have undergone significant reworking. However, because the manuscript is undated, we do not know when it was written. There is a plausible case that it reflects the state of *On War* around 1827, but we will return to this possible dating later, and argue that it is in fact probably older. This document had already been transcribed and published by the German historian Werner Hahlweg in a large volume devoted to Clausewitz's correspondence and writings, yet it somehow failed to attract the attention of Clausewitz scholars.[13]

The second document, by contrast, had been completely forgotten since its publication between 1833 and 1835 in a journal entitled *Zeitschrift für Kunst, Wissenschaft und Geschichte des Krieges* ('Journal for Art, Science, and History of War'). It consists of 177 aphorisms – short paragraphs each conveying one or two key ideas – and was published under the title *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* ('Aphorisms on War and Warfare'). Here again, the proximity to the published version of *On War* is striking: almost all the aphorisms (171 out of 177) can be found in *On War*, some almost verbatim, others with minor modifications. Moreover, the aphorisms appear in the same order as the corresponding passages in *On War*, with only four deviating from the order found in the book. Finally, the aphorisms are divided into four parts, each bearing the same title as the first four books of *On War* – they cover only Books I to IV, with none corresponding to Books V to VIII. Although the aphorisms were published after the first four books of *On War*, we do not know whether they were written before or after them.

While the first document is clearly an intermediate version of *On War* that predates the published text by several years, determining when the second document was written – and where it should be placed within the chronology of the writing of *On*

[13]Carl von Clausewitz, 'Niederschriften des Werkes „Vom Kriege"' in Werner Hahlweg (ed.), *Carl von Clausewitz, Schriften – Aufsätze – Studiën – Briefe II*, pp.623-675

War – is far less straightforward. At first glance, it appears to be a condensed rendering of the published work, perhaps even a kind of anthology or collection of extracts from *On War*. This, however, is not Paul Donker's contention. According to him, *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* probably constitutes the very first version of *On War*, drafted by Clausewitz during his Coblenz period (1816–1818) – that is, more than twelve years before his death in 1831 and the posthumous publication of his writings beginning in 1832. Donker advances two main arguments in support of this bold hypothesis.

The first argument rests on the undeniable similarity between the literary form of *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* and the way both Carl and Marie describe, in several places, the earliest draft of *On War*. In her preface to the first volume, Marie explains that her husband initially 'developed his views in brief essays only loosely connected with each other.'[14] Carl himself, in one of the three notes reproduced by Marie, states that his 'original intention was to set down my conclusions on the principal elements of this topic in short, precise, compact statements' which he calls 'kernels' ('*körner*').[15] The same term appears again in his preface, where he claims that his aim was to 'present in compressed form, like small nuggets ['*körnern*'] of pure metal' the 'ideas and convictions' he had developed through 'years of thinking about war, much association with able men who knew war, and a good deal of personal experience with it'.[16] For Paul Donker, there is little doubt that the 'kernels' Clausewitz refers to are in fact the aphorisms of *Aphorismen ûber den Krieg und die Kriegführung*.

Donker's second argument derives from a comparison between the aphorisms and the text of *On War*. Donker notes that, despite the close proximity between the two texts, only 62 aphorisms, roughly a third, appear in exactly or almost exactly the same form in *On War*. In contrast, 76 aphorisms have been slightly rewritten, 8 have been significantly transformed, 3 rely on entirely different examples, 13 are partially or completely absent from *On War*, and 11 repeat passages from *On War* while omitting key concepts. For Donker, these discrepancies indicate that a certain amount of time must have elapsed between the composition of the two texts, and that one represents a reworked, more accomplished version of the other.

Three main reasons lead him to conclude that the aphorisms are the earliest version. First, as noted above, 11 aphorisms echo passages from *On War* while surprisingly

[14]Preface by Marie von Clausewitz, included in Howard and Paret's translation (Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, p.66).
[15]Carl von Clausewitz, 'Author's comment on the genesis of his early manuscript on the theory of war', in Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, p.63
[16]Carl von Clausewitz, 'Author's preface' in Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, p.62

omitting certain key notions. The clearest example is aphorism no. 22, which corresponds to Clausewitz's famous discussion of the 'paradoxical trinity' – made up of the 'primordial violence' of war, the 'play of chance and probability,' and 'its element of subordination, as [a political] instrument.'[17] The aphorism repeats this passage almost verbatim but leaves out three crucial elements. Missing from aphorism no. 22 are the reference to war as 'a true chameleon', the expression 'paradoxical trinity' itself, and the sentence linking each of the three 'tendencies' to a specific actor, the people, the commander and his army, and the government, respectively. These are among the most important contributions of this passage in *On War*, yet they are absent from the corresponding aphorism. For Donker, 'it is hard to believe that Clausewitz, or somebody else, would have left them out if he or she was extracting the aphorisms from *On War*. It is far more plausible that these three remarks were inserted by Clausewitz at a later date.'[18]

Second, following from this point, Donker observes that many important ideas from *On War* – especially from chapter 1 of Book I – are entirely absent from the aphorisms. This includes, for example, the definition of war as a duel on a larger scale and the characterization of war as a 'true political instrument'.[19] Donker finds it inconceivable that such foundational ideas could have been overlooked or deliberately omitted by Clausewitz, or by anyone else, when compiling an anthology of *On War*. He therefore considers it far more likely that these ideas are absent from *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* because they were later additions.

Finally, Donker notes that 6 aphorisms have no corresponding passage in *On War*, and that 7 others appear only partially. For him, this again rules out the possibility that the aphorisms constitute an anthology of *On War*: If that were the case, all aphorisms should appear in some form in the published text. Donker therefore concludes that the 13 aphorisms that are partially or entirely absent from *On War* must have been written first and later discarded by Clausewitz.

Donker's theory has genuinely revolutionary potential for Clausewitz studies. If the aphorisms truly represent the first draft of *On War*, an entire line of scholarship would collapse – the one that claims Clausewitz acquired fundamentally new insights after 1827. Indeed, most of these supposedly 'new' ideas already appear in the aphorisms.

[17]Carl von Clausewitz, On War, p.89 where we have altered the end of the quotation from the Howard and Paret translation in order to avoid the term 'policy', which we do not believe accurately conveys the meaning Clausewitz assigns to his concept of '*politik*'.
[18]Paul Donker, '*Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* as the first version of Clausewitz's masterpiece', p.30
[19]Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, p.87

More striking still, the two concepts at the heart of the July 1827 note, that were to underpin the revision of the first six books, are not only already present in the aphorisms: they are included within the first two. As such, if Donker is right, it would mean that Clausewitz had formulated most – if not all – of the ideas for which he is now celebrated as early as 1816-1818, nearly a decade before the 1827 note and more than twelve years before he put the final touches on his manuscript.

Donker's theory would also raise new puzzles and open fresh avenues for research. His reconstruction of the genealogy of *On War* does not point to a linear progression. He himself notes that the manuscript held at the State Library in Berlin contains relatively few aphorisms compared to the published version, even though it would, in his chronology, represent an intermediate stage. To explain this anomaly, Donker suggests that Clausewitz first wrote the aphorisms but later drifted away from them. In 1827, dissatisfied with what he had written in the intervening period, he then decided to reincorporate them into his manuscript. On this view, the July 1827 note did indeed announce his intent to rewrite large parts of the text, but in order to go back to the first version of *On War*. In this scenario, the post-1827 revision would not reflect a conceptual breakthrough leading to new ideas, but an attempt to reinject ideas formulated a decade earlier, from which Clausewitz had deviated. Such a chronology raises further questions: why would Clausewitz have departed from the ideas laid down in his first draft of *On War*? And what prompted him to return to them in 1827?

Why Aphorismen ûber den Krieg und die Kriegführung is not the first version of On War

Paul Donker's hypothesis is elegant, but it encounters several difficulties when confronted with Clausewitz's own statements and with the textual evidence provided by the three surviving versions of *On War*.

The first problem arises from Clausewitz's description of his working method during the Coblenz years (1816–1818). Paul Donker is right to note that the aphorisms seem to match the form of the first version of *On War* as described by Carl and Marie. Yet he overlooks another crucial piece of information that Clausewitz himself provides about that early version. In a letter to his friend and mentor August Neidhardt von Gneisenau, dated 4 March 1817, Clausewitz explains that he has 'the unfortunate instinct of developing everything by [himself]', and that only when 'a discussion has become too long' does he 'incorporate the result into [his] little work', before 'throwing the preparatory work into the fire'.[20] In other words, Clausewitz's method

[20]The correspondence between Clausewitz and Gneisenau has been transcribed and published by Werner Hahlweg, (Werne Hahlweg, *Carl von Clausewitz, Schriften – Aufsätze – Studiën – Briefe II*, volume 1, pp.243-244)

at the time consisted in drafting relatively long texts from which he then extracted a few key ideas.

If *Aphorisms About War and Warfare* had been written between 1816 and 1818, as Donker contends, it would have had to be produced in precisely this way – through the condensation of much longer preparatory writings. But this scenario seems materially implausible, if not absurd. It would require that, between 1816 and 1818 – at a time when Clausewitz had very little opportunity to write – he somehow drafted extensive texts anticipating the structure and key ideas of the first four books of *On War*, condensed them into 177 aphorisms, destroyed all the underlying material, then went on to rewrite those same four books entirely after 1827.[21] Donker's thesis only makes sense if one assumes that the aphorisms were written almost spontaneously, without being derived from longer drafts. Yet this assumption is explicitly contradicted by Clausewitz's own description of his method in March 1817.

A second difficulty emerges from a systematic comparison of the three available texts – the Berlin manuscript, the aphorisms, and the published version of *On War*. To begin with, it must be noted that the aphorisms are markedly closer to the published version than to the pre-1827 manuscript. Only 18 aphorisms appear in the Berlin manuscript, whereas 98 are found in Book I and II of the published text. In total, 81 aphorisms (and all the concepts and ideas associated with them) present in the later version are absent from the earlier one.[22] That so many aphorisms are missing from the old version of Book I and II – i.e., from a text that Paul Donker considers is *posterior* to the aphorisms – is quite puzzling. If Donker were correct, it would mean that Clausewitz laid the foundations of his theory of war between 1816 and 1818 in the form of aphorisms, most of which he then dropped from his subsequent works – only to return to them after 1827, even restoring their initial order of exposition. Such a 'zigzag' in Clausewitz's intellectual trajectory is difficult to make sense of.

The case of Book II makes the point even more forcefully. Only 2 aphorisms appear in the Berlin version, whereas 46 are found in the published text. How, then, are we to account for Clausewitz setting aside 44 of the 46 aphorisms when drafting the old version of Book II? A modest departure from his initial intuitions would be understandable; the near-total abandonment of almost all of them – followed by their

[21]In her preface, Marie wrote that 'In Coblenz, where he had many duties, he could devote only a few hours now and then to his private studies. Not until 1818 when he was appointed Director of the General War College in Berlin did he acquire enough time to expand his work' (Marie von Clausewitz, 'preface', p.66)

[22]The difference is indeed 81 aphorisms rather than 80, because one aphorism that appears in chapter 2 of Book I in the old version is found again in chapter 1 of Book III in the published version.

subsequent reinstatement – stretches the notion of an intellectual 'zigzag' to its limits. A far more plausible explanation for the scarcity of aphorisms in the Berlin manuscript – especially in Book II – is simply that the aphorisms were written after that manuscript.

The distribution of the 18 aphorisms that do appear in the Berlin manuscript reinforces this conclusion. 12 of them are concentrated in just four chapters out of the nineteen that the two books comprise. These four chapters, chapters 3 to 6 of Book I, happen to be quite special: they were kept intact in the final version of *On War*, and therefore did not undergo revision post-1827 – only six chapters of the old version of Books I and II were retained unchanged; the two other chapters that Clausewitz preserved do not contain any corresponding aphorisms. Donker attempts to explain this strange correlation by suggesting that these chapters required no revision precisely because they had remained faithful to the supposed first version of *On War*. Yet this explanation raises a deeper inconsistency: why would Clausewitz have preserved fidelity to the alleged first version in four chapters while diverging radically from it in at least thirteen others? The overrepresentation of aphorisms in the few chapters Clausewitz left unchanged is far more naturally explained by their having been written after the Berlin manuscript, not before it.

Another line of evidence comes from the micro-variations between the three texts. Twelve passages appear almost verbatim in all three versions – Berlin manuscript, aphorisms, and published *On War*. These passages are clearly copied across the texts, but small variations – an added word here, a substitution there – can be detected. These variations follow a revealing pattern. In each case, the published version aligns perfectly with one of the two other texts, while the third text contains a small deviation. Crucially, no variation is shared exclusively by the Berlin manuscript and the aphorisms. Instead, the published version always serves as the point of reference: either the Berlin manuscript matches it and the aphorism diverges slightly, or the aphorism matches it and the Berlin manuscript diverges.[23] This pattern strongly suggests a chronological sequence in which the published version postdates the Berlin manuscript but predates the aphorisms. If the aphorisms were the earliest version, one would expect at least some passages to be identical between the aphorisms and the Berlin manuscript, with the published version introducing later modifications. This is not the case. Rather, the evidence indicates that certain passages were copied verbatim between the Berlin manuscript and the published version before being slightly altered in the aphorisms; and that others were modified between the Berlin manuscript and the published version before being reproduced unchanged in the aphorisms.

[23]The detailed results of this comparison are presented in Appendix 1.

From this perspective, the *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* would appear not to be the first draft of *On War*, but rather an anthology of its final version, compiled either by Clausewitz himself or, more likely, by someone else after his death.

The aphorisms on war and warfare as an anthology of *On War*?

Treating the aphorisms as an anthology of *On War* provides the most coherent explanation for the evidence. It accounts for the extraordinary similarity between the published version of *On War* and the aphorisms: both develop, in the same order, 171 common propositions, almost all formulated in very similar terms – and, in roughly a third of cases, identically, aside from one or two minor variations. It also explains the limited presence of aphorisms in the earlier version of Books I and II, as well as the relative underdevelopment of that manuscript compared to the other two versions of *On War*. Finally, it allows us to posit a coherent progression in Clausewitz's intellectual development, rather than assuming an initial 'revelation' in which he discovered his entire theory, followed by a puzzling intellectual detour and then a return to the first version.

This author's assumption – admittedly speculative – is that *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* is in fact an anthology of *On War* compiled after Clausewitz's death by someone else, and based on the version published in 1832. As noted above, the textual comparison of the three versions strongly suggests that the aphorisms were written after the published text. Another telling element is that the aphorisms cover only part of *On War, and* specifically Books I to IV, while omitting nearly two-thirds of the work, Books V to VIII. This apparent anomaly becomes less surprising once we recall that *On War* was published in three successive volumes, the first of which contained Books I to IV. It is therefore plausible that the aphorisms were extracted from this first volume. The chronology is consistent: the first volume appeared in 1832, while the publication of the aphorisms began only the following year, in 1833.

A further clue concerns aphorisms nos. 1 and 2. Both contain passages absent from either version of Books I and II, yet found almost verbatim in another text: the July 1827 note.[24] It is, to say the least, strange, that *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* would incorporate extracts from a separate text by Clausewitz – and from a mere note at that. Their placement at the very beginning of the document is equally puzzling, as it does not correspond to the way Clausewitz structures his argument. Aphorism no. 1 would have been more naturally positioned alongside aphorisms nos. 12 and 13; similarly, the content of aphorism no. 2 echoes material

[24]The first half of aphorism no. 1 can be found in *On War*, but not the second half. Aphorism no. 2 is entirely absent from *On War*. These two passages are precisely those in which Clausewitz introduces the key ideas that were to guide his post-1827 revision of On War.

Clausewitz discusses toward the end of chapter 1, Book I. As they stand, both aphorisms appear to have been placed rather arbitrarily.

This becomes more intelligible once we recall that Marie von Clausewitz reproduced the July 1827 note at the beginning of the first volume of *On War*. The most obvious explanation, therefore, is that an unidentified compiler simply followed the order in which these passages appeared in the first posthumous volume of Clausewitz's works. A small but meaningful detail reinforces this hypothesis: both the July 1827 note and aphorism no. 1 use the term '*Staatspolitik*', instead of '*Politik*'. Nowhere else in *On War* does Clausewitz employ this specific expression. This strongly suggests that aphorism no. 1 was lifted directly from the July 1827 note and, as a consequence, that the aphorisms constitute an anthology compiled after Clausewitz's death and after the publication of the first volume of *On War*.

If the aphorisms were indeed compiled by someone other than Clausewitz, this would also explain why certain concepts that we consider central today do not appear in *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung*. Selecting passages for an anthology is a subjective exercise, and there is no reason to assume that the compiler shared our contemporary sense of which elements of Clausewitz's theory are most important. One example is particularly convincing in this regard: the treatment of Clausewitz's three 'reciprocal actions' in each of the three versions of *On War*. The most detailed discussion appears in chapter 1 of Book I of the published version, where Clausewitz argues that each 'reciprocal action' drives belligerents to abandon all restraint in their use of force and compels them to try to surpass their opponent's level of violence. Since these incentives apply to both sides, it follows that war is bound to escalate; the ensuring rise to the extremes cannot be stopped until one of the belligerents succeeds in defeating the other. Clausewitz devotes a separate subsection to each of the three 'reciprocal actions', presenting them in sequence.

These three 'reciprocal actions' are already present – though in a less developed form – in the earlier Berlin manuscript of Book I. Yet only one of them appears in *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung*: the first 'reciprocal action' is reproduced in aphorism no. 5; elements related to the third appear in aphorism no. 6, but without any explicit connection to the notion of 'reciprocal action'; the second is entirely absent. Given that the three 'reciprocal actions' form an inseparable conceptual triad in Clausewitz's theory, and that they were already present in the earlier manuscript, it is difficult to believe that Clausewitz himself would have omitted two of them when composing the aphorisms. It is far more plausible that the omission reflects the choices of a compiler less familiar with Clausewitz's text and conceptual architecture.

This interpretation is reinforced by the content of aphorism 6, which reproduces a secondary idea associated with the third 'reciprocal action' while omitting the crucial

point Clausewitz is trying to make. Aphorism 6 focuses on the claim that a belligerent's resistance depends on 'the extent of the means of resistance available and the strength of the will'. Yet this idea is not introduced in *On War* for its own sake, but for its implications on the behaviour of belligerents. Clausewitz's key point is that each side must proportion its effort to the opponent's resistance, but since the opponent does the same, both are driven to outdo one another, producing an endless escalation. Aphorism 6 does not address this part of the argument. The selection of a peripheral element while ignoring the core argument is difficult to reconcile with Clausewitz's authorship but entirely consistent with the work of a compiler extracting striking passages without fully grasping their theoretical function.

Taken together, these clues strongly support the hypothesis that the aphorisms are not an early draft of *On War* but a posthumous anthology derived from the first published volume. This interpretation aligns with the textual evidence, resolves the anomalies created by Donker's chronology, and provides a more coherent account of the evolution of Clausewitz's manuscript.

Revisiting the dating of the old version of Books I and II: A revision before the revision?

If *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* is, as this author believes, merely an anthology of *On War*, compiled by another hand, then it is ultimately a text of minor significance. It cannot, in any case, help us gain a better understanding of Clausewitz's writing process. What, then, of the second manuscript that has recently resurfaced? Can the old version of Books I and II, held at the State Library of Berlin, shed new light on the genesis of Clausewitz's masterpiece?

Paul Donker is on firmer ground when he suggests that this manuscript may well be the version of *On War* that preceded the revision announced by Clausewitz in July 1827. During his research at the *Staatsbibliothek* in Berlin, Donker noted that the two books are written in a clear hand on high-quality paper.[25] This immediately recalls Clausewitz's remark in the July 1827 note that the first six books had already been transcribed in 'clean copy'.[26] This is a strong – though not definitive – indication that the Berlin manuscript may indeed be the version to which Clausewitz referred. If correct, this dating would be highly consequential: comparing this text with the published version of *On War* would allow us to identify the parts rewritten after 1827. It would be a genuine breakthrough for Clausewitz studies, clarifying both the nature

[25]Paul Donker, 'The Genesis of Clausewitz's *On War* Reconsidered'; Paul Donker, 'The Evolution of Clausewitz's *Vom Kriege*'

[26]Carl von Clausewitz, 'Two notes by the author on his plans for revising *On War*', p.69

and scope of the changes Clausewitz made and offering a better understanding of the evolution of his theorising at that time.

However, a close comparison of the two texts reveals several striking features that cast doubt on whether the Berlin manuscript is truly the 1827 version – or whether it might be an even earlier one.

As noted above, several chapters are reproduced almost unchanged between the two versions, with only minor modifications, such as spelling, small additions or deletions, etc. Of the seven chapters in the old version of Book I, five appear almost identically in the published version, the old chapters 3 to 7, which become chapters 4 to 8. By contrast, only one of the twelve chapters in the old version of Book II remains unchanged. the old chapter 9, now chapter 3. Moreover, the overall structure of both books has been altered – slightly in one case, radically in the other. Book I now contains eight chapters instead of seven. One chapter from the old version has been removed entirely, chapter 2, and two new chapters have been added: chapters 2 and 3, on 'purpose and means in war' and 'on military genius'. Chapter 1 has been partially retained and expanded, and now appears under a new title: originally 'The Purpose of War', it becomes 'What is War?' Book II has undergone an even more radical transformation: it has been reduced from twelve chapters to six. While fragments of chapters 1, 3, 4, 10, 11, and 12 survive in the new version, five chapters have disappeared completely (chapters 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8).

Although this might suggest a degree of continuity between the two versions of Book I, this impression is misleading. In terms of word count, the volume of Book I has more than tripled – from just over 7,000 words in the old version to more than 23,000 in the new one. This dramatic expansion is due both to the addition of chapters 2 and 3, which together account for roughly half of the new Book I, and to the extensive reworking of chapter 1, which grows from about 2,500 to over 7,000 words. Remarkably, chapter 1 of the new version is now as long as the entire old Book I. Book II has undergone a similar transformation: its length has more than doubled, even though most of the old text has been discarded. Only a few isolated paragraphs survive – aside from the old chapter 9, which is reproduced unchanged. The scale of the reworking is therefore substantial and cannot be described as mere fine-tuning or minor revision.

The difference in chapter length is equally revealing. In the old version, chapters are generally short, averaging around 900 words. In the new version, the chapters that have been added or radically transformed average over 5,000 words. None of the eight new chapters is under 2,000 words, whereas only one of the six retained chapters exceeds 1,000. Clausewitz clearly changed his compositional model between the two versions: from short, concise chapters to far more expansive ones.

The extent of these changes – especially the near-complete rewriting of Book II – raises questions about the dating of the Berlin manuscript. The July 1827 note does state that the first six books 'must be thoroughly reworked', but this reworking is justified primarily by the need to integrate two key ideas: the distinction between the two types of war and the political nature of war.[27] As such, the note gives the impression of a focused revision – certainly not of a plan to triple the length of Book I, double that of Book II, or rewrite the latter almost entirely. The transformation of Book II is particularly surprising, as it appears unrelated to the integration of the two key ideas from the July 1827 note. We must therefore consider the possibility that the changes observed between the old and new versions of Books I and II may not stem solely from the post-1827 revision, but also from an earlier one.

The idea that Clausewitz may already have rewritten part of his magnum opus before 1827 is consistent with what we know of his working habits. Clausewitz appears to have been perpetually dissatisfied with his own work, leading him to rewrite it again and again. As Bruno Colson notes in his richly documented biography, Clausewitz 'proceeded by successive drafts, rewriting the same text according to a different plan and giving free rein to his mind in order to reach the substance of things'.[28] Moreover, assuming that the old version of Books I and II had already been rewritten before 1827 aligns with another piece of evidence. In her preface to the first volume, Marie states that Book I had not been copied out neatly and that her brother, 'in the course of careful checking and sorting the material, […] found the beginnings of the revision' announced in July 1827. She explains that 'the revisions have been inserted in those parts of Book I for which they were intended', but adds a crucial detail: this editorial work concerned only Book I because the revision 'did not go further'.[29] If Marie is correct, Carl did not revise Book II, and the published version would therefore reflect the state of the text in 1827. In that case, the Berlin manuscript could not be the 1827 version of *On War*, but an earlier one. Marie's testimony is not definitive, however, as some of her other statements do not appear to be entirely reliable.[30]

[27]*Ibid*., p.69
[28]Bruno Colson, *Clausewitz* (Paris: Perrin, 2016), p.353
[29]Marie von Clausewitz, 'Preface', p.65
[30]For example, in her preface to the third volume, Marie von Clausewitz states that Clausewitz did not complete Books VII and VIII. She adds that they remained 'in the form of sketches and preparatory work,' a claim that is somewhat puzzling given that Book VIII is the third-longest book in *On War*. Both Strachan and Gat have questioned Marie's characterization of Books VII and VIII (Marie von Clausewitz, 'Vorrede zum Dritter Teil'; Hew Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War*; Azar Gat, 'Clausewitz's final notes').

One final piece of internal evidence deserves attention. Book VIII contains, on two occasions, explicit cross-references to chapters from Books I and II. In both cases, the references match the chapters as they appear in the published version, not in the Berlin manuscript. First, at the end of chapter 5 of Book VIII, Clausewitz refers back to what he had previously developed in chapter 2 of Book I and gives its title in parentheses: 'purpose and means in war.' This title is that of the later, published version. Second, in chapter 9 of Book VIII, Clausewitz refers to chapter 5 of Book II in a passage where he discusses the criteria on which it is reasonable to rely when judging or criticising an event. The reference here clearly points to the content of chapter 5 in the published version of Book II, 'Critical analysis', and not to chapter 5 of the earlier manuscript, 'Polarity of Reciprocal Intentions in War'.

It is possible that these correspondences were introduced by the editors at the time of publication. But they may also point to a plausible inference: that by the time Clausewitz drafted chapters 5 and 9 of Book VIII, the first two books of *On War* had already undergone the structural changes that distinguish the published version from the Berlin manuscript. Now, this would be significant because the available indications strongly suggest that Clausewitz began drafting Book VIII – without bringing it to completion - before he undertook his post-1827 revision of Book I. Indeed, Clausewitz himself writes, in the July 1827 note, that he intends to tackle the drafting of Book VIII before undertaking the revision of the first six. Moreover, Book I – and especially its opening chapter – reveals a more mature and fully developed intellectual framework than Book VIII, where one still observes Clausewitz's conceptual and theoretical groping.[31] This would imply that the Berlin manuscripts are not the 1827 version of *On War*, but an even earlier one, that had already undergone one, or perhaps several, rounds of revision prior to the one announced in that year.

Unfortunately, unless new evidence emerges – or another manuscript is discovered – uncertainty about the dating of the Berlin text is likely to persist. There is currently no way to determine whether this text is the one Clausewitz alludes to in his July 1827 note, or an older version that had already been revised at least once. This author's intuition – although highly speculative – is that the text is older: the sheer magnitude of the changes between this version and the published one, especially the tripling of Book I and the doubling of Book II, tips the scales in favour of this hypothesis. Whatever the case, this uncertainty limits the conclusions that can be drawn from the Berlin manuscript. As long as its precise dating remains unclear, it cannot serve as a reliable basis for reconstructing the post-1827 revision or for tracing the evolution of Clausewitz's thought during that crucial period.

[31] Raymond Aron, *Penser la guerre, Clausewitz*

Conclusion

The analysis developed in this article suggests a chronology that differs markedly from the one proposed by Paul Donker. *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung* is far more likely to be an anthology of *On War* than its first draft: its close alignment with the published text, the pattern of textual variants between the three versions, and the implausibility of a radical 'zigzag' in Clausewitz's theorising all point to a later origin and, in this author's view, to a compilation produced after Clausewitz's death and after the publication of the first volume of *On War*.

As for the Berlin manuscript, the available evidence does not allow for a definitive conclusion. However, the magnitude of the changes between this version and the published text tentatively suggests that it predates 1827 and had already undergone at least one revision before the one announced that year.

This revised chronology leads to a more restrained conclusion than the initial excitement surrounding the rediscovery of these documents seemed to promise. Neither text can serve as a reliable witness to Clausewitz's earliest theorising or to the state of his manuscript on the eve of the 1827 revision. Their contribution to our understanding of the genesis of *On War* is therefore limited. In the absence of new evidence, both documents must be handled with caution, and we should be wary of relying on them to make broad claims about the evolution of Clausewitz's thought.

For now, the mysteries and ambiguities of *On War* seem destined to endure.

Appendix 1. A textual comparison of the twelve aphorisms found *verbatim* or almost *verbatim* in both the version of *On War* held at the *Staatsbibliothek* of Berlin and the published version

Aphorism number	**From the manuscript kept at the *Staatsbibliothek* in Berlin**	**From the published version of *On War***	**From *Aphorismen über den Krieg und die Kriegführung***
No. 20	Wie schon von Hause aus das Absolute, das sogenannt mathematische in den Berechnungen der Kriegskunst nirgend einen festen Grund findet und daß gleich von vorn herein ein Spiel von Möglichkeiten, Wahrscheinlichkeiten, Glück und Unglück hinein kommt, welches in allen großen und kleinen Fäden seines Gewebes fortläuft und den Krieg von allen Zweigen des menschlichen Thuns dem Karten Spiele am nächsten stellt.	Wir sehen also, wie von Hause aus das Absolute, das sogenannte Mathematische, in den Berechnungen der Kriegskunst nirgends einen festen Grund findet, und daß gleich von vornherein ein Spiel von Möglichkeiten, Wahrscheinlichkeiten, Glück und Unglück hineinkommt, welches in allen großen und kleinen Fäden seines Gewebes fortläuft und von allen Zweigen des menschlichen Tuns den Krieg dem Kartenspiel am nächsten stellt.	Das Absolute, das sogenannte Mathematische, findet also in den Berechnungen der Kriegskunst nirgends einen festen Grund, weil gleich von vornherein ein Spiel von Möglichkeiten und Wahrscheinlichkeiten, von Glück und Unglück eintritt, welches in allen großen und kleinen Fäden seines Gewebes fortläuft.
No. 45	Von der Gefahr im Kriege Gewöhnlich macht man sich ehe man sie kennen gelernt hat eine Vorstellung davon die eher anziehend als zurückschreckend ist	Viertes Kapitel: Von der Gefahr im Kriege Gewöhnlich macht man sich, ehe man sie kennengelernt hat, eine Vorstellung davon, die eher anziehend als zurückschreckend ist.	Von der Gefahr im Kriege macht man sich, bevor man sie kennen lernt, gewöhnlich eine Vorstellung, die eher anziehend als abschreckend ist.
No. 46	Dies sei unserer Anschauung ein Maaß des Einflusses den die körperliche Anstrengung übt, und	Dies sei unsere Anschauung, ein Maß des Einflusses, den die körperliche Anstrengung übt, und	Die körperliche Anstrengung gehört zu den vielen Dingen, für deren Gebrauch keine Polizeitaxe ein Maß

	der Rücksicht, die sie beim Urtheil verdient. Unter den vielen Dingen im Kriege, für deren Gebrauch keine Polizei Taxe ein Maaß festsetzen kann, gehört hauptsächlich die körperliche Anstrengung. Vorausgesetzt daß sie nicht verschwendet wird, ist sie ein coefficient aller Kräfte und niemand kann genau sagen, wie weit sie getrieben werden darf.	der Rücksicht, die sie beim Urtheil verdient. Unter den vielen Dingen im Kriege, für deren Gebrauch keine Polizeitaxe ein Maß festsetzen kann, gehört hauptsächlich die körperliche Anstrengung. Vorausgesetzt, daß sie nicht verschwendet wird, ist sie ein Koeffizient aller Kräfte, und niemand kann genau sagen, wie weit sie getrieben werden darf.	festsetzen kann; sie ist im Kriege ein Koeffizient aller Kräfte, und Niemand kann genau sagen, wie weit sie getrieben werden darf.
No. 49	der Eindruck der Sinne ist stärker als die Vorstellungen des überlegenden Kalkuls, und dies geht so weit, daß wohl noch nie eine einigermaaßen wichtige Unternehmung ausgeführt worden ist, wo der Befehlshaber nicht in den ersten Momenten der Ausführung neue Zweifel bei sich zu besiegen ge-(Bl. 31 v) habt hätte	Der Eindruck der Sinne ist stärker als die Vorstellungen des überlegenden Kalküls, und dies geht so weit, daß wohl noch nie eine einigermaßen wichtige Unternehmung ausgeführt worden ist, wo der Befehlshaber nicht in den ersten Momenten der Ausführung neue Zweifel bei sich zu besiegen gehabt hätte.	Der Eindruck der Sinne ist stärker als die Vorstellungen des überliegenden Kalküls, und dies geht so weit, daß wohl noch nie eine Unternehmung von Wichtigkeit ausgeführt worden ist, wo der Befehlshaber nicht, in den ersten Momenten der Ausführung, neue Zweifel bei sich zu besiegen gehabt hätte.
No. 51	Es ist alles im Kriege sehr einfach, aber das Einfachste ist schwierig. Diese Schwierigkeiten häufen sich und bringen eine Friktion hervor, die sich niemand richtig vorstellt, der den Krieg nicht gesehen hat. Man denke sich einen	Es ist alles im Kriege sehr einfach, aber das Einfachste ist schwierig. Diese Schwierigkeiten häufen sich und bringen eine Friktion hervor, die sich niemand richtig vorstellt, der den Krieg nicht gesehen hat. Man denke sich einen	Im Kriege ist alles sehr einfach, aber das Einfachste ist schwierig. Diese Schwierigkeiten bringen eine Friktion in der Kriegsmaschine hervor, von der nur der erfahrene Krieger eine richtige Vorstellung haben

	Reisenden, der zwei Stationen am Ende seiner Tagereise noch gegen Abend von einer Stadt zur andern zurück zu legen denkt; 4 bis 5 Stunden - mit Postpferden, auf der chaussée - es ist nichts! Nun kommt er an findet keine oder schlechte Pferde, muß warten, bergige Gegend, verdorbene Wege, es (Bl. 17 v) wird finstre Nacht und er ist froh die erste Station nach vielen Mühseeligkeiten erreicht zu haben und eine dürftige Aufnahme dort zu finden. So stimmt sich im Kriege durch den Einfluß unzähliger kleiner Umstände, die auf dem Papier nie gehörig in Betrachtung kommen können, alles herab und man bleibt weit hinter dem Ziel. – Ein mächtiger eiserner Wille überwindet diese Friktion, er zermalmt die Hindernisse, aber freilich die Maschine mit.	Reisenden, der zwei Stationen am Ende seiner Tagereise noch gegen Abend zurückzulegen denkt, vier bis fünf Stunden mit Postpferden auf der Chaussee; es ist nichts. Nun kommt er auf der vorletzten Station an, findet keine oder schlechte Pferde, dann eine bergige Gegend, verdorbene Wege, es wird finstere Nacht, und er ist froh, die nächste Station nach vielen Mühseligkeiten erreicht zu haben und eine dürftige Unterkunft dort zu finden. So stimmt sich im Kriege durch den Einfluß unzähliger kleiner Umstände, die auf dem Papier nie gehörig in Betrachtung kommen können, alles herab, und man bleibt weit hinter dem Ziel. Ein mächtiger eiserner Wille überwindet diese Friktion, er zermalmt die Hindernisse, aber freilich die Maschine mit.	kann. Ein mächtiger, eiserner Wille überwindet diese Friktion, er zermalmt die Hindernisse, aber freilich die Maschine mit.
No. 52	Die militärische Maschine, die Armee, und alles was dazu gehört, ist im Grunde sehr einfach und scheint deswegen leicht zu handhaben. Aber man bedenke daß kein	Die militärische Maschine, die Armee und alles, was dazu gehört, ist im Grunde sehr einfach und scheint deswegen leicht zu handhaben. Aber man bedenke, daß kein	Die militärische Maschine, d.h. die Armee und alles, was dazu gehört, ist im Grunde sehr einfach und scheint deshalb leicht zu handhaben. Aber man bedenke,

	Theil davon aus einem Stück ist, daß alles aus Individuen zusammengesetzt ist, deren jedes seine eigene Friktion nach allen Seiten hin behält.	Teil davon aus einem Stücke ist, daß alles aus Individuen zusammengesetzt ist, deren jedes seine eigene Friktion nach allen Seiten hin behält.	daß kein Teil davon aus einem Stücke ist, daß alles aus Individuen zusammengesetzt ist, deren jedes seine eigene Friktion hat.
No. 53	Diese entsetzliche Friktion die sich nicht wie in der Mecha-(Bl. 19 r)nik auf wenig Punkte konzentriren läßt, ist deswegen überall im Contact mit dem Zufall und bringt dann Erscheinungen hervor, die sich gar nicht berechnen lassen, eben weil sie zur Hälfte dem Zufall angehören.	Diese entsetzliche Friktion, die sich nicht wie in der Mechanik auf wenig Punkte konzentrieren läßt, ist deswegen überall im Kontakt mit dem Zufall und bringt dann Erscheinungen hervor, die sich gar nicht berechnen lassen, eben weil sie zum großen Teil dem Zufall angehören.	Diese entsetzliche Friktion, die sich nicht wie in der Mechanik auf wenig Punkte konzentrieren laßt, ist deshalb überall im Kontakt mit dem Zufall, und bringt dann Erscheinungen hervor, die sich gar nicht berechnen lassen, eben weil sie zum großen Teil dem Zufall angehören.
No. 54	Das Handeln im Kriege ist eine Bewegung im erschwerenden Mittel. So wenig man im Stande ist im Wasser die natürlichste und einfachste Bewegung, das bloße Gehen mit Leichtigkeit und Präzision zu (Bl. 20 r) thun, so wenig kann man im Krieg mit gewöhnlichen Kräften auch nur die Linie des Mittelmäßigen halten. Daher kommt es daß der richtige Theoretiker wie ein Schwimmmeister erscheint der Bewegungen die fürs Wasser nöthig sind, auf dem Trocknen üben	Das Handeln im Kriege ist eine Bewegung im erschwerenden Mittel. Sowenig man imstande ist, im Wasser die natürlichste und einfachste Bewegung, das bloße Gehen, mit Leichtigkeit und Präzision zu tun, sowenig kann man im Kriege mit gewöhnlichen Kräften auch nur die Linie des Mittelmäßigen halten. Daher kommt es, daß der richtige Theoretiker wie ein Schwimmeister erscheint, der Bewegungen, die fürs Wasser nötig sind, auf dem Trocknen üben	Das Handeln im Kriege ist eine Bewegung im erschwerenden Mittel. Sowenig man im Stande ist, im Wasser die natürlichste und einfachste Bewegung, das bloße Gehen, mit Leichtigkeit und Präzision zu tun, sowenig kann man im Kriege mit gewöhnlichen Kräften auch nur die Linie des Mittelmäßigen halten. Daher kommt es, daß der richtige Theoretiker wie ein Schwimmeister erscheint, welcher Bewegungen, die fürs Wasser nötig sind, auf dem Trocknen üben

	läßt und die denen grotesk und übertrieben vorkommen die nicht ans Wasser denken;	läßt, die denen grotesk und übertrieben vorkommen, die nicht an das Wasser denken;	läßt, die nur denen grotesk und übertrieben vorkommen, welche nicht an das Wasser denken.
No. 55	Die Kenntniß dieser Friktion ist ein Haupttheil der oft gerühmten Kriegserfahrung welche von einem guten General gefordert wird. Freilich ist der nicht der beste der die größte Vorstellung hat, dem sie am meisten imponirt (dies giebt jene Klasse von ängstli- (Bl. 21 r)chen Generalen, die unter den erfahrenen am häufigsten zu finden sind) sondern der General muß sie kennen um sie zu überwinden wo dies möglich ist und um nicht eine Präcision in den Wirkungen zu erwarten die eben wegen dieser Friktion nicht möglich ist. –	Die Kenntnis dieser Friktion ist ein Hauptteil der oft gerühmten Kriegserfahrung, welche von einem guten General gefordert wird. Freilich ist der nicht der beste, der die größte Vorstellung davon hat, dem sie am meisten imponiert (dies gibt jene Klasse von ängstlichen Generalen, die unter den Erfahrenen so häufig zu finden sind), sondern der General muß sie kennen, um sie zu überwinden, wo dies möglich ist, und um nicht eine Präzision in den Wirkungen zu erwarten, die eben wegen dieser Friktion nicht möglich ist.	Die Kenntnis der Friktion ist ein Hauptteil der oft gerühmten Kriegserfahrung. Freilich ist der nicht der beste General, der die größte Vorstellung davon hat, dem sie am meisten imponiert; aber der General muß sie kennen, um sie zu überwinden, wo dies möglich ist, und um nicht eine Präzision in den Wirkungen zu erwarten, die, eben wegen dieser Friktion, nicht möglich ist.
No. 56	So wie den Weltmann nur der fast zur Gewohnheit gewordene Takt (Bl. 21 v) seines Urtheils immer passend sprechen, handeln und sich bewegen läßt, so wird nur der kriegserfahrne Offizier bei großen und kleinen	So wie den Weltmann nur der fast zur Gewohnheit gewordene Takt seines Urteils immer passend sprechen, handeln und sich bewegen läßt, so wird nur der kriegserfahrene Offizier bei großen und kleinen Vorfällen, man möchte	So wie den Weltmann nun der, fast zur Gewohnheit gewordene, Takt seines Urteils immer passend sprechen, handeln und sich bewegen läßt: so wird nur der kriegserfahrene Offizier, bei großen und kleinen Vorfällen,

	Vorfällen, man mögte sagen bei jedem Pulsschlage des Krieges immer passend entscheiden und bestimmen.	sagen bei jedem Pulsschlage des Krieges, immer passend entscheiden und bestimmen.	man möchte sagen bei jedem Pulsschlage des Krieges, immer passend entscheiden und bestimmen.
No. 72	Untersucht die Theorie die Gegenstände welche den Krieg ausmachen, unterscheidet sie schärfer, was auf den ersten Blick zusammen zu fließen scheint, giebt sie die Eigenschaften der Mittel vollständig an, zeigt sie die wahrscheinlichen Wirkungen derselben, bestimmt sie klar die Natur der Zwecke; trägt sie überall das Licht einer verweilenden kritischen Betrachtung in das Feld des Krieges so hat sie den (Bl. 11 r) Hauptgegenstand ihrer Aufgabe erfüllt. Sie wird dann ein Führer desjenigen, der sich mit dem Kriege aus Büchern vertraut machen will; sie hellt ihm überall den Weg auf, erleichtert ihm seine Schritte, erzieht sein Urtheil, bewahrt ihn vor vielen Abwegen.	Untersucht die Theorie die Gegenstände, welche den Krieg ausmachen, unterscheidet sie schärfer, was auf den ersten Blick zusammenzufließen scheint, gibt sie die Eigenschaften der Mittel vollständig an, zeigt sie die wahrscheinlichen Wirkungen derselben, bestimmt sie klar die Natur der Zwecke, trägt sie überall das Licht einer verweilenden kritischen Betrachtung in das Feld des Krieges, so hat sie den Hauptgegenstand ihrer Aufgabe erfüllt. Sie wird dann demjenigen ein Führer, der sich mit dem Kriege aus Büchern vertraut machen will; sie hellt ihm überall den Weg auf, erleichtert seine Schritte, erzieht sein Urteil und bewahrt ihn vor Abwegen.	Untersucht die Theorie die Gegenstände, welche den Krieg ausmachen, unterscheidet sie schärfer, was auf den ersten Blick zusammenzufließen scheint; gibt sie die Eigenschaften der Mittel vollständig an, zeigt sie die wahrscheinlichen Wirkungen derselben; bestimmt sie klar die Natur der Zwecke, trägt sie überall das Licht einer verweilenden kritischen Betrachtung in das Feld des Krieges: so hat sie den Hauptgegenstand ihrer Aufgabe erfüllt. Sie wird dann demjenigen ein Führer, der sich aus Büchern mit dem Kriege vertraut machen will; sie hellt ihm überall den Weg auf, erleichtert seine Schritte, erzieht sein Urteil und bewahrt ihn vor Abwegen.
No. 73	Wenn ein Sachverständiger sein halbes Leben darauf verwendet einen	Wenn ein Sachverständiger sein halbes Leben darauf verwendet, einen	Wenn ein Sachverständiger sein halbes Leben darauf verwendet, einen

	dunkeln Gegenstand überall aufzuklären, so wird er wohl weiter kommen als derjenige, welcher in kurzer Zeit damit vertraut sein will. Damit also nicht jeder von neuem aufzuräumen und sich durchzuarbeiten habe, sondern die Sache geordnet und gelichtet finde, dazu ist die Theorie vorhanden. Sie soll den Geist (Bl. 11 v) des künftigen Führers im Kriege erziehen, oder vielmehr ihn bei seiner Selbst-Erziehung leiten, nicht aber ihn auf das Schlachtfeld begleiten; so wie ein weiser Erzieher die Geistes-Entwickelung des Jünglings lenkt und erleichtert, ohne ihn darum das ganze Leben am Gängelbande zu führen.	dunkeln Gegenstand überall aufzuklären, so wird er wohl weiter kommen als derjenige, welcher in kurzer Zeit damit vertraut sein will. Daß also nicht jeder von neuem aufzuräumen und sich durchzuarbeiten habe, sondern die Sache geordnet und gelichtet finde, dazu ist die Theorie vorhanden. Sie soll den Geist des künftigen Führers im Kriege erziehen oder vielmehr ihn bei seiner Selbsterziehung leiten, nicht aber ihn auf das Schlachtfeld begleiten; so wie ein weiser Erzieher die Geistesentwicklung eines Jünglings lenkt und erleichtert, ohne ihn darum das ganze Leben hindurch am Gängelbande zu führen.	dunkeln Gegenstand überall aufzuklären, so wird er wohl weiter kommen, als derjenige, welcher in kurzer Zeit damit vertraut sein will. Daß also nicht jeder von neuem aufzuräumen und sich durchzuarbeiten brauche, sondern die Sache geordnet und gelichtet finde, dazu ist die Theorie vorhanden. Sie soll den Geist des künftigen Führers im Kriege erziehen, oder vielmehr ihn bei seiner Selbsterziehung leiten, nicht aber ihn auf das Schlachtfeld begleiten; so wie ein weiser Erzieher die Geistesentwicklung eines Jünglings lenkt und erleichtert, ohne ihn darum das ganze Leben hindurch am Gängelbande zu führen.