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War and the Civilian in the Thought of Clausewitz

By
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Master of Philosophy

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Abstract

Despite the enduring interest in the written work of Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) there appears to be shortage of studies focusing specifically on what he had to say about the matter of civilians or non-combatants in war. After extensive consultation with primary and secondary sources this dissertation will argue that Clausewitz wrote a lot more on this subject than is commonly acknowledged. He was aware that civilian suffering was not simply an accidental by-product of war but also the result of deliberate strategic intent to compel an enemy to do one’s will. Clausewitz did not endorse such methods because he had a moral and theoretical preference for decisive battles between conventional armed forces. He tended to dismiss violence against civilian persons and property as morally wrong, militarily ineffective and politically counter-productive.
Declarations

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed .... ................................................
Date 23 September 2013

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s).

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed ....................................................................

Date 23 September 2013

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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Introduction

It is first necessary to introduce the reader to the general subject of war and civilians as it stands in relation to the work of Carl von Clausewitz. This chapter will start first by defining the term ‘civilian’ or ‘non-combatant’ and mention recent academic works on the targeting of such persons during times of war. The narrative will then point out the challenges of applying the principal author and source material to this particular area. A brief bibliographic survey of secondary literature will show the various interpretations generated over the centuries and help to distil the main outstanding questions and points of controversy driving this inquiry. This chapter will end with a basic overview of how the rest of the dissertation will be structured in order to make the case stated in the abstract and thesis statement below.

Outstanding questions

Any academic inquiry into warfare should start with a reading of On War by Clausewitz. As we near the bicentennial anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo the contents have somehow remained relevant to the phenomenon in all its potential manifestations from thermonuclear destruction to the nebulous menace of cyber warfare. The enduring interest in the treatise is attributable to its masterful scope, timeless concepts, and the way it gives readers a penetrating insight into military means and political ends so that nearly any debate about war almost always starts from Clausewitz’s paradigm or returns to it. By writing on the existential nature of war Clausewitz touched on many concepts which transcend time and culture. The trinity is especially helpful because it provides a three-fold perspective for understanding all forms of war-making, including those against civilians and non-combatants who are generally understood to be unarmed persons not belonging to a military organisation.

It is well-known that Clausewitz was fascinated by the role of politics and popular passions. He understood that the degree of civilian involvement influenced the course of military campaigns and the character of entire wars. Yet it has been left unclear whether Clausewitz wrote extensively about the suffering of civilians, or largely ignores this aspect of war. The importance of this area of research is paramount given that the man and his written legacy have been subjected to many conflicting interpretations and the charge of advocating the mass destruction of human life. Civilians meanwhile continue to perish in high numbers in armed conflicts across the world. Benjamin A. Valentino’s Final Solutions defines ‘mass killing’ to mean the intentional deaths of 50,000-plus people over a five-year period through
direct killing and/or the effects of starvation, exposure, exhaustion, disease, relocation or forced labour.  

This dissertation intends to bridge the gap between academic works on the targeting of civilians in general and those in the more specialised field of Clausewitz studies. The void has left many important questions unanswered. Did Clausewitz for example advocate the destruction of civilian lives and property or did he oppose such methods? Are scorched-earth operations an effective logistical strategy or just disgraceful vandalism in his opinion? What does Clausewitz tell us about how to wage a people’s war and was he aware of its humanitarian consequences? How does one defeat an enemy insurgency and neutralise the passions of an enemy people? How should a conquered nation be treated? What happens if cruel and irrational politicians take control of policy? The answers to such questions are either openly on display in Clausewitz’s work or so subtle and fleeting in inference that they must be extrapolated carefully. Referring to various sources written at different stages of developing thought in order to answer thematic questions of our time obviously brings with it the risk of quoting Clausewitz out of context.

**Thesis**

On the basis of extensive consultation of primary and secondary sources this dissertation will highlight the fact that Clausewitz was neither ignorant nor insensitive to the suffering of civilians. His work displays an awareness of the humanitarian effects of battles, sieges, plundering raids, burdensome contributions, scorched-earth strategies, passionate hatreds and punitive or exterminatory policies brought forth by political conditions. It is actually curious that Clausewitz did not give the matter more attention. The answer can be attributed to the hypothesis that Clausewitz was a conscientious professional soldier exhibiting a conservative attitude towards the conduct of war. Clausewitz’s professional prejudices or academic assumptions regarding civilians are reflected in at least three ways.

First, his repeated emphasis on decisive battle between regular armed forces (even in the event of a people’s war or insurgency). Second, a dismissal of violence against non-military persons as morally wrong and military ineffective or counter-productive. Third, his observation that higher political goals and a greater participation of the masses in the politics of a state (i.e. democracy) generally leads to higher levels of violence and destruction. From a moral and historical perspective, Clausewitz suggests that war against civilians was a practice of weak societies in the past and a terrible excess of the French in the present. From a theoretical perspective, the targeting of civilians goes against the logic of destroying or
disarming the enemy's combatants, thereby rendering the enemy defenceless in order to achieve a political purpose.

*What is a ‘civilian’?*

It may not be immediately apparent how the ideas of an early nineteenth century soldier can be applied to a phenomenon that seems so characteristic of recent times. The legal concept of a civilian or non-combatant is a relatively new one and such terms do not exist in the work of Clausewitz. The word *civilian*—derived from the Latin *civilis*—was likely to mean a person with some expertise in civil law. There was no body of political science and international law to define, let alone enforce, the principle in Clausewitz's day. There was nevertheless a cultural preference for decisive battles and a moral ambiguity (or hypocrisy) towards the destruction of the lives and property of those not directly involved in combat.

The principle of non-combatant immunity existed faintly in the writings of theologians, philosophers and publicists like Francisco de Vitoria, Hugo Grotius and Emer de Vattel. It was only in the modern age that a secular and legalised framework of International Humanitarian Law was incrementally constructed to accommodate the *lex ferenda* arguments stemming from the philosophical traditions of *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello* and *jus post bellum*. The Geneva Conventions, Hague Regulations and United Nations specified the rights and obligations of military servicemen by demanding protection for those rendered incapable of further combat through wounds or capture. In the response to the widespread abuse of civil populations, prohibitions were slowly extended against inflicting direct violence or inducing harmful conditions for all individuals who were *hors de combat*. Valentino provides a useful working definition of a civilian or non-combatant:

'A noncombatant is defined as any unarmed person who is not a member of an organized military group and who does not actively participate in hostilities by intending to cause physical harm to enemy personnel or property. It should be noted that simply associating with combatants, providing food or other nonlethal military supplies to them, or participating in nonviolent political activities in support of armed forces does not convert a noncombatant to a combatant. Because these activities pose no immediate threat of physical harm to combatants, individuals who engage in them deserve protection from killing—even if they may be subject to judicial punishments.'

The whole concept of 'guilt' or 'innocence' is so complicated in modern conflicts that it has become redundant. Individuals can easily take up arms to fight then revert to bystanders by discarding their weapons. Even unarmed individuals are inextricably linked to the war-making capacity of state and non-state actors by working in war-related industries, paying
taxes or providing services, labour and materials, etc.\textsuperscript{10} It is just simpler to define everyone who is not a legal combatant as a civilian and afford them the protection specified in the 1977 Additional Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Convention.\textsuperscript{11}

Unless they take a direct part in hostilities individuals and entire populations will retain protection from military operations or any of the following: ‘acts or threats of violence’ with the primary purpose to spread terror; ‘indiscriminate attacks’ causing damage or loss of life incidental to the concrete military advantage anticipated from attacking a military target; the use of human shields; attacks and/or reprisals against civilian objects, cultural objects or places of worship, objects indispensable for survival, the natural environment or works/installations containing dangerous forces.\textsuperscript{12} In short, it is considered a grave breach of International Humanitarian Law to launch attacks on objects, facilities, localities, and persons outside of combat.\textsuperscript{13}

The ‘western way of war’

War remains an inescapable phenomenon of our modern world and it is civilians who typically bear the brunt of casualties; a fact verified by recent armed conflicts in parts of Africa, the Middle and Far East.\textsuperscript{14} It is easy for the general public in the more peaceful parts of the western world to overlook or downplay war against civilians as incomprehensible barbarity. Mainstream military historiography has not helped disabuse this natural notion by following in the tradition of Sir Edward Creasy\textsuperscript{15} and Hans Delbrück\textsuperscript{16} with narratives on decisive battles.\textsuperscript{17} Anglo-American scholars such as Victor Davis Hanson\textsuperscript{18} have propagated the alluring notion that western societies have a cultural disposition towards conventional battles, due in part to Clausewitz, and are now unable or unwilling to adapt, militarily or culturally, to the costly and ‘dirty’ business of fighting insurgency warfare.\textsuperscript{19}

The argument for a ‘western way of war’ is select in its presentation of history and rather self-congratulatory in tone. Prior to the nineteenth century battle was more often than not a difficult, dangerous and unnecessary undertaking, particularly against superior armies belonging to the Muslim world.\textsuperscript{20} John A. Lynn,\textsuperscript{21} John France,\textsuperscript{22} and Beatrice Heuser,\textsuperscript{23} have all challenged Hanson’s thesis partly on the grounds that western armies tended to avoid battle and found alternative means to impose their will upon their enemies such as devastating the lands and property of those who would be recognised today as civilians. The reasoning for such attacks is a controversial and contentious area of study because it dredges up animosities from the past and brings the actions or atrocities of the perpetrators into ethical question.\textsuperscript{24}
The targeting of civilians: current debates

It is debatable as to what exactly in human nature or culture lessens the stigma of homicidal killing to the point where it becomes acceptable to the perpetrators. Individuals and societies at war usually want to preserve their own sense of humanity. They will try to assuage their consciences with a multitude of excuses commonly based around race, religion, nationalism, the appropriation of wealth or resources, or a sense of dealing out justice for some crime like armed rebellion. The most common grounds for understanding the causes of genocide or mass killing therefore include: the psychological/sociological conditions working on "ordinary" individuals; the domestic conditions or regime-type of the state; or the specific strategies and policies of those in power.\textsuperscript{25}

According to Valentino et al the political reasoning for acts of genocide could be seen as a way of eliminating internal enemies.\textsuperscript{26} Targeting foreign civilians in times of war on the other hand could be a way to coerce the enemy and undermine his means of resistance.\textsuperscript{27} Based on the study of interstate wars, counter-insurgencies and civil conflicts between 1816 and 2003 Alexander B. Downes has advanced some strong hypotheses on the reasoning behind the targeting of civilians. First, the desperation to win in desperate times and save lives in the long-run. Second, to deny enemy combatants the food, shelter, intelligence and manpower they derive from civilian sources. This can be attempted by using reprisal killings or strategies of interdiction (scorched-earth and population resettlement). Third, the desire to achieve lasting control over a conquered territory by killing or expelling a potentially dissident population.\textsuperscript{28}

In certain circumstances like a ‘supreme emergency’ political leaders, professional soldiers and the common people will be tempted to disregard the principle of non-combatant immunity and use more extreme and indiscriminate means of violence than previous political conditions would allow.\textsuperscript{29} Whatever the causes or reasoning it is evident that the terrorisation and killing of civilians dates back to beginning of civilisation.\textsuperscript{30} From the Spartan raids into Attica during the Peloponnesian War to the suicide bombings of the present day there is of course intense debate over the morality and effectiveness of such attacks. A strong argument has been made that far from discrediting the enemy policy-makers, weakening their forces capacity to fight, or demoralising their popular support, attacks on civilians actually have the opposite effect.\textsuperscript{31} But if war on civilians is so useless it begs the question why so many combatants have so often resorted to it as a military method in the past.\textsuperscript{32}
It is important to remember that not all historic societies were as versatile as the cohesive nation-states of the twentieth century. The latter usually had enough organisation and capital to provide medical aid, rations and other and assistance to their beleaguered populations. Human beings lived for centuries in tenuous ecological equilibrium with the land where the priority was to get enough food to survive. Crop failures, natural disasters, disease, or the appearance of bandits and raiders could all damage the land and deplete valuable surpluses or scarce commodities. Agricultural devastation or laying the enemy’s lands under contribution were standard, if not the preferred, methods of attack in Europe until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Given that Clausewitz witnessed the humanitarian effects of agricultural devastation it brings into question why he did not give this strategy as much attention as Vegetius who inspired medieval warriors with the maxim: ‘Famine makes greater havoc in an army than the enemy, and is more terrible than the sword.’

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars

The lifetime of Clausewitz represents an important historical period because it witnessed a major shift away from siege and proprietary warfare to decisive battles between mass armed forces. According to David A. Bell the wars of this time paradoxically blurred and hardened the normative distinctions between soldiers and what we would today call civilians. The victimisation of the latter in this period is easy to overlook because traditional military historiography, including Clausewitz’s contribution, has been captivated by its epic battles. The general emphasis on destroying the enemy’s armed forces through the ‘Napoleonic-Clausewitzian paradigm’ meant that these wars appear relatively restrained by the standards of other centuries.

The Revolutionary-Napoleonic Wars were essentially humanitarian disasters which degraded and destroyed the lives of millions. There are no concrete figures for military dead yet it is estimated that the death toll of European combatants came to 5,000,000. It is impossible to tell how many civilians were killed, maimed, displaced or suffered from the effects of having their food and shelter confiscated or destroyed. The effects of the campaigns in the Iberian Peninsula and Russia were certainly very devastating. Even the British Isles, which escaped relatively unscathed, paid an enormous cost for maintaining its armed forces, subsidising allies and waging intermittent economic warfare against France over two decades.

This period witnessed a significant amount of civil disruption and popularised violence as the warring armies trampled their way back and forth across Europe. Hugh Smith
explains that the French invaders sometimes ‘met armed resistance from local populations driven in part by national enthusiasm but also parochialism, threats to religion and popular culture, and the impositions and brutality of the occupiers.’ The distinctions between soldiers and civilians blurred with horrendous results in the Vendée, Tyrol, Italy and Spain. Finally there were nationalist rebellions in Belgium, Poland, the Balkans and Greece all seeking freedom from foreign rule. It is important to describe this historical context and question to what extent it influenced the thought of Clausewitz.

Bringing Clausewitz into the debate

Despite the seemingly all-encompassing title and wide acclaim On War is not an ideal starting point for an engaging discussion on war and civilians. The main problems basically relate to the man, what remains of his written work and the various (mis)interpretations it has generated. The truth is that Clausewitz was not a consistent or coherent man and neither was his intellectual output. It is scattered in various historical volumes and periodical literature, often fragmented in content, variable in approach, difficult to date, and largely untranslated into English. The influence of On War over the centuries is just as difficult to assess and is perhaps best explained in Heuser’s Reading Clausewitz.

Put simply for the purpose a literature review, Clausewitz’s treatise was seen primarily as a manual for the conduct of mass armies into battle with few questioning its application to guerrilla warfare. Clausewitz was used by militant German nationalists to support ‘total war’ and blamed retrospectively by the British for the resulting atrocities. As Clausewitz’s reputation was rehabilitated in the West after 1945, Anglo-American readers became attracted to the message of political control within the context of the Cold War. After the fall of the Berlin Wall Clausewitz again came under criticism for being unable to explain ‘low intensity’ violence waged by non-state actors.

Recent criticisms have stimulated academic debate and more a balanced or ambiguous academic view of Clausewitz is emerging for the twenty-first century. While there is an element of truth to all the interpretations above Clausewitz cannot be simply labelled and pigeon-holed into a category of political philosophy. As this dissertation will show, Clausewitz’s elusive thoughts on the matter of civilians are actually a lot more mixed than the thesis statement asserts. It is necessary however to take a firm stance against the various misinterpretations, which are forgivable given the complex nature of the man and his work.
Clausesitz's motivations and writing process

The main problems can be traced back to the original motivations and writing process of the author whose focus was largely on the importance of conventional battle and the role of policy or politics (*Politik*). In 1818 Major-General Clausewitz was relegated to administrative duties at the *Allegemeine Kriegsschule* in Berlin where he had enough spare time to reflect on recent events and write copiously on military affairs. Clausewitz felt that his years of experience and studious contemplation on warfare had left him with valuable ideas and insights, which he hoped others would find interesting to read more than once. According to Azar Gat nobody formulated the Napoleonic experience in such extreme terms as Clausewitz, not even his fellow Prussian reformers, who had all been deeply shaken and enraged by defeat and subjugation of the kingdom.

Clausewitz was irritated by the works of contemporaries like Dietrich Adam Heinrich von Bülow and Archduke Charles of Austria. In Clausewitz's opinion they had reduced the understanding and practice war to abstract theorems and scientific principles. Military theory should instead be a heuristic aid to judgement; a way to gain an illuminating insight into a mass of phenomena if one lacked the *coup d'oeil* that comes with innate genius. Theory had to be formed on the basis of historical examples and real-life experience. The problem was that it was all so subjective and untrustworthy. Clausewitz was dismissive of military history prior to the seventeenth century, thus curtailing any investigation into what he understood about civilian suffering in the past. The fact that Clausewitz does mention wars, campaigns and individual commanders dating from the time of Alexander the Great requires students to have a detailed knowledge of military history in order to know what he refers to and, just as importantly, what he does not.

The Napoleonic Wars of course formed the bulk of Clausewitz's studies. He believed that these had truly revealed the basic elements of war, its violent essence, and Bonaparte most embodied its aggressive and destructive spirit. Clausewitz witnessed first-hand the 'catastrophe of 1806' and the way the leaders had dissipated the energies of their antiquated armies on panaceas and a 'flimsy web of scientific but extremely feeble strategic schemes' simply not good enough to catch Bonaparte. The 'wild boar' was eventually caged by the combined coalition forces at Leipzig in 1813. Clausewitz felt that too many people had dismissed the French battles as crude brawls representing decay in the science or art of war. By undoing the reforms that helped the Austro-Prussian powers to achieve victory they were...
slipping back into the same kind of complacency which had caught them off-guard in the first place.\textsuperscript{54}

In seeking to write a book of some theoretical value for soldiers and statesmen Clausewitz explored the existential nature of war and the importance of policy or political conditions, specifically the aims adopted and degree of popular participation. In a note dated 10\textsuperscript{th} July 1827 Clausewitz stated a need to redraft the first six books of \textit{On War} and emphasise two things throughout: first, that there at least two types of war (to completely overthrow one’s opponent or merely achieve some modest territorial conquests on the frontiers); second, that war is nothing but a setting forth of politics with other means.\textsuperscript{55} Various other letters and historical studies written around this time also put greater stress on the political conditions permeating military actions, thereby making war an instrument of policy.\textsuperscript{56}

Clausewitz henceforth undertook corrections to \textit{On War} as well as writing up bulky histories on the most recent campaigns.\textsuperscript{57} Whether or not he found the time between 1827 and 1830 to revise and polish up more than the first chapter of book one is unknown. What we have is invaluable even if some chapters lack the superior style, language and three-fold conception of the very first.\textsuperscript{58} Clausewitz was at least satisfied with certain concepts and believed that a whole range of propositions could be checked against real-life without too much difficulty. The author’s expressed wish was that the reader would give \textit{On War} careful attention and test its conclusions against the actual history of war.\textsuperscript{59}

\textit{Posthumous publication and dialectics of the text}

The writing process was interrupted by a European crisis in 1830 and Clausewitz died prematurely in November 1831. Marie von Clausewitz faithfully picked up the pieces and endeavoured to fulfil her late husband’s wish to have the unfinished work published. She was helped in this effort by family and friends like Friedrich Wilhelm von Brühl, Franz August O’Etzel and Count Carl von der Gröben. The extent of their influence on the manuscripts is difficult to detect but just as Marie asked readers to be lenient with her husband’s work the same courtesy should be extended to its editors.\textsuperscript{60}

The treatise \textit{On War} composed just three of ten volumes making up the \textit{Hinterlassene Werke} or \textit{Posthumous Work}. The other seven contain a lengthy collection of historical materials covering the revolutionary campaigns in Italy and Switzerland between 1796-1799 (volumes four, five and six), the later Napoleonic campaigns in Russia and France (seven and
eight), as well as various other campaigns by generals of the past, notably Gustavus Adolphus and Frederick the Great (nine and ten).

Despite the challenges of dating and translating these sizable historical volumes Jan Willem Honig has highlighted their importance as they contain theoretical insights. In regard to the specific matter of civilians these volumes are indeed significant. The first page of *On War* in volume one for example starts with dismissive remarks about publicists applying ethics to the act of violence in war while the last page of volume ten ends with a moral denunciation of the methods of cruelty employed against the civil uprising in the Vendée.

There were many more essays, draft papers, instructional syllabi to military students as well as numerous letters to family and friends. These materials were intended for smaller readership and went unpublished until they were retrieved by archivists and historians like Hans Delbrück and Karl Schwartz. Private letters by Clausewitz to his wife are especially important because they reveal his humanitarian sentiment as well as his candid political opinion on issues such as the Polish Uprising of 1830.

The initial publication of the *Posthumous Work* was not a great commercial success. The historical volumes attracted only modest attention in England, and *On War* went into French translation without much acclaim. It was not Clausewitz who was most widely read in this period but Baron Antoine-Henri Jomini whose *Art of War* was seen to have more practical application than the ‘scholarly labyrinth’ constructed by Clausewitz. The relative obscurity of *On War* in the English-speaking world can initially be attributed to the difficulties of the language and the philosophical nature of its content.

Clausewitz was a certainly a brilliant, if very self-deprecating, thinker who adopted a dialectic approach of having two or more clashing concepts. The opening chapter for example sets out a thesis (war is an act of violence), contrasts it with a antithesis (war is a continuation of politics or policy by other means), and the incorporates and supersedes them both with a synthesis (the trinity). The dialectics and ambiguities in the original text, as well as the subtle changes in later translations, help to explain why there are so many conflicting interpretations of Clausewitz from a devil’s advocate of all-out war to a sober supporter of political control.

*Causewitz and the cult of the offensive battle*
After years of obscurity Clausewitz’s name was propelled to international and almost mystical fame when Prussia’s commander-in-chief Helmuth Graf von Moltke gave *On War* partial credit for his victories over Austria and France.\textsuperscript{71} The defensive principles of Archduke Charles (d. 1847), which Clausewitz had so often criticised, were exposed as inadequate in 1866. Rather than tapping into the passions of his subjects Emperor Franz Joseph sued for peace (much like the Habsburgs of Clausewitz’s day) on the basis that his armies had been defeated in battle and the victors were in a position to continue requisitioning occupied lands to the point of despoliation.\textsuperscript{72} The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 was less tractable when the invasion provoked the formation of a new revolutionary republic, a protracted siege at Paris and *francs-tireurs* in the country at large.\textsuperscript{73} The experience disturbed Moltke enough to warn the *Reichstag* in Clausewitzian language that the age of cabinet wars was over and wars of the future would be affairs for the whole nation.\textsuperscript{74}

The insights of Clausewitz became more accessible to English language readers at this time with a translation of *On War* by Colonel James John Graham in 1873.\textsuperscript{75} Lieutenant-Colonel George. F. R. Henderson lectured on the text for the British Army,\textsuperscript{76} while in the naval sphere Alfred Mahan and Julian Corbett propounded the logic that one attain command of the sea by destroying the enemy’s battle fleet and delegate attacks on the civilian commerce as secondary missions, unless of course they better serve the political purpose of war.\textsuperscript{77} A whole range of military responses for small wars was outlined by ‘the Clausewitz of colonial warfare’ Charles Callwell who placed a similar emphasis on battles and the capture of capitals, but much more on agricultural devastation and cattle-raiding.\textsuperscript{78} Sir Charles Dilke referred to Clausewitz when arguing that the scorched earth and concentration camps adopted against the Boers would never work due to national character of the enemy and terrain of South Africa.\textsuperscript{79}

There were numerous other instances whereby guerrilla activity resulted in civilian suffering, most notably during the Russian suppression of holy warriors in the Caucasus,\textsuperscript{80} the Spanish counter-insurgency in Cuba,\textsuperscript{81} and the wars of the Americans.\textsuperscript{82} No one seemed to question the relevance of *On War* maybe because it described how to wage a people’s war in defence. For the attacker Clausewitz had suggested insurgents could be beaten whenever they lacked support from a regular army. The failure revolutionary movements in France, Germany and Switzerland convinced Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, both readers of *On War*, that internal disturbances could not withstand state troopers.\textsuperscript{83} The Boer War merely vindicated Britain’s need to prepare for a major clash on the continent,\textsuperscript{84} and decisive battle
was the chief feature that the French took from what they saw as a very confusing and metaphysical text.  

By the time of the fifth German edition in 1905 On War had a commendatory introduction by no less a person than Chief of General Staff, Count Alfred von Schlieffen.  

At least three memoranda written by Clausewitz for a possible war against France were released prior to outbreak of the First World War. The German military establishment cherry-picked operational maxims and managed to subvert Clausewitz’s key message on the role of policy. It was widely believed that civilian politicians should stay out of military affairs once a war was underway; a fallacy reinforced by a flawed edition of On War. This interpretation was consistent with the militaristic or social Darwinist views prevailing at the time. Humanitarian laws, customs and usages of war (Kriegsmanier) were to be brushed aside by military necessity in order to achieve complete victory; a concept increasingly equated with the physical annihilation of the enemy nation. More attentive readers like Max Jähns, Hans Delbrück and Rudolf von Caemmerer benefitted from a greater understanding of the context and subtleties of Clausewitz’s writing.  

On War and International Humanitarian Law

During the nineteenth century civilian intellectuals like Leon Tolstoy had been critical of the cruel government policies and plundering behaviour of soldiers in foreign countries like China. Clausewitz was portrayed in Tolstoy’s War and Peace as a rather aloof and heartless theoretician who tells a colleague that in war ‘the only aim is to weaken the enemy, so one cannot of course, take into account the losses of private persons.’ While the protection of civilians was not a high priority western states did make a concerted attempt to define combatants and regulate their conduct. Dr Francis Lieber was a fellow Prussian veteran of the Waterloo campaign and read Clausewitz’s statements on ‘absolute’ war. Lieber codified a philosophy of humanitarian restraint into U.S. army regulations despite the legal challenges of secessionism and guerrillas during the American Civil War.  

From 1864 onwards the International Red Cross and Geneva Conventions strove to construct working articles for ambulances, medical personnel and soldiers rendered incapable of serving in a fighting capacity by wounds or capture.  

The 1907 Hague Convention IV incorporated these conventions and prohibited the bombardment of undefended property and ill-treatment of inhabitants under occupation so long as they did not engage themselves in spying and active resistance. Professional opinion generally took the view that the participation of guerrillas and people-in-arms was of low  

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military value and morally undesirable. An annex to the convention legalised such combatants on the condition that they belonged to the army’s militia or volunteer corps with a specific commander, displayed identifiable insignia, carried their arms openly, and conducted their operations in accordance with laws and customs of war. Clausewitz and August Graf Neidhardt von Gneisenau had already mentioned some of this criteria in their plans for a national uprising and the Prussian government had tried to make similar distinctions during the ‘War of National Liberation’ in 1813.95

At sea the Paris Declaration of 1856 abolished non-state privateering96 and the Hague placed limits on the naval bombardment of coastal settlements.97 The 1909 Declaration of London drew distinctions between types of contraband and gave safe passage to vessels not carrying war materials to ports free from blockade.98 Britain refused to ratify these restrictions and all the signatories at Hague gave only a vague agreement to observe the usages established by the laws of humanity and dictates of public conscience.99 Militarists like Friedrich von Bernhardi endorsed Clausewitz’s cynical words on humanitarian law and believed that only a great victorious battle could win war on the cheap and avoid years of horrifying attrition between nations as foreseen by the likes of Ivan Bloch.100 By 1918 Sir Graham Bower lamented how the breakdown of civilisation predicted by Clausewitz and Bernhardi had reduced the Hague agreements to mere scraps of paper.101

Clausewitz and the total wars

Like the Great Paraguayan War of 1865-70, the Great War of 1914-18 revealed a fundamental problem in Clausewitz’s recipe for success, which was briefly touched upon by Major Stuart Murray. Namely, how to neutralise the enemy’s public opinion beyond the obvious way of bloody battle.102 If both sides kept reconstituting their armed forces the destruction of human and material resources would go on indefinitely until either the popular passions wilted away or the policy-makers agreed on peace.103 The British and German navies were both moved by expediency and the allure of statistics to attack all enemy and neutral shipping destined for the other’s blockaded population.104 The war was not won however until the German army was broken in battle and its home front collapsed into revolution.105

Clausewitz’s reputation was tarnished by the WWI experience. James W. Garner blamed Clausewitz for the way the Germans ruthlessly exploited occupied areas in France, Belgium and Russia and terrorised civilians at the slightest sign of partisan resistance.106 Governor General of Canada John Buchan on the other hand believed that Clausewitz had intended wars to be won quickly thereby saving lives in the long-run and warned his
countrymen that it was inexpedient 'to do anything to outrage the moral sense of other peoples.' If nothing else, the Great War validated Clausewitz's prediction that the higher the political aim and the greater the participation of the masses, the more policy would converge with destructive military aims. Clausewitz's message on the power of defence also earned greater respect in both military and civilian circles after the traumatic experience of the trenches.

As industrialised mass killing exceeded beyond the battlefield the relevance as well as the morality of *On War* was brought into question. During the years of economic depression and intellectual disillusionment that followed there was a call by veterans, literary figures and politicians to abolish war as a means for solving political disputes. The League of Nations pledged itself to reduce the incidence of international aggression while various international conferences held at Washington, Geneva and the Hague sought armament control and bans on the use of new incendiary, chemical and biological weapons. These could now be delivered by aerial means against civil populations for the purpose of economic disruption and moral terrorisation. This threatened to render the Napoleonic-Clausewitzian battle approach obsolete.

A more indirect approach to paralyse the enemy's armed power was more preferable for T. E. Lawrence, J. F. C Fuller and Basil Liddell Hart who denounced Clausewitz as a Mahdi of mass and mutual massacre. Spenser Wilkinson defended Clausewitz against such aspersions by reminding readers that military events could not be understood without reference to politics and most of the alternatives proposed by critics were already encompassed by *On War*. Elbridge Colby was however correct to identify two of its alternative strategies with harmful implications for civilians: levying contributions from occupied lands and causing damage in a general way. The belief that Clausewitz was to partly to blame for inspiring an inhumane war philosophy therefore persisted.

Germany continued to be the most fruitful and perilous ground for Clausewitz studies. Biographical works by Karl Linnebach, Hans Rothfels, Eberhard Kessel, and Walter Malmsten Schering benefitted from access to Clausewitz's complete papers before they were lost during the Second World War. Those army officers who took the time to read *On War*, notably Wilhelm Groener and Hans von Seeckt, continued to use the treatise for operational insights on offensive war. Joachim von Stülpnagel on the other hand reported to the *Reichswehr* in 1924 on the weakened state of the regular army and should Germany be invaded the country would have to fall back on Clausewitz's desperate vision of people's war; a self-destructive option rejected back in 1918.
For Bernhardi and Erich von Ludendorff Clausewitz had not gone far enough in his espousal of nation-state effort. The next ‘total war’ would require the complete subordination of civilian policy to a strong militaristic government until the country had achieved the political goal of national survival. Like many of the French and German nationalists of the early nineteenth century Clausewitz had a romanticised image of national purification through the shared hardship of war. His more inflammatory declarations were easy to use as Nazi propaganda to support a life-or-death struggle to the finish. Karl Goerdeler, Gerhard Ritter and Ludwig Beck questioned whether it was morally or politically necessary to take Clausewitz’s concept of absolute war and overthrow beyond the destruction of enemy armies to literally exterminate entire peoples.

Outside Germany there was a cautious interest in Clausewitz as historians tried to place the man and his ideas within their proper context. Stalinist Russia was suspicious of German literature despite the fascination in On War shown by Vladimir Lenin and Major-General E. A. Razin. Rothfels provided an illuminating chapter about Clausewitz for The Makers of Modern Strategy and at least three key texts were translated for study in the U.S military. British opinion continued to be hostile: Arthur Bryant concluded his Years of Endurance with a comment on Clausewitz’s lack of respect for human decencies, while John H. Morgan blamed On War for indoctrinating the Germans into a militarist philosophy leading to bloodshed and the enslavement of subject populations.

The Anglo-American armies were hardly blameless and they too found it necessary to rain down indiscriminate artillery and aerial firepower to aid the advance of their ground troops. The allied naval blockades and bomber offensives inflicted the most contentious damage upon the Axis populations. Air Marshal Sir Robert Saundby later tried to justify these attacks by repeating Clausewitz’s apparent lack of faith in international law and the argument of military necessity. The bombings bring into question whether Clausewitz advocated the targeting civilians as a short-cut to success, or to what extent one may project military force into the opposing to state in order to bring about in-cohesion and war-weariness. On the basis of the WWII experience Edward M. Collins and Carl Schmitt referred to Clausewitz to argue that democracies were just as capable as autocracies of unleashing massive amounts of violence when they develop passionate enmity and set their political goals as high as unconditional surrender.

Cold War Clausewitz
After 1945 the rights and responsibilities of combatants (including those in resistance movements struggling against foreign occupation) were expanded by the International Military Tribunals, Geneva Convention III and 1949 Civilian Convention. In the years following the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Convention against Genocide the U.N. and E.C./E.U. produced various other international covenants on economic, social and political rights. These normative changes somehow affected French policy in North Africa because the razzia raids and torture of non-combatants employed around the time of Clausewitz’s death were no longer acceptable to international and domestic opinion as legitimate methods of pacification by the time of the Algerian War for Independence (1954-62). Documents like the 1970 Declaration remained ambiguous on the circumstances and extent to which a people could resist colonial regimes in order to secure their self-determination.

The West was receptive to idea of protecting civilian populations from foreign occupation but resisted restrictions on air power since it would deprive them of a key military advantage. The advent of aerial bombing, nuclear weapons and intercontinental missiles had seemingly devalued conventional armed forces and invalidated the central tenant in On War to destroy the enemy’s armies in ground battle. Anglo-American strategists and political scientists like Bernard Brodie and Hermann Kahn instead approved a policy of containment and deterrence with a range of ‘limited’ or ‘counterforce’ responses short of mutually assured destruction. The message on costs-benefits calculus in On War added credibility to these scientific theories but neo-Clausewitzians feared that a multitude of factors such as uncertainty, friction, human error and the escalatory logic of using utmost force would result in any nuclear confrontation spiralling out of control.

The Cold War and a desire to restore the armed forces of West Germany led to renaissance in Clausewitz studies. Some of his original work was unfortunately lost, destroyed or fell into the hands of private collectors. Werner Hahlweg returned to the original manuscript for the 16th edition of Vom Kriege and compiled two sizeable volumes from materials eschewed by previous archivists. Eduard Rosenbaum welcomed the additions because they would help show that Clausewitz was more than just a crude militarist. Clausewitz’s reputation was rehabilitated in English-speaking world by the efforts of Sir Michael Howard and Peter Paret as well as Roger Parkinson, Raymond Aron and W. B. Gallie. This biographical work was accused of exaggerating the liberalism and rationality of Clausewitz whose harsh political views in later life arguably placed him more on the side of counter-reaction.
In 1976 Howard and Paret et al produced what is considered the best edition of *On War*. While these are invaluable for English-language readers Honig has pointed out some of their problems. For whatever reason significant words and passages have been altered: the concept of ‘Zweikampf’ (lit. two-struggle) is rendered as *duel* and ‘das Gefecht’ (the fight) is softened to be the *engagement*. There are many difficult phrases such as ‘Wehrlos’ (defenceless) and ‘Niederwefung’ (overthrow) which are open for interpretation as to whether they encompass attacks on non-combatants. Clausewitz rarely uses the terms ‘total war’ or ‘limited war’ instead preferring long-winded expressions like a war in its absolute conception or that a limited aim can apply to both the offensive and defensive forms of war.

It is not always clear whether Clausewitz is talking about a political or military aim. He sometimes refers to the former as ‘Zweck’ and the latter as ‘Ziel’ but not consistently. A chapter entitled ‘Zweck und Mittel im Kriege’ for example uses ‘Zweck’ interchangeably with the political object on the one hand and the object of combat(s) on the other. It gets confusing when such distinctions are not made clear, especially when Howard and Paret use terms such as ‘policies’ when Clausewitz is clearly referring to military methods or ways (‘Wege’). Subordinate engagements may not have the enemy’s destruction as their first, immediate concern. This could instead be the capture of a hill or bridge, or simply to engage in trial of strength. The object in this case is merely a means to inflict more damage and outright destruction on the enemy at a later opportunity in the battle or campaign. Clausewitz leaves it unclear whether subordinate objects include the destruction, or at least fight over, civilian assets like food supplies and shelter.

To allow combat, killing or the capture of territory to become an open-ended goal in itself is a perversion of *On War* since it warns against striving solely for such windfall profits. The new Howard and Paret edition came out at time when the Americans were trying to understand where they went wrong during the Vietnam War. In the assessment of Harry G. Summers the U.S. military had successfully checked all major offensives undertaken by the enemy but had failed to adapt pseudo-economic strategies to undermine the Viet Cong’s support amongst the population. Poorly articulated political objectives and a divided American public did not help either. The ‘trinity’ was a convenient way to argue that in the future there had to be greater ‘balance’ between the politicians, army and people. The 1984 Weinberger Doctrine henceforth insisted on specific and achievable political purposes and public support, while service manuals and academic works were written using the language and concepts expressed in *On War*.169

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*Introduction*
The Vietnam War caused significant civilian casualties and exposed the problem of identifying the ‘enemy’ in guerrilla situations. Greater discipline and education were needed for service personnel to internalise and uphold the norm of non-combatant immunity regardless of personal risk.\textsuperscript{170} This ideal was enshrined by the 1977 Additional Protocols to the Geneva Convention,\textsuperscript{171} which was accompanied by various bans on weaponry likely to cause indiscriminate and disproportional damage.\textsuperscript{172} It still remained difficult to target certifiable military targets without causing collateral damage or terror to nearby civilians.\textsuperscript{173} The military necessity argument remained a strong get-out clause and it was still within an occupier’s power to hold civilians suspected of espionage or acts sabotage and terrorism.\textsuperscript{174}

The 1977 protocols did extend the protection of combatants and non-combatants to ‘armed conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right to self-determination’.\textsuperscript{175} Internal disturbances, riots, rebellion and civil war by indigenous people against their own government were not counted so the ruling authorities were entitled to re-establish law and order through strong-handed means. International supervision and law enforcement was also restrained by political factors such as state interests and the principle of sovereignty and non-intervention.\textsuperscript{176} Numerous human rights abuses were therefore perpetuated in authoritarian states or those struggling to put down insurgency and civil strife. This is worth bearing in mind when trying to understand the severity of measures used against popular uprisings during Clausewitz’s lifetime.

Mao Zedong apparently read \textit{On War} when formulating his own strategy for protracted people’s war in which he described popular support as a sea in which guerrillas could swim like fish.\textsuperscript{177} Military history shows the more this is a great temptation for the counter-insurgent to try ‘draining the sea’ by targeting civilians.\textsuperscript{178} The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan for example showed that the more the Russians deviated from conventional combats and resorted to killing civilians the more they lost control in a spiral of brutality as described by Clausewitz.\textsuperscript{179} It is important to explore this area to discover what Clausewitz had to say about insurgency and whether he disliked people’s war because it debased professional warfare with its fearful costs.\textsuperscript{180}

\textit{The enduring relevance of On War}

As the Cold War ended the treatise retained its relevance to inter-state conflicts like the 1991 Gulf War; the trinity was a convenient way to conceptually separate the regime of Saddam Hussein and his armed forces from the Iraqi people as the centre of gravity or legitimate
The political and military changes of 1990s then brought the relevance of *On War* to other conflicts into serious question. Martin van Creveld, Sir John Keegan, and Mary Kaldor spearheaded the charge that Clausewitz had overlooked the influence of culture and based his assumptions too narrowly on regular armies seeking decisive battle for the rational policies of states. It appeared to these critics that Clausewitz’s writings were outdated and could not explain the increasing incidence of ‘low intensity’ conflicts, civil violence and international terrorism between non-state actors for whom civilians were the principal targets.

The character of the violence internal to Somalia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia made it harder to discern the logic behind the massacre, mass rape and ethnic cleansing of unarmed populations. These cases led to varying degrees of armed intervention by the U.N. and N.A.T.O. and a strengthening of I.H.L. through the Criminal Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda and Rome Statute of International Criminal Court. The criticism of *On War* on these ‘new wars’ stimulated debate yet no detailed investigation emerged on where exactly Clausewitz stood on the matter of civilians. Christopher Bassford at least defended the theoretical ideas and moral character of Clausewitz by explaining the mixed reception of *On War* among Anglo-American readers.

There are still those who question the morality or practical application of keeping an nineteenth century treatise at forefront of military education or in sensitive situations like counter-insurgency. In such cases, strict political control and non-violent alternatives like economic sanctions are seen as preferable to all-out bloodshed. It is typical to use phraseology such as ‘hearts and minds’ or ‘carrot and stick’ for various political, economic and social strategies. These often encompass strong policing, re-education, acts of kindness, goodwill gestures, propaganda, bribery or some other positive appeal. Such policy by other means can be considered a form of interdiction to weaken the opposing enemy forces but should never be confused with war itself.

U.S. field manuals repeat Clausewitz’s dictum that politics is the central object in war and legitimate military means include the destruction of enemy armed forces, seizing territory, and targeting vital objectives or resources to raise the enemy’s costs and reduce his will to fight. Clausewitz remains essential for understanding the political rationale behind recent acts of terrorism and counter-terrorism in which there is a strong element of civilian victimisation. The emerging threat of cyberwar again brings a new form of attack on civil infrastructure for the purpose of causing disruption, confusion and paralysis thereby compelling the victim to a fulfil the political will of the assailant.
Military colleges and civilian universities continue to prescribe *On War* as essential reading.\(^{195}\) Aside from those academics already mentioned others with a specialised interest in Clausewitz are Paul Cornish,\(^ {196}\) Antulio J. Echevaria II,\(^ {197}\) Stuart Kinross,\(^ {198}\) Andreas Herberg-Rothe,\(^ {199}\) Hew Strachan,\(^ {200}\) and Jon Tetsuro Sumida.\(^ {201}\) The most recent publications with a wide-range of content include *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century*,\(^ {202}\) *Clausewitz: The State and War*\(^ {203}\) and *Clausewitz Goes Global: Carl von Clausewitz in the 21st Century*.\(^ {204}\) The website Clausewitz.com features a regularly updated bibliography of multilingual works.\(^ {205}\)

**Focusing the research**

Paret's *Clausewitz and the State*, republished in 2007, remains the seminal biographical source and it recommends that more research be done on the influence of Frederick von Schiller and the Thirty Years’ War.\(^ {206}\) This will be addressed in the course of this dissertation because it relates to the matter of civilian suffering. A fresh look at what Clausewitz has to say about on such issues requires greater consultation with the historical volumes of the *Posthumous Work* than is normally given. Lynn’s *Wars of Louis XIV* for example contains only minimal references to the battle-centric Clausewitz of *On War* and does not draw upon the ninth volume in which Clausewitz displays an awareness of alternative strategies such as naval bombardments, coercive contributions and scorched-earth strategies.\(^ {207}\)

Academic output does seems to be shifting towards the historical.\(^ {208}\) There are new English translations of the 1815 campaign history\(^ {209}\) and a renewed interest on what Clausewitz had to say on the phenomenon of *petite guerre* and people’s war.\(^ {210}\) These inquiries are revealing a much more ambiguous picture of Clausewitz as a man with little faith in the ability of politics to control the escalatory and violent tendencies of war; as a fiery would-be insurgent who accepted the inevitable atrocities of people’s war; and an objective historian who recognised that it was Napoleon’s preference for battles and his inability to tap into the passions of the French people which brought the latter campaigns in France to a speedy conclusion.

It is perplexing that in the two hundred years following the *Dos de Mayo* and burning of Moscow the subject of civilian participation and suffering has not been studied with more rigorous reference to Clausewitz, especially given the eminence of *On War* and the blame often attributed to its legacy. Caleb Carr’s *Lessons of Terror* is stinging: ‘We will never know how much gratuitous bloodshed might have been avoided had the brilliantly phrased but no
less neurotic and incendiary intellectual exercise that is On War slipped quietly into obscurity. This view seems to have filtered into popular culture because in 2009 movie *Law Abiding Citizen* the leading character justifies the assassination of civilian members of the U.S. justice system with references to the centre of gravity: “This is von Clausewitz shit, total fucking war.” Even Dresden’s Museum of Military History braces visitors with the quote: ‘War is an act of violence.’

The style and content of *On War* can easily lead to revulsion if one does not try to place the book or its author in their proper context. Readers of *On War* are immediately presented with an amoral conception of war in the absolute and shocking sentences about how moderation and notions of humanity are absurd. The pedantic insistence on bloody fighting verges on the obsessive. Even the oft-quoted phrase that war is nothing but a continuation of policy by other means is unsettling because it is seen to legitimise war into being just another form of forceful negotiation, no different than sending diplomatic notes, as normal to human existence as commerce or reproduction. ‘Not only was the concept of battle central to his strategic thought,’ observes Howard, ‘but he wrote about it with a vigor and a vivacity which make those chapters leap from the pages like a splash of scarlet against a background of scholarly gray.’

Using words Clausewitz was able to conjure up an image of war just as disturbing as *Los Desastres de la Guerra* by Francisco de Goya. Yet it would erroneous to think of Clausewitz as an amoral advocate of indiscriminate violence; *On War* does not prescribe the mass murder of civil populations. Indeed, such was the emphasis on conventional war that Rothfels noticed that Clausewitz almost seems to revive the ideal concept of war between governments and armies. Susanne C. Nielsen has also detected the underlying morality throughout seemingly amoral statements and argues that while Clausewitz does not explicitly argue that the means of warfare should be limited by moral considerations, he disapproves of senseless destruction, and does not fail to remind readers of war’s costs.

Scholars have tended to skirt around these issues only to hold back. Martin Kitchen correctly identified some key areas where Clausewitz shows his personal sentiments without elaborating in detail. Geoffrey Best states only briefly in *War and Law since 1945* that for all the strong language about war Clausewitz was a model of chivalry and humanity. This general assumption without detailed explanation has left a lot of unanswered questions. ‘We can only speculate’ cautions Kinross, ‘as to whether or not Clausewitz ever envisaged there being no distinction between military and civilian targets.’ Michael C. C. Adams went straight to heart of the matter in a short review of van Creveld’s *Transformation of War*.
Clausewitz said that the tool of the state was the uniformed army of combatants, and that the civil populace, or noncombatants, must stay neutral. In this role, they must be protected from abuse but dealt with harshly if they invade the gameboard of war. The problem again is that the arbitrary classifications do not work in reality. Twentieth-century total war broke down the distinction between combatant and noncombatant. Bombs dropped on Berlin, London, or Toyko killed more civilians than soldiers. Also, when wars are fought by scientists inventing weapons in laboratories, who is a combatant anyway? Even in Clausewitz’s own day, the Spanish resistance to French occupation, the rising of the Landwehr in Prussia, made a mockery of such fine distinctions. Because partisan activities violate conventional etiquette, they tend to provoke savage reprisal, as Francisco Goya’s pictures of the peasant war in Spain illustrated.  

A way forward

A detailed study is clearly needed to bring the many disorganised and disparate interpretations together and assess their validity, as well as providing new insights and directions for further study. In order to make the case set out in the abstract and thesis statement above this dissertation will have to strike a balance between a chronological and thematic narrative. The chapters will follow the rough course of the wars and will be each moulded around a particular theme or set of research questions.

The next chapter will narrate the wars brought forth by the French Revolution with attention to the issues of nationalised warfare, radicalised politics, the pillage and plunder of armies, and low-level insurrectionary activity. In this way it will become clear that Clausewitz condemned the French in moral terms. It will also begin a recurring theme throughout the dissertation: namely, that Clausewitz thought the job of fighting the French was not for amateur militias or civilian-in-arms alone but required mass armed forces backed up by a militarised society.

The third chapter will focus more on Clausewitz as a conscientious military professional by addressing four main areas: his social position as an enlightened officer and gentleman; his theoretical understanding of war; his reading of military history; and his conventional recipe for success. In this way it will become more evident that Clausewitz knew civilians had often been targeted in the distant past and their increasing involvement made war more destructive. Despite the fact that civilians were becoming an key factor in a nation’s war-making capacity Clausewitz exhibited a moral and theoretical preference for battles between regular forces not the slaughter of those hors de combat.
The fourth chapter will explain that in the wake of military defeat Clausewitz and his contemporaries wanted to reform the Prussian state, enlist the passions of the troops and resort to the desperate measure of a people’s war. The narrative has to be constructed around questions such as what is a people’s war, how is it to be used and what are the consequences for non-combatants? The answers will show that Clausewitz addressed subject from a largely military point of view. He dismissed the dangers of social revolution and accepted the possibility of atrocities and non-combatant casualties as necessary sacrifice to liberate one’s country or be destroyed in the attempt.

The last two chapters will cover the key events surrounding the downfall of Napoleon: namely, the protracted defence-in-depth and scorched-earth adopted by the Russians; the resurgence of Prussia; and the invasions of France by which the wars were ended in a relatively conventional manner. Clausewitz witnessed extensive violence against civilian lives and property during this period and was conscious of the passionate desire to seek revenge against the French nation and its confederates. He generally opposed punitive violence as either morally wrong, militarily ineffective and politically counter-productive. The question of how to defeat an enemy insurgency was left largely unexplored by Clausewitz despite the fact that his final campaign involved the suppression of a Polish insurrection.

**Academic contribution**

While this dissertation will help to contribute a largely positive image of Clausewitz it will not shy away from highlighting the uglier elements of his writing such as his acceptance of civilian casualties in more desperate times of war, his approval of harsh policies towards the Poles and the disturbing implications of his theoretical revelations on war. It could be argued that by putting so much such stress on combat, Clausewitz was, consciously or not, making a distinction between those who fight and those who do not. It is distinction based on more on logic rather than a subjective and temperamental sense of morality.

The way Clausewitz constructs his arguments strongly suggests that whoever picks up weapon (be they a man, woman or child) to use against their enemy’s armed forces will immediately expose themselves to the logical object(s) of war, strategy, combat, tactics, defence and attack. All lead to the disarmament or destruction of the opposing armed forces. Besides the friction operating on the military machine and the illogic of the human mind, only a very weak sense of humanitarianism and political restraint fetters this act of violence thus leaving war a chained down half-thing.
These insights seem to backup contemporary academics like Downes in the assumption that 'only those individuals who present a direct threat of harm to the enemy by using weapons surrender their immunity from harm.' The problems facing International Humanitarian Law today can be understood with reference to On War which argues that unless political or humanitarian considerations are vigorously asserted the self-preservation and security of the army will come first because all that really matters is the fight.

In addition, political conditions may not necessarily be protective as Clausewitz explains with reference to cases like the Vendée or Spain. His insights support the claim that politics be aligned in such a way that a civilian population becomes characterised by the hostile belligerent as being as much the enemy ('Gegner' or 'Feind') as the military forces and therefore a target. In other words, the targeting of civilians may be a means to an end or the end itself, especially if the perpetrator’s political goal is the physical annihilation of his enemy (non-combatants included).

Conclusion

This introductory chapter has made a sweeping survey of historical literature and academic debates to serve as the basis for further investigation into the matter of Clausewitz and civilians. It has explained what defines a civilian, their widespread victimisation and a lack of academic works engaging Clausewitz's written work with the subject. Furthermore, it has mentioned some of the challenges relating to the motivations and intellectual character of the man, the unfinished nature of his work, its dialectic style, the problems of dating certain texts, and the pitfalls of translation into English. The dissertation will now proceed onto the terrifying force around which Clausewitz’s whole life revolved: the French Revolution and emergence of Napoleon Bonaparte.


2 Readers should note that the difficulties of the original text and its translations make it necessary to quote and reference interchangeably from various editions On War. First, the original 1832 version of Vom Kriege available in complete format online or Ulrich Marwedel’s abridged 2005 version of the 1980 reprint by Philipp Reclam jun. GmbH and Co., Stuttgart. For English quotations this paper relies primarily on the 1989 paperback edition of On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret et al. This was originally published in 1976 by Princeton University Press, New Jersey and reissued with an extensive index in 1984 and reprinted as a paperback in 1989. It also makes use of an abridged version of the 1873 translation by Colonel James John Graham first published in London by N. Trübner and Co. in 1873, revised by F. N. Maude, and later edited by Louise Willmot for Wordsworth Editions Limited in 1997. The complete unabridged versions of the 1832 original and Graham’s translation are available at <www.clausewitz.com>. For convenience these three different versions of On War will be cited hereafter as CVC, Graham and H&P by book, chapter, section (where appropriate), paragraph and page numbers or internet links.


6 The word ‘civilian’ apparently originates in the 13th or 14th century from the old French word civilien ‘of the civil law,’ created from Latin civilis. The word’s original meaning in English was ‘judge or authority on civil law’. Its use in the sense of a ‘non-military person’ is first attested in 1829, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/civilian>, retrieved 07/01/2013.

7 The ‘just war’ theory generally tends to place strong emphasis on: a) having the legitimate authority to wage war; b) having a reasonable prospect of success whenever resorting to war; c) trying peaceful means first; d) waging war with a sense of proportion and discrimination.


11 ‘1. A civilian is any person who does not belong to one of the categories of persons referred to in Article 4 A (1), (2), (3) and (6) of the Third Convention and in Article 43 of this Protocol. In case of doubt whether a person is a civilian, that person shall be considered to be a civilian. 2. The civilian population comprises all persons who are civilians. 3. The presence within the civilian population of individuals who do not come within the definition of civilians does not deprive the population of its civilian character.’ Article 50, Paragraphs 1-3 in ‘Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)’, 8 June 1977; <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/full/4707opendocument>, retrieved 07/01/2013; see also ‘Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)’, 8 June 1977, <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/full/47570openDocument>, retrieved 07/01/2013.


17 Ian Beckett, ‘Victory, Counter-Insurgency and Iraq’, in Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn, eds,


See Heuser's *Evolution of Strategy*.


44 Beatrice Heuser, Reading Clausewitz (London: Pimilico, 2002).


56 For elaboration and references to these other materials see Chapter 3.


60 Marie was helped in this effort by her brother Friedrich Wilhelm von Brühl, Major Franz August O’Etzel, and General Count Carl von der Gröben who published the last volumes after Marie died in January 1836. Since the original manuscripts are lost we may never know the degree of influence or corrections by these editors: Marie’s brother apparently inserted the revisions to Book I and he was


63 For more on the Vendée and publicists see Chapters 2 and 3.

64 A biography written by Clausewitz in 1817 on the life and character of Gerhard von Scharnhorst appeared in 1832 entitled, 'Über das Leben und den Charakter von Scharnhorst. Aus dem Nachlasse des General Clausewitz,' Historisch-politische Zeitschrift, 1 (1832); an article on the military institutions of the Prussian state went unpublished for thirty-seven years until it appeared as 'Unsere Kriegsverfassung', Zeitschrift für Kunst, Wissenschaft und Geschichte des Krieges, 7 (1858); the declaration justifying his resignation from the Prussian army in 1812 and numerous private letters surfaced in Georg H. Pertz and Hans Delbrück, eds., Das Leben des Feldmarschalls Grafen Neithardt von Gneisenau, 5 Vols. (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1864-1880); for more on Gneisenau see Karl Griewank, ed. Gneisenau. Ein Leben in Briefen (Leipzig: Koehler, 1939) in 1878 Delbrück presented an early essay on the phenomenon of standstills in the act of war by Clausewitz, 'Über das Fortschreiten und den Stillstand der kriegerischen Begebenheiten', Zeitschrift für preussische Geschichte und Landeskunde, 15 (1878); see also H. Delbrück, 'General von Clausewitz', Historische und politische Aufsätze (Berlin, 1887); Karl Schwartz edited a volume of personal letters between Clausewitz and his wife and also incorporated various materials on the political issues of the day like the suppression of the Polish Uprising of 1830, Leben des Generals Carl von Clausewitz und der Frau Marie von Clausewitz, 2 Vols. (Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmler, 1878); ten years later the General Staff felt it safe to release Clausewitz's study on the Great Catastrophe of 1806, 'Nachrichten über Preussen in seiner grossen Katastrophe', Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften herausgegeben vom Grossen Generalstabe, 10 (Berlin: E. S. Mittler, 1888).

65 J. E. Marston's, The Life and Campaigns of Field Marshal Prince Blücher (London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1815) contains what Paret has described as a 'free rendering' of Clausewitz's, Der Feldzug von 1813 bis zum Waffenstillstand (Glatz, 1813), see Paret (1976), p. 240, Note 46; Clausewitz's account of the invasion of Russia was translated and published (anonymously) by Francis Egerton, Lord Ellesmere, as The Campaign of 1812 in Russia (London: John Murray, 1843), reprinted with an introduction by Sir Michael Howard (New York: Da Capo Press, 1995); Cope Jenkinson, Lord Liverpool also worked on an unpublished translation of the 1815 campaign, see 'Partial translation of Carl von Clausewitz, Der Feldzug von 1815 in Frankreich', circa 1840, in the papers of the first Duke of Wellington, University of Southampton, Folder 8/1, <http://www.clausewitz.eom/readings/1815/LiverpoolMS-CampaignOf1815.pdf#zoom=100>, retrieved 07/01/2013.


76 Lieutenant-Colonel George F. R. Henderson’s essays were collected under the posthumous title The Science of War (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1905).


Moltke the Elder claimed to be a great admirer of Clausewitz yet was resistant the idea of political control. Moltke believed that the course and conduct of war should remain free from the interference of politicians: it would serve policy best if left to do its own business. This is contrary to Clausewitz’s view but understandable given that reprints of Vom Kriege misrepresented civil-military relations and the role of the commander-in-chief. The mistranslation in question comes from the 1853 Dümmler edition of Vom Kriege. It makes a cardinal error on the role of the commander-in-chief on the cabinet as a participant in political decisions. The archivist historian Werner Hahlweg noticed the difference in the 1960s and pointed out that the original version explained that the presence of the c-in-c on the cabinet was to ensure that political members can participate in the main moments of his actions. The 1853 edition had inverted it to mean that he was there so that he could participate in the cabinet’s most important deliberations and decisions, see CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 28, p. 335; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 26, pp. 608-609 and footnote 1, p. 608, for further reading see Bernard Brodie, War and Politics (London: Cassel, 1974); D. French, p. 73; Gat (2001), pp. 347-352; Handel ed., (2004), pp. 24-


121 Clausewitz, Clausewitz: Geist und Tat, ed. Walther Malmsten Schering (Stuttgart: A. Kröner, 1941); see also Schering, Die Kriegsphilosophie von Clausewitz (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlaganstalt, 1935).

122 There were several other dissertations at this time including Richard Blaschke, Carl von Clausewitz: Ein Leben in Kampf (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1934); Arnold Brögmann, Staat und Nation im Denken Carls von Clausewitz (Heidelberg: Lamade, 1934); Maria Hartl, Carl von Clausewitz: Persönlichkeit und Stil (Emden: Kunst und Leben, 1956); for more on German works from this period see Paret (2007), pp. 443-444.


141 The Geneva Convention III reaffirmed the protection of Prisoners of War and expanded the
definition of combatants to include members of organised resistance movements struggling against a
foreign occupational power in internal conflicts not of an international character. The new definition
took notice of the Free French and resistance movements of WWII by adding three new conditions
allowing for: '(1) Members of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict as well as members of militias
or volunteer corps forming part of such armed forces. (2) Members of other militias and members of
other volunteer corps, including those of organized resistance movements, belonging to a Party to the
conflict and operating in or outside their own territory, even if this territory is occupied, provided that
such militias or volunteer corps, including such organised resistance movements, fulfil the following
conditions: (a) that of being commanded by a person responsible for his subordinates; (b) that of
having a fixed distinctive sign recognizable at a distance; (c) that of carrying arms openly; (d) that of
conducting their operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war. (3) Members of regular
armed forces who profess allegiance to a government or an authority not recognized by the Detaining
Power. ... (6) Inhabitants of a non-occupied territory, who on the approach of the enemy spontaneously
take up arms to resist the invading forces, without having had time to form themselves into regular
armed units, provided they carry arms openly and respect the laws and customs of war. 'Convention
III Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War', esp. Art. 1, 3, 4, and 'Convention IV relative to the
Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War', esp. Art. 3, Geneva, 12 August 1949,
<http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/TNTRO/37570penDocument> and

142 The 1949 Civilian Convention List also sought to protect the humanity and honour of civilian
persons by making the contracting parties responsible for grave breaches which included: wilful
killing, torture, experiments causing suffering or injury, unlawful deportation or confinement,
compulsory military service for the hostile power, forced sexual intercourse, compulsion to work,
failure on the part of the occupier to provide food and medical supplies, and wanton destruction of
public and private property not justified by military necessity, see esp. Art. 4-5, 14-15, 23-24, 27, 31-
34, 49-56, 68, 147 in 'Civilian Convention's List Convention IV relative to the Protection of Civilian
Persons in Time of War', Geneva, 12 August 1949,
117-124, 394.

143 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Palais de Chaillot, Paris, 10 December

144 In December 1948 the U.N. was able to define the crime of genocide as ‘acts committed with the
intention to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious groups’ in Article 2,

145 Charter of the United Nations, Art. 1, 2, 51, 73,
pp. 191, 200; Best (2002), pp. 62-73, 214-229; P. Christopher, p. 99; Gardam, p. 403; M. Howard,

146 For the original conquest and pacification see Asprey, pp. 96-100, 150-154; Callwell, pp. 128-130;
Raphael Danziger, Abd-al-Qadir and the Algerians (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1977), pp. 223-
237; Downes (2008), pp. 158-159; Heuser (2010a), p. 423; Merom, pp. 44, 94; Douglas Poch,
'Bugeaud, Galliêni, Lyautet: The Development of French Colonial Warfare', in Paret, Craig and
Gilbert, eds., pp. 376-407; Thomas Rid, 'The Nineteenth Century Origins of Counterinsurgency
Doctrine', Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol. 33, No. 5 (October 2010), pp. 727-758; for the Algerian
War of 1954-1962 see Andreopoulos, pp. 193-211; Paul Aussaresses, The Battle of the Casbah:
Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Algeria 1955-1957 (New York: Enigma Books, 2002); Constantin


164 It is important not to confuse 'total war' with Clausewitz's concept of war in the absolute. Beatrice Heuser explains that Clausewitz himself rarely uses the snappy and concise phrases such as 'absolute war' or 'limited war' but preferred long-winded sentences like war in its absolute perfection or limitations of the conduct of war. What we may call 'absolute' war was a theoretical concept Clausewitz distilled from his from experiences of Napoleonic warfare. It is therefore crucial for readers to note that Clausewitz rarely uses the term 'total war' but terms like 'ganz Kriege' where he probably meant 'whole' or 'perfect' war. We prefer the expression 'absolute war' because it avoids confusion with the term 'total war' that was coined in the twentieth century and is most associated with the wars of the twentieth century and is used to describe wars marked by a) unprecedented intensity and extent b) theatres of operations that span the globe c) fought heedless of restraints of morality, custom, international law, typically involves hatreds from ideologies d) requires mobilisation of armed forces and populations e) political goals are unlimited. See for example CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 5, p. 331; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 5, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch06.html#B>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 5, p. 605; see Heuser (2002), pp. xi, 27, 117; the term 'limited war' perhaps comes from the Howard and Paret translation of On War which reads 'the limited aim suggests that two kinds of limited war are possible: offensive war with a limited aim, and defensive war.' Yet Clausewitz does not appear to use the term at all but says that a limited aim or object can apply to both offensive and defensive war, compare H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 5, Para. 6, p. 602 to CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 5, Para. 8, p. 325 and Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 5, Para. 8, p. 356; Honig (1994), p. 578.


171 The Additional Protocol I and Additional Protocol II defines everyone who is not a legal combatant as a civilian (API Article 50, Para. II-3). Acts of ‘perfidy’ and feigning non-combatant status are prohibited (Art. 37). Unless ‘they a direct part in hostilities’ individual civilians and civil populations will retain protection against dangers arising from military operations or the following; ‘acts or threats of violence’ with the primary purpose to spread terror, ‘indiscriminate attacks’ not direct at a specific military object causing indiscriminate damage or loss of life incidental to the concrete military advantage anticipated, ‘reprisals’ and the use of civilians as human shields (Art. 51, Para. 1-8). Attacks or reprisals against ‘civilian objects’ are prohibited (Art. 52, Para. 1-3). Attacks on cultural objects or places or worship are prohibited (API Art. 53 and AP2 Art. 16). Objects indispensable for survival such as crops, livestock and water are prohibited (API Art. 54-55). Attacks on the natural environment and works or installations containing dangerous forces are prohibited (Art. 56). For a general ban on reprisals of all kinds against civilian population see Art. 20, Art. 51, Para. 6, Art. 52, Para 1, Art. 53c, Art. 54, Para. 4, Art. 55, Para. 2, Art. 56, Para. 4. It was therefore a grave breach to launch attacks on objects, facilities, localities, and persons outside of combat (Art. 11 and 85); Best (2002), pp. 255-257, 265, 280-285, 311-312, 394-395; P. Christopher, p. 198; Heuser (2010a), pp. 369-370; *Ibid* (2008), pp. 19-20; Gardam, p. 406; Valentino (2005), pp. 13-14.


175 API, Art. 1, Sec. 4; Heuser (2010a), pp. 421-422.


187 The Rome 1998 Statue of I.C.C. defines a ‘crime against humanity’ as acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population using methods of (a) murder, (b) extermination, (c) enslavement, (d) deportation or forcible transfers of populations, (e) imprisonment or other severe deprivations of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, (f) torture, (g) rape, sexual slavery, prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilisation, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity, (h) persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity whether it be political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or based on other grounds, (i) enforced disappearance of persons, (j) the crime of apartheid, (k) inhumane acts of similar character causing great suffering or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health, see Heuser (2008), pp. 1-2; Bellamy, pp. 838-339; J. T. Johnson (2007b), p. 168; Paul J. Magnarella, ‘Recent Developments in the International Law of Genocide: An Anthropological Perspective on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda’, in Hinton, ed., pp. 310-322; James Meernik, Defining and Delivering Justice: The Work of the Ad Hoc International Criminal Tribunals, in Syse and Reichberg, eds., pp. 2900-322; Waller, pp. 276-277.


211 Carr, p. 130.

212 Clyde Sheldon (Gerard Butler), Law Abiding Citizen (Overture Films, The Weinstein Company, 2009)
Introduction


218 Kitchen, pp. 27-29.


Chapter Two  
** 
The French Revolutionary Wars

The purpose of this chapter is to narrate the destructive wars unleashed by the French Revolution and address the following general questions. What did Clausewitz think of the political changes in France and how did they change warfare? How did the Terror and civil war in the Vendée inform Clausewitz’s thinking on the role of policy or politics (Politik)? Where exactly did Clausewitz stand on the matter of supply over humanitarian suffering? Is there any truth to the charge that he advocated the ruthless exploitation of civilian populations for the military necessity of supplying one’s army? Are critics right to assert further that Clausewitz focused too much on decisive battles between the regular armed forces of states and ignored ‘low-intensity’ conflict between non-state actors? Was he aware for example of the civil disturbances in the Tyrol, Switzerland and Italy?

The origins of revolution

In the post-war period between 1819 to 1823 Clausewitz wrote an essay entitled ‘Umtriebe’ which can be awkwardly translated as ‘Agitation’. The paper charts the historical transition from feudalism to absolute monarchies and democracies. During this course of history concepts of humanity and justice were broadened to apply to all classes of civilised society, including the middle classes and peasants. In some countries the nobles took up the civil administration where corruption and injustice flourished at the expense of the oppressed lower classes. The reaction to this sort of abuse or social neglect in France was a form of ‘extreme democracy’ which went about persecuting people of all classes with great terror and cruelty.

The paper was composed at a time when the German states and re-established monarchies of France, Portugal and Spain were suppressing the liberal ideas and reforms brought forth since the French Revolution. Clausewitz obviously knew that power could be concentrated in hands of cruel princes or abusive rulers who begun foreign wars out of ambition and pride, let hunting parties trample fields at home, starved the arts, stifled scholarship, and tyrannised the people with the guillotine, firing squad, imprisonment or banishment. Such cruel authoritarianism, in Clausewitz opinion, did not exist in the kingdom of Prussia or wider German society unlike it had in France during the 1790s.

The long-term causes and course of the French Revolution need no great elaboration. By the 1780s the lower classes were discontented by poverty and taxes while the royal family
and the aristocratic nobles lived in apparent luxury. The Estates General and parliament were unable to remedy the situation and angry mobs stormed the Bastille on 14th July 1789. The citizenry were granted a greater measure of civil rights and freedoms in the Declaration of the Rights of Man on 26th August 1789 and Constitution of 1791. The successive National, Constituent and Legislative assemblies struggled to find domestic stability around a constitutional monarchy. The Girondin or Brissotin faction meanwhile pressed for an invigorating war to unite the nation behind a common cause.5

The radicalisation of French politics

The War of the First Coalition did not pan out as the nationalists expected. The economic crisis worsened and political grievances caused public disorder, notably in the Gard and at Marseille.6 On the western frontier the French armies suffered humiliating defeat and the nation was moved to panic by the advance of the Austro-Prussian forces under the command Carl William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg. Clausewitz later compared Brunswick’s 1792 campaign to Prussia’s armed intervention in the patriotic revolution of 1787 against the Stadholder Prince William V of Orange and Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia.7

The latter was in Clausewitz’s opinion a ridiculously limited campaign during which Brunswick’s paltry army of 25,000 troops marched on Amsterdam, disbanded the free corps and pillaged the towns where political opposition was concentrated. Thousands of political refugees fled the country and the lingering resentment later helped the French to create the Batavian Republic.8 The Prussians had left no contingency for a French intervention and this half-hearted approach to war was later found wanting when invading France: ‘Overwhelming though the support for the [French] Revolution was, inner divisions would have emerged if France had been invaded in 1792 with 200,000 men, instead of 70,000, and they had audaciously marched on Paris.’9 Clausewitz repeats in On War that if Paris had been taken that year there would have been no need to defeat the enemy’s armies to end the Revolution.10

Brunswick’s campaign in France helps argue the case for the ineffective and counter-productive results of terrorising the civil population of one’s enemy.11 On 25th July Brunswick issued a manifesto threatening to burn down Paris if any harm came to the royal family.12 The threat backfired and actually had the opposite effect of enraging the nation and empowering the Jacobins.13 Parisian mobs attacked the Tuileries on 10th August and 600 members of the king’s Swiss Guard were murdered. The Legislative Assembly gave way to the National Convention and power existed nebulously between this body, the Paris Commune, and various other committees and popular assemblies. Politicians like Georges Jacques Danton
Clausewitz was disgusted by these extreme acts of violence. It was generally expected of ignorant mobs but Clausewitz was shocked at how educated men of talent and virtue in private life could become such ‘fools and villains’ in the maelstrom of political revolution. These events made Clausewitz ever distrustful of German republicans such as Josef Görres who, in Clausewitz’s opinion, could have easily become ‘a Vergniaud or a Danton, driving men to extremes with a stentorian voice and volcanic eloquence until he himself is finally carried away by the flood of and hurled into the abyss.’

The political climate was therefore radicalised by passionate personalities, internal divisions and fear of the allied advance, which was stopped by the Battle of Valmy on 20th September. This rather unspectacular victory steadied the nerve of the nation and emboldened the Convention to proclaim the First Republic. French victories soon turned into reverses and the number of men under arms fell dangerously low by February 1793. Even after an emergency levy of 300,000 conscripts the situation continued to deteriorate and Spain joined the coalition arrayed against France. The forces under General Antonio Ricardos Carillo de Albornoz crossed the Pyrenees border and invaded Rousillon where he threatened anyone taking up arms to fight as guerrillas would be hung like criminals.

Towards ‘total war’

Clausewitz shared some of the prejudices of his profession and believed that war was a special business best carried out by those with proper training and military virtues. Yet he recognised that a country can mobilise all able-bodied men to bear arms as citizen-soldiers, thereby nationalising war. This ideal was enshrined in the new French constitution giving their armed forces an almost limitless source of manpower. The February levy of manpower in 1793 helped to bolster the existing royal army and national guards, albeit at the risk turning them into a Jacobin institution and sparking revolt throughout the country. In mid-August the French government took more extreme steps and appointed the dynamic Lazare Carnot as Minister of War. On 23rd August 1793 the National Convention declared a levée en masse:

‘From this moment until that in which the enemy shall have been driven from the soil of the Republic, all Frenchmen are in permanent requisition for the service of the armies. The young men shall go to battle; the married men shall forge arms and transport provisions; the women shall make tents and clothing and shall serve in the
hospitals; the children shall turn old linen into lint; the aged shall betake themselves to the public places in order to arouse the courage of the warriors and preach the hatred of kings and the unity of the Republic.24

This significance of this development did not escape Clausewitz:

'Suddenly war again became the business of the people—a people of thirty millions, all of whom considered themselves to be citizens. ... The people became a participant in war; instead of governments and armies as heretofore, the full weight of the nation was thrown into the balance. The resources and efforts now available for use surpassed all conventional limits; nothing now impeded the vigor with which war could be waged, and consequently the opponents of France faced utmost peril.'25

Despite Clausewitz’s hyperbole and the idealistic rhetoric of the decree it was difficult to actually raise, train and equip 300,000 conscripts, let alone mobilise the potential energy and resources of thirty million people. While France had taken greater steps towards national unity and state consolidation through the ages the country was not a monolithic entity. It resembled an agglomeration of regional peoples sometimes beyond the reach of the government due to the size of the country and the poor condition of roads.26

The levy of taxes, military recruits and garrisoning of troops had always been unpopular and the exceptionally demanding period between 1793 and 1815 was no exception. The rural nature of society meant that men taken from their family farms expected a staccato service so they could return home to tend to the harvest.27 The regional departments were often inconsistent or unresponsive at fulfilling their quotas and a great many of the men who turned up for duty were unfit or lacked the proper clothing, equipment or discipline.28

The country certainly did take big steps which historians have interpreted as a foreshadowing of the ‘total wars’ of the twentieth century.29 By building upon the reforms and technological advancements of the ancien régime the government set up factories for the mass manufacture of weapons, ammunition, clothing and other military paraphernalia. The talents of civilian scientists, mathematicians, artisans and intellectuals to the task of supplying the troops and supporting the war effort.30 This all-out effort was hard to sustain and levée en masse became a temporary measure of expediency. The so-called nation-in-arms soon lapsed back into lethargy and left the same soldiers to suffer on repeated campaigns.31

In order to replenish the losses the state institutionalised regular conscription in the Jourdan Law of 1798. In theory, all single and childless men between the ages of 20-25 were liable for five years of service chosen by democratic ballot. In practice, there were many draft avoidances, substitutions and exemptions. Nor was it necessary to entirely fill the quotas until
the crisis years of the late Napoleonic Empire. The army settled down into a more professional, self-sufficient entity numbered around the 500,000 men, which was maintained to a significant extent by exploiting manpower and material resources beyond France.33

Despite these real-life frictions, Clausewitz was fascinated by how the convergence of state governments and peoples propelled war closer towards the absolute conception. Political changes had lifted some of the stifling conditions that had kept war a half-thing for so many centuries.34 The Revolution had set in motion new forces energy by giving the people a greater share in the fighting and an outlet for their hostile emotions.35 This trend put Austrian and Prussia in utmost danger and yet they still refused to change their semi-feudal societies to match the new military effort required to fight a republic.36 The Prussian elite so hated and feared the notion of democracy that Clausewitz had to discreetly attribute France’s wartime advantages to changes in policies and administration, by the new character of government and the altered conditions of the people.37

*The Terror*

The historical survey and trinity provided in *On War* show that Clausewitz considered the involvement of the common people, through growing state cohesion and democracy, to be a key factor in the level of violence in war. Their exclusion in previous centuries had helped suppress the destructive drive of passionate hatred and enmity.38 Clausewitz disliked the idea of entrusting something as volatile as war to a revolutionary democracy because the political system allowed ‘fools and villains’ to occupy positions of authority where they were easily swayed by their passions or the mood of the masses.39 Clausewitz’s political prejudices were course informed by the Reign of Terror for which he expressed nothing but horror and singled out Bertrand Barère de Vieuzeac for moral damnation.40

Readers of *On War* should not accept blithely that policy-makers in government personify ‘pure reason’, nor that war is subordinated as rational instrument or continuation of policy by other means.41 Modern commentators have pointed out the crucial subtleties of his trinity and the expression Politik, which can mean both policy and politics.42 The conduct of the dictators and democratic politicians of the twentieth-century proved that policy-makers are not entirely rational or especially intelligent; they often misjudge situations, underestimate their enemies, alienate allies, forfeit the protection of non-combatants and lead societies to insane and suicidal destruction.43
Clausewitz did acknowledge the possibility that policy can err in a false direction, subserve the ambitions, private interests and vanity of those in power and thus fail to be representative of all the interests of the community. But state policy, as Clausewitz understood it, is nothing in itself except a mere trustee of these interests, an exponent of them against other states. The aim of policy to unify and reconcile all aspects and interests of internal administration, as well as the spiritual values and other peculiarities of the age, including humanity and whatever else the moral philosopher may care to add.44

The transition from monarchy to revolutionary republic was one of the bloodiest episodes in French history. The violence culminated in the period between April-July 1793 with the creation of the Committee for Public Safety and the rise of Maximilien Robespierre, Saint Just and other psychopaths like Public Prosecutor Fouquier de Tinville.45 Louis XVI was beheaded on 21st January 1793 and the republic’s leading general Charles Dumouriez deserted to the Habsburgs, leaving behind a scene of tyranny and mass executions against those who either opposed or failed the state.46

The repression was focused on nobles, royalists, intellectuals and churchmen but ordinary people of the middle and lower classes also fell victim to the state and the armées révolutionnaires.47 It is estimated that 16,000 to 40,000 people lost their lives to The Terror.48 The country as a whole suffered from the effects of poverty, high taxes, confiscations, conscription and divisive policies towards the Catholic Church.49 By 1793 the republic’s very existence was threatened by internal uprisings in Brittany and the Vendée.50

Civil war in the Vendée

Rebel forces in the Vendée banded together to form the armée catholique et royale which had an elastic strength of around 20-45,000 combatants. By using the advantages of the boîage countryside and skirmishing tactics of petite guerre the rebels were able win a number of military victories. They captured Saumur on 9th June and continued to clear the Loire valley. Despite showing great bravery and resourcefulness during times of crisis the rebels lacked a proper military organisation, command structure or long-term strategy and eventually suffered a serious reverse at Nantes on 29th June. After another crushing defeat near Cholet on 17th October the Vendéans tried to escape north to the coast and make a rendezvous with the British Royal Navy. The march was hounded back down into the Vendée by government troops. The rebels were given no quarter at the Battle of Le Mans on 12th December and forced to make a last stand at Siavenay a few days before Christmas.
The political atmosphere at the time was filled with self-righteous, exterminatory rhetoric about pulverising the rebel race (a derogative not ethnic term). In the absence of coordinated policy from the central government the generals and representatives-on-mission like Jean-Baptiste Carrier and Charles-Philippe Ronsin were allowed to vent their hatreds against the unarmed members of the population. General Jean Baptiste Kléber had wanted to pacify the Vendée region gradually with fortified posts and flying columns but from January 1794 the new commander-in-chief General Louis Marie Turreau adopted a harsher strategy using colonnes infernales. The troops belonging to these hell columns were given license to rape, plunder, burn, and massacre without fear of reprisal or prosecution. The violence was neither systematic nor efficiently carried out yet it still resulted in the deaths of an estimated 200,000-250,000 people.51

Clausewitz read of events in the Vendée as told by Alphonse de Beauchamp and Marie Louise Victoire de Donnissan, marquise de La Rochejacquelein.52 Historians have tended to overlook the place Clausewitz gave the Vendée rising in his own writing. They are rarely translated into English and deal with a historical subject matter that for most contemporary soldiers (a significant group of students on Clausewitz) may seem too ghastly or irrelevant to their current profession. Clausewitz tended to see war against non-combatants in much the same light. In the years following Prussia’s battlefield defeat and subsequent capitulation in 1807 Clausewitz looked to the Vendean insurgency for inspiration in his plans a popular uprising in Prussia.53

In 1815 Clausewitz visited the battle site at Le Mans and expressed his concerns to his superior Gneisenau that the Prussian occupation would provoke another terrible revolt throughout France unless humanitarian restraint and political control curbed the passions for revenge.54 The final volume of the Posthumous Work contains an unfinished overview of the conflict and the editors saw fit to include a hand-written note about events following the Battle of Cholet on the Loire. Clausewitz implies that the cruelty came not the logic of war per se but from the human passions and political conditions attached to the act of war, which had finished its business as soon as the rebel armed forces were destroyed:

‘After the great army of the Vendée in Brittany was defeated on the right bank of Loire, and a few chiefs and refugees, under the resolve of [Henri du Vergier, comte de la Rochejaquelein], reached the left bank of the Loire; after a part of the smaller army under [François de Charette] was held back in Poitou; after the dying [Maurice Joseph Louis, Gigot d’Elbé], who had surrendered, was murdered on the island of Noirmoutier; and after Charette, with a weakened heap, went fugitively to the highland of Poitou, it was believed in Paris and the Vendée itself that the civil war was at an end. The division of the coast of Cherbourg therefore received orders to
return to the northern coast (the department of Calvados) and it seemed that the only important thing was to destroy the remains of the royalist pile on the left bank of the Loire and crush the last sparks in the theatre of war. General Turreau, who commanded the republican military power, established the measures of reprimand that had come to be used in the proposals and debates of the Committee of Public Safety. The terrible Barère had in great and energetic moves, from time to time, specified to the Committee the means which the revolutionary government had at their disposal to oppose the Counter-revolution. These means were large, comprehensive and strong, but they also incorporated a spirit of cruelty [and] insensibility which denied all dignity and humanity. That was the reason why human dignity was stamped out taking its bloody revenge! The Vendée, driven by cruelty to the point of despair, resulted in new hate, new power and frightfulness. They outbid the furious republicans and forced them to return to moderation. The wisest measures were transformed and spoiled by cruelty alone, and it alone called forth a new war of life and death.55

The Terror abates

Clausewitz evidently knew that political conditions can allow hatred and passions to force their way through the barriers of reason and humanity into military and political decisions—even in those taken against one’s own people.56 Barère had changed from a democratic mediator to one of most martial leaders of the Revolution, preaching the philosophy that desperate times called for desperate measures, especially against enemies internal to the nation. He described the Vendée as volcano or rallying point for resistance so it was a matter of national survival to sweep the rebel soil with cannon and purify it with fire.57 The revolts of Marseille, Bordeaux, Lyon and Toulon were treated with more varying degrees of severity depending on the political circumstances under which the cities had originally rebelled, the temperament of the representatives-on-mission, and whether the government wanted to send out a message of terror or leniency to other places still outstanding. In each case hundreds of people were executed.58

Over the course of 1794 the instruments of terror and the people’s armies were disbanded and the ultra-revolutionaries like Ronsin fell from power. The Girondins and Herbéristes were arrested and executed, followed by the Dantonists, and finally Robespierre went to the guillotine after a coup d’etat on 27-28th July.59 Commanders like Turreau were replaced by the likes of General Louis Lazare Hoche who placed greater emphasis on military discipline and beating the insurgents either in conventional combats or by wearing them down with minimal damage to the civilian population. Hoche issued instructions prohibiting attacks on non-combatants even if they were caught helping the rebel combatants with food and information.60
The British-backed revolt of the Chouans in Brittany was defeated at Quiberon Bay in June-July 1795. Guerilla leaders like Charette and Jean-Nicolas Stofflet were neutralised either through peaceful negotiation or by arrest and execution. General Bonaparte had in the meantime avoided disdainful service with the Army of the West and was instead celebrated as the saviour of the republic for turning his guns on royalist crowds who tried marching on the convention during the 13 Vendémiaire (5th October 1795). Clausewitz noted that when the Directory came to power the French nation could turn its attention outwards:

‘The turn the French Revolution took toward the most extreme democracy, the cruelty that filled the years 1792-94, naturally tended to reduce sympathy for it in Germany. When more moderate principles, a more peaceful attitude, and a more reasonable constitution emerged during the years 1795-99, this sympathy revived to an extent, but now the public’s attention was diverted by the French campaign of conquest, by fear of war, invasion, contributions, quartering of troops, expropriation etc.’

Pillage and Plunder: historical precedents

For centuries the incohesive armies of the west struggled to supply the enormous demands for food and water for the men and horses. Even the best-organised armies could not survive without staying close to populated areas in order to take advantage of local resources such as food, shelter and transportation networks. These could be procured through diplomacy, legitimate purchase or brute force, all of which had their inherent disadvantages. Putting soldiers in contact with civilians often resulted in disciplinary problems as shown by the sack of cities such as Persepolis (330 B.C.), Locha (204 B.C.), Cremona (A.D. 69), Lisbon (1147), Rouen (1562) and countless others. The suffering of civilians from the logistical demands and poor discipline of armies reached a zenith during the Thirty Years’ War when the fluctuating size of European armies approached the 100,000-man mark.

Throughout the ages commanders were conscious of the political and military implications of break-downs in discipline: troops would break off in the middle of fighting to gather up cumbersome loads of loot, burn down valuable shelter and gobble up stores of food. ‘History knows many more armies ruined by want and disorder than by the efforts of their enemies’ wrote Cardinal Richelieu. The enlightened rulers and generals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had the self-preservation of their armies and lands in mind when they subjected their soldiers to iron discipline and attempted to create an independent system of shelter and supply. Louis Armand de Vignerot du Plessis, Duke of Richelieu, earned the disreputable sobriquet “père de la maraude” for his corrupt exploitation
of conquered territories such as Hanover during the Seven Years War, indicating that such methods were deemed malpractice.7

The size of European armies were so staggering by the eighteenth century that their logistical demands could only be met by the organised mobilisation of state resources.78 The advent of technological inventions such as canning, railways and motorised transport helped ease the problems of supply but the ever-increasing number of men and horses meant ensured that any country traversed by an army bore a heavy burden.79 As mentioned in the introduction, On War was blamed for the ruthless exploitation of occupied countries by the Germans during WWI and WWII.

While the treatise should not be taken to entirely represent the personal views of Clausewitz, who went out of his way to ameliorate the suffering of civilians in the Rhineland one must first admit the costs to civilians behind the concepts he advanced in On War. Clausewitz’s views were partly influenced by the work of Friederich von Schiller from whom he borrowed terms such as ‘the swift and mighty deeds of violence’80 and the image of war as a merciless force of nature or a bustling activity that tramples men and fields underfoot, empowers brigands and brings disruption to commerce and the arts.81

Clausewitz on the theory of supply

It becomes obvious when reading On War that logistics or supply permeates all aspects of military action. It has a major bearing on the relative strength and combat performance of armies, as well as being a major cause of humanitarian suffering.82 Bernard Brodie pointed out that Clausewitz barely hints at the ruthlessness toward the foreign population through which one’s army passes but instead speaks of the ruthlessness of the commander toward his troops.83 In the harsh theory of war soldiers are merely tools to be used in accordance to the plan of the campaign. They can be replaced once they have been killed, wounded or worn out prematurely by exertion.84

The commander obviously carries with him the worrisome responsibility for protecting the human lives under his charge. He should seek to reward his soldiers either out of a sense of moral sympathy or military prudence.85 Yet Clausewitz leaves the reader will little doubt that if moral and political considerations are not asserted to protect individual lives then all that matters for armed forces in routine matters is their self-preservation and security so they can exist without any particular difficulty and fight as a unit.86 We thus find passages such as the following:
"If war is to be waged in accordance with its essential spirit—with the unbridled violence that lies at its core, the craving and need for battle and decision—then feeding the troops, though important, is a secondary matter."  

In order to move, supply, quarter their troops armies had to stay close to desirable agricultural areas or large populous towns with decent roads and waterways. Clausewitz knew from personal experience the humanitarian relief that nearby villages could offer soldiers exposed to the heat and dust of summer or the mud, rain and snow of winter. Heavy loads of tents and such can be abandoned, as can the routine practice of building camps, for the military advantages of speed or freeing up room for more guns, cavalry and supplies. The disadvantage is greater exposure to the elements resulting in more wear and tear on one’s fighting forces. Clausewitz skips over ‘the way in which the absence of tents contributes to the increased devastation of the countryside’ and seems more interested in preserving the soldiers from sickness.

The matter of billeting becomes an important consideration between marches and campaigns to avoid any unnecessary attrition of fighting efficiency. Clausewitz roughly calculates that an army of 50,000 soldiers — with an advance guard posted out — can billet in 10,000 houses at four men per house. To be chosen as a billeting area was less a blessing than a curse hence the old adage that ‘every soldier needs three peasants: one to give up his lodgings, one to provide his wife, and one to take his place in Hell.’

Clausewitz gives a short history about maintenance and supply explaining how the governments of Europe had assumed greater administrative and financial responsibility to meet the demands of their armies. By creating a more independent and self-sufficient system of supply the soldiers no longer had to live off the land and could rely on army bakeries, transports, magazines and depots freshly stocked at the expense of the state. The burden was thus distributed more evenly beyond those people within the immediate vicinity of military operations. Soldiers were no longer distracted by the search for food during which time they could commit outrages on the civilian population or desert their regiment.

The men were expected to sustain themselves on rations carried about their person or on the slow-moving wagon train until resupply. The feed for horses could not possibly be carried so it had to be procured through foraging expeditions. Clausewitz was under the impression this was far less common by the time of the Silesian Wars because there was a greater reliance on orderly requisition and deliveries. The overall consequence of this artificial system of supply was that warfare became more regular, better organised, and more
attuned to the political purpose of war. The movement of armies on the other hand was much more limited and campaigns were waged with far less vigour.94

Armies in Clausewitz's day used a combination of ways for provisioning the troops.95 The first was to live off local households and rely on civil populations to furnish food for the passing columns. They could widen their fronts or take separate routes if necessary to ease the demand.96 The second method was to let soldiers supplement their week-or-so rations by seizing goods for themselves; a very improvised and wasteful expedient.97 The more efficient third option was for the army commissariat to procure regular supplies from a wider area and have them distributed along the route or at the army's static position. Local authorities and officials would either have to cooperate or be coerced into arranging the requisitions.98

The whole system starts to fall apart if the army is in continuous advance through enemy territory,99 in hasty retreat, or when 'the situation particularly favors resistance and ill will on the part of the local inhabitants.'100 None of the above methods was without military drawbacks and entailed a high cost to the civil population. Assuming that an area had enough agricultural surplus to feed an extra 150,000 mouths or had not been stripped bare several times already, then taking what food and fodder was available was bound to induce miserable hardship or famine for the people dependent on that land until the next harvest.101

Clausewitz saw for himself in Russia and the Rhineland that no country, even a willing one, could remain the chief-supply agent without failing in its obligations because armies would requisition to the point of complete exhaustion and impoverishment.102 Even belligerent foreign forces that occupy a country for any length of time will hardly be so harsh and pitiless as to place the whole burden of subsistence on the land.103 Clausewitz was resigned to the fact that war was anything but humane and the old way of provisioning by depots would be abandoned at the crucial moments of a campaign whenever it became too costly or too restrictive.104

Whatever logistical system adopted armies Clausewitz says they cope better in fertile agricultural areas or densely populated prosperous urban towns where a population of over 2,000,000 people can support the needs of 100,000 men (for a short time at least) through high levels of productivity and reserves of food. Experience had shown it was easier to feed an army in Flanders than Poland.105 'It follows that war, with its numerous tentacles, prefers to suck nourishment from main roads, populous towns, fertile valleys traversed by broad rivers, and busy coastal areas.'106 There seems moral disapproval in Clausewitz's words when he writes that the French leaders discarded the humane and well-organised depot system:
'They sent their soldiers into the field and drove their generals into battle—feeding, reinforcing, and stimulating their armies by having them procure, steal, and loot everything they needed.'107

French abuses go unchecked

The French had initially set out with the purpose to liberate foreigners from their old ruling regimes according to the noble ideals expressed in the Edict of Fraternity (19th November 1792), the military proclamations of General Dumouriez and popular slogans such as “Guerre aux châteaux, paix aux chaumières!”108 French military ventures during this period usually enjoyed a considerable degree of local support from local dissidents, radicals, religious minorities and general critics of the previous regimes.109 The Belgians and inhabitants of the Rhineland areas of Mainz, Coblenz, Trier, Aachen, Württemberg and Hamburg took the opportunity to abolish noble and ecclesiastical privileges.110 The Austrians were driven from Belgium and the Netherlands in 1795 whereupon the Dutch Republic was restyled the Batavian Republic.111

Despite the lukewarm reception abroad, the economic problems within France encouraged the policy-makers to permit the armies to nourish themselves on foreign lands.112 Generals Dumouriez, Cambon and Cusine tried to requisition only the necessities but other commanders were less conscientious and bringing hungry soldiers into contact with civilians was bound to induce hardship regardless of kind words and good intentions.113 The French penal code of 1796 institutionalised discipline within the ranks but too many incidents of unsanctioned violence and abuses went unpunished by lenient judicial procedures reluctant put the welfare of foreign nationals before Frenchmen and French interests.114

The inhabitants of Belgium and the Rhineland paid a high price for liberation. Towns and cities were reduced to destitution trying to supply the demands of their occupiers and labourers were conscripted to perform military duties like building fortifications. Thousands succumbed to the effects of deprivation, malnutrition, hypothermia and beatings.115 Some of the younger officers and commissars were appalled by this unglamorous side of military life. Dumouriez and Soult worried that the behaviour of their troops would drive the people to take up arms to exact revenge for the rape of their women, the burning of their homes and theft of their livestock.116 An imperial edict on 21st January 1794 indeed called upon the German principalities of the Rhine to arm their people and repel the invaders.117 Whenever shots were fired upon French soldiers they reacted by defeating the insurgents in bloody combats, burning down nearby habitations and deporting priests and other potential rabble rousers.118
Clausewitz understood that isolated acts of peasant resistance alone could not stop the revolutionary force of arms. The German armies were themselves barely able to stem the tide of victory and 'this was really due to only to technical imperfections that hampered the French, and which became evident in the rank and file, then in their generals, and under the Directory in the government itself.'\textsuperscript{119} The Prussians beat the French repeatedly in Alsace and the Saar only to be distracted by the partitions of Poland. The war came to an unspectacular end with the Treaty of Basel 1795, which left most of the Rhenish lands to the mercy of the French. Clausewitz recognised that ideological changes within France had not alarmed Prussia enough and it still approached war in the traditional manner of scavenging over territory.\textsuperscript{120} The divergence of Austro-Prussian interests allowed France to gather its war-making strength and resurge forward as a dangerous hegemonic power under Napoleon Bonaparte.\textsuperscript{121}

\textit{The campaigns in Italy, 1796-1797}

The fourth volume of Clausewitz's \textit{Posthumous Work} is devoted to Bonaparte's 1796 campaign in Italy and this largely military narrative refers to the effect on the civil population.\textsuperscript{122} As a republican general Napoleon proclaimed friendship and respect for each person and their property and repeated the common maxim that nothing was better designed to disorganise and destroy an army than excessive pillage and plunder.\textsuperscript{123} Yet when he found the soldiers under his command in a ragged and demoralised state he too had to promise them the fertile plains of Italy as an incentive.\textsuperscript{124} The municipalities of Mondovi, Frabosa, Acqui were thus made to provide rations of bread and meat, bottles of wine, clothes, boots.\textsuperscript{125}

Bonaparte went on the offensive by defeating the Austrians at Lodi on 10\textsuperscript{th} May and overthrowing the Duchy of Milan. Italian intellectuals had initially welcomed the liberation in the form of a new Lombard republic only to be disappointed by the uncontrollable plundering of the French soldiers and official requisitions pressed by the Parisian government.\textsuperscript{126} Clausewitz quotes General Claude Dallemagne, who belonged to the division of La Harpe, complaining to Napoleon on 9\textsuperscript{th} May about his inability to stop the pillaging. Clausewitz writes that the robberies, maltreatment, plundering and cruelty – by this time common in the French army – the contributions and deliveries that were to be expected, and the general revolutionary tendency of threatening existing conditions all inflamed a general hatred in the people. The clergy also stirred popular feelings by spreading false rumours and atrocity stories.\textsuperscript{127}
The ensuing revolt of Lombardy during May and June was put down with swift retribution and exemplary punishment. Clausewitz uses the expression, 'durch gewöhnlichen Mittel von Füsiliern, Geißeln und Verantwortlichkeit der Korporationen befestigt' roughly meaning that Bonaparte fixed the situation through the common means of firing squads, scourging and responsibility of the political authorities, presumably bound by threats and the taking of hostages. Order was restored to Milan on 24th May after General Despinois executed a councillor and a priest while Archbishop Monsignor Viconti made an appeal for calm. The next day 1,800 men heading for Pavia intercepted 600-1,000 peasants-in-arms ('bewaffnete Bauern') near Binasco; the rebels were scattered and the place looted and burnt; 74 hostages were also taken for future leverage. The French appeared at Pavia on the 26th May but the gates were closed. Clausewitz describes how the French stormed the city by driving the defenders from the walls, broke through the gates, fought from house-to-house and sent in the cavalry to chase the armed rabble through the streets until city’s magistrate came forward to surrender. Bonaparte held off the destruction of the city until verification that the French garrison besieged in the citadel was in fact safe, whereupon he had one in ten men of the garrison shot and the commandant condemned by a military tribunal. The town was given over to the soldiers for many hours of rape and plunder. After this great act of determination and strength ('diesem Akt großer Entschlossenheit und Strenge') Napoleon returned to Brescia and halted on 28th May.128

The terrible measures employed by Napoleon and his generals against civil populations in revolt was considered a normal feature of warfare, as were the excesses of the common soldier; 12,000-20,000 inhabitants of Praga and Warsaw were killed by the Russians of Alexander Suvorov during the 1794 Uprising and Sir Arthur Wellesley’s victory at the Siege of Seringapatam in 1799 was mired by the bestial behaviour of his soldiers.129 Bonaparte’s campaigns were bloody affairs which sought to destroy the armed forces of his enemies and pulverise uncooperative communities, later entire countries, into groveling submission.130 From a republican general to emperor of Europe, Napoleon believed that men and nations were kept in line by a combination of fear and self-interest. His outlook on counter-insurgency was perhaps shaped the French takeover of Corsica after 1768.131

In June 1796 the French pressed ahead to occupy the papal provinces of Bologna and Ferrara. The town of Lugo was to the sack along the way in reprisal against the actions of insurgents (60 of whom were executed).132 The Church was forced give up vast wealth and treasure in the non-ratified Peace of Bologna.133 The campaign was then stalled by the siege of Mantua partly because, as Clausewitz observes in On War, Bonaparte merely probed the defences and chose to battle the Austrian relief armies in field.134 The blockade dragged on
for six months inducing the kind of starvation, malarial sickness and ecological damage reminiscent of the terrible sieges in the Italian Wars (1494-1559).\textsuperscript{135} Clausewitz's campaign history states that by the time Würmser capitulated on 2\textsuperscript{nd} February only 15,000 of his original 28,000 troops were fit for duty: 7,000 had died and a further 6,000 were hospitalised.\textsuperscript{136} Modern historians place the number of civilian dead at 6,000 persons.\textsuperscript{137} Once Mantua was out of the way Bonaparte headed south as far as Ancona and forced the Papal States to capitulate more lands and treasures in the Treaty of Tolentino (19\textsuperscript{th} February 1797).\textsuperscript{138}

\textit{The campaign in the Alps, 1797}

Bonaparte next turned his attention towards Vienna and planned to advance his forces across the Carnatic and Julian Alps while Barthélemy Joubert pushed through the Tyrol.\textsuperscript{139} This mountain region was a Habsburg possession with an historic tradition of drafting its countrymen for local defense missions and their sharpshooting skills.\textsuperscript{140} Clausewitz speculated that in theory the Austrian forces of under generals Laudon and Kerpen could expect assistance from the home guard or \textit{Landsturm}.\textsuperscript{141} Joubert had the initial advantage until the armament of the civil population or \textit{Landsbewaffnung} could come into full efficiency.\textsuperscript{142}

The peasant resistance in the Tyrol was ineffectual but it captured the public imagination, especially in later years. During the combat at Springes for example a young woman named Katharina Lanz was supposed to have fought off French soldiers from the walls of a cemetery armed with a pitchfork.\textsuperscript{143} In March both Joubert and Bonaparte inflicted repeated defeats on the Austrian main forces and drove to Leoben, some hundred miles from Vienna by 6\textsuperscript{th} April.\textsuperscript{144} This induced enough civil panic in the capital for the government to seek peace preliminaries resulting in the Peace of Compo Formio (17\textsuperscript{th} October); Clausewitz scoffed at how a few provinces were given up to spare the Habsburg monarchy from destruction.\textsuperscript{145}

Clausewitz's account of the Alpine campaign of 1797 emphasises the danger into which Bonaparte had placed his forces and the failure on the part of the Austrians to pull together all their means of resistance to utterly destroy them. Clausewitz believed it was Bonaparte's original intention to march on Vienna out of personal power and thirst for victory. Poor coordination with another army on the Rhine and the dangers of his own theatre of operations curtailed such ambitions. Had Archduke Charles assembled the necessary forces behind the Alps and organised a people's uprising then it was quite possible that the Italian Army would have beaten and ruined in the high mountains. In the event, Joubert experienced many difficulties in the Tyrol, Carinthia and Krain (Carniola) and was lucky to get back in
touch with Bonaparte after four weeks. Clausewitz states that sufficient troops were available
to disarm the insurgents of the Tyrol and 10,000 should have been left in Verona frighten the
people and secure the strategic rear and lines of communication.\(^{146}\)

Clausewitz appears to reference the Veronese Easters (*Pasque Veronesi*) which was
another armed rebellion against French occupational forces in the Veneto. This too was
quickly put down by combats with the insurgent forces, execution of ringleaders, mass exiles,
and large fines in cash, treasures and valuable goods.\(^{147}\) Venice was handed over to the
Austrians after a thorough plundering.\(^{148}\) Bologna and Romagna were taken from the Pope,\(^{149}\)
and Bonaparte continued extracting vast amounts of wealth from Italy to support France and
his own political career.\(^{150}\) The Roman Republic and Italian peninsula was never entirely
secure so frequent incidents of rioting and open revolt persisted for many years.\(^{151}\)

*The Swiss insurgencies, 1798-1799*

In order to secure the route to Milan the French Directory next turned its greedy attention to
the rich cities and monasteries of Switzerland. At the invitation of Swiss republicans and the
inhabitants of the lower Valais the French intervened ostensibly to liberate the country from
patrician rule. The dominant Bernese forces were defeated at Fraubrunnen and Grauholz and
the city was looted on 5\(^{\text{th}}\) March 1798. Attempts to then create a Helvetic Republic based on
its French parent were undermined by chronic political disagreements and a lack of centralist
tradition. The government was further discredited by its association with the French occupiers
who quartered their troops on the population and went about extracting vast sums of wealth
(over \(15,000,000\) francs initially) from places such as Zürich, Freibourg, Solothurn, Lucern,
St. Urban and Einsiedeln.\(^{152}\)

In late April the Forest Cantons (Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden) rebelled against what
they perceived to be a threat to their Catholic religion and local traditions. A bailiff or
*Landeshauptmann* in Schwyz named Alois von Reding (brother to Theodor of Battle of
Bailén fame) was entrusted with 10,000 fighters to make a stand. On 29-30\(^{\text{th}}\) April the men of
Schwyz pushed out in various directions, failing to arouse the support of neighbouring
cantons. The French closed in from the directions of Rapperswil, Küsnacht-am-Rigi,
Schindellegi and Einsiedeln, plundering the latter’s monastery on the way. Exhausted of
ammunition and energy the insurgents fell back to Rotherthurm near the historic medieval
battle site of Morgaten (1315). The opposing general Alexis Henri Antoine von Schauenburg
offered the rebels a propitious truce at a moment of demoralisation. There had been talk of
calling out a Landsturm and enlisting the help of women, children and old men. The cost of
300 allied casualties had however spread a feeling of hopelessness and the Landsgemeinde (cantonal assembly) of Schwyz capitulated on 4th May. The defiant action won Reding such fame and respect that he was offered a role in the new order but refused and led the Federal Diet when it all collapsed in October 1802.\textsuperscript{153}

The canton of Schwyz remained in an agitated state throughout the summer of 1798. The Landsgemeinde again tried to vote for active resistance and a few hundred people left to join the revolt of neighbouring Unterwalden. This was the excuse Schauenburg needed to occupy the town.\textsuperscript{154} The rising of 2,000 armed men in Nidwalden prompted the government and French to send in 10,000 Franco-Swiss troops to knock down the rebellion. Under-equipped and outnumbered the rebels frustrated the attackers with sniper tactics of petite guerre. In the heavy fighting around Stans on 9th September about 600 houses were burnt and somewhere between 360-12,000 men, women and children were killed. The Swiss pedagogue and reformer Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi was appalled by the carnage and took the orphaned children under his charge. The unpopular Helvetic Republic bound itself to France for military protection and became a battleground in the following year.\textsuperscript{155}

In 1799 the French republic faced a severe crisis and the danger of internal royalist rebellion as its ambitious grand strategy backfired on all fronts.\textsuperscript{156} The Army of Rhine under General Jean Baptiste Jourdan suffered a severe blow from Archduke Charles at Stockash between 21st and 26th March. General André Masséna’s Army of Helvetic was also threatened by the build-up of Austro-Russian forces in north-western Switzerland.\textsuperscript{157} It is clear from eyewitness accounts and church records that this was a terrible time for the villages and communities in the Brunnen-Schwyz-Muotathal area.\textsuperscript{158} Both sides requisitioned supplies and the French were inclined to execute any villagers found with weapons in their hands or believed to be giving food and information to the imperials and Freikorps sent from Glarus.\textsuperscript{159}

In April and May 1799 the resentment towards the Helvetic Republic and its conscription plans provoked an armed uprising known as the Hirthemlikrieg (Sheppard’s War). Clausewitz’s account of the insurrection covers just three pages and is a valuable compliment to the ideas of people’s war developed in On War. It explains that the Swiss who emigrated to Austria were formed three battalions under General Johann Konrad Friedrich Freiherr von Hotze, a Swiss man by birth. In anticipation of Austrian assistance the men of Schwyz, Uri and Wallis were brought to arms around 28th April: 3,000 insurgents in Schwyz, double the number in Wallis (Valais), 6,000 on the bridge of Reichenau and 10,000 appeared in the upper allied cantons. The French reaction was swift and decisive.
General Ménard first beat the Austrian General St. Julien and on 3rd May turned against the insurgents in the Rheinthals. At the same time Soult moved against the canton of Schwyz, which was boxed in by the positions the French occupied at Arth, Küsnacht and Einsiedeln. Soult took part of a reserve division to Rothenthurm on 8th May and met an armed mob (‘bewaffnete Haufen’) who willingly laid down their arms when challenged. Soult then threw himself against the canton of the Vierwaldstättersee and went to Altdorf in the canton of Uri. There he found 4,000 men with four large guns: these were beaten, forced to retreat and completely dispersed due the action of another division led by Claude-Jacques Lecourbe. Only in Wallis were the French unable to run over the 6,000 insurgents and seven guns blocking the valley of the Rhône. Eager to defeat them, General Xaintrailles gathered his forces and attacked several weeks later.160

Clausewitz states that through these defeats the main places of insurgency were calmed down and held in fear: ‘Durch diese Niederlage der hauptsächlichsten Insurgenten wurde die Schweiz beruhigt und das Mißvergnügen in Furcht gehalten.’161 The outcome proved that a popular armament (‘Bewaffnung’) could not hold against a regular army and clear the land of foreign enemies. The reasons the Swiss failure lay in the circumstances of their insurrection rather than the actions of the enemy. If this impressive effort had been properly coordinated with main effort of the Austrians then Masséna and the French divisions of Dessalus and Lecourbe would have had a hard time trying to escape because the whole Lombard side of the Alps was in the hands of the allies by that time. The action instead provoked a bloody reaction from the French after which the Swiss learned the terrible consequences of insurrection and blamed their misfortune on the Austrians.162

The success of insurgency in Italy, 1798-1799

In regard to the campaign in northern Italy Clausewitz was concerned mainly with the major battles and places the insurrection of Naples within this context.163 King Ferdinand IV and Queen Maria Carolina had opposed Revolution and anticipated Austro-British support when the kingdom went on the offensive in October 1798. The Neapolitan army moved into Rome to restore papal authority that month. A Franco-Polish counter-offensive then routed these forces and carried the war to Naples, shooting down those who offered resistance as was the case at Itri on 30th December.164 The monarchs fled to Sicily allowing the new political authorities to disband all instruments of the previous regime and proclaim the Parthenopean Republic on 23rd January 1799.
Clausewitz writes that the overthrow of Naples rendered large numbers men hungry and unemployed. Discontented members of the lower classes formed themselves into armed gangs of *lazzaroni* and turned to killing people of republican sympathy. The middle classes were also unhappy by the way the country was burdened with various ‘kriegslasten’. Clausewitz condemned the way that the neither the French Directory in Paris or General Jean Étienne Vachier Championnet and representative-on-mission Guillaume-Charles Faipoult gave the slightest consideration to the inhabitants of Naples. Championnet was recalled by the Directory and replaced by Étienne Jacques Joseph Alexandre Macdonald. The ill-discipline of the troops continued as did the official confiscations and state repression, all of which contributed to the fall of the republic in June.165

Naples had been an insecure conquest for the French during the Italian Wars.166 According to Clausewitz there is no country made for resistance like Calabria: it is a wild land with wild inhabitants who cannot be mastered by concepts and shapes (‘begriffe und formen’) of political rhetoric. The island of Sicily also serves as the heart of resistance on which a people’s uprising (‘Volksaufstand’) can crystallise.167 From the court at Palermo Ferdinand I of the Two Sicilies (as he was known there) appointed Cardinal Fabrizio di Ruffo di Baranello to serve as vicar-general and recover his kingdom. The British and Neapolitan-Sicilian navies ferried Ruffo to the mainland of Calabria on 7/8th February. Brandishing little more than banners the cardinal’s small band grew to over 17,000 armed followers calling themselves the *Armata della Santa Fede* or Army of Holy Faith. The Sanfedismo movement relied on fanatical peasants and experienced guerrilla leaders such as Michele Pezza (Fra Diavolo) who organised a band of 4,000 men to hit French outposts and supply lines. An atmosphere of horrific civil strife and banditry overtook the country as the *armada Cristiana* swept through Apulia and Basilicata persecuting French sympathisers, collaborators, republicans, Jews and moderate figures within the Catholic Church.168

Clausewitz does not mention the atrocious side to the uprising and seems only to admit its military value within the context of regular campaigns. He explains that as the fire of insurrection got closer and closer to the capital, Macdonald readied himself for action. Then came orders in late April and early May to march north where there was another insurgency raging in loose conjunction with the conventional forces belonging to the Austrians, Russians and English.169 Macdonald was unable to return to Naples because he was defeated by Suvorov at Trebbia on 17-19th June.170 Macdonald left 5,000 men behind to garrison places like Fort St. Elmo, Capua, and Gaeta. The National Guard also strengthened the defensive forces to 20,000 men. This was not enough to defend Naples from Ruffo who brought 25,000 men to the capital on 6th June. The republicans were fired into resistance but lacked the
necessary war material and clung to fixed points all of which capitulated within a month. Ferdinand returned in July whereupon the authorities reinstated a reign of legalised terror upon alleged Jacobins and collaborators.

The battlefield defeats of the French in northern Italy necessitated a general retreat towards Genoa thus allowing the insurgency and units designated for petite guerre to thrive. Clausewitz mentions for example that Johann von Klenau and 6,000 men operating in the Apennines and Po river region were able to isolate French garrisons and were well received by the inhabitants north of Rome at Florence, Lucca, Pisa, Livorno where there was great public rejoicing and much war material to be collected. It should be noted that earlier in April the troops and rebel auxiliaries under Klenau’s command were able blockade Ferrara into capitulation on 24\textsuperscript{th} May and the Jewish residents paid 30,000 ducats to avoid pillage.

In short, Clausewitz was well-aware of the insurrectionary activity at this time but did not dwell on its humanitarian consequences. Nor did he have an exaggerated confidence in its capabilities outside of conventional war waged by states. The Tyrolese and Swiss had failed because they could not coordinate their actions with the Austrian armies. The insurrectionary units in Italy escaped destruction in 1799 because the French forces were beaten in battles. Suvorov could not repeat his success in Switzerland later that year and had to let his troops live off the land during his epic march over the Alps because the other Austro-Russo forces had dissolved through a combination of poor strategic decisions and the battles around Zürich. Despite plundering Swiss farms and villages to aid the escape Suvorov and his troops became folk heroes and their epic march over the Alps inspires fascination to this day.

Clausewitz notes that during the first battle between 4-5\textsuperscript{th} June the city’s entrenchments helped the French occupiers repulse the attack but superior enemy numbers and the dubious loyalty of the Swiss caused Masséna to withdraw to the Ütliberg and settle his troops from Basle to the Tessin. The Austro-Russian forces under Archduke Charles and General Rimsky-Korsakov assumed positions around the city until Masséna restored French hegemony in a big battle between 25-26\textsuperscript{th} September. The city was then subjected to another bout of requisitions protested by the likes of David Hess. The republic later collapsed in a civil war known as the Stecklikrieg or War of the Sticks because it involved so many armed peasants until the ravaged cantons were turned into Napoleonic dependencies by the Act of Mediation (1803-1815). 

_Napoleon takes control_
Since Clausewitz has little to say about Bonaparte’s failed campaign in the Middle East it shall detain us no longer than to point out that it revealed the logistical weaknesses of a French army operating far from its home base in a poor and pestilential region, surrounded by a hostile population and vulnerable to the military actions of enemy forces (those belonging to the Mamluks, Ottomans and British in this case).\textsuperscript{180} Bonaparte returned to France in 1799 to find there was no stable constitutional regime and little popular support for the corrupt Directory, which he overthrew in the \textit{coup de 18 Brumaire} (9\textsuperscript{th} November).\textsuperscript{181} Bonaparte’s first priority as First Consul was to bring the War of the Second Coalition to a rapid conclusion. General Jean Moreau took command on the Rhine while Bonaparte led the Reserve Army into Italy looking for a decisive battle.\textsuperscript{182}

As in previous campaigns there were many incidents of popular violence below the threshold of clashing armies. In the Electorate of Mainz for example the first minister Franz Joseph von Albini mobilised home-guard units to harass French units along the Main. General Ney responded to the rising of the Rhineland communities with great bloodshed boasting that his forces had killed 3,000 peasants and put 20,000 to flight.\textsuperscript{183} In April 1800 an Austrian army under Field Marshal Michael Friedrich Melas drove a French column of 10,000 men under Masséna to Genoa where the soldiers and civilians alike had to endure a grim blockade on land and sea until the 6,500 French survivors capitulated on 4\textsuperscript{th} June.\textsuperscript{184} The narrow battlefields victories at Marengo and Hohenlinden forced Vienna to sue for an armistice and peace was signed in the Treaty of Lunéville on 9\textsuperscript{th} February 1801.\textsuperscript{185}

Clausewitz willingly bestowed on Bonaparte the title of military genius while refusing to hail him as a force for good in European civilisation.\textsuperscript{186} To German observers at the time the new ruler appeared a more benign and cultured statesman.\textsuperscript{187} The Consulate consolidated the stability of the state and helped to heal old religious wounds and grievances in the provinces. For all Napoleon’s liberal reforms France remained essentially a police-state. There was intrusive surveillance, restrictions of public expression, strong detention powers and special tribunals to punish acts of treason with death or deportation.\textsuperscript{188} Clausewitz was not fooled: Bonaparte was in his opinion a warlord only concerned about the happiness of his people so long as it was compatible with his lust for fame and power.\textsuperscript{189} Clausewitz was scathing in his criticism of the people’s compliance to the new order:

‘Bonaparte found the French to be obedient subjects, for which they excuse themselves on the grounds that he fought off the hydra of Revolution; but Barrère, one of the most its appalling offspring, lives in society and among friends in Paris.’\textsuperscript{190}

\textit{Conclusion}
To conclude this chapter it has been argued that Clausewitz recognised the French Revolution as a powerful step towards absolute or total war but he did not morally approve of the violence it unleashed. Clausewitz was disgusted by the way the French government oppressed its own nationals and allowed its armies to pillage and plunder foreign countries. The people of Switzerland, Tyrol and Italy put up some insurrectionary resistance but without the support of regular armies it was easily knocked down by the French. This reinforced Clausewitz’s belief that such resistance was only useful in the context of conventional warfare. Having shown that Clausewitz morally condemned the Revolutionary Wars it seems natural to turn next to the standards by which he passed such judgement.


6 W. Doyle, pp. 181-183.

7 The date of composition for Clausewitz’s manuscript on Brunswick’s 1787 campaign in Holland is difficult to place but Paret believes it to be around 1827 due the sophistication of the language and references in the later books of On War with regard to attacks on swamps, flooded areas and forests. Jan Willem Honig suggests it could have been written anytime between 1806 and 1823, Clausewitz, ‘Der Feldzug der Herzogs von Braunschweig gegen die Holländer 1787’, Hinterlassene Werke des Generals von Clausewitz über Krieg und Kriegführung, Vol. 10 (Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmler, 1832-


18 W. Doyle, pp. 202-204.


25 H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 42, pp. 591-592; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 43, p. 309; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 43, pp. 347-438.


29 As pointed out earlier (Chapter 1, Endnote 164, p. 52) is important not to confuse ‘total war’ with Clausewitz’s concept of war in the absolute. ‘Total war, at least theoretically, consists of total mobilisation of all the nation’s resources by a highly organized and centralized state for a military conflict with unlimited war aims (such as complete conquest and subjugation of the enemy) and unrestricted use of force (against the enemy’s armies and civil population alike, going as far as complete destruction of the home front, extermination, and genocide)’, Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler, *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861-1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 1-28; Heuser (2002), pp. xi, 27, 117; see works by Arthur Marwick in bibliography.

30 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 3, pp. 17-18; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 3, p. 5; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 3, p. 75; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 4, pp. 63-64; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 4, pp. 40-41; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 4, pp. 100-101; CvC, Bk. II, Ch. 2, Para. 62, pp. 126-127; Graham, Bk.


34 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 20, p. 301; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 20, p. 341; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 19, p. 587.

35 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 32-41, pp. 336-338; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 32-41, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch06.html#B>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 29-36, pp. 609-610.


37 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 35-36, pp. 336-337; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 35-36, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch06.html#B>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 31-32, p. 609; Heuser (2002), p. 54.


41 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 28, Para. 1-5, pp. 42-43, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegel832/Book1Ch01VK.htm#1x28>; Graham, Bk. I,
Ch. 1, Sec. 28, Para. 1-5, p. 24; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 28, Para. 1-5, p. 89.


49 W. Doyle, pp. 259-261.


57 Gershoy, pp. 84-85, 185-216; Secher, pp. 115-117, 350-351.


71 Charles Wendell David, *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi or The Conquest of Lisbon*, attributed to 12th century writers Osbernus and Raol (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001);


119 H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 43, p. 592; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 44, pp. 309-310; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 44, p. 348.


121 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 45, p. 310; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 45, pp. 348-349; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 44, p. 592; Kohn (1967), pp. 137-142; Seeley (1878), Vol. 1, p. 82.


133 Dwyer (2008), pp. 234-238.


Campaign in Italy, 1796-97.


151 Blanning (1996), pp. 242-244; Heriot, pp. 174-175, 186, 290.

Andreas Meyerhans, Der Kanton Schwyz 1798 bis 1848: Der Weg in den Bundesstaat, Schweizer Hefte, Band 72, Herausgeberin: Kulturkommission Kanton Schwyz (Druckerei Mercel Kürzi, AG, Einsiedeln, 1998), pp. 8-11, 22-25.

Meyerhans, pp. 13-14.


R. E. Dupuy and T. N. Dupuy, p. 757; D. D. Howard, p. 32; Ross, pp. 176-177.


R. E. Dupuy and T. N. Dupuy, p. 757; Mittler, ed., pp. 72-78.


Bruto Amante, Fra Diavolo e il Suo Tempo (Attivita bibliografica editoriale, 1974), pp. 70, 75; Piero Bargellini, Fra Diavolo (Firenze: Vollecchi, 1932), pp. 86-88; Heriot, pp. 190-220; Mackesy, pp. 54-56.


182 Seeley (1895), pp. 85-87.

183 Blanning (1996), pp. 241-242; Ramm, p. 49.


Chapter Three

A Profession of Violence

The previous chapter revealed some of Clausewitz’s opinions regarding the popularised violence unleashed by the early French Revolutionary Wars. This chapter will concentrate on Clausewitz as a conscientious military professional by addressing four main areas. Firstly, his personal background and social position as an officer and gentleman. Secondly, his theory of war which allows for the restraining influence of humanitarian sentiment and political reason. Thirdly, his study military history in which he hesitates to engage in detailed discussion of the targeting of civilians in the past. Fourthly, his recipe for military success, which places emphasis on destroying the enemy’s armed forces in battle rather than massacring civilians. This will all help rebuff the charge that Clausewitz was simply an amoral advocate of mass destruction and total war.

Formative years: Scharnhorst and the military institution

Carl Philipp Gottlieb von Clausewitz was born in Burg on 1st July 1780. He was one of six children belonging to Friedrich Gabriel and Friederike Schmidt. His father was a tax collector in Burg with a record of military service as a lieutenant in the Seven Years War. The visits of old comrades and tales of soldiering meant that Clausewitz always felt like he had been nurtured in a military-like family. His grandfather had been a professor of theology and the family had ambiguous claims to Silesian nobility. Since Clausewitz lacked the noble status that usually came with officers and generals of the period he felt very insecure and occupied a peculiar social position as a full-time, life-long member of a military institution or caste.1

At the age of twelve he enrolled as a Fahnenjunker or cadet lance corporal in the 34th Infantry Regiment. In January 1793 the regiment marched off to the Rhine and experienced the physical hardships of campaigning in that period.2 In June the allied forces closed their siege around Mainz and bombarded the city with incendiaries.3 The destruction of Mainz was lamented by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe4 and Prussia’s future prime minister, Baron Heinrich Friedrich Karl Freiherr vom und zum Stein.5 In adulthood Clausewitz confessed with great shame his fiancée: ‘I added my childish shout to the triumphant cheers of the soldiers.’6 His friend and mentor Gerhard Johann David von Scharnhorst wrote to his own wife of the 1793 campaign:

‘I can face danger without difficulty; but I am enraged and thrown into an unsupportable mood by the sight of innocent people moaning in their blood at my
It was Scharnhorst above all whom Clausewitz looked up to as a paragon of personal and professional conduct by describing him as the father of his intellect and spirit. Born the son of a free peasant Scharnhorst rose through the ranks of the Hanoverian and Prussian army and believed that such institutions should be open and rewarding of talented and energetic individuals like Clausewitz. Scharnhorst's death following the battle of Lützen/Gross-Görschen in 1813 was a traumatic loss to Clausewitz who felt obligated to pay his fallen friend written tributes in the forms of an obituary and a biography.

The early campaigns against France had revealed to Scharnhorst the weaknesses of Prussia's military institutions as well as a definite link between war and politics. He identified the reasons for the French military success lay in their use of interior lines, light troops, superior numbers and most important of all; a national population enthused by political emancipation and the terror that they were going to be enslaved. Clausewitz thus credited Scharnhorst with the insight to see that the frightful power of war was no longer a shackled affair for kings and their armies. War had been released from its former diplomatic and financial bonds when politics returned it to the people through whom it could progress in its raw form.

Clausewitz had in the meantime made his mark as a rather bookish, shy, sensitive and socially awkward member of high society; some its members later came to regard him as arrogant and possibly seditious. In the spring of 1795 Clausewitz's regiment was demobilised and in the eleven years of peace that followed he concentrated on his education and matured into an intelligent and dignified young man who cared a great deal about matters relating to his country, whether it was subsistence farming in Westphalia or the highest levels of state policy.

The first five years were spent as a subaltern in a royally patronised regiment stationed at Neuruppin. The town had been devastated during the Thirty Years' War and rebuilt so it now gave Clausewitz access to the residency of Prince Henry, a renowned library, opera and theatre. At the end of 1801 the twenty-one year old Clausewitz earned admission to the War College in Berlin where he received a vigorous education in geometry, mathematics, politics, history and philosophy. He graduated the top of his class in 1804 and was appointed adjutant to Prince August.
Marie and the civilian publicists

Shortly afterwards Clausewitz began a long courtship of Marie von Brühl, daughter of Carl Adolf von Brühl and Sophie Gromm. Being the daughter of nobility and a favourite of Queen Louise made Marie slightly above Clausewitz’s station in life. Marie was gregarious, intelligent, well-balanced and serene. Clausewitz was withdrawn, introspective, and plagued with anxiety and worries. Marie’s English mother opposed a marriage and for all their incompatible qualities Marie was inexorably attracted to the young officer whom she judged to be loyal, honourable, kind, and unable to stand by and bear another’s misery. Both shared a strong admiration for the English and hated the French with xenophobic passion. On 26th June 1809 he confessed to his fiancée:

‘The thought is very good to me that one day I will delight in firing the bloody bullet at the arrogant, odious Frenchman. While people face one another in war one may be aware of the glory of existence. Those who have lived for years in slavery, scarcely allowed to have hostile thoughts about the French, let alone speak out with the thunder of cannons, must undertake a sad war with pride.’

It is true that Clausewitz confided in Marie some dark thoughts about war and politics and she was ultimately responsible for publishing *On War*. It could be argued that aside from being chief editor Marie functioned as a moral compass for Clausewitz and helped him to stay in touch with his humanity during very emotionally turbulent times. In the preface of *On War* Marie described her late husband in glowing terms as a man of rare distinction and broad education who directed his reflections toward military affairs ‘which are of such great importance to the well-being of nations and which constituted his profession.’ Clausewitz presumably read the major literary works of his times and was an exemplary product of what some historians have called the age of the Enlightenment.

The ‘publicists’ Clausewitz refers to in *On War* were typically men of letters and culture who wrote for courts, cabinets, educational colleges and military academies. It appears that Clausewitz took inspiration from Baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu, Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Johann Gottfried Kiesewetter. There is a possible connection to Emer de Vattel given that he was one of the most prominent philosophers of the age and was in correspondence with the grandfather of Clausewitz’s wife (Count Heinrich von Brühl). There also appears to be a subtle resemblance between *On War* and *The Law of Nations* (1758) in the choice of language, concepts, and references to historical matters and individuals like Henry IV.
Pinpointing the exact intellectual influences on Clausewitz is a matter of conjecture. We know for certain that he was impressed by works of Friedrich von Schiller\textsuperscript{26} and Niccolò Machiavelli.\textsuperscript{27} Clausewitz was slightly contemptuous those \textit{petite-maitres}, including the young Crown Prince Frederick (later Frederick II), who affected disgust for Machiavellian principles and took on pretentious airs of humanity.\textsuperscript{28} Yet according to Geoffrey Best, Clausewitz remained a model of model of chivalry and his strong language about the explosive unpredictability and violent tendencies of war was aimed at the dandies, pedants and sentimentalists would thought it could be conducted with kid gloves according to rule books.\textsuperscript{29}

\textit{Professional polemics}

It is important to bear in mind that Clausewitz was no academic philosopher but thinking-soldier who turned to real-life experience and the observation of events in order to discover general principles for practical results in the field of warfare and statecraft.\textsuperscript{30} Unlike previous writers on ‘military science’ or ‘art of war’ Clausewitz was always up for the fight (das Gefecht) and quick to pour scorn over alternative approaches designed to bring about bloodless victories. The preference for avoiding armed contact and compelling an opponent to concede through famine and clever logistical methods had been refined by military experts in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{31} Clausewitz emerged as outspoken critic of the antiquated and rigid state of the army and the overly scientific, didactic theories of men like Bülow.\textsuperscript{32}

Clausewitz accepted that every \textit{kriegssystem} was a product of its times, that every army depended on a base of supply and lines of communication, and the advantage lay with the side with the bigger economic power. On the basis of recent experience Clausewitz refused to believe that armies would in shy away from bloody fighting and not resort to living off the enemy’s lands. He consistently rejected indirect strategies of manoeuvre as outmoded methods and exalted actual fighting as the very essence of war: ‘Battle is for strategy what cold cash is for commercial transactions’ he wrote in his \textit{Strategie aus dem Jahr 1804}. The purpose of war was to either destroy one opponent, to terminate his political existence, or impose conditions on him during peace negotiations. In both cases one had to destroy or paralyse his fighting power either through direct battle or by occupying territory thereby depriving him of military supplies.\textsuperscript{33}

Clausewitz remained faithful to this doctrine throughout his military career.\textsuperscript{34} His \textit{Principles of War} written for the crown prince in 1812 repeats that one should aim at the destruction of the enemy’s armed power and take possession of his material sources of
The prominence of this theme has been considerable enough for critics to label Clausewitz’s work a culturally-specific product of its time. By thinking about how to wage war using battles Clausewitz derived a powerful understanding of what it was essentially all about and articulated a theory versatile enough to understand other forms of warfare. These include the targeting of both armed and unarmed persons, even if the latter lacked a proper legal definition at the time.36

To sum up, while Clausewitz was socialised to be an officer and gentlemen he was never deluded about the purpose of his profession: using violence in order to render the enemy defenceless and achieve a political purpose. This was a view shared by colleagues like Johann Friedrich Constantin von Lossau and Johann Jakob Otto August Rühle von Lilienstern.37 Philosophers, theologians and soldiers such as Justus Lipsius, Hugo Grotius and Raimondo de Montecuccoli had long ago stated that war was the use of force against a foreign enemy, be it a single ruler or a whole people.38 Vattel defines war as ‘that state in which we prosecute our right by force’ before trying to make distinctions between the different kinds of war, who has the legitimate authority to employ it, and for what for just causes (to recover what is due to us, to provide for future safety by punishing an aggressor, or defence from injury).39

Absolute war

The juristic aspect of On War is clear from the very first page. Clausewitz rejects the efforts of publicists to define war with abstruse and pedantic definitions and asks his readers to simply imagine war as a Zweikampf or two-struggle between two wrestling fighters who both use force with utmost effort to throw down their opponent and make him incapable of further resistance.40 There is no such thing as a civilian or non-combatant, merely our enemy since war arises without reference to political life and is devoid of any real-world circumstances.41

By using a theoretical construct or ideal, which readers sometimes refer to as ‘absolute war’,42 Clausewitz defines war as an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will.43 In theory, war is an instantaneous act of violence without duration44 and discharged to utmost effect.45 There is no assembly of forces in time, no successive action of powers because the simultaneous application of all forces for the shock or collision is an elementary or primordial law of war.46 A zero-sum principal of polarity means there can be no suspensions in military activity,47 and the reciprocal interactions of both opponents would ensure the violence escalates to utmost and unconceivable bounds.48
Whenever *On War* is demonised as a celebration of ‘total war’ and its author portrayed as an advocate of mutual massacre it is usually with reference to Clausewitz’s descriptions of absolute war. Similarly harsh language appears in Leon Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, William T. Sherman’s address to Atlanta in 1864, and the “whirlwind” speech of Sir Arthur Harris in 1942. It is difficult to comprehend war in the absolute because even if every thermonuclear device on the planet was detonated simultaneously, the apocalyptic destruction would still fall below an unattainable level of absolute violence.

It is unclear whether the term ‘overthrow’ equates to the physical disappearance of the enemy state or extermination of its people because the analogy of two wrestlers seems to imply that one allows their enemy to rise again after a peaceful submission. What Clausewitz leaves in no doubt is that the true or original aim in the plan of war, and therefore all military acts and supporting activity, is the overthrow of the enemy, to render him utterly defenceless and this means annihilating his armed forces (i.e. killing or disarming combatants). After this has been achieved the victor can carry out supplemental operations to further strengthen his position and dictate the conditions of peace to a prostate enemy.

Decisive battle is the core argument in *On War*, far more so than the message about policy which was added belatedly during the redrafts. In the conceptual schemata of military aims (referred to interchangeably as Zweck or Ziel) the destruction of the enemy’s armed forces always forms the underlying basis or object of war, strategy, combat, tactics, defense and attack. There also exists in reality a human impulse to vent one’s hostility in bloody battles and a cultural celebration of military honour and glorious victories. Put bluntly, all those who arm themselves for fighting, whether they be professional soldiers in the regular army (das Heer) or armed peasants (referred to variably as Landsturm, Volkshaufen or bewaffnete Bauern) can be considered part of the enemy’s armed forces (die Streitkräfte) and therefore liable targets for immediate destruction.

*War in reality*

From as early as 1801, Clausewitz struggled to find an answer to the question of why armed forces and their host societies do not engage in constant fighting to throw down the other opponent thus leaving war a fettered half-thing. Clausewitz understood that war could never attain its true, absolute conception because it operated within a non-conducting medium full of real-world impediments. He encapsulated many by identifying the illogic and passions of the human mind, the friction on the military machine or play of chance, and the role of policy or politics. Another crucial factor was the degree of involvement by the people who could
either support the war effort in a non-combatant role or actually take up arms to oppose a foreign invader.  

After 1827 Clausewitz set about redrafting *On War* in order to incorporate the argument that war is nothing but a setting forth of political conditions or intercourse by other means. War should always remain an instrumental means to achieve a political purpose and politicians have the ultimate authority. Clausewitz suggests two conditions likely to raise levels of violence: a higher political end and the greater involvement of the people. The higher the political purpose, the more it affects the existence of whole peoples, the more policy/politics and hostile feelings will coincide with the destruction dictated by the logic of war. When war is charged with hostile spirit of the masses and policy-makers aim for an exterminatory overthrow of the enemy it will most likely try to approximate its absolute conception.

In short, Clausewitz explained ‘absolute’ war as an untrammelled act of instantaneous and utmost violence intended to compel one’s opponent to one’s will. He then countered it with war in reality and clung to the essential idea that political goals are best achieved by the physical and moral destruction of the enemy’s armed forces. All military activities including the feeding, clothing and sheltering of soldiers have to seen as working towards this military aim. Whether individuals can be physically attacked for engaging in such non-fighting roles is left uncertain in Clausewitz’s writing but is now banned by the laws promulgated by Geneva, the Hague and U.N. Even with the benefit of these international humanitarian laws there remains much ambiguity and tension with the political interests of opponents and the destructive tendencies of war. Contemporary political scientists cannot be assured that even individuals who do not present a direct threat of harm to the enemy’s armed forces will be guaranteed to receive the immunity from harm for which they are now entitled.

*Humanitarian and political restraint*

It would be erroneous to assume that Clausewitz had nothing but contempt for civilian publicists and politicians and ignored their influence on the causes, course, conduct and character of war. While it is true that Clausewitz did not digress into ethical questions of what is ‘just’ or ‘unjust’ he did accept that war existed within the realms of human morality and reasoning. Since political intercourse and diplomatic contact between two adversaries does not cease entirely when war breaks out extraneous forces such as humanitarian law continue to have a modest influence throughout. Instead of a being simple an act of violence war becomes saturated with social, ethical and political particularities or peculiarities
Clausewitz was not an amoral theorist. He wanted to first wipe away concepts such as international law (Volkerrecht), the humane standpoint (Humaner Standpunkt) or the soul of humanity (menschenfreundliche Seelen) because they risked misleading kind-hearted friends of mankind into thinking there was a skilful method of disarming and overcoming an enemy without causing great bloodshed and believe this the proper tendency in the art of war. Pleasant as that sounds, Clausewitz felt it was wrong to shut one’s eyes in distress to all the horror and brutality that comes along with the true, ruthless nature of war because mistakes stemming from a spirit of benevolence (Gutmütigkeit) are the very worst.

The self-imposed restrictions, termed usages of international law and custom, which are hardly worth mentioning in regard to war in the abstract conception are indeed worth mentioning as impediments weakening the violence of war in reality. The social conditions of states and their relationships to one another are what give rise to war and are the same forces which circumscribe and moderate it with principles leading to logical absurdity. Clausewitz was not calling for these humane tendencies to be thrown away, merely warning against the dangerous tendency to regard war as nothing more than an intelligent act of governments, or a kind of algebraic action, because the facts of war teach us better. For Clausewitz, humanity or the moral progress of civilisation has little control on war:

‘If, then, civilized nations do not put their prisoners to death or devastate cities and countries, it is because intelligence plays a larger part in their methods of warfare and has taught them more effective ways of using force than the crude expression of instinct.

‘The invention of gunpowder and the constant improvement of firearms are enough in themselves to show that the advance of civilization has done nothing practical to alter or deflect the impulse to destroy the enemy, which is central to the very idea of war.’

Clausewitz appears to side with those argue that the killing of non-combatants and destruction of cities is an ineffective and counterproductive way to achieve one’s political aim. In other words, why kill civilians if serves no rational purpose? Another way of reading the above passage is to concede that if such methods are an effective mode of carrying on the war then that will likely be applied with intelligent reasoning. The human mind and passions maybe already inclined towards atrocity regardless of whether it is effective or not. War is anything but a rational activity because it is full of hostile feelings and intentions and can could
approach the complete perfection of ‘ganz Krieg’ if the pure element of enmity was unleashed.  

The trinity

In order to accommodate these irrational and unpredictable factors Clausewitz brought in a synthesis that war was a trinity composed of primordial violence, hatred and enmity; the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam; and the element subordination to reason as an instrument of policy. These tendencies are mainly associated with the people, the commander and army, and the government. This certainly helps to understand why opposing armed forces are deviated from the task of mutual destruction in order to target civilian populations instead. In each case it could be frenzied passion by the perpetrator, or an attempt to beat down the enemy’s morale and neutralise his people’s passion to fight; an accident of chance, or calculated a form of interdiction to undermine the enemy’s chance and probability of military success; a military means to a political end, or the aim of policy itself.

The trinity helps orientate this reader’s understanding of cases outside Clausewitz’s lifetime. The damage inflicted on civilian property during Sherman’s March (1864) for example firstly satisfied the soldiers human urge to wreak havoc, as well making the inhabitants feel the hard hand of war for supporting secessionism. Secondly, it aimed to distract or disrupt the strength of the Confederate forces, thereby indirectly affecting the chance and probability of military success. Thirdly, the destructive inroads made into the South provided a political morale boost for the Abraham Lincoln administration, while discrediting the enemy government and applying coercive pressure on its leaders to make peace. It was only after the loss of Richmond and the defeat of their main forces that the military elite accepted ultimate defeat. They turned down the option of full-scale guerrilla war with all its attending atrocities and instead accepted a relatively lenient peace.

The R.A.F bombing of Germany during WWII can also be understood in trinitarian terms: firstly, as a manifestation of British revenge and an attempt to demoralise the morale of the enemy nation (passion); secondly, as a way to disrupt the Germany’s industrial capacity and divert men and material from the decisive battles on the Eastern Front (chance and probability); and thirdly, as a political gesture for the Russian allies and a means to coerce the German political authorities into unconditional surrender (reason). Despite political interference, technological limitations and general friction the R.A.F. succeeded at utterly devastating civilian quarters in Cologne, Hamburg and Dresden. The moral effect of these
attacks was dampened by the defiance it inspired amongst the people and the fact that a war-weary population living under such a draconian dictatorship cannot so easily convert defeatism into political action.  

_Civilians in the western way of war_  

A superficial historical survey will be enough to show that Clausewitz knew the suffering of non-combatants was not just an accidental by-product of war, but as an instrumental method of violence employed by western combatants to impose their will. It is remarkable how little Clausewitz was prepared to admit this was employed as a rational strategy and puts it down mostly to the weaknesses of the human mind and political societies. What makes this point challenging to prove is that while Clausewitz was thoroughly well-read in the military history he had a preference for the in-depth study of single military campaigns rather than sweeping narratives covering entire wars. He was quite dismissive of historical sources prior to the Silesian Wars as untrustworthy and was irritated by those who pedantically cited the methods of the ancients to show off their classical knowledge.

Clausewitz warned students not look upon the past with the perspective and assumptions of one’s own times otherwise it would be difficult to accept what appears exceptional or out of the ordinary. No two wars are ever the same due to differing political objects and the fact that the number of possible ways of reaching them rises to infinity. The war aims a belligerent adopts and the methods and resources he employs will be governed by the particular characteristics of his own position. They will also conform to the prevailing spirit of the age, its general character, its limiting conditions, its own peculiar preconceptions, scientific principles and its own theory of war. Finally, aims and methods will be governed by whatever conclusions are drawn from the nature of war itself. In a sweeping historical survey Clausewitz argues that the character and intensity of war, as well as the methods of waging it, showed variance according to differing circumstances:

> 'The semibarbarous Tartars, the republics of antiquity, the feudal lords and trading cities of the Middle Ages, eighteenth-century kings and the rulers and peoples of the nineteenth century—all conducted war in their own particular way, using different methods and pursuing different aims.'

_The wars of antiquity_

Although it is difficult to accept the notion of a ‘western way of war’ European societies have since the Battle of Marathon (490 B.C.) celebrated the cultural and political aspects of
combat, while exhibiting a moral ambiguity towards the destruction of outside persons and property. Greek philosopher-historians lamented the deaths of religious personnel and property or the wasteful devastation of crops and cities. The Greeks would forfeit moral qualms for reasons of booty, racism, or in revenge for some snub or infuriating insult leading to explosive revenge and communal feuds.

The Peloponnesian War and Corinthian War were typically fought along the lines of battles, skirmishes, agricultural ravaging and the besieging of cities. Military experts such as Xenophon, Tacitus and Vegetius recognised the effectiveness of inflicting fire and famine upon one’s enemy, but cautioned against dispersing one’s soldiers for such a task left because it left them vulnerable to a counter-attack. Clausewitz did not give much attention to this epoch and wrote that the republics of antiquity, Rome excepted, were small and their armies smaller because the plebs or mass of people were excluded. War was confined to devastating the open country and taking some towns to ensure a certain degree of influence for the future.

Clausewitz moves on to single out the achievements of Alexander the Great as a unique example of an exceptional leader and army operating without the backing of a mass republic. He leaves out the more brutal side to the Macedonian conquests by simply stating that Alexander led the army on a ruthless (or reckless) advance through Asia to India. The Persian Empire was in such a brittle and decayed state that it shattered on impact. Even so, Clausewitz omits the fact that Alexander also punished civil populations for stubborn sieges and instances of guerrilla resistance.

The rise of Rome from a weak city to a mighty empire was attributed to the clever use of alliances, the assimilation or subjugation of neighbouring peoples, and an excellent army supported by the wealth of the people. Clausewitz was intrigued by the fact that the Punic Wars were conducted with much activity in the form of minor skirmishes, which did not lead to decisive consequences. The Romans consistently adopted a ‘peculiar’ or ‘round-about method of resistance’ (which involved butchering settlements in Italy, Sicily and Spain) while Hannibal was still victorious in the field. The Carthaginian forces were eventually beaten and the city was destroyed in 146 B.C.

Roman wars were not ‘absolute’ in the Clausewitzian sense. They too were supposed to be regulated by fetial ceremonies and kept within the bounds of honour and justifiable revenge. Face-to-face battle rather than brigand-like raiding was glorified as true warfare, yet even in the hands of great commanders like Julius Caesar the army routinely made the
lands and cities of their enemies suffer the devastation of fire and sword.\textsuperscript{100} The comparison Clausewitz makes between ancient Rome and Napoleonic France suggests that he disapproved of both as tyrannical empires.\textsuperscript{101} Rome conquered foreign peoples either for the self-satisfaction of plunder and prestige, or to punish obstinate resistance and acts of rebellion.\textsuperscript{102} Even those living peacefully within the frontiers were exposed to bouts of praetorianism, civil war and logistical demands of passing armies.\textsuperscript{103}

\textit{The medieval age}

By the late fifth century the pressure of migrating ‘barbarians’ caused the western empire to dissolve into an impoverished patchwork of pagan and Christian societies.\textsuperscript{104} Peasants were robbed and terrorised in all forms of war from the great Frankish conquests\textsuperscript{105} to the raids of the Vikings.\textsuperscript{106} It is curious that neither Clausewitz or his disciple Hans Delbrück had much to say on the Crusades given that popular religious energies were militarised with atrocious results far beyond Europe.\textsuperscript{107} ‘Since war is a means of politics and in the final analysis the conduct of war is always determined by its political purpose, the mystical original basis made it impossible from the start to have a rational strategy in the Crusades’, wrote Delbrück.\textsuperscript{108} Be that as it may, agricultural raiding was utilised for the rational purpose of bringing tribute-paying areas under one’s control, or to weaken the lands surrounding a target city as a precursor to laying it under siege.\textsuperscript{109}

The spread of Christianity\textsuperscript{110} and ideal of chivalry\textsuperscript{111} represented a significant development in the notion of non-combatant immunity and Clausewitz was lightly imbued with these notions.\textsuperscript{112} Such intangible concepts were little understood or practiced by every medieval warrior, especially when they were given licence by their masters to create havoc for the opposing lord and his subjects. Theologians were more concerned about the conditions under which a lawful authority could prosecute a just war to correct wrong-doing, vanquish evil and restore peace. The end justified means that would be considered atrocious by other moral standards.\textsuperscript{113} Even without devoting a study to the campaigns of successful Christian warlords such as William the Conqueror\textsuperscript{114} or Baldwin V of Hainaut,\textsuperscript{115} Clausewitz correctly identified some of the tangible factors that characterised the proprietorial warfare of the medieval age: small feudal armies and the dominance of castles and fortified places.\textsuperscript{116} Medieval war became a form of litigation by other means:

‘They were waged relatively quickly; not much time was wasted in the field; but their aim was usually to punish the enemy, not subdue him. When his cattle had been driven off and his castles burned, one could go home.’\textsuperscript{117}
Although the devastating struggle between England and France certainly stood out Clausewitz believed that like most warring societies of the medieval period the two kingdoms lacked domestic unity and military operations betrayed the marks of immature political cohesion.\textsuperscript{118} The military events of the Middle Ages and Renaissance which appear to have interested Clausewitz the most were the destructive descents of the German emperors into Italy, and the restricted wars of the commercial cities and small republics.\textsuperscript{119} He describes the latter as more like armed negotiations using small and expensive \textit{condottieri} forces putting up sham fights and so lacking in energy that war was robbed of risk and wholly changed from its proper nature.\textsuperscript{120}

The medieval mercenaries who Machiavelli and Clausewitz so contemptuously dismissed were more than capable of fighting battles, especially in cases of personal or unit rivalries. Mercenary loyalties did not extend far beyond their contract of employment and raiding was normally sufficient for the job at hand.\textsuperscript{121} References to the invasion of Charles VIII, the dear price Venice had to pay for opposing the League of Cambrai, and the infamous Sack of Rome in 1527 also reveal that Clausewitz had read of the more extreme Italian Wars between 1494-1559.\textsuperscript{122} He appreciated the harsh context of Machiavelli’s writing which legitimised fear, cruelty and terrorism as indispensible parts of war and statecraft, sometimes necessary to preserve one’s political existence and limited only by effectiveness.\textsuperscript{123}

\textit{The age of religious wars}

The power of France was at this point checked by the Charles V and the Holy Roman Empire, which Clausewitz described as a mighty colossus lacking internal cohesion and domestic stability yet supported by its enormous wealth until the split of 1556.\textsuperscript{124} Clausewitz says virtually nothing on the \textit{conquistadors} in South America, Africa and India,\textsuperscript{125} or the philosopher-theologians such as Francisco de Vitoria who approved attacks on unarmed people for a just cause like punishing rebellion against a sovereign master.\textsuperscript{126} Passages from \textit{On War} and a full overview of the Dutch Revolt between 1568-1606 do show Clausewitz’s awareness of the atrocious repression meted out by Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alba to places like Haarlem in July 1673. Clausewitz does not go into the grisly details of the many sieges, nor the damage caused by the rebels whenever they flooded their own land.\textsuperscript{127} The French Wars of Religion are barely touched upon in \textit{On War} except to mention that Henri de Navarre (Henry IV) appeased the ‘internal dissension’ through his ‘noble feelings and a generous disposition’, after the fact that his attempts to starve Paris cost thousands of civilian lives.\textsuperscript{128}
Likewise, the initial religious disturbances in Germany and Switzerland receive little attention. The campaigns of Gustavus Adolphus between 1630-1632 were the subject of Clausewitz’s earliest in-depth studies in military history. Clausewitz denounced the massacre of Magdeburg by the troops of Count Johann Tserclaes Tilly as an act of boundless cruelty (‘grenzenlose Grausamkeit’). He also criticised the form of strategic distraction and manoeuvre Gustavus had employed by moving his army along the Oder, plundering towns like Frankfurt. Clausewitz was conscious that strategic movements were highly influenced by logistics and the possession of civilian territory. His account of the Breitenfeld campaign for example points out that Tilly forced Leipzig to pay 200,000 talers and various other ‘lebensmittel’ to avoid pillage. Gustavus meanwhile tried to interdict the enemy’s food supply through the tactics of kleine Krieg as a prelude to the knock-out blow and subsequent occupation of Bohemia and Bavaria.

The English Civil War and Cromwellian Conquest of Ireland also witnessed the extortion of fire-money and massacre of settlements but it was the Thirty Years’ War above all others that drove Hugo Grotius and the educated men of Europe to think hard about how to secularise international relations, discipline soldiers, and purge war of the destruction that brought Germany’s population down from 21 million to 13.5 million. Clausewitz read works by Schiller and chose to study the military events without presuming the universal standards of the Enlightenment applied to conditions of that particular period. The nature of war had depended on subjective forces at work on the minds and personalities of the commanders and the clash of wills between the countries and peoples involved, on their religion, customs, culture, and political circumstances. Clausewitz actually admired the way peoples of the past had the courage (or fanaticism) to fight long and hard unlike the people of the present.

War in Eastern Europe

These cultural influences and desultory forms of waging war were on Clausewitz’s mind when wrote the last few chapters of book six for On War. Without going into historical details he frequently mentions that fortresses and military cordons guard against incursions or raids intended to exact contributions or live off the enemy. The Great Wall of China for example served as protection against the Tartars and Clausewitz states that frontier defences are essential for states bordering Asia and Turkey where a state of war with the Asiatic peoples is virtually permanent. A working note penned during the redrafting process questions whether the raiding parties of the Tartars should be considered representative of the phenomenon of war alongside its stronger manifestations. The Mongols and Tartars
engaged in ravaging and plunder as often as battle because it was a culturally acceptable and served the policy or political interests of the tribes and their leaders.\textsuperscript{142}

A short study on the Grand Hetman and warrior-king John III Sobieski, perhaps written sometime during the last two years of Clausewitz’s life, argues that the Asian nature and constitution of the principal opponents means one should not compare or measure the adopted methods by western European standards.\textsuperscript{143} Clausewitz was clearly aware of the terrible devastation and atrocities visited on Poland by its neighbours in the decades following the Cossack revolt of Bogdan Chmielnicki in 1648.\textsuperscript{144} The Poles had to fall back on partisan war to beat off the Tartars-Turks who raided for booty and slaves.\textsuperscript{145} Poland was finally trampled by the forces of Charles XII during the Great Northern War\textsuperscript{146} and fell under the malevolent of influence of Russia, Austria and Prussia.\textsuperscript{147} Clausewitz believed that the Tartar-like country had lost its place in the modern European balance of power and to reinstate Poland would be to the advantage of France.\textsuperscript{148}

\textit{The age of Louis XIV}

Clausewitz explains that in centuries between the reigns of Louis XI and Louis XIV the turbulent republics and precarious monarchies of Europe all undertook state consolidation and institutional organisation. Feudal service was replaced by a system of mercenaries, which was replaced in turn by a standing army paid for by the treasury. Ambitious campaigns were still curbed by military inefficiency, financial costs and prevailing political conditions. War resembled a forceful game or kind of armed negotiation between monarchical governments in which the people were largely excluded. The army entrusted to a general was a precious instrument to be used prudently in healthy campaigning seasons. It was customary to seize a few fortresses, a province or two, and fight a battle under the most advantageous circumstances possible.\textsuperscript{149} When the balance of forces were too evenly matched and neither side was resolved on battle whole campaigns turned on sieges or the retention and systematic exploitation of strategic towns and rich provinces until they were reduced to an emaciated condition.\textsuperscript{150} Taking a stretch of territory reduced the enemy’s national resources, yielded up food-supplies and contributions, satisfied notions of gloire and became an asset in peace negotiations.\textsuperscript{151}

These reflections are most evident in the ninth volume of his Posthumous Work which is devoted almost entirely the campaigns of Marshal Turenne and Luxembourg in Holland and Flanders.\textsuperscript{152} Clausewitz appreciated that for commanders of this period the aim of battles such as Fleurus (1690) or Blenheim (1704) was to beat the opposing army as
precursor to securing good quarters for the army and raising coercive contributions at the expense of the enemy’s subjects until their government requested a peace.\textsuperscript{153} He was also aware of the \textit{guerre de course} and the naval bombardment of Genoa in 1684.\textsuperscript{154} In regard to the devastation of the Rhenish Palatinate in 1688-89 Clausewitz mentions that General Montclar destroyed the land before the opening of the campaign and Marshal Duras later made raids into Swabia to collect contributions and carry out select burnings.\textsuperscript{155}

It can be argued that the study of these restricted, halfling campaigns impressed on Clausewitz less the importance of humanitarian sentiment and political control but more the idea that the logical development of war was stunted by human ignorance and political weakness. \textit{The Campaigns of Luxembourg} noted ‘how little objective conditions decided matters, how little compelling grounds determined actions, and how infrequently the strict order between means and ends was applied.’\textsuperscript{156} France was never really threatened with non-existence during the Spanish War of Succession because its size and resources were enough to deter her enemies, nor did they even think such a goal was a possibility.\textsuperscript{157}

\textit{Frederick the Great}

By the time Clausewitz wrote \textit{The Campaigns of Frederick} he understood how wars of the early modern period were circumscribed by ‘the prejudices and the institutions of the time.’\textsuperscript{158} None of the powers, with the exception of Austria, had any reason for making an all-out-effort during the War of Austrian Succession so strategic plans became saturated with political considerations.\textsuperscript{159} One common ordinance was not to let soldiers have their way with the civilian population. Clausewitz repeats at least twice that to supply the army in the manner usual since the French Revolution by living off the land, which was possible even then, went against accepted practice. It would have been regarded as completely despoiling the countryside and led to powerful reactions in the people’s feelings and opinions. Nor was it easy to live off the land became the army’s organisation and administration were not designed for such practices.\textsuperscript{160}

The growing permanency of the military organisation (sustained through a system of volunteering, conscription and hiring of mercenaries) did help create faint normative distinctions between soldiers and non-combatants. There were those subjects who paid taxes in return for peaceful status and those who were paid or honour-bound to fight in the state’s armies, either under the leadership of aristocrats or the king himself in the case of Frederick II.\textsuperscript{161} While the Empress Maria Theresa let her light troops devastate Bavaria,\textsuperscript{162} Frederick
kept his largely in check by draconian discipline and a general policy (one endorsed by On War) of taking advantage of disaffected enemy subjects.163

As a fellow Prussian Clausewitz naturally wrote about Frederick the Great with patriotic admiration and considered him a military genius for whom neither vanity, ambition, nor vindictiveness could deviate from his political object.164 Yet Frederick’s flawed mind and character were subject to the very temperamental passions, obstinacy, and abuses of honour (Ehrgeiz) and glory (Ruhmsucht) Clausewitz warned readers about in a chapter entitled ‘On Military Genius’.165 Frederick’s policies entangled the kingdom in the Seven Years War during which the Austro-Russian monarchs were determined to grind down Prussia’s military power, not to massacre its inhabitants who in East Prussia willingly transferred their allegiance to the Tsarina Elizabeth.166

Frederick’s victories at Mollwitz, Hohenfriedberg, Soor, Leuthen and Rossbach fascinated contemporaries and subsequent military historians like Napoleon and Clausewitz.167 The Prussian army was however bloodied many times in set-piece battles and harassed by the tactics of petite guerre, particularly by the Austrian forces under the command of Leopold Joseph von Daun and Ernst Gideon von Loudan.168 On 22nd November 1757 for incidence the troops under the Duke of Beven were beaten at Breslau and retreated towards Glogau, pillaging on the way either out of ill-discipline or to hinder any enemy pursuit. Clausewitz speculates that Beven could have taken a position on the far side of Breslau had this not exposed the city and its supply depots to the risk of bombardment and the displeasure of the king.169 The shelling of defended places like Zittau and Prague had mixed military results.170 Frederick’s own bombardment of Dresden in July 1760 was an outrage that Clausewitz found hard to excuse especially since it failed to dislodge the garrison, tempt Daun to battle or even prevent Loudon taking Glatz (Klodzko) at the end of the month.171

There were many subsidiary raids and plundering expeditions between the battles and sieges. Berlin was twice raided in 1758 and 1760 leading Clausewitz to admit the military potential of flying columns.172 Frederick and Prince Henry organised successful forays into Poland, Bohemia and Franconia with the retaliatory object of causing arson or raising fire-money (‘Zweck einer Wiedervergeltung oder der Brandschatzung’).173 Money and manpower were extracted from occupied lands and as well as nearby German principalities and bishoprics to help carry on the exhausting struggle.174 Clausewitz must have known about the draconian exploitation of the Electorate of Saxony given that his wife’s grandfather, Heinrich von Brühl, had his estates vindictively ruined for crossing Frederick while serving as its first minister.175
Even with British subsidies and Frederick’s imperative to ‘maintain the strength of his army as far as possible at the expense of other countries’ in the words of Clausewitz, the costs in manpower and money were enormous for Prussia, as they were for all the participant powers. The allies struggled to coordinate their offensives thus allowing Frederick’s forces breathing spaces within which to operate. The near-suicidal king was finally saved by Austrian hesitancy in the face of costly danger, as well as the political changes following the death of the Tsarina and the ascension of Peter III. Clausewitz observes that the coalition wrung from Frederick all the desire and courage for conquest, save the desultory ‘Potato War’ of 1778-79 and the tripartite partition of Poland in 1772.

The Enlightenment

War was increasingly seen in intellectual circles as unnatural aberration to be abolished by the interdependence of states, secularisation of politics, or the satisfaction delivered by increasing wealth, commerce and trade. Kant argued that war made humans treat one another as disposable means and statesmen should instead strive for perpetual peace by respecting each other’s national domains, cultural values and citizenry. François-Marie Arouet (Voltaire) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau were not naïve enough to think that war could or even should be averted but like Kant and Hegel they hoped that the violence could be restricted to soldiers who were merely servants of the state and therefore entitled to basic human rights.

Unlike Clausewitz, Vattel wrote plainly that one should go to war with as much forbearance and courtesy as safety will allow. A prince or general should obviously not put his own soldiers and people at risk for the sake of the enemy. He may even refuse prisoners quarter and resort to scorched-earth and reprisals when gentler methods are insufficient to stop an inhumane enemy or bring a very stubborn one to terms. The definition of one’s enemy could be expanded to encompass all the personnel and property within an opposing nation, especially if it was deemed barbarous like the Turks. It was unnecessary to widen such a band to encompass women, children, old men and sick persons if the worse effects of war could be limited to those actually in arms. Like Clausewitz, Vattel argues those who take up arms (including women) become legitimate targets but his reasoning seems to be based more on parochial morality and gender roles rather than universal military logic.

Clausewitz and the publicists could not foresee the extent to which successive generations would seek to institutionalise this philosophy into international law and institutions. There was however a general cultural preference going back centuries that
unarmed prisoners and innocent folk should not be put to death and spared any unnecessary suffering. Excessive cruelty and destruction for no military or political purpose was regarded as disreputable imbecility because it enflamed the enemy’s passions to fighter harder, alienated one’s allies and ruined one’s own army through hunger, ill discipline and desertion. The result of all these military, social and political developments was that civilians were largely isolated from what Clausewitz describes as a restricted, shrivelled-up form of war. While Clausewitz morally applauds the spirit of progress he regarded a comforting façade without logical sense:

'It had ceased to be in harmony with the spirit of the times to plunder and lay waste the enemy’s land, which had played such an important role in antiquity, in Tartar days and indeed in mediaeval times. It was rightly held to be unnecessarily barbarous, an invitation to reprisals, and a practice that hurt the enemy’s subjects rather than their government—one therefore that was ineffective and only served permanently to impede the advance of general civilization. Not only in its means, therefore, but also in its aims, war increasingly became limited to the fighting force itself. Armies, with their fortresses and prepared positions, came to form a state within a state, in which violence gradually faded away.

'All Europe rejoiced at this development. It was seen as a logical outcome of enlightenment. This is a misconception. Enlightenment can never lead to inconsistency: as we have said before and shall have to say again, it can never make two and two equal five. Nevertheless this development benefited the peoples of Europe, although there is no denying that it turned war even more into the exclusive concern of governments and estranged it still further from the interests of the people.'

This appears to be a repetition of Jacques-Antoine-Hippolyte, Comte de Guibert and Johann Friedrich von Decken. Guibert foresaw both the military benefits and humanitarian costs of arousing the wrathful passions of the people in form of citizen armies or popular militias. When quasi-democratic changes were married with concurrent technological developments and reforms undertaken by French army the results were astounding. In intellectual circles the Revolutionary Wars were seen as crude outbursts of violence. For Clausewitz it was only natural when the chains fettering war were loosened by men as ruthless as Bonaparte or political aims as high as regime overthrow or the extermination of civil populations.

By the standards of other centuries these wars appear relatively civilised to historians, partly because they were ended so quickly by conventional military means. It can be asserted that Clausewitz was a dignified officer imbued with the normative standards of the Enlightenment and trained to fight battles. Anything less than combat like slaughtering prisoners, burning down cottages or bullying women and children was beneath a soldier’s dignity and simply useless against the massive armies of France. If one must go to war there was an underlying assumption in the writings of humanist philosophers like Vattel and
Kant, or soldiers like Napoleon or Clausewitz that men, not women or children, should fight bravely and openly for their state in conventional or semi-conventional armed forces while the citizens should not be used as spies, assassins or spreaders of lies.\textsuperscript{196}

The 'Napoleonic-Clausewitzian paradigm\textsuperscript{197}

The strong emphasis on conventional warfare in \textit{On War} tends to undermine the argument that Clausewitz advocated the targeting of non-combatants as an instrumental means of violence. His martial definition of strategy is restricted to the operational level as the use of combat for the purpose of war.\textsuperscript{198} The cultural attraction to battle was alluring for Clausewitz because notions of honour and renown permeate all military activity.\textsuperscript{199} 'It satisfies the vanity of the general, the court, the army, and the people, and thereby in some measure the expectations that are always pinned on an offensive.'\textsuperscript{200} Clausewitz wanted his readers to understand that war was no pastime for irresponsible enthusiasts who are easily captivated by the vicissitudes of chance, courage, comradeship and honour; war is a serious means for a serious end.\textsuperscript{201}

The first and most comprehensive strategic issue for both commander and statesman is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.\textsuperscript{202} In his opinion the commander-in-chief must be like a statesman simultaneously. In order to conduct a war right through to its successful conclusion he must have a knowledge of higher state policy and relations on the one hand; and on the other, he must know exactly what he can do or how much he can achieve with the means at his disposal.\textsuperscript{203}

One must draft a war plan according to political aim and be prepared to continuously adjust and modify efforts, neither doing too much or too little.\textsuperscript{204} The worst decision is to be caught on devious paths applying the wrong standard of measurement by an enemy employing shockingly violent methods that do not go against the nature of war.\textsuperscript{205} Clausewitz did not live to see technological breakthroughs in the twentieth century render the strongest military means of his time, namely conventional battle between ground forces, a relatively minor measure yet many passages retain their relevance:

\textsuperscript{1}In order to ascertain the real scale of the means which we must put forth for war, we must think over the political object both on our own side and on the enemy’s side; we must consider the power and position of the enemy’s state as well as of our own, the character of his government and of his people, and the capacities of both, and all that
The maelstrom of strategy

As shall be elaborated later, *On War* conveys the message that one stays on the defence at their peril and violence must be inflicted at some point. At what exactly will be determined by military and political conditions unique to the given strategic situation. Clausewitz stresses that strategy is especially difficult because there is no positive doctrine and the infinite amount and range of attending information, not to mention the moral responsibility to save one’s own soldiers and people from death and suffering, can easily overwhelm the most brilliant of minds. This maelstrom requires a genius of great strength or steadiness of mind and character, acquired through birth or training, to grope out the truth, determine a way to achieve the goal, and not be diverted from this course of action.

A commander must be prepared to accept responsibility for his actions either before the tribunal of some outside power or before the court of his own conscience. He is in a position to either earn distinction or blacken his reputation by committing some of the worse outrages and abuses on the human race in the pursuit of honour, glory and revenge. It is easy for modern readers with men like Sherman or “Bomber” Harris in mind to imagine an obstinate or impassioned commander who is set upon targeting civilians and will not be distracted from this course, even when others object on humanitarian or utilitarian grounds. It is tempting to categorise Clausewitz and agree with those who argue strategies of coercion and terrorism against civilians are counterproductive because they provoke an escalation spiral by galvanising popular support behind the enemy government. Brunswick’s threats to burn down Paris certainly backfired in 1792. The Polish insurrection led by Tadeusz Kościuszko in 1794-95 however could not withstand Suvorov’s Russian troops who sacked the suburbs of Praga with such terrifying severity that popular resistance in Warsaw and the rest of the country collapsed. Clausewitz confessed that he did not study this campaign in any great depth until the November Insurrection of 1830, which was again crushed by the Russians.

Clausewitz does not explore the effectiveness of targeting civilians *per se* but states that if critics and historians (who enjoy the benefit of hindsight) wish to bestow praise or blame on any strategic decision, and suggest a superior means, they must place themselves in the position of the person whose act he has under review while at the same time trying to keep
a larger and more objective view.\textsuperscript{214} This is ultimately impossible given that the countless obstacles, arguments and clashes of opinion preceding military operations are not always repeated in the memoirs of generals or their confidents because they touch political interests or they are simply forgotten.\textsuperscript{215}

\textit{Battle and invasion}

There is no attempt in \textit{On War} to catalogue all the various styles that may derive from the characteristics of the army, the country and other circumstances – history does not provide a solid basis for the formulation of principles, rules or methods.\textsuperscript{216} The treatise does however offer a basic blue-print to disarm the opposing state. The first step in the plan of war is to seek out and destroy the enemy's armed forces in a great slaughter (\textit{Hauptschlacht}). This fulfils the logic of war and further serves to humiliate and terrify the enemy government, people and their allies into signing a peace.\textsuperscript{217} Clausewitz warns that the play of passion and revenge brings the possibility of an entirely opposite, injurious effect of arousing the rage of forces that would have otherwise remained dormant.\textsuperscript{218}

Since wars are rarely resolved by a single battle strategy allows for successive efforts in space and time.\textsuperscript{219} A defeated army can be restored in strength or replaced entirely by utilising the resources of conquered territory, a home base or supportive ally.\textsuperscript{220} It is obvious that the composition, strength, technology and military potential of an armed force are largely a product of its host society and Clausewitz seems to imply that a more cohesive and civilised state equates to a more dangerous foe.\textsuperscript{221} He therefore advocates invasion of the enemy's state to undermine its existing armed forces indirectly by interrupting the process of production.\textsuperscript{222} It is a natural human impulse to grab something tangible and territorial conquest serves to additionally shake the loyalty and confidence of the enemy's people.\textsuperscript{223}

If one does not seek a logical decision, or has already been achieved it, the possession of the country or some other physical object or component in the enemy's war power (a city, fortress or supply depot) will be the next limited objective ('Beschränktes Ziel'). Clausewitz consistently warned against the occupation of enemy land before the enemy army was defeated as a slow-working windfall profit. The natural order would be to destroy the opposing armies first, then subdue the country. The effect of these two results, as well the position of strength we then hold, will hopefully force the enemy to make peace.\textsuperscript{224}

\textit{Peculiar alternatives}
Clausewitz realised that the overthrow or disarmament of the enemy was not a necessary condition for peace because there are two other grounds: improbability of victory and unacceptable cost.\textsuperscript{225} Battle and territorial conquest are always the preferred methods but Clausewitz lists several other ‘peculiar ways’ (‘eigentümliche Wege‘): operations that have political repercussions;\textsuperscript{226} invasions or raids to exact contributions or lay the enemy’s lands waste; operations against objects which can do the enemy greater damage or suffering; or to let the duration of the war exhaust the enemy’s physical and moral resistance.\textsuperscript{227} The numerous other means and objectives that are possible are neither inconsistent, absurd or even mistaken if they achieve a military and political object.\textsuperscript{228} This of course leaves the reader questioning whether the atomic bombings of Japan would qualify as a short-cut to peace.\textsuperscript{229}

All options Clausewitz lists could conceivably involve the terrible suffering of civilians over an indefinite period of time until the enemy government or policy-maker signs a peace and its people accept the decision.\textsuperscript{230} Even the capture of enemy lands as opposed to their devastation has its costs to the inhabitants. Conquered enemy provinces can bring additional wealth to the attacker and their long-term exploitation will increase the strain to the point where the resources are exhausted.\textsuperscript{231} Without strict reference to the political objective, one risks defining victory or success through the amount of damage or loss inflicted upon the enemy as if reducing the enemy’s relative strength were an end in itself.\textsuperscript{232}

\textit{The centre of gravity}

To help bring about the enemy’s quick collapse Clausewitz advocates hammer blows against the centre of gravity; a concept so vague it can mean almost anything from assassinating political leaders to wholesale attacks on civilian population centres (especially if one sees them as the ‘heart’ of the enemy’s power). For Clausewitz the focal point of the enemy’s power and movement was located ideally in one or all of the following: the army, its reserves, his capital city and the strongest of his allies.\textsuperscript{233} In the event of war against France he advises that Prussia and its own allies act with utmost speed to overwhelm her with sheer numbers, capture Paris, and drive the shattered remnants of her forces across the Loire.\textsuperscript{234} He presumed this war would be fought from the moral high-ground:

‘We are quite convinced that in this manner France can be brought to her knees and taught a lesson any time she chooses to resume that insolent behaviour with which she has burdened Europe for a hundred and fifty years.’\textsuperscript{235}

Clausewitz certainly did not advocate that the Prussian army take fire and sword to the cities and villages of France. He prefers to restrict his recipe for strategic success to destroying the
enemy in battle, disrupting the cohesion of the enemy's state by occupying its lands and factories, and finally compelling the government to sign a peace which he hopes the peace-loving or reasonable majority will accept.\textsuperscript{236} All other peculiar alternatives (in which the reader can categorise attacks on civilians or civilian property) were dangerous and ineffectual distractions. Beatrice Heuser is quite right to assert that despite his knowledge of the Thirty Years' War and scorched-earth strategies of Louis XIV's generals, 'Clausewitz never included the targeting of an adversary's civilian population as a legitimate war aim.'\textsuperscript{237}

Conclusion

When the reader takes into consideration Clausewitz's social background, his theoretical conception of war, his study of military, and his recipe for military success it is difficult to accept the charge that he advocated war against civilians. He was raised an officer and gentleman and exhibited both a cultural and theoretical preference for battles between armed forces rather than slaughter of individuals outside the \textit{Hauptschlacht}. He tended to avoid ethical questions and had little faith in the influence of humanitarian restraint, instead emphasising war as an instrument of policy. Clausewitz certainly advanced the logic of destroying opposing combatants and his trinity helps to understand why armed forces can be deviated to attack civilian populations. Such operations happened in the past largely because, in his opinion, western armies and states lacked the political cohesion or human resolve to fight the battle-centric warfare more conventional in the present. As we shall see next the preference for keeping war between politicians and soldiers was compromised by the need to marshal the energies of an entire people against the French.

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\textsuperscript{2} Paret (1976), footnote 18, p. 19 and footnote 12, pp. 27-28 and p. 33.


\textsuperscript{4} Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 'Belagerang von Mainz', \textit{Werke}, 14 Volumes (Hamburg, 1956-1960),


spanischen Regierung (The Revolt of the Netherlands); Geschichte des dreißigjährigen Kriegs (A History of the Thirty Years’ War); Über Völkerwanderung, Kreuzzüge und Mittelalter (On the Barbarian Invasions, Crusaders and Middle Ages); Peter Paret and Daniel Moran, eds./trans., p. 9.


33 Clausewitz, ‘Bemerkungen über die reine und angewandte Strategie des Herrn von Bülow, oder Kritik der darin enthaltenden Ansichten,’ Neue Bellona, Vol. 9, No. 3 (1805), pp. 252-287; Clausewitz,


36 Palmgren, p. 50.


41 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 6, Para. 4, p. 23; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 6, Para. 4, p. 9; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 6. Para. 3, p. 78; Jan Willem Honig, ‘Clausewitz’s On War: Problems of Text and Translation’, in Strachan and Herberg-Rothe, eds. (2007), p. 63.
For a previous explanation about the difference between ‘absolute’ and ‘total war’ see Chapter 1, Note 164, p. 52; Heuser (2002), pp. xi, 27, 117.

CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 1-3, p. 17; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 1-3, p. 5; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 1-3, p. 75.

CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 6, Para. 5 and Sec. 8, pp. 23-26; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 6, Para. 5 and Sec. 8, pp. 10-12; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 6, Para. 3 and Sec. 8, pp. 78-80; Honig (2007), pp. 65-66.

CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 23, Para. 2, p. 38; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 23, Para. 2, p. 21; H&P, Bk. I, Ch., Sec. 23, Para. 2, pp. 86-87; Echevarria (2007a), p. 65.


CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3-5, pp. 18-21; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3-5, pp. 6-10; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3-5, pp. 75-77; CvC, Bk. II, Ch. 3, Para. 4-5, p. 135; Graham, Bk. II, Ch. 3, Para. 5-6, p. 103; H&P, Bk. II, Ch. 3, Para. 5-6, p. 149; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 5-6, p. 297; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 5-6, p. 338; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 5-6, p. 585; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6A, Para. 5, p. 327; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6A, Para. 6, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch06.html#A>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6A, Para. 6, pp. 603-604; Echevarria (2007a), p. 65.


CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 3, Sec. 4, Para. 2, pp. 17-18, 20-21; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 3, Sec. 4, Para. 2, pp. 5-6, 8; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 2, Para. 3, Sec. 4, Para. 1, pp. 75, 77; CvC,

55 First, the aim of war is the enemy’s overthrow which obliges us to destroy his armed forces or put him position where he can no longer carry on the fight. CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Sec. 4, Para. 1-2, p. 10; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Sec. 4, Para. 1-2, p. 8; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 4, Para. 1-2, p. 77; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 5, p. 44; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 5, p. 25; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 5, p. 90; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 1, Para. 1, p. 286; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 1, Para. 1, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK8ch01.html>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 1, Para. 1, p. 577; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 4, Para. 6-9, pp. 315-316; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 4, Para. 6-9, pp. 351-252; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 4, Para. 6-9, p. 596.

56 Strategy is the use of combat(s) or the threat of combat(s) for the object of war. Strategy will determine whether the results, be it success or failure, are useful in accordance with the political object of war. CvC, Bk. II, Ch. 1, Para. 12, p. 103; Graham, Bk. II, Ch. 1, Para. 12, p. 75; H&P, Bk. II, Ch. 1, Para. 12, p. 128; CvC, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 1-2, 24-31, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book3.htm#1>; Graham, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 1-2, 24-31, pp. 141, 146-148; H&P, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 1-2, 24-31, pp. 177, 180-182; CvC, Bk. III, Ch. 8, Para. 2, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book3.htm#8>; Graham, Bk. III, Ch. 8, Para. 2, pp. 163-164; H&P, Bk. III, Ch. 8, Para. 2, p. 194; CvC, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 6, pp. 214-215; Graham, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 6, p. 204; H&P, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 6, p. 227.

57 There is only one means in war: the fight. The object of combat is to inflict the maximum slaughter and destruction on the enemy’s armed forces in a great battle until they are no longer in a physical and psychological position to continue the fight. CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 30-48, 58, pp. 52-57, 59; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 31-49, 59, pp. 32-35, 38; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 30-48, 58, pp. 95-98; CvC, Bk. II, Ch. 1, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK2ch01.html>; Graham, Bk. II, Ch. 1, pp. 73-81; H&P, Bk. II, Ch. 1, pp. 127-132; CvC, Bk. IV, Ch. 1, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book4.htm#1>; Graham, Bk. IV, Ch. 1, p. 201; H&P, Bk. IV, Ch. 1, p. 225; CvC Bk. IV, Ch. 2, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book4.htm#2>; Graham, Bk. IV, Ch. 2, pp. 202-203; H&P, Bk. IV, Ch. 2, p. 226; CvC, Bk. IV, Ch. 3 Para. 1-2, 8, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book4.htm#3>; Graham, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 1-2, 8, pp. 203-204; H&P, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 1-2, 8, p. 227; CvC, Bk. IV, Ch. 4,
The object of tactics is to achieve victory by destroying the enemy's armed forces. Only great tactical successes can lead to great strategic ones. CvC, Bk. II, Ch. 2, Para. 49, p. 123; Graham, Bk. II, Ch. 2, Para. 47, pp. 93-94; H&P, Bk. II, Ch. 2, Para. 49, p. 142; CvC, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 13, <http://www.clausewitz.eom/readings/VomKriegel832/Book4.htm#3>; Graham, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 13, p. 206; H&P, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 13, p. 228.

The object of defense is to preserve our armed forces and state while wearing down and destroying the enemy's attacking forces. Defense is a stronger form of combat and its object (Zweck) is to preserve our forces and destroy enemy's fighting forces (victory). On a higher level, the ultimate object (der letzte Zweck) is to and preserve our state and overthrow the enemy. The intended peace treaty will resolve the conflict and result in a common settlement. CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 27, <http://www.clausewitz.eom/readings/VomKriegel832/Book6.htm#27>; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 27, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWarl873/BK6ch27.html>; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 27, pp. 484-487; CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 28, Para. 7, <http://www.clausewitz.eom/readings/VomKriegel832/Book6.htm#28>; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 28, Para. 7, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWarl873/Bk6ch28.html>; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 28, Para. 7, p. 489.


The fight, combat or battle, may come in many forms and may be applied in an infinite variety of ways created by the multiplicity of aims or objects (die Mannigfaltigkeit der Zwecke) but combat is ‘a thread which assists the study of the subject, as it runs through the whole web of military activity, and holds it together.’ Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 47, p. 35; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 46, p. 56; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 46, p. 96; CvC, Bk. IV, Ch. 3 Para. 1, p. 214; Graham, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 1, p. 203; H&P, Bk. IV, Ch. 3, Para. 1, p. 227; see also Bk. V, Ch. 9-16.


70 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 3, pp. 18-19; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 3, p. 6; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, p. 76; Aron (1986), p. 196.

71 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 5-6, pp. 19-20; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 5-6, p. 7; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 5-6, p. 76.

72 H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3. Para. 7-8, p. 76; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 7-8, p. 20; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 7, p. 7.

73 H. Smith (2005), pp. 74-75.


75 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 4, p. 19; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 4, p. 6-7; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 3, Para. 4, p. 76.


84 Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 28, p. 32; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 27, p. 51-52; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 27, p. 94.


90 Xenophon, Anabasis 3.1.23 and Aristotle, Politics 1252b5-9, in Sage, ed., Source No. 177 and No. 178, pp. 120-121; Sidebottom (2004), pp. 6, 9; Wees (2005), pp. 6-7, 126.


97 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 18, p. 300; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 18, pp. 340-341; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 16, p. 587; compare to Machiavelli, *Discourses on the First Decade of Livy’s History*, Bk. II, Ch. 2-3, 6, tran. Penman, pp. 228-230, 253-238 and Vattel, Bk. I, Ch. 16, Sec. 194,


...  es. pp. 22, 25, 29-30, 100, 104, 134, 139, 140-143.


112 ‘Religion must not draw our attention from this world. It is a celestial power that allies itself with the noble forces of this life, and I have never yet been penetrated and strengthened by a religious sentiment without feeling encouraged to perform a good deed, and without being given the desire—yes, even the hope—of performing a great one.’ Clausewitz to Marie, 5 October 1807, in Linnebach, ed. (1917), p. 142, quoted in Paret (1968), p. 396.


319-325, 330-331, 335-342, 346-349; N. Wright, pp. 65-68.


122 Clausewitz, ‘Notes on History and Politics (1803-1807)’, in Paret and Moran, eds./trans., pp. 242-243; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 26, p. 303; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 26, pp. 342-343; H&P,

The study of the campaigns of Gustavus Adolphus was one of the earliest and most accomplished manuscripts written by Clausewitz during his first years in Berlin but it was published until 1837, see 'Gustav Adolphs Feldzüge von 1630-1632', Werke, Vol. 9 (1832-1837), pp. 1-106, or 2nd edition (1862), pp. 1-90; Honig (2011), p. 37; Michael Roberts, The Swedish Imperial Experience, 1560-1718 (New York: Cambridge, 1978).


146 Beneš and Pounds, p. 59; Halecki, pp. 146-147; Rappoport, pp. 94-95.


148 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 15-16, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegel832/Book6.htm#6>; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 15-16, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK6cH06.html>; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 15-16, pp. 375-376; for more on Clausewitz’s views on Poland see Chapter 6, pp. 279-284.


151


Clausewitz, ‘Some Comments on the War of Spanish Succession after Reading the Letters of Madame De Maintenon to the Princess des Ursins (1826 or later)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 18; Honig (2011), pp. 45-46.


Years War: A Transatlantic History (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 61, 102, 114; Starkey, pp. 137-139; Szabo (2008), pp. 67-68, 136-153; for more on petite guerre see Chapter 4.


182 Immanuel Kant, "Zum Ewigen Frieden" (Koenigsberg: Friedrich Nicolovius, 1795) or "Project for a Perpetual Peace" (London: Vernor and Hood, 1796); Heuser (2010a), p. 75; Hippler, pp. 28-33; Strachan (2007a), p. 91.


185 Vattel, Bk. III, Ch. 8, Sec. 145-147, eds./trans. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 549-551.


189 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 37, pp. 306-307; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 37, pp. 345-346; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 36, p. 590.

190 H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 38-39, pp. 590-591; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 40, pp. 307-308; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 40, pp. 346-347.


H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 30, Para. 46, p. 509; CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 30, Para. 44, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book6.htm#30>; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 30,

201 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 23, Para. 1, pp. 37-38; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 23, Para. 1, pp. 20-21; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 23, Para. 1, p. 86.

202 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 27, Para. 2, p. 41; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 27, Para. 2, p. 23; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 27, Para. 2, pp. 88-89.

203 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 68, 70, p. 85; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 69, 71, pp. 57-58; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 66, 68, pp. 111-112.

204 CvC, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 2, 6, pp. 178-179; Graham, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 2, 6 pp. 141-142; H&P, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 2, 6, p. 177.


206 Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 9, p. 339; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 9, p. 298; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 9, pp. 585-586; David Kahn, ‘Clausewitz and Intelligence’, in Handel, ed. (2004), p. 118.


209 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 28, p. 105; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 29, pp. 47-48; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 3, Para. 28, p. 105; CvC, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 13-17, pp. 181-182; Graham, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 13-17, pp. 143-144; H&P, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Para. 13-17, p. 179.


The first peculiar way or means (‘ein eigentümliches Mittel’) of taking a shorter route to influence the probability of the result without disarming the enemy forces is, ‘nämlich solche Unternehmungen, die eine unmittelbare politische Beziehung haben.’ Graham translates this passage as referring to ‘expeditions which have a direct connection with political views’, while Howard and Paret render it as, ‘operations that have direct political repercussions’. This concept seems vague and open-ended enough to account for almost any kind of armed undertaking from supporting a disreputable ally to undermining the enemy through propaganda campaigns, bribery, hostage-taking, political assassinations, terrorism or a coup d’etat.

Clausewitz provides at least three peculiar ways (‘drei eigentümliche Wege’). The first is invasion or seizure of enemy territory not with the object of retaining it but in order to exact financial contributions, or even to lay it waste. The immediate object here is neither to conquer the enemy country nor to destroy its army, but simply to cause general damage. A second method is to give...
priority or preference to operations or enterprises against objects which can do the enemy greater damage, loss or suffering: ‘Der zweite Weg ist, unsere Unternehmen vorzugsweise auf solche Gegenstände zu richten, die den feindlichen Schaden vergrößern.’ The third method is to tire an enemy (‘das Ermüden des Gegners’), which amounts in practice to using the duration of struggle to bring about a gradual exhaustion of his physical powers and will of resistance. CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21, pp. 49-50; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21-22, pp. 29-30; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21, p. 93.


230 It is mere speculation whether Clausewitz would have have developed a more sophisticated theory for conflict resolution had he lived longer. In a hypothetical situation in which two clearly-defined sides, opponent A and opponent B, wage war with strict economy of force according to a rational costs-benefits calculus there would be an optimal point for war termination; a point where the value of the political object no longer justifies the costs in magnitude and duration thus forcing the side with least incentive to fight on to make a prudent peace. The bloody wars of the later nineteenth and the twentieth century proved that trying rationally calculate costs and benefits in terms of human lives and sacrifices or terminate war according to some airy formula does not take into account the play of moral and political factors or different perceptions at particular times. Unforseen real-world factors can raise tolerance levels and make the enemy resist more fiercely. The enemy government must eventually renounce his political object and sign a peace which the people, allies and other non-state actors will accept in turn. The situation will be further complicated in revolutionary situations or civil anarchy when the enemy government accepts defeat or is replaced (regime change) but the people, either in an extremist minority (warlords, guerrillas, insurgents or fanatics) or as a national majority remain hostile. A state actor or government may in these cases be supplanted as the chief policy-maker. When vital political interests are stake and popular passions are running high it may be necessary to inflict an enormous amount of violence and strive to overthrow one’s enemy we get something closer to absolute war. Aron (1986), pp. 110, 119-120, 192, 281-283; Brodie (1989b), pp. 644, 692; David Chuter, ‘The Triumph of the Will? Or Why Surrender is Not Always Inevitable’, Review of International Studies, Vol. 23, No. 4 (October 1997), pp. 1-20; Cimbala (1991), pp. 34-36; Furlong (1983), p. 5; Handel (2001), pp. 81-82, 195-209, 203-209 and Figure 14.1 Clausewitz’s Rational Calculus of War, p. 205; Ibid, ‘Who is Afraid of Carl von Clausewitz? A Guide to the Perplexed’, Department of Strategy and Policy, U.S. Naval War College courseware 1997, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/Handel/Handlart.htm>, retrieved 07/01/2013; Herberg-Rothe (2009a), pp. 214-215; Beatrice Heuser, ‘Misleading Paradigms of War, States and Non-State Actors, Combatants and Non-Combatants’, War and Society, Vol. 27, No. 2 (October 2008), pp. 14-15; Ibid (2007a), pp. 151, 159-60; Ibid (2002) pp. 27, 41-42, 86; Kaiser, pp. 681-682; Frank L. Klingberg, ‘Predicting the Termination of War: Battle Casualties and Population Losses’, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 10, No. 2 (June 1966), pp. 129-171; Robert A. Pape, Bombing to Win: Airpower and Coercion in War (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1996); Paret (1965b), pp. 28-29; Strachan (2007a), pp. 11, 24; Waldman (2009), p. 150.

Chapter Four
People’s War

It was argued previously that Clausewitz tended to dismiss attacks on civilian persons and property as a practice of weak societies in the past or those deviating from the logic of fighting. Such was his emphasis on decisive campaigns between regular armies that it has been asserted that, like Jomini, Clausewitz had preference for chivalrous battles and ‘was hardly enthusiastic about “people’s war” that debased “professional” warfare and involved fearful costs.’¹ This chapter will explain that in the wake of military defeat Clausewitz and his contemporaries wanted to reform the Prussian army and state, enlist the passions of the people and resort to the desperate measure of popular insurgency. It will address thematic questions such as what is a people’s war? Where did it come from? How should it be fought in Clausewitz’s professional opinion and what are the consequences for civilians? These lines of inquiry will reveal how Clausewitz accepted people’s war primarily as a military means of resistance even though it would invite atrocities for non-combatants on both sides.

What is people’s war?

What is a people’s war and how does it differ from the actions of volunteer units? Clausewitz tries to answer this question in The Campaign in Italy and Switzerland of 1799. In this particular manuscript, apparently written after 1827, Clausewitz states there are two rules of thumb: the first is a true national armament or people-in-arms (‘Volksbewaffnung’); the other is the setting up of volunteer units called Freikorps or freiwilliger Korps. The first one consists of all the inhabitants who are courageous or well-equipped enough to offer resistance to the enemy invasion. These people can be organised into divisions of various sizes but should generally avoid the enemy wherever or whenever he is too strong. In this situation they should divert themselves to other areas or hide their weapons and return home.

The freiwilliger Korps on the other hand belong to a more fluid or mobile form of national armament (‘Landesbewaffnung’). They are formed solely to reinforce the existing war power and may be used in two ways: either without any consideration for local defence or entirely for local defence. In the first case the corps joins the army and follows its directions, backwards and forwards, and obeys it in every aspect. If the army decides to retreat the freicorps must go too because if they stayed behind the enemy would take away their weapons and make them prisoners. In the second case the free corps can stay behind with a division of the regular army and make a place like Tyrol into a fortress. These means have to be judged in relation to other strategic conditions and a Landesbewaffnung cannot be
expected to do all the work on its own. The Austrians would have been better served in the campaigns of 1797 and 1799 by first winning with their regular armies. The alternatives do not guaranteed stand-alone success and entail immense risks to civilians:

‘There is no doubt that such a people’s resistance as we have in seen in Spain is linked with plenty of victims and danger for the people, and a people who decide to arm themselves must be ready to sacrifice those victims.’2

Like most themes in Clausewitz’s writing his views of popular warfare are difficult to assemble in a coherent manner for easy readership. The treatise On War represents perhaps the most comprehensive treatment on the role of the people in war but references are scattered until a sustained discussion appears in the twenty-sixth chapter of book six. Clausewitz generally wrote on the subject with interchangeable terms such as Landesbewaffnung, Nationalbewaffnung, Volksbewaffnung, Volksaufstand, Volkskrieg. The term ‘civilians’ did not exist in its modern meaning and it was more common to use terms like Bauern, Bürger, Untertanen, Einwohner, Volk. It was a long-established fact that previously unarmed and non-militarised elements of the population could make the transition from noncombantants to combatants, or vice versa, either voluntarily or at the command of their state or sovereign ruler.

**Historical precedents**

The wars of the ancient Greeks and Romans,5 the English wars against the Scots,6 Welsh7 and French,8 the Dutch Revolt,9 and Wars of Religion10 all involved ravaging operations and angry peasants set upon soldiers with grisly consequences.11 The outbreak of popularised violence or the revolt of towns and cities against their sovereign lords added a particularly vicious dimension to medieval conflicts as exemplified by events in Flanders following the murder of Charles the Good in 112712 or the rebellions of 1302 and 1379-85.13 In addition to civil revolts inside France the armies of Louis XIV responded with exterminatory vigour against popular resistance in the Netherlands, Spain and Vaud.14

Harsh counter-measures were considered normal military protocol by commanders like Marshal Maurice de Saxe.15 The Scottish “Forty Five”,16 the rising of Genoa against Austria in 1746,17 the nationalists of Corisca,18 and the Pugachev Rebellion of 1773-75;19 all were put down with great damage and social dislocation for the civilian populations who were seen as complicit in the crime of rebellion. The American War of Independence made successful use of militia alongside the regulars of the Continental Army, but blurring the distinctions between rebels and loyalists did cause incidents of civil strife and reprisal.20
The record of popular wars and insurrections in Western Europe tended to reinforce the traditional belief that they invited atrocities and could not stand against the enemy’s regular armies. Clausewitz was born into an age when the state had the monopoly on the use of armed force. Eighteenth century combat and drill required a degree of weapons proficiency and discipline often lacking in peasants. Armies were kept relatively separate from their indigenous people who were supposed to provide food, taxes, and conscripts whenever it suited the interests of the state. To supply the demands for manpower in the Silesian Wars the Prussian army was forced to recruit more subjects (like Clausewitz’s father) from a wider social stratum. Mercenaries, free corps and rangers were also brought into existence to match the enemy’s expertise at petite guerre.

*From petite guerre to people’s war*

It appears that Clausewitz initially approached the phenomenon of popularised fighting from a tactical or operational view of petite guerre or kleine Krieg. There were numerous writers on the subject, notably Johann von Ewald and Andreas Emmerich. In Clausewitz’s lifetime people’s war took on a character that went beyond what was traditionally understood as ‘small war’. It was generally regarded as the auxiliary domain of irregular light infantry and cavalry units (varying in number and organisation) made up from dependable regulars or specialised mercenaries. These troops did not fight for any ideological or religious cause; their loyalty was to their unit, leader and paymaster. The word partisan (Partheyganger in German) originally referred to the leader who took his parties or Partheyen on low-intensity operations.

Partisan warfare was especially prevalent in Eastern Europe. Clausewitz knew for instance that the Poles used ‘Parteigängerkrieg’ to resist the plundering invasions of the Cossacks, Tartars, Turks, Russians and Swedes. In 1672 for example the Turks rampaged through Poland along with their Tartar vassals and Cossack allies. The invaders captured Kamieniec, Podolski and Lublin, devastated Pokucie, and then moved on to Lviv in the Polish Ukraine. By October Grand Hetman John Sobieski had gathered a force of 2,500–3,000 cavalry, marched hundreds of miles, and caught the invaders in a battle which Clausewitz places near Kalusz (Kalush) in the mountains of Styri in Galicia:

‘The Grand Vizier Achmet Kiuperli took Kamieniec and besieged Lviv. Sobieski is so weak that he must lead a partisan war with several thousand men. In October he moves into the rear of the Turkish army by crossing the Dniester, and by lying in wait in the eastern foothills of the Carpathians bursts from hiding upon a corps of Tartars
twenty times stronger, which, under the Sultan Galga, Brother, and Nuraddin, son of the Khan, carries an immense haul of booty homeward. He [Sobieski] defeats them, takes all their booty and frees a large number of people who they were taking into slavery.30

Troops designated for small or partisan warfare were best used in operations auxiliary to pitched battles.31 Specialised duties covered scouting, intelligence-gathering, ambushes, attacking pickets and posts, or exacting contributions from the local populace.32 The standard procedure in the latter situation was to assail the local authority figure, take hostages and carry out burnings and executions until the civilian population met one’s demands.33 The Pandour Corps of Colonel Freiherr Franz von der Trenk became notorious for such activities so disciplinary procedures were necessary to stop pillaging and fraudulence.34

Between 1740 and 1813 freelance military entrepreneurs were integrated into the framework of armed forces and military service became linked to a higher social or political ideal. Encyclopaedic materials defined a soldier (soldat) as being synonymous with paid mercenaries whereas citizens fought to defend their lives, liberties and goods.35 Despite the political or nationalistic dimension emerging to popularised fighting Clausewitz’s perspective was that of a professional officer. His colleague Lilienstern likewise believed that ‘small war’ was merely complimentary ‘major war’.36 Later strategic theorists such as Mao Zedong and Vo Nguyen Giap also thought of people’s war as the early phases of a protracted armed struggle culminating in the destruction of the enemy by heavier conventional forces.37

The campaigns of 1792 and 1795 exposed Prussia’s need for light infantry similar to the tirailleurs or sharpshooters of the French. Scharnhorst tried to overcome the general distain for the evasive and sniping tactics of half-trained levies by incorporating the fluid tactics of partisan units into his lectures and training manuals.38 Clausewitz took an interest in this field by reading all the major works, in particular those by Ewald and Emmerich.39 He also associated with colleagues such as Gneisenau who had briefly served in Jäger formation in North America.40 Bülow expressed admiration for the tactics of the Iroquis and Tartars, while others like Hegel and Heinrich von Kleist noted the successful, albeit atrocious, slave rebellion of Saint-Domingue.41

Clausewitz acquired some personal experience of skirmishing with a grenadier battalion at the Battle of Jena-Auerstädt.42 In 1810 he began lecturing on the tactics of small war at Berlin’s General War College. These lectures focused on tactical matters and apparently avoided the wider political implications. Clausewitz did include the idea of kidnapping enemy commanders, which was morally reprehensible at the time. As far as ‘the
enemy' was concerned Clausewitz envisaged them as opposing regular troops. He did not deal with the problem of combating the Hussars and Jäger of the adversary, let alone how to stop enemy civilians taking up arms.43

Clausewitz on people's war

There are various references in On War about the potential nationalisation of war and danger this presents to opposing forces.44 Changing circumstances can expose weaknesses in the security of rear areas, strategic flanks and lines of communication, which are typically vulnerable to bands of raiders appearing from any quarter.45 Besides being the lines of retreat, roads running along rich agricultural areas and fortified cities are like arteries for moving vital supplies and personnel back and forth. Should they be cut or put under pressure an army would wither on the vine or have to retreat.46 Clausewitz refers to an example from 1758 when Daun sent raiding parties to capture supply convoys destined for Frederick's siege of Olmütz and facilitated the king's retreat into Silesia.47 Clausewitz was sceptical about distracting regular forces from decisive confrontations to alternative operations against these weak points.48 As far as the enemy's smaller raiding parties went Clausewitz felt there was a good chance they would be caught and beaten up so badly as to disintegrate.49

The prospect of enemy raiders receiving help from the civilian population was much more alarming.50 One should rate the value and vulnerability of lines of communication not simply according to physical and geographic features because the condition and temper of the local inhabitants is just as relevant.51 From the moment an invader enters his enemy's territory it becomes hostile and must be garrisoned, weakening the strength of attack.52 Exposing one's rear and lines of communication will be of little danger if the state being invaded lacks solidity because its people have gone soft and shed their war-like passions. But when faced with a stout-hearted and loyal populace the invader's area of safety in hostile territory will be confined to a narrow triangle.53

For the defender a militia or armed population is to be regarded as important fortresses and geographical obstacles. Even if the population is not in arms and has no stomach at all for war its mere allegiance to one side remains a palpable disadvantage to the other. Raiding parties in particular can obtain food, intelligence and shelter from the people.54 The role assigned to these units is to assault enemy's weaker garrisons, convoys and minor units as well as encouraging national levies or local home guards (Landsturm) to join them in harassing operations.55 When the population takes up arms the attacker will be always and everywhere exposed to insurgent attacks and must treat the situation as if enemy forces were
A chapter entitled ‘Volksbewaffnung’ tackles this relatively new phenomenon head on and in greater depth. It admits how many contemporaries object to it either on political grounds, considering it as a means of revolution, a state of legalized anarchy that is as much a threat to the social order at home as it is to the enemy; or else on military grounds because they feel that the results are not commensurate with the energies that they have expended. Clausewitz avoids the ethical issues by professing that his interest is merely in its value as a means of combat given that conventional or social barriers have been swept away as war broadens beyond the old narrow military system:

‘Any nation that uses it intelligently will, as a rule, gain some superiority over those who disdain its use. If this is so, the question only remains whether mankind at large will gain by this further expansion of the element of war; a question to which the answer should be the same as to the question of war itself. We shall leave both to the philosophers. But it can be argued that the resources expended in an insurrection might be put to better uses in other kinds of warfare. No lengthy investigation is needed, however, to uncover the fact that these resources are, for the most part, not otherwise available and cannot be disposed of at will.’

The consequences for humanity are conveniently side-stepped. When a whole nation renders armed resistance, one must ask what is its potential value, what are the conditions it requires, and how it is to be utilised. Clausewitz judged its value within the framework of a war conducted by the regular army and coordinated together in an all-encompassing plan. The national character must be suited to this kind of war as should the terrain and geographical obstacles of the country. Scattered passages in earlier chapters similarly assert that frequent raids by partisans or a full-blown people’s war are able to work best when the enemy forces are dispersed or entangled in difficult mountainous terrain.

The whole strategy of people’s war was counter to what Clausewitz said about decisive conventional war. Rather than trying to decide the war in a single stroke the idea is to spread violence in time and space and let smoldering actions burn up and consume the enemy ready for when the regular army delivers the knock-out blow. Clausewitz stresses that the militia bands, national levies and armed peasantry cannot and should not be employed against the main body of the enemy’s army, or even against any considerable corps. They should instead disperse in the face of such opposition and attack weak flanks, lines of communication, isolated detachments or garrisons in the rear. Modest successes would then encourage the fire of courage and love of fighting to spread to neighbouring provinces.
Clausewitz appreciated the insurgent’s desire to defend their homes and native soil by fighting major battles. While their strength can be bolstered by parties of regulars to take on larger operations and sustain the momentum of the insurrection it was generally inadvisable to divide the main army up into small detachments, or even try to integrate national levies into the main army. The presence of regular troops attracts a strong enemy presence which hurts those inhabitants who must provide quarters, transport, contributions and so forth. Landsturm units may defend the approaches through mountains, dykes, river-passages but must avoid getting caught in tactical positions where they will be destroyed. If the enemy is able to direct sufficient force at its core, crush it, and take many prisoners, the people will lose heart and drop their weapons. With a hint of professional snobbery Clausewitz assumes that the ardour of such second-rate troops will be dampened by repeated blows in an atmosphere full of danger.

The failure of stand-alone insurrections

Clausewitz was after all a professional soldier and many in his position doubted the military value and honour of irregulars. Clausewitz admitted that middle-aged men worn out by a lifetime of labour and dragged away from their families to serve in such reserve and militia units would never make ideal soldiers or cavalrymen. In *On War* he displays a slight disregard for bands of partisans (‘Parteigänger’) who have no right to claim for themselves the term ‘Armee’ because they lack what he calls its special military virtues (‘Kriegerische Tugend des Heeres’). The Vendéans, Swiss, Americans and Spaniards fought bravely but had no matter how much one tries to nationalise war by arming the common man (‘Bürger’) fighting is a unique function best performed by the professionals who are better able to cope with its toils and the depressing effects of defeat.

In short, insurgent actions must be coordinated with the regular armed forces to have any real value. Clausewitz makes it quite clear in his campaign histories that this was the reason for the respective failure and success of the insurrections in Switzerland and Italy during 1798 and 1799. Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina recovered Naples only to loose it again in 1805 when Anglo-Russian contingents put ashore failed to win the support the people or stop the French invasion. The court fled once again to Sicily from where it tried to stir up guerrilla strife for the new Napoleonic kingdom. The land of Calabria was destabilised to the point that Joseph Bonaparte’s cabinet approved the use of punitive confiscations, village burnings and execution of captured insurgents. Without the legitimate
backing of a state, regular army or the people the insurgents merely resembled bandits. Fra Diavolo was eventually betrayed to the authorities and executed in November 1806.7 8

The Napoleonic juggernaught

The reason why Clausewitz and his contemporaries turned to this apparently ineffectual and morally questionable form of resistance was out of sheer desperation to resist the French. Clausewitz sensed as early as 1803 that the reasons for their military success went beyond national resources or strategic geography and had more to do with the culture and spirit of the French people. He was appalled by the cowardly lethargy of the Germanic peoples as France went about enslaving the nations of Europe like a modern Rome.7 9

Like the Principate the Napoleonic Empire lacked a grand strategy because policy was such a highly personalised and ad hoc affair reacting to events with a superb army.8 0 Imperialistic policies such as the annexations in Italy and the execution of Louis Antoine, duc d’Enghien, soured Napoleon’s reputation as a strong enlightened ruler and drove Austria into the Third Coalition in August 1805. Most German states, including Prussia, stayed neutral while Baden, Bavaria, Württemberg joined the French.8 1 In a spectacular campaign of speed, achieved partly by living off the land at the height of the potato season, the newly-christened Grande Armée defeated the Russo-Austro forces at the battles of Ulm and Austerlitz before sickness and hunger could weaken its offensive.8 2

Francis II sued for a separate peace and Napoleon went against the advise of his diplomats by demanding a conqueror’s ransom of money and land. This accelerated the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. The numerous dukedoms, principalities and free cities were later remodelled into a more pliable Confederation of the Rhine to support Napoleon’s wars.8 3 The astonishing success of Napoleon’s offensive impressed on Clausewitz that a flimsy web of schemes was no substitute for the destruction of the enemy’s forces in battle.8 4 Napoleon by now had taken charge of a military juggernaught, corrected all its technical imperfections and directed its pulverising course throughout Europe.8 5

Prussia’s catastrophe

Like Scharnhorst and Stein, Clausewitz was fixated by the danger of French imperialism and therefore critical of the policy of acquiescent neutrality personified by Frederick William III.8 6 The king was indecisive, averse to confrontations, abhorred bloodshed and showed little interest in military affairs except for trivialities such as uniforms, music, and parade ground
His government had attempted to reaffirm friendship with France in the Treaty of Schönbrunn (15th December 1805) until intolerable displays of French arrogance and border violations, as well as political changes within Prussia, put the two countries on a collision course.88

As the post of foreign minister alternated between Christian von Haugwitz and Karl August von Hardenberg from 1804 to 1806 the king was pressed by generals, princes, politicians, civilian intellectuals and Queen Louise to make a show of defiance. The Russo-Prussian accord of July 1806 was followed by the decision to go to war in August.89 Clausewitz was overjoyed because like most junior officers of the period he longed for military glory won through a major battle.90 Clausewitz felt that ‘the arrogant Emperor’ was a degenerate gambler who would be toppled into a precipice by the combined efforts of all Europe.91 On 12th October Clausewitz confessed how he looked forward to the looming battle almost as much as his wedding day.92

In the event, the Battle of Jena-Auerstädt on 14th October was an unmitigated disaster which destroyed the army and shook the moral confidence of the kingdom.93 Discipline broke down in retreat as the soldiers looted nearby houses for food and surrendered in droves.94 Clausewitz was captured conducting a rear-guard action and admired the way Scharnhorst and Blücher tried to fight on until the close pursuit of the enemy led to the Sack of Lübeck on 6th November.95 The splintered remnants of the army were mopped up by French detachments and the garrisons of fortified places like Magdeburg capitulated with little resistance.96

In total, over 25,000 soldiers were killed and an estimated 140,000 were made prisoner during the battle and ensuing pursuit, representing a ninety-six percent loss in the Prussian armed forces.97 Few armies in history had been ruined with such thoroughness and Napoleon added insult to injury by robbing the tomb of Frederick the Great and then the wealth of the entire kingdom. Some Francophiles welcomed the French entry into Berlin on 27th October only to find the conquerors went about restricting civil liberties, the freedoms of the press and trampling of over the pride of men like Kleist.98

The victory seemed to reaffirm Bonaparte’s military genius and his shortcut to success; the destruction of the enemy armies in battles and occupation of the capital as a way to trigger normal political protocol for peace.99 The commandant of Berlin instructed the inhabitants that their first duty was to remain passive until a decision had been reached by the king.100 Napoleon meanwhile encouraged dissenters to make their own peace with the French and form themselves into a regiment of four battalions much to Clausewitz’s disgust.101
Frederick William refused to make terms perhaps hoping that the situation could be turned about by the remnants of the army supported by free corps and allied reinforcements from Russia, Sweden or England. Several months of grim campaigning in Poland passed until the Russians sued for an armistice. Only the personal appeals of Louise and Tsar Alexander I saved Prussia from total dismemberment in the peace negotiations at Tilsit.  

*The reality of overthrow*

The Prussian experience gives some meaning to the Clausewitzian term to overthrow one’s opponent. In addition to supplying the 150,000 French soldiers initially quartered on the land the kingdom was presented with a reparations bill of around 150,000,000 francs; more than a third of its normal revenue. When war damages and debts owed to creditors are taken into account the total costs may have exceeded a billion francs—a crushing sum considering that Frederick William’s subjects were reduced from 10,000,000 to 4,600,000 because half his territories were carved up between the rulers of Württemberg, Bavaria and Westphalia. The Polish provinces were also stripped away for a new Duchy of Warsaw under the nominal rule of Frederick Augustus of Saxony.  

The precise figure of indemnity was not resolved until Treaty of Paris (8 September 1808) when it was reduced to 120,000,000 francs. The French would leave behind garrisons at Glogau, Stettin and Küstrin (paid for by Prussia) until the bill was settled. The Prussian army was cut down to 42,000 men yet even this force was an extravagant expense which exceeded the kingdom’s annual income (now below half of its 1805 level). The country saw food prices soar and land values plummet. Pandemics of cholera, typhoid, dysentery and famine ravaged the weakest members of the population: child mortality in Berlin reached almost seventy-five percent at one point. To continue the royal orchestra, opera and trappings of culture in such a time of financial catastrophe would have been obscene. Clausewitz had an unscathed English audience in mind when explaining how the country was kept in obedience:

‘The French not only enforced strict compliance with the Treaty of Tilsit, they also raised a thousand difficulties before vacating the occupied provinces, and by constant threats held Prussia in rigorous subjugation. This, combined with the sorry experience of the war itself, fostered the growth of a large party of despairing and fainthearted people, to whom anything like resistance—indeed, any measure displeasing the French—meant a betrayal of the country. Finally, the strongest impediment to any exceptional measure was the country’s total exhaustion.’
In short, the fate of Prussia highlights what severe social, economic and political disruption can be caused by a foreign invasion and one should always bear this in mind when reading Clausewitz’s emotional declarations to fight back. Not until 1813 was Prussia again able to summon up the physical and moral strength necessary to resume the struggle. Even then it took the combined efforts of the European allies to overthrow Napoleon in a very close-run contest. This desperate time helps to understand why Clausewitz was increasingly attracted to the desperate option of people’s war.

The need to reform the Prussian army and state

As we have already shown, Clausewitz was orientated towards large-scale battles and the war of 1806 was fought on highly conventional lines. The armies of Austria and Prussia were defeated and their countries rendered prostrate to Napoleon’s harsh demands because the French were fighting war closer to its absolute conception. Rather than being executed on the spot, as was common for insurgents or less-esteemed combatants taken in unfortunate circumstances, Prince August and his aide-de-camp were treated like gentleman and given parole in Berlin until 30th December. In the months that followed they were both kept in comfortable detention in Nancy, Soissons, Paris and Switzerland until their repatriation back to an impoverished Prussia by the terms of Tilsit.

During their time in Switzerland Clausewitz met several other influential persons including Madame Germaine de Stael, August Wilhelm Schlegel and Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi whose educational endeavours were an inspiration for military reform. Despite the comfortable surroundings Clausewitz hated the fact he was a prisoner and channeled his frustrations into writing bitter letters and articles for Minerva. He helped the prince compile a memorandum calling for the reorganisation of the Prussian army, universal conscription, the meritocratic admission of bourgeoisie men into the officer ranks, and the abolition of draconian discipline so that ambition, honour and patriotism could flourish.

After regaining his freedom in November 1807 Clausewitz joined up with Scharnhorst, Hardenberg, Stein and Theodor von Shön. These men wanted to galvanise a sense of independence so the country could again stand up and compel respect. Scharnhorst had already been appointed head of the Military Reorganisation Commission and was in the process of overhauling the army’s recruitment, penal system and officer corps. Scharnhorst’s more ambitious plans for the national conscription of all fit and eligible men into either the regular army, reserves or home-guard militias were grounded on the controversial statement that ‘all inhabitants of the state are its born defenders.’ For
Clausewitz a disciplined national militia was an emergency mechanism for raising large numbers of combatants and psychologically connecting the unarmed masses to the war effort.  

_Historical inspiration_

In an anonymous letter dated 11th January 1809 and addressed to the philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte Clausewitz wrote that the army would be superior if it treated its soldiers as more than just machines. It should infuse each man with vitalising energy and martial virtue "so that the fire of war spreads to every component of the army instead of leaving numerous dead coals in the mass." Clausewitz was inspired by the Swiss peasant-infantry of the Middle Ages who defended their lands against the Austrians and Burgundians. Clausewitz omits to mention that the Swiss were just as ferocious at plundering and blockading their enemies into submission as the Valois dukes of Burgundy and it was largely the petty feuding of the cantons which distracted their aggressive and expansionist energy.

Clausewitz also imitated Machiavelli’s call for a citizen’s militia to replace the _condottieri_ because without the popular support one’s position was vulnerable to the kind of internal dissention and foreign conquest Francesco Guicciardini described when he wrote about the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. Weak states and insurgencies of the past did not always prevail like they have in more modern times. Florence employed agricultural raiding and a diplomatic offensive to successfully isolate the rebel city of Pisa between 1949 and 1509. Machiavelli’s experimental citizen-soldiers helped recover Pisa only to be defeated in 1512 by the mercenaries and regulars employed by the Pope and Spanish with the result that Prato was sacked and the Medici were restored to power.

History showed that tapping into the passions of the people was often a dangerously unreliable thing play about with but Clausewitz did not seem overly concerned at this time. From a military point of view popular commitment from the masses was the missing and consequently most urgently sought advantage in the Prussian capacity for war. The army was still a product of its semi-feudal society; the relations between nobles, bourgeoisie and peasants replicated itself in the recruitment and social composition of the rank and file, which in turn limited the enthusiasm of the troops and operational capability. Enlisting the passions of soldiers as well as morally regenerating civilian society at large was pressed for more rigorously after the army’s defeat in 1806.
In letters to his fiancée Clausewitz claimed that that German nation was like a lazy animal that had to be whipped until it found enough honour and dignity to burst the chains of cowardice and fear. Other notes from this period express the view that the Germans had withdrawn in the face of French cruelty and aggression into sullen defeatism. ‘No nation has ever responded to repression by another with anything except hatred and enmity’ he wrote in 1808, ‘We alone suffer from this asininity, this fool’s wisdom, which imagines itself wearing a crown while dragging the chains of a slave.’ Clausewitz’s harsh tone had not diminished by the time he wrote ‘Prussia in Her Great Catastrophe’ in the 1820s. This reiterated the reasons for Prussia’s defeat as the inadequacy of the army, the desiccated and decrepit government, and the faint-hearted pacific spirit of the alienated people.

War since the French Revolution war could no longer be measured by tangibles like the numerical strength of the army, wealth of the treasury and the degree of financial credit. It lay more in the unpredictable temperament or energy of the people. Clausewitz writes in *On War* that twenty years of revolutionary triumph were mainly due to the mistaken policies of France’s enemies. Not until the opposing statesmen grasped the new political conditions and fought back on the scale necessary for overthrowing Napoleon were they able to succeed. The treatise often makes the point that a moral superiority can make up for physical deficiencies in material and the inherent weaknesses of attack. The national spirit of an army (enthusiasm, fanatical zeal, faith, opinion) opens up greater possibilities for operational and tactical flexibility.

Napoleon and his soldiers, like Alexander the Great and his Macedonians centuries before them, went about war with such ruthless or reckless energy that they could overcome logistical limitations and other frictions to press unremittingly toward a great decision. ‘The true nature of war will break through again and again with overwhelming forces, and must, therefore be the basis of any permanent military arrangements.’ With fewer standstills campaigns thus took place with greater speed and intensity. ‘The greater tension of feelings from which the war springs, the greater therefore the energy with which it is carried on, so much the shorter will be the periods of inaction’. The intensification of popular support was a genuine new source of power which brought war closer to its absolute conception.

*The reforms of Stein, Hardenberg and Scharnhorst*

The big problem was how to militarise society and mobilise its resources to fight the French without having to adopt their form of democracy and retaining the humanity and reason of the
ancien régime. Clausewitz denied that the French version of republicanism was the best way to activate the heroism of the people: why in that case had the French state had to resort to terrorism and draconian conscription against its own people? Why was it necessary to reward the soldiers with booty and plunder? And why had the armies of the Revolution struggled to overcome weaker armies of the traditional type led by old men? The romanticism of the citizen-in-arms has indeed tended to obscure the fact that the origins of the French success lay in the military reforms of the eighteenth century and the defects in the armies and political conditions of opposing states.

Prussia had to find its own unique way to emancipate the people, most of whom were not “Prussian” in a nationalistic or ethnic sense: Stein came from the Rhineland, Scharnhorst from Hanover, Gneisenau and Fitche from Saxony. What Clausewitz and his contemporaries meant when they talked of the “nation” was a patriotic people united by common language, laws and traditions and all obedient to a king. The policy-maker and commander-in-chief were ideally united in a single genius like Alexander or Frederick the Great. Frederick William III could never aspire to be a warrior-king like Sobieski but his position as leader of the nation had to be better strengthened by oligarchic state reforms, a cabinet of able ministers, a British-style parliament and popular national service.

There was no democratic process or public opinion to take into serious account in the formulation of policy. It was a rather complicated process involving many conflicting agencies and personalities gathered in the royal antechamber of power. Prior to the war of 1806 Stein had already drafted a reform program for replacing counsellors with a stronger council of ministers excluding Haugwitz and other francophiles. Several months after Haugwitz had reassumed office as foreign minister Stein’s ambitious plans were presented in a rather abrupt manner to the king who misread the remonstrance as an act of mutiny rather than as well-meaning attempt to bring the monarchy into protective harmony with its people. Even if the king had endorsed the reforms it was too late to effect the changes.

Despite the disruption caused by the invasion the monarchy remained a much revered and respected institution. Stein took charge as its chief minister in 1807 and pressed ahead with a major political program of parliamentary government, greater powers for more accountable ministers, changes to city and provincial governance, and land reform. The Emancipation Edict (9th October 1807) abolished serfdom and the reformers hoped that other progressive measures would kindle a renewed energy in every loyal subject (Bürger rather than citoyen) to be used in the service of the state upon the command of the king. The bold proposals made by Stein and Hardenberg were blocked by the beliefs of conservatives like...
Friedrich August Ludwig von der Marwitz who had genuine fears of internal revolution and French reprisals.¹⁵⁰

In the military sphere Scharnhorst and the Commission struggled to navigate around entrenched values and the terms imposed after Tilsit. The hesitation of the king to arm large sections of the civil population was understandable. It was feared that if cultured society did not degenerate into anarchy and revolution it would at the very least compound the crippling economic problems left over from the last war. Any plans to expand the army beyond 42,000-mark would be in clear violation of the limits imposed by the Paris Convention of September 1808.¹⁵¹ A clever system for training reservists managed to circumvent these restrictions and keep a large body of men standing ready to expand the regular army should a state of war be resumed.¹⁵²

The risings of 1809

Austria had in the meantime reformed and built up their regular army along with a sizable *Landwehr*.¹⁵³ Chancellor Count Philipp von Stadion and other advisors to Francis I urged war to reverse the terms of Pressburg and protect the Habsburg dynasty.¹⁵⁴ Civilian intellectuals, essayists, poets, clerics and court figures were also trying to drum up a sense of German nationalism by emphasising the injustice of the French and need to break the chains of slavery through self-sacrifice and the love of the Fatherland.¹⁵⁵ Austria joined the War of the Fifth Coalition in April 1809 by launching its armies into Bavaria and the Kingdom of Italy. The Confederate states did not join the rising and contributed some 120,000 troops to Napoleon’s counter-offensive.¹⁵⁶

The ensuing fight was not solely limited to open battlefields: the city of Regensburg for example fell foul of collateral damage and looting.¹⁵⁷ On 13ᵗʰ May the French armies once again took possession of the vast supply stores in Vienna. The Landwehr defence melted away and it was easy to cow down the sullen inhabitants with threats of bombardment.¹⁵⁸ Stadion fell from power as Prince Metternich ascended as foreign minister and chancellor.¹⁵⁹ The Habsburgs made peace on the basis that their armies had been beaten and their lands were threatened by enemy despoliation and rupture from ethnic divisions, particularly among the discontented Magyars.¹⁶⁰

The Tyrol remained loyal and Austria’s opening victories inspired militia and peasant resistance to spring up on a scale far larger than that encountered by Joubert and Ney in 1797 and 1805. The free corps and *schutzen* sharpshooters overwhelmed the Bavarian garrison and
were able to repel the invaders at the battles of Bergisel. The overwhelming Franco-Saxon-Bavarian forces not only adapted to mountainous combat but also took reprisal on prisoners, churches and nearby villages to deny the insurgents food and shelter. The insurrection lost political legitimacy after the harsh Treaty of Schönbrunn (14th October). The principal resistance leader, an innkeeper named Andreas Hofer, was caught in early January 1810 and sent to Mantua for trial and execution on 20th February.161

Austria’s example excited freedom fighters and budding nationalists across Germany.162 The young officers of the army were in such an agitated state that several different advisors warned Frederick William that if he did not act, then it was quite possible his subjects would act without his permission.163 In trinitarian terms, there was tension between allegiance to the government as the chief policy-maker (or agent of reason) and the passionate desire to liberate the country as expressed by fiery intellectuals like Fichte or honourable army officers like Gneisenau and Clausewitz whose pride and patriotism had been wounded.164

The Prussian officers were inspired by the actions of the ‘Black Brunswickers’ of William of Brunswick-Oels,165 Colonel Wilhelm von Dömburg,166 and Lieutenant Friedrich von Katte.167 None could drum up much popular support partly because the men behaved like brigands or were dispersed by regular security forces. Those civilians who did show their colours were liable to be punished: after Dornberg’s insurgents were defeated by government troops for example there followed numerous arrests, the confiscation of property and the dissolution of societies like the Foundation for Single Ladies at Homberg.168

It was Major Ferdinand von Schill above all who captured the imagination of Clausewitz.169 Under the guise of a training exercise Schill set out from Berlin on the night of the 27-28th April with Hussar regiment and company of Jäger in the hope of sparking a Westphalian insurrection.170 Clausewitz applauded the bold decision: as far as he was concerned the disapproving officers could join the old ladies at pulling frightful faces while the rest of the country wished their most sincere blessings to ‘Gute Schill’ and his band of men.171 When they discovered that their commander was acting without political authorisation some chose to desert the regiment. Schill moved the remainder down the Elbe to the Baltic seaport of Stralsund where the French converged with forces belonging to the Dutch and Danish to destroy the insurrectionary units on 31st May.172

These episodes represent a significant point of transition from the petite guerre of the ancien régime to freedom fighting of the modern age.173 It is interesting to note that
Emmerich and Ewald were on opposing sides during the insurrections of 1809. Emmerich was shot by firing squad for taking part in the anti-Napoleon rebellion in Marburg and Ewald, a Danish general by this point, helped destroy Schill at Stralsund. In the days that followed, Clausewitz expressed his sadness about the complete and honourable demise of Schill. He described him as a great man of intelligence (‘superweisheit’) who had had the ability to awaken the passions of others. Clausewitz felt it was a tragedy that such a man could not find a fine hand to guide his efforts and wondered how many others would go down in this same manner. In his opinion, Schill was better off dead and being well regarded by the public throughout the land rather than attached to the sordid political business left behind.

Clausewitz was passionately stirred by these events and was on the verge of applying for a commission in the Austrian army before its defeat. A feeling of powerlessness then overcame the Austrians and it was left to Prussia and Russia to lead the struggle.

Clausewitz expressed admiration for the Spartan heroism of Schill and the Tyrolese. He hoped that ‘deep outrage at the wickedness and violence of the oppressor’ could substitute the religious passion of the past. Clausewitz assumes, rather idealistically given the ineffective and criminal nature of popular resistance in Germany and Italy, that in this ‘truly poetic existence’ that the people would display great idealism and dignity and vent their violence upon the enemy army only:

‘Hatred of the oppressor would pervade the lower classes, the activity of the government would quickly inspire confidence; what else is needed to invigorate and unite the power of five million people?’

What if all this was not enough? What if the army was beaten shamefully again, the state totally destroyed and the nation enslaved? Clausewitz answers that such a glorious demise would set an example to their descendents. Human passion and the love of independence could never be conquered because it grows with sacrifices. A cowardly submission was like poison, eating away at the strength and vitality of a nation for generations. Yet it was within the power of a glorious monarch to apply a balm on a nation’s wounds.

The Spanish ulcer

In the years following Clausewitz was increasingly attracted to the sacrificial ideal of a people’s war as were Stein and Gneisenau. Stein was forced to flee the country after November 1808 when agents intercepted his plans for such action. These men envisaged a German legion of 6,000 volunteers, partly funded by the English, cornering itself into defensive positions while inspiring the rest of the nation to rise up with rifles and pitchforks.
Clausewitz’s inspiration was the rising in the Vendée, the Lines of Torres Vedras in Portugal and the insurgents of Spain who reacting against French occupation with a full-blown ‘Volksaufstand’.¹⁸⁵

It is important to keep in mind the sheer humanitarian cost to the methods Clausewitz was citing. The scorched-earth and defensive strategy enforced by the Anglo-Portuguese defenders brought the population down from 3,200,000 in 1807 to 2,960,000 by 1814.¹⁸⁶ This did not deter Gneisenau from wanting to scorch the earth, remove grain, evacuate women and children to safe districts, barricade the cities and avoid all battles that played to Napoleon’s advantage.¹⁸⁷ ‘In addition, Gneisenau called for the overthrow of all rulers who remained on France’s side, the confiscation of the estates of all disloyal noblemen, and the full emancipation of all peasants who took part in the fighting.’¹⁸⁸ Such plans obviously met resistance from aristocratic reactionaries and professional soldiers who preferred more gentlemanly methods of war.¹⁸⁹

The guerrilla route was adopted in the Iberian Peninsula largely because the regular forces belonging to the displaced royal families had lacked the strength to withstand the Napoleonic takeover in the first place. In March 1808 popular revolt spread across Spain with grisly consequences for the inhabitants of Madrid and Valencia.¹⁹⁰ Royalist officers and the provisional juntas (led by the Junta Suprema after 25 September 1808) tried to douse the insurrectionary spirit by emphasising that the revolt was being organised for king, country and Church.¹⁹¹ The conflict quickly spiraled out of control into full-blown war of attrition which cost an estimated 164,000-300,000 imperial troop casualties and enormous amounts of gold, weapons, horses and matériel.¹⁹²

Napoleon stabilised the military situation after the surrender at Bailén. On a political level his intervention damaged the economy, further discredited the afrancesados, and undermined Joseph’s kingdom so much that it was effectively turned over to harsh military rule.¹⁹³ The French never properly developed a coherent and effective military or political strategy to cut the enemy forces off from the civilian population and spent most of the war tied down to garrisoning strongholds or chasing the enemy units through the logistically-challenging and hostile countryside of Galicia, Asturias, Andalusia and Cataluña.¹⁹⁴ There was no single centre of gravity and the resistance in regions had to be reduced systematically one army, one guerrilla band and one fortress at a time.¹⁹⁵

*The defence of fortified places*
The capture of fortresses and cities in revolt was more difficult hence the reason why Clausewitz was shocked by the ease with which places like Magdeburg capitulated in 1806; Schill and Gneisenau had at least tried to defend Colberg in 1807. According to *On War* fortresses and walled towns exist for the protection of the inhabitants, to support one's army or tie down large numbers of the enemy. Devoting one's best soldiers for defence is unnecessary because the garrison can and should be made up of half-trained militia, convalescents, armed civilians, home guard, and those who cannot go on active service.

Fortresses can act as the focal point for a general insurrection or arming of the nation by providing a refuge for the wounded, for civil authorities, a treasury and place for storing arms and munitions. Enemy forces are placed in a static situation while undertaking a siege operation, which invites attack by local partisans or national levies. In a country where every sizeable town is fortified and defended by its inhabitants and the farmers of the surrounding land, the speed of military operations can be reduced and the determination of the enemy commander will dwindle to insignificance. Clausewitz did not describe in detail how to successfully defend a fortified place. There are sterile discussions on the use of inundations, lines of circumvallation and attacks on army troops while in billets, all with little regard for civilian inhabitants who found themselves caught up in the contest.

Clausewitz did at least warn that a city or township gambling on its strength, only to be taken few weeks or months later could expect "then to receive harsher treatment." We have already shown his low opinion on the 1631 Sack of Magdeburg an act of boundless cruelty which killed 40,000 people by Clausewitz's count. Protracted resistance did not necessarily mean brutal treatment as indicted by many acts of leniency from the Crusades to the Napoleonic War in Spain. In general, a city providing refuge for an army or adopting the kind of resistance described by Clausewitz exposed the civilian inhabitants to extreme danger, as verified by the destructive sieges of Zaragoza, Gerona and Tarrogona.

_The atrocities of guerrilla war_

The failure of the Spanish regular army to defend its cities or defeat the enemy in the open field forced the juntas and central junta (the Cortes from September 1810) to turn, with the mixed blessings of the Church, to partidas and privateers of the land. The war garnered a romantic image of ordinary people taking up arms in a unanimous and unbeatable national struggle; a myth the French were only too willing to perpetuate to explain their seemingly inevitable defeat. Modern historians have pointed out the parochialism to the movement, the lack of cooperation between different juntas and armed bands, and their suspicion of foreign
armies. The guerrilla (literally ‘little war’ in Spanish) was for the most part waged by irregular troops who were trained, disciplined and organised until they resembled the partisans or troops traditionally designated for petite guerre operations. 207

Clausewitz subscribed to the belief that the guerrilleros were not only cheaper than mercenaries but highly motivated by the love of their country for which they would show its people and property utmost respect. 208 Such was the brigand-like appearance and conduct of some guerrillas and militia levies towards captured Frenchmen and collaborators that it was hard to distinguish them from patriotic heroes or self-indulgent criminals prolonging the agony of war. 209 Philosophers had long been ambivalent about the blurring of distinctions between combatants and non-combatants. Although the common people have the right to defend their homes and cities Vattel believed that they should never to interfere with the business of armies. The general should in turn show gentleness towards the population unless the inhabitants try to attack his soldiers and need to be chastised. 210

In Spain intellectuals, priests, peasant farmers and women were known to murder and mutilate captured enemy soldiers, which in turn gave the French an excuse for reprisal. 211 The French at first refused to grant guerrilla soldiers and civilians-in-arms the status of legitimate combatants and responded in the usual way regular soldiers did toward rebels: maximum violence in the form of merciless combat conjoined with the arrest and execution of civilian hostages and the destruction of whole villages as depicted by Goya’s Disasters of War. 212 Only in Aragón did Suchet keep the population under a modicum of control through a combination of counter-insurgency methods: mobile columns, strategically-placed garrisons, the use of experienced and disciplined troops (paid promptly to discourage pillage), as well as economic incentives for the inhabitants and reliance on local collaborators and police. 213

It is considered a failing on Clausewitz’s part that he did not address the issue of military intelligence and deception in more depth, especially considering its enduring importance in insurgency situations. 214 Clausewitz regarded the available methods of the time so rudimentary and flawed that armies of the day had to operate in a perpetual fog of uncertainty and assume that the enemy already knew about one’s own forces. 215 To attempt a strategic ruse or surprise was useless because the movements were easy to observe and ‘will usually be announced in the press before a single shot is fired.’ 216 Clausewitz assumed that a population would give over intelligence willingly to the defending side and keep a constant report on the invader’s movements. 217
Clausewitz certainly did not suggest that one threaten civilians for military intelligence in the way recommended by Frederick the Great and petite guerre writers. The French governors and secret police in Spain made extensive such of intelligence gathering techniques such as spies, informants, and surveys of the population. Anyone absent from their home for an unauthorised period would have goods and property confiscated. Policy hardened to deportation or execution for those who would not offer up information or attended illegal public venues. The guerrillas also resorted to intimidating civilians in order to gain food, money and information at the expense of the French.

Military victories and a terror campaign in Navarre cooled the spirit of the people and forced the local guerrilla bands to undergo several cycles of assimilation, dissolution and reconstruction between 1808 and 1811. Francisco Espoz y Mina emerged the strongest with a formidable force of some 4,000-6,000 fighters to prey on French convoys and isolated detachments. As control slipped away between July and October 1811 General Reille was under pressure to step up sterner measures of imprisonment and the execution of non-combatants. Mina responded in kind by refusing captured soldiers any quarter. This forced Reille and his successor General Abbé to grant the guerrillas the rights and privileges normally reserved for proper soldiers. By 1812 the French became hostages in cities like Pamplona and Tudela, which Mina blockaded partly by threatening the surrounding population to withhold food and other essentials from the enemy or face punishment.

In short, killing non-combatants did not reverse the deteriorating situation for the French and made matters worse. Mina’s guerrilla divisions, for all their success as disciplined semi-permanent units, could only slow down a disorganised enemy. They could not win a war. It took the conventional forces under the Duke of Wellington to finally clear the Peninsula of imperial forces in 1813. Civilians in the meantime suffered largely from the logistical demands and ill-discipline behaviour of troops on all sides. Napoleon did not help the situation by releasing Ferdinand VII in the hope that the king would make a peace favourable to France. In the years that followed Ferdinand ordered the dissolution of the Cortes, reneged on promises to rule under the Constitution of 1812 and launched a bloody suppression of liberal patriots.

Clausewitz calls for a people’s war

Prussia in the meantime grew anxious as diplomatic relations between the emperors of France and Russia deteriorated. Frederick William was by now in deep mourning for his late wife and had no faith in winning an insurrectionary war modelled on Spain’s horrific example and
consistently blocked proposals for a citizen’s militia or *Volksarmee*. He did approve clandestine steps to enlarge the existing regular army over the summer of 1811.\textsuperscript{228} When this secret rearmament was discovered Napoleon threatened to occupy Berlin and effectively terminate Prussia’s political existence. Blücher and Scharnhorst were removed from their posts and replaced with men who more politically acceptable to the French. Hermann von Boyden was fortunately just as diligent and committed to the military reorganisation as Scharnhorst.\textsuperscript{229}

In February 1812 a French column under Davout made a sudden march towards Magdeburg causing general alarm throughout the country.\textsuperscript{230} It was during these tense weeks that Clausewitz dictated to his wife a long memorandum based on conversations with Gneisenau, Boyen and others like-minded patriots. The *Bekenntnisdenkschrift* dated 16\textsuperscript{th} February consisted of three emotional declarations calling for a national uprising to assist the Russians. It would involve a regular army backed-up by national militias or home guards using guerrilla strategies and the tactics of *kleine Krieg*.\textsuperscript{231} As the enemy columns marched for Berlin the Landstrum of nearby parishes would assemble to the sound of church bells and fall upon isolated detachments and rearguard wagons, then disperse as soon as the enemy turned about to counter-attack. In this way ‘the enemy soldiers get a foretaste, an inkling of what awaits him, namely a Spanish Civil War in Germany.’\textsuperscript{232}

The Prussian insurgents would use the advantages of terrain in the swampy forests of Pomerania, East Prussia, West Prussia and Silesia. Clausewitz calculated that out of a remaining population of 4,600,000 people there were about 750,000 men aged 18 and over available for military service. All those not conscripted into the regular army or the reserve Landwehr would be organised into the Landsturm. These home guard units were to be organised on a local or communal basis under a *Landeshauptmann* working in conjunction with the regular officers. The men of the Landsturm would bear their status as combatants by wearing provincial insignia and openly arming themselves with rifles, scythes, pikes or sickles. This fulfilled many of the clauses later specified by the Hague and Geneva Conventions for legal combatants.

A major obstacle would be the procurement of sufficient quantities of money, weapons, food, horses, and other *kriegsmittel*. A great deal of this was expected to come from England. It would be important to prevent the delivery contributions of all sorts going to the enemy and secure the necessary resources for one’s own side. In combat, Clausewitz writes that even a ridiculous worship of the sabre, cartridge and lower tactics was irrelevant in a dreadful setting where one faces a ten-fold superiority: what can 50,000 enemy troops

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realistically do against 500,000 people, or 500 against 5,000? The true function of the insurgents was to avoid the enemy and focus on ambushing convoys, destroying depots, capturing French officials, and tying down large numbers of troops like the 300,000 imperial troops committed in Spain against Wellington's 40,000-50,000-man army. But what of the enemy's passion for revenge?

'It is common belief that the enemy would demoralize the rebels by mistreating imprisoned insurgents, with death penalties and so on. But what if we could be as horrible as the enemy, as if the enemy was also made of flesh and blood like us! The enemy will employ the same means and the war will soon take a terrible turn. But to whose disadvantage? Obviously to the disadvantage of those who can afford to put the fewer people at stake, those with regular armies. Let us get to the point when horror is repaid with horror, violence with violence! It will be easy for us to outbid our enemy and drive him to the limits of temperance and humanity. The tiger that ruled France in the years 1793 and 1794 under the name of republican government has had to stop drinking the Vendee's blood with such thirst.

'The Republicans were forced to slow down in the contest of atrocity. The Vendee was not defeated after having been fought with mixed results for a year-and-a-half, been more than once put to the swords of the armies, with death and fire - human principles, forgiveness, respect above all, the humanityapor even the enemy [who is governed by the enemy] against the laws and principles for each society which is governed by the enemy and deems forever and could perhaps be avoided by the measure alone that the government takes each arm in under its authority, and hence it again appears as if the Vendee is a terrible limit, and all that we have to do is to destroy with the knife and glowing iron, destroy with the knife and glowing iron, destroy with the knife and glowing iron.

This blood alone could heal the cancerous injury which has been caused in vain wanted to destroy with the knife and glowing iron, destroy with the knife and glowing iron, destroy with the knife and glowing iron.

The Republican laws began to stop drinking the Vendee's blood with such thirst.

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The Republican laws began to stop drinking the Vendee's blood with such thirst.
‘The world trembles at the thought of a people’s war, because it is bloodier than others, is rarely free of horrible scenes, and all misery and destruction is multiplied in it. But whose fault is this? The people’s war exists, you curse its pernicious effects, so curse those who have forced it upon us. If you make yourselves the judges of human actions, do not condemn the oppressed because he is weak. But be just, cast your curses against him who has made this evil necessary!’

Clausewitz did not share the fear of his contemporaries about social anarchy and believed the passions unleashed could be controlled by the political reason of the state government:

‘This is precisely where our situation has its advantages: the government which provokes this storm remains its master. It is able to give it a general direction, and to drive it towards one goal. Even the divergence in opinion and action which in Spain is visibly destroying a large part of the effects, and which before divided the forces of the Vendée, can and will be prevented by a government which behaves [as well] towards its people as does that of Prussia.’

Christopher Daase points out that Clausewitz assumes, either out of naiveté or political calculus, that the weaker party can control the dynamic spiral of brutality and terror. This seems at odds with the Clausewitz who argues there is a tendency for escalation and it is the opponent who fights with all his strength and uses violence without reference to bloodshed who will most likely prevail. Even in small wars there is nothing in the dynamic between opponents to stop either side restraining themselves within the bounds of state institutions, international rules and normative standards. For Clausewitz and like-minded contemporaries such a war was not simply a rational act for furthering one’s state interests; it was also a matter of honour to fight and assert one’s independence:

‘I believe and confess that a people can value nothing more highly than the dignity and liberty of its existence. That it must defend these to the last drop of its blood. … That the shameful blot of cowardly submission can never be erased. … That the honor of the king and government are at one with the honor of people, and the sole safeguard of its wellbeing. That a people courageously struggling for its liberty is invincible. That even the destruction of liberty after a bloody and honorable struggle assures the people’s rebirth.’

This sort of language is often repeated in On War: ‘The defeated state often considers the outcome merely as a transitory evil, for which a remedy may still be found in political conditions at some later date.’ After a battlefield defeat a turn of fortune can be brought about by developing new sources of internal strength and ‘it is the natural law of the moral world that nation that finds itself on the brink of an abyss will try to save itself by any means.’ Even if the regular armies were beaten or driven out of the country entirely one can fall back on the passions of people:
'No matter how small and weak a state may be in comparison with its enemy, it must not forego these last efforts, or one would conclude that its soul is dead. ... A government that after having lost a major battle, is only interested in letting its people go back to sleep in peace as soon as possible, and, overwhelmed by feelings of failure and disappointment, lacks the courage and desire to put forth a final effort, is, because of its weakness, involved in a major inconsistency in any case. It shows that it did not deserve to win, and, possibly for that very reason was unable to.'

To modern eyes the Bekenntnisdenkschrift is arguably the most dreadful of all Clausewitz’s texts because it is so callous about civilian suffering and later inspired militant nationalists. It belongs to a time of early nationalistic thought during which others thought in much the same way. Fichte’s concern with liberty, morality and rational philosophy slid into thinking that a just war was necessary to save the superior German civilisation. Kleist hailed Leonidas, Arminius, William Tell and José Palafox as heroes and believed one must be willing to sacrifice women and children to destroy an evil enemy. Ernst Moritz Arndt went further in his racist language with calls for regenerative and exterminatory war against the French.

It was precarious for Clausewitz and his contemporaries to speak of national self-sacrifice and regenerative struggle without leading to obstinate self-destruction or implying that the enemy should be subjected to the same vigours of a Vernichtungskrieg. Despite the acceptance of civilian casualties one gets the sense that Clausewitz and his fellow officers hoped that the weight of resurgent conventional forces (100,000 regulars at least) could be brought quickly to bear to stop the French from having free rein to commit such atrocities. It should be appreciated that for Clausewitz a people’s war was a means of salvation (‘Rettungsmittel’); the last, desperate resort of self-defence aimed at the annihilation of the invading army. Clausewitz was not entirely comfortable with the idea of pitting entire peoples against each other but it was now a necessary factor in the act of war:

'The war of the present is a war of all against all. It is not the king who fights another king, not an army another, but a people fights another and the people includes king and army. War will hardly change this character again, and it would truly not be desirable that the old bloody and yet boring game of chess of the soldier’s battle would ever come back. But I do no mean by that the people’s uprising in masses [i.e., the levée en masse], that we have now seen twice in big examples (France and Spain) will henceforth be the only way in which peoples will wage war against each other, Heaven protect us! That phenomenon is particular to the present with its fateful hours ... But while there may be future centuries in which none of the peoples is forced to take recourse to the last desperate measure of the people’s uprising, we can still say that in these centuries war will be regarded as the business of the nation, and it will be conducted in this spirit.'
Frederick William was not prepared to take such a course and caved in to a Napoleonic alliance on 24th February 1812. This designated Prussia to provide 12,000-30,000 soldiers for service as auxiliaries against the Tsar, as well as supplying the 300,000 soldiers trampling their way to assembly points in the east. To observers it was a policy of submission deserving of a conquered satellite state of Rome and the devastation which followed recalled the Thirty Years' War. The kingdom was financially ruined for a second time and the king's credibility sorely damaged. Hundreds of capable officers went into enforced or voluntary retirement or, in the case of Clausewitz, offered their services to the Tsar. 'I consider myself entirely free of self-interest' he declared, 'I would consider myself lucky to die gloriously in a noble struggle for the freedom and dignity of the Fatherland.'

Conclusion

This chapter has revealed that people's war had its origins in the tactics of petite guerre and Clausewitz wanted it adopted as a military means to resist the French. Clausewitz recognised the military advantage one obtained by enlisting the passions of the people and pressed for this to be incorporated into Prussia's war capacity without dwelling too much on the humanitarian implications. Clausewitz was aware that by imitating the guerrilla war in Spain the inhabitants of Prussia would have to endure terrible suffering at the hands of the French. He accepted the possibility of such atrocities and hoped they could be averted by a reprisal killings and quick resolution of the war delivered by the resurrected conventional forces. He was callous or realistic enough to accept that civilian casualties were a necessary sacrifice to liberate one's country, or be destroyed in the attempt.


3 Beatrice Heuser, Reading Clausewitz (London: Pimilico, 2002), pp. 133, 135-137; it is perhaps
significant that in the 1811 lectures on small war Clausewitz used term ‘Nationalbewaffnung’ but used more emotive word ‘Volksbewaffnung’ in On War, see Peter Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, 1807-1816 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 178-179.


9 Heuser (2010a), pp. 69, 423.


19 Starkey, pp. 156-158.


33 Frederick II, ed. Volz, pp. 3-86; Croix, p. 97; Grandmaison, pp. 118-124; Wüst, pp. 34, 64-67, 112; Ewald, Abhandlung (1790), p. 104; Emmerich, Der Partheyganger (1789), pp. 81, 85, 113; Scharnhorst, Militärisches Taschenbuch, p. 145; Decker, Der kleine Krieg (1828), p. 293; Rink (2010), pp. 17-18.

34 Ewald, Abhandlung (1790), p. 103; Decker, Der kleine Krieg (1828), p. 293; Reiche, p. 305; Rink (2010), pp. 10-16, 18.


CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 4-11, pp. 254-255; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 4-11, pp. 310-311; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 6-13, p. 480.

69 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 12-15, pp. 255-259; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 12-15, pp. 311-314; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 14-17, pp. 480-482.

70 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 13, p. 257; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 13, p. 312; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 15, pp. 481-482.

71 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 12, pp. 258-259; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 15, pp. 313-314; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 17, p. 482.


75 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 16, p. 229; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 16, p. 314; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 18, p. 483.


80 D. Gates (2003), pp. xi-xii; Godechot, Hyslop and Dowd, pp. 107-109; Hans Kohn, Prelude to


‘My fatherland needs war’ Clausewitz wrote to Marie on 18th September 1806, ‘war alone can bring me to my goal. In whatever way I have sought to link my existence to the rest of the world, my path always leads me to a vast battlefield. Unless I enter this field there can be no permanent happiness for me.’ *Karl und Marie von Clausewitz. Ein Lebensbild in Briefen und Tagebuchblättern*, ed. Karl Linnebach (Berlin: Martin Warneck, 1917), pp. 57-60, quoted in Paret (1976), pp. 118-119 and Strachan (2007a), p. 44.


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CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 5-7, pp. 43-44; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 5-8, pp. 25-26; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 5-8, pp. 90-91; E. M. Beardsley, Napoleon: The Fall (London: Heath Cranton Ltd, 1918), p. 68; Heuser (2002), pp. 75-76; McKay and Scott, pp. 313-314.

Parkinson, pp. 77-78; Seeley (1878), Vol. 1, pp. 286-287.

Godechot, Hyslop and Dowd, p. 123; Parkinson, pp. 79-80.


105 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3A, Para. 8-12, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegel832/Book8.htm#3>; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3A, Para. 8-12, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch03.html>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3A, Para. 8-12, pp. 583-584.


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131 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 39, p. 337; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 39, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch06.html#B>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 34, p. 609.

132 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 38, p. 337; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 38, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch06.html#B>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 6B, Para. 33, p. 609.


135 CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 18, Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 18, pp. 340-341; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 3B, Para. 17, p. 587.


139 Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 18, Para. 2, p. 18; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 18, Para. 2, pp. 34-35; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 18, Para. 2, p. 85.


142 Rothfels, ed. (1922), pp. xxv, 26, 29ff, 39, 63f; Schwartz, ed., Vol. 1, pp. 88ff; Kohn (1967), pp. 218-221; Parkinson, p. 93.


148 Simms (1997), pp. 119-120.


Clausewitz, ‘Notes on History and Politics (1807-1809)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 278.


188 For Gneisenau’s 1808 plan see Friedrich Thimme, ‘Zu den Eroberungsplänen der preußischen Patrioten in Sommer 1808’, Historische Zeitschrift, No. 86 (1901), pp. 89-103; Dorpalen, p. 495.

189 Dorpalen, pp. 495-496.


195 R. Fraser, p. 214.


210 Vattel, Bk. III, Ch. 4, Sec. 61-65, and Ch. 5, Sec. 69-77, eds./trans. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 504-506, 509-511.


217 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 5, <http://clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegel832/Book6.htm#6>; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 5, <http://clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK6ch06.html>; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 5, p. 373.

218 Frederick II, ed./tran. Luvaas, pp. 307-311, 333-337; Emmerich, The Partisan in War, Ch. 4, 8, 11, 12, PDF pp. 24-25, 55-56, 83-93, 100.


Godechot, Hyslop and Dowd, p. 192; E. F. Henderson, p. 61; McKay and Scott, pp. 324, 330-333.


H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 9, p. 80; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 9, Para. 9, p. 26; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 9, p. 12.

H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 19, p. 483; CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 17, pp. 259-260; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 17, p. 314.
The three *Bekenntnisse* were not published until 1869 because they were considered too inflammatory. By 1879 the historian Heinrich von Treitschke regarded the memorandum a profoundly moving use of the German language. H. von Treitschke, *German History in the Nineteenth Century*, 7 Vols. (New York, 1915-1919), Vol. 1, p. 460; Parkinson, p. 134; for the influence on later German Nationalists see Chapter 1, pp. 17-19.


Clauswitz, ‘From the “Political Declaration” (1812)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 291; Hippler, p. 188.
Chapter Five

Hunger and the Sword of Vengeance

It was argued in the last chapter that Clausewitz embraced the idea of waging a people’s war even though it would entail suffering for non-combatants. This chapter will continue the theme of civilian participation and sacrifices during the invasion of Russia and the armed resurgence of Prussia. The first campaign provides an excellent opportunity to explore Clausewitz’s thoughts on scorched-earth, the strategy of exhaustion and the power of defence. The second will explain how popular resistance was activated in Germany and test Clausewitz’s assumption that the horrors of a people’s war could be averted if it was subordinated to the regular army and state government. Both campaigns illustrate the problem of collateral damage and bigger dilemma of a government and people who do not give in to an invader but fight on regardless of the costs to civilian society. Finally, the conquest of Saxony and the dissolution of the Confederation of Rhine help to pose the question of what one is supposed to do with the allies or accomplices of one’s enemy.

The invasion of Russia: historical precedents

Napoleon’s disaster in Russia was not without historical precedent. In 1709 the army of Charles XII of Sweden was destroyed by the Russians at Poltava after a protracted campaign of withdrawal and scorched-earth, causing immense agricultural loss and privation to the peasants. Clausewitz labelled Charles a reckless failure compared to Alexander or Frederick the Great and implies the reason for their differing places in military history lay in the political conditions of the societies under attack. Unlike Alexander, Charles could make little head-way against Russia because he was not attacking a weak Asiatic empire. Similarly, Jan Sobieski’s campaigns after the victory at Vienna in 1683 were frustrated by scarcities of food and shelter in hostile lands like Moldavia, as well as political conditions within Poland and its diplomatic relations with jealous neighbouring powers.

As the threat from Sweden and Poland receded the Russians concentrated against the Tartars and Turks. One the first studies Clausewitz undertook was a short narrative on the Russo-Turkish War of 1736-39 with particular attention to the campaigns of Marshal Burkhard Christoph von Münich and General Peter Lacy. These operations took place largely in the Crimea where, despite careful logistical preparations, the Russian armies (peasant labourers and drivers included) suffered staggering losses from sickness and the effects of operating over such large distances in difficult terrain. To worsen the invader’s supply problems the Tartars scorched the land and launched offensive raids into the Ukraine.
Münich concentrated on the Dniester front by beating the Ottoman Turks at Stavuchany (August 1739) and made tentative drives into the plague-infected Wallachia and Moldavia until peace was negotiated. The Russians were unable to annex the Crimea until 1783 and conflict with the Turks persisted with acts of brutality such as the massacre at Ochakov in 1788 and Izmail two years later.4

The prelude to the invasion

It has already been shown that Clausewitz understood the importance of logistics and losses from disease and geographic conditions would remain high for European armies throughout the nineteenth century.5 Military success depended on the extent of political or social cohesion within the opposing society and Clausewitz predicted as early as 1804 that Napoleon would fail in Russia.6 After resigning from the Prussian army the ex-major arrived at the Tsar’s HQ in Vilna on 20th May 1812. He was commissioned a lieutenant-colonel to help General Ernst von Phull, a former Prussian quartermaster general and close military advisor to the Tsar.7 Russia’s strategy was torn between an offensive into the Duchy of Warsaw and beyond, or a protracted defence-in-depth inside Lithuania and Russia. In the latter case all the damage would done on the Tsar’s soil at the risk of a serf rebellion. Phull’s plan was to avoid battling Napoleon on the frontier and instead strike his forces in the flank and rear from the fortified base at Drissa near the Duna River.8

Napoleon on the other hand assumed that he had only to demoralise the Russians in one or two big battles to get peace from what he considered a wayward ally rather than a mortal enemy. To that end he did not enlist the passions of the Polish people and was cool to their ambitions for an independent kingdom. The requisition and plunder of supplies hurt the Duchy of Warsaw as badly as East Prussia and Russia.9 On 24th June Napoleon’s armies crossed the Niemen and made a strong central thrust from Kowno (modern Kaunas) for Vilna. Napoleon entered four days later rather mystified about the fact that the Tsar’s armies had not stood in battle but escaped further east. The harsh weather and poor geographic conditions took a foreboding toll on man and beast. The Poles and serfs of Lithuania who had initially welcomed the French were bitterly disappointed to find themselves plundered and put under the rule of a provisional government as if they were a conquered people.10 Clausewitz was aware of how the invasion and subsequent counter-offensive caused immense civil disruption and many inhabitants fled their homes for nearby woods.11

The strategy of exhaustion
Contrary to the logic of destruction dictated in *On War* there was no big decisive battle in the opening phase of the campaign. Clausewitz was actually among those who identified the deficiencies of the camp at Drissa and advised a withdrawal deeper into Russia. This requires some explanation to discover whether Leon Tolstoy was right to fictionalise Clausewitz in *War and Peace* as an aloof and heartless theoretician who tells a colleague that in war ‘the only aim is to weaken the enemy, so one cannot of course, take into account the losses of private persons.’ Tolstoy’s Clausewitz was referring to what *On War* lists as an alternative strategy designed to bring about the exhaustion of the enemy (‘das Ermüden des Gegners’).

This defensive activity amounts in practice to using the duration of struggle to bring about a gradual exhaustion of the enemy’s physical powers and will of resistance. By this process the stronger opponent is worn out and forced to make peace. Clausewitz cites the Seven Years War and 1812 Russian campaign as key examples. In both cases the defender’s civil population and resources were put under strain and the outcome depended on political conditions within Russia. Clausewitz did not dwell too much on ‘Ermattungstrategie’ (as termed by Hans Delbrück) because like Frederick the Great and the Prussian soldiers who followed he was more attracted to quick, aggressive victories (‘Niederwerfungstrategie’) intended to overthrow and render the enemy prostrate before one’s own army and state became too exhausted.

The strategy of exhaustion was intended to take advantage of the logistical vulnerabilities of pre-modern armies. Book five in *On War* explains that insufficient logistical supply, excessive marching and numerous combats are key factors in time and space which influence the strength of military forces and their readiness for battle. Unless thorough preparations are undertaken troops will suffer from the effects of shortages, sickness and excessive marching several days before they go into combat. Disproportionate exertions take their toll on man, beast, wagons and clothing. Such attrition is only exacerbated in a zone of operations lacking roads, sufficient provisions, shelter and other resources usually provided by civilian communities.

The inhumane system of requisitioning revived by the French helped to overcome some of these problems but its inherent problems were painfully evident during rapid advances through enemy territory or in shambolic retreats. Earlier Napoleonic campaigns in Europe and the Middle East had already revealed some of the shortcomings that would become fatal in Russia. In Clausewitz’s opinion the logistical failure had two causes. Firstly, the organisational neglect and reckless gambling of Napoleon who, quite rightly from a
purely military point of view, attached greater importance to the object of fighting the enemy rather than the feeding his own men. The second reason was of course the impoverished, thinly populated and hostile state of Russia:

‘How vast a difference there is between a supply line stretching from Vilna to Moscow, where every wagon has to be procured by force, and a line from Cologne to Paris, via Liège, Louvain, Brussels, Mons, Valenciennes and Cambrai, where a commercial transaction, a bill of exchange, is enough to produce millions of rations!’

For all the emphasis on decisive battle On War also explores situations where the likelihood of victory is deprived as strength ebbs away so that a halt or retreat becomes unavoidable. Book six argues that one that one should be prepared to sacrifice territory to advancing enemy. A decision can be effected through a number of smaller fights and actions leading to a change of fortune either because they actually end in bloodshed or because the probability of their consequences necessitates the enemy’s retreat. When an enemy offensive has run its course, its troops have been detached or killed, and those who remain are weakened by hunger and sickness, then it is the fear of our opposing forces that make the enemy general turn about and retreat. The defender can therefore formulate a plan ‘depending on whether the attacker is to perish by the sword or by his own exertions.’ Clausewitz referred to how Fabius Cunctator let Hannibal exhaust himself in the field, how Wellington stayed behind the fortified lines of Torres Vedras, and of course his own experiences in Russia.

The logic of scorched-earth

These examples provide the principal sources of inspiration for a retreat into the interior of the country whereby the defender falls back onto available supplies and gathers up reinforcements. The attacker must either leave his sources of supply behind or have them forwarded. When the latter is not practical the essentials must be either captured or requisitioned along the way. A countryside already exhausted of food and fodder is a fatal weakness. If the attacker were to capture supplies this would be a matter of pure luck or gross neglect on the defender’s part; the implication being that the defender should try to deprive the attacker of this potential advantage.

Ancient armies had a zero-sum relationship when it came to food and fertile territory. In a situation analogous to a ‘burning ladder’ an army had to keep moving into search of new supplies. To follow in the devastated wake of retreating army or be forced to retrace one’s own steps usually meant logistical disaster. Clausewitz articulates a zero-sum principle of
polarity to explain why armies should, theoretically, engage in constant fighting because if it is in the interests of one side to stay on the defense it must be in the other’s to attack. Clausewitz realised of course that such strict polarity does not really exist but there always exists an opposition of interests. The polarity lies not in strictly attack or defence but that in which both sides bear a relation.37 Clausewitz states that lesser combats can aim at the capture of an advantageous hill or bridge yet it is left unclear whether subordinate objects include the destruction, or at least fight over, civilian assets like food supplies and shelter.38

It can be argued that the reasoning for scorched-earth strategies and the targeting of civilian property is derived from the zero-sum principle of polarity in theory, the opposition of interests in reality and the logic (or ill-logic) of the human mind which may spitefully reason, without regard for political or moral concerns, that whatever is an advantage to my enemy is to my disadvantage and therefore to be either denied to the enemy or usurped for myself. This can be likened to a situation akin to hedging the bets whereby one is gambling that by cutting off or at least reducing such advantages, the enemy will weaken, and the balance of forces will alter enough to bring about conditions or circumstances favourable for success in battle if or when it arrives.39

A strategy of interdiction is not easy to attribute to Clausewitz who consistently warned his readers against such indirect methods. They are tempting because they cost so little and are preferable to pointless battles. They are generally overrated because they seldom achieve so much as true success in arms and involve the risk of drawbacks previously overlooked: ‘They should always be looked upon as minor investments that can only yield minor dividends, appropriate to limited circumstances and weaker motives.’40 There are occasional passages on the matter of troop deployments, billeting arrangements and manoeuvring with a view to cover the fertile countryside and prevent the enemy from requisitioning food supplies.41

The treatise *On War* endorses the logic of interdiction or denial only as far as it is accomplished by possession or physical obstruction rather than destruction of civilian resources. Collateral damage was accepted as a side-effect of campaigning. ‘The retreating army has first call on, and usually exhausts, the local resources. All that remains are devastated towns and villages, harvested and trampled fields, empty wells, and muddied streams.’42 These forces can ‘make the pursuit more difficult for the enemy by destroying bridges, making bad roads worse merely by using them, denying the enemy the best camping places and watering points by occupying them itself, and so forth.’43
The campaign in Russia was unique: its sheer size, sparse population, severe weather (the heat and dust of summer followed by the cold and snow of winter) would weaken the strength of Napoleon’s gigantic invasion force and ensure logistical disaster regardless of whether the Russians scorched their own land or not. The deciding factor would be how the political authorities reacted to the invasion and whether they could rely upon a truly loyal and warlike people.\(^4\) Clausewitz listed the main drawbacks of retreat: namely, the abandonment and wastage of land, having to give up commercial cities and the loss of war material, whether in finished form or in the process of production.\(^5\) More importantly a retreat has a paralysing psychological effect beyond the army’s morale:

‘There may be times when the army and the nation fully understand the reasons for withdrawing to the interior, when confidence and hope may even be fortified as a result; but they are very rare. As a rule, the people and the army cannot even tell the difference between a planned retreat and a backward stumble; still less can they be certain if a plan is a wise one, based on anticipation of positive advantages, or whether it has simply been dictated by fear of the enemy. There will be public concern and resentment at the fate of the abandoned areas; the army will possibly loose confidence not only in its leaders but in itself, and never-ending rear guard actions will only tend to confirm its fears. These consequences of retreat should not be underrated. Moreover, in the abstract it is, of course, more natural, simpler, nobler and more in keeping with a nation’s moral character to face the challenge squarely, and ensure that an enemy who violates a frontier will be made to pay a penalty in blood.’\(^6\)

*The Russians withdraw, Napoleon pursues*

When the Tsar saw for himself the deficiencies at Drissa he ordered a withdrawal be carried out between 12-17\(^{th}\) July.\(^7\) Clausewitz served with the rearguard as it fell back on Vitesbk, then on to Smolensk.\(^8\) He witnessed the Smolensk’s destruction as the enemy bombarded the city on 16-18\(^{th}\) August in an attempt to drive out its 15,000 defenders.\(^9\) The Russians pulled back towards Moscow and Napoleon decided to pursue rather than consolidate his position in Lithuania-Belorussia. The marching was physically and mentally exhausting for the men on both sides and went totally against the instinctive desire for decisive battle.\(^5\)

The attrition of marching so far so fast was compounded by the heat, rain, lack of food and the harassment of foraging parties by Cossacks and peasants-in-arms.\(^1\) Clausewitz wrote that from Vitebsk to Moscow the Russians found plentiful stores of cereal, biscuits, wheat, and meat. There was seldom grain for the horses so they made do on hay. The French followed through spoilt countryside and without proper maps were forced to send out scouts in search of food and wells. Clausewitz remembered however how everyone was tortured by thirst and tiredness and relieved themselves by stopping to drink from dirty puddles.\(^2\) From
Dorogobuzh he complained to Marie of gout, his hollowing teeth, thinning hair and how his un-gloved hands looked like yellow leather:

'The difficulties of this campaign are extraordinary. For nine weeks now we have been on the march. For five weeks we have had no change of clothes. Heat, dust, filthy water and often near-starvation. Until now I have spent each night in the open, with few exceptions, because few people live in this locality and their pitiful huts have been destroyed.'

The absence of billets, tents and adequate baggage trains made the campaign especially arduous for the troops who were exposed to the rigors of the climate for six months. Clausewitz knew from personal experience the humanitarian relief nearby villages could offer to heavily-laden and hungry soldiers falling ill on the open road, mired in mud and rain, or the dust and burning heat of summer. The Russians had no coherent plan to deny the invaders the respite of food, water or shelter. Most acts of sabotage were carried out on the initiative of individual commanders while ordinary soldiers sometimes found it heart-breaking to burn down peasant property. Clausewitz recalled the logic behind the vandalism:

'It became the custom of the Russian rear guard to burn villages as they were leaving them. Usually the inhabitants were already gone, whatever food and forage remained was quickly used up, and the only things left were the wooden houses, which in this region are not worth much. Under these circumstances no great care was taken to protect them from being burned or torn down, and that by itself was sufficient to cause the destruction of most of them. What had at first been thoughtlessness and carelessness gradually became policy, which was often extended to small farms and large towns as well. The bridges were also torn down, and the numerals were hacked out of the mileposts, which eliminated a useful source of information. As very few inhabitants remained, the French must often have found it difficult to know where they were on the highway.'

Clausewitz calculated that the French needed twelve weeks to march the 530 miles from Kowno to Moscow, and of the estimated 280,000 men who undertook the journey not more than 90,000-100,000 reached the capital. The retreat had such a detrimental effect on Russian morale that national honour and professional pride impelled them to stand and fight on occasions like the Battle of Borodino (7th September). This slugging match left Napoleon with 120,000 men to march on Moscow and it was on that everything appeared to hinge. Clausewitz was clearly shocked by the enormous loss of life because he repeats several times that Napoleon's centre crossed the Niemen with 300,000 men and lost over half from the effects of rapid marching along a single road, the shortage of supplies, sickness, stragglers, the need to detach men to guard conquered places and the fighting itself. By the time the invaders reached the capital their casualties totalled 198,000.
The great fire of Moscow

The Russians made the final seventy miles to Moscow in seven days, passing through on the 14th September still 70,000-men strong. Clausewitz reflected in hindsight that had the Russians planned a retreat from Smolensk to Kuluga in the first place they would have lured the invaders away from the capital and saved Moscow altogether. The logic of destroying the enemy’s armed forces and the danger of detaching any sizeable force for any other object (like a civilian settlement) would have compelled Napoleon to give Moscow a wide berth. Its capture came about from a lack of forward planning and the fear of disgrace at leaving the capital totally unprotected. Clausewitz applauded Napoleon’s decision to seek battle and occupy Moscow as an admirable attempt to shake the confidence and sow dissension in the government, the army and the people.

The advance certainly did create an atmosphere of hysterical fear and panic amongst the civil population. The memoirs of Count Philippe-Paul de Ségur recorded the effort made by propagandists to convince the inhabitants that the French had not come to slit everyone’s throats. Ségur lamented the shameful destruction of cities and mortal suffering of prisoners and civilians. Moscow had a pre-war population of 300,000 inhabitants but everyone except 6,000 fled the city, leaving it stripped of valuables and paralysed of social services like firefighting. General Miloradovich tried to negotiate a handover of the city without assault and spare it the same fate as Smolensk, Viazma (Vyazma) or Mozhaysk. Clausewitz recalled the sight of the capital as he passed through on 14th September:

'Moscow seemed more or less abandoned. A few hundred people of the lowest classes met General Miloradovitch and begged for his protection. Here and there in the streets we encountered other groups, watching us sadly as we passed by. The streets were still crowded with wagons leaving the city, so that General Miloradovitch had to order two cavalry regiments to ride ahead and clear the way. The most painful sight was long rows of wounded soldiers, who lay along the house and were vainly hoping to be moved away. All these unfortunates probably died in the city.'

Clausewitz saw how the loss of their city had produced grief, despair, dejection amongst the Russian soldiers and people. The damage ultimately had a counter-productive effect because it was generally felt by everyone, especially Prince Kutuzov, that too much had already been sacrificed just to give up and surrender. After abandoning the capital a great debate flared up over what direction the Russians should take next. Clausewitz was among those who recommended the southern route to Kaluga where the Russians could advantage of space and economic resources. As the French took over the capital fires broke out mysteriously and...
spread rapidly to engulf the city between the 15 to 18th September. Clausewitz witnessed the blaze from afar on the Podolsk-Thula road:

‘During this march we saw Moscow burning day and night, and although we were thirty miles from the city the wind occasionally carried ashes all the way to us. Even though the burning of Smolensk and of many other towns had accustomed the Russians to sacrifices of this kind, the burning of Moscow saddened them and increased their anger at the enemy, on whom they blamed the fire as a true expression of his hatred, arrogance, and cruelty.’

Clausewitz never discovered whether the true cause of the fire was arson or a deliberate act of scorched-earth instigated by Count Theodore Rostopchin. The governor-general had been hysterical about defending Moscow and encouraged peasants to arm themselves (with pikes rather than the muskets stored in the Kremlin) on the road to Mozhaisk (Mozhaysk) for a battle that never materialised. Clausewitz later met Rostopchin who denied all responsibility for the fires and protested his innocence over such a dishonourable act. He was prepared to admit that the fire, intentional or not, turned out to be useful from a military point of view. It helped to worsen the situation for the enemy troops as they huddled in the blackened city ruins subsisting on the flesh of 20,000 horses and whatever provisions they could gather up from an ever-expanding radius. The fire was unnecessary in Clausewitz’s opinion because Napoleon’s retreat was inevitable:

‘That the burning of Moscow proved highly detrimental to the French cannot be denied. If the fire made the possibility of peace negotiations seem even more remote in the Czar’s mind, and if it became a way of enraging the Russian people further, this probably constituted the main damage it caused to the French. On the other hand, it is exaggerating the significance of a single act to regard the burning of Moscow – as the French usually do – as the main reason for the failure of the campaign. The fire certainly deprived the French of resources they could have used, but their most important need was for soldiers, and these they would not have found in an undamaged Moscow either.

‘An army of 90,000, of exhausted men and horses, at the point of narrow wedge driven 550 miles into Russia; to its right an enemy army of 110,000; on all sides a population in arms; forced to face the enemy in all directions, without depots, without adequate supplies and ammunition, depending on a single, devastated line of supply and communications—that does not add up to a situation one can tolerate through a winter. But if Bonaparte was not certain he could maintain himself in Moscow through the winter, he had to retreat before winter came. Whether Moscow still stood or had been destroyed would not significantly influence the issue. Bonaparte’s retreat was inevitable; his entire campaign failed the moment Emperor Alexander refused to sue for peace. All his moves had been designed to bring about a negotiated peace, and Bonaparte certainly did not deceive himself this point for a moment.’

The French are forced to retreat
Napoleon was slow to extricate his army from this grave situation and passed the time sending letters to the Tsar blaming criminal elements for the lamentable fires and asking for a peaceful settlement. Clausewitz believed that to occupy and subjugate a country as large as Russia was impossible and Napoleon had gambled on the psychological effects of his offensive to terrorise the government into signing a peace. The retreat had already been a terrible personal experience for Clausewitz, who was almost killed in combat when a horse shot from underneath him, yet he remained convinced that only a premature peace could save the French. The Russian forces meanwhile moved to establish a position near Kaluga where they help the Cossacks and peasants-in-arms to threaten the enemy’s lines of communications and block the flow of supplies and replacements.

Clausewitz was ordered to go north and after being detained by ignorant militiamen who were convinced he was a French spy arrived safely in St. Petersburg by the mid-October. Boyen, Stein, Mme de Stael, Arndt and many other German nationalists were already gathered around the Tsar, urging him to fight on. His sister the Grand Duchess Catherine was another vigorous supporter for continuing the war and asked Clausewitz for his appraisal on the military situation. He confided in her the opinion that Napoleon would have no choice but to retreat if the Russians stood firm.

Clausewitz was careful not to offend Russian sensitivities over the suffering of their country. He was at least relieved to see that in St. Petersburg the Tsar and his counsellors were at least able to make firm decisions in an atmosphere of relative calm, isolated from the horrors of ‘bloody battlefields, devastated villages and towns, and the painful retreat of the Russian army’. In On War he repeats that only internal weakness and disunity could ruin Russia but the people remained loyal and steadfast behind the government which refused to make peace in the face of lost battles, captured cities and occupied provinces.

On 19th October Napoleon decided to retreat and ordered the country be ruined, either out of spite or to slow down the enemy’s pursuit. Governor Mortier was therefore instructed to booby trap the Kremlin as it was abandoned to the Cossacks a few days later. The drive south was obstructed at Maloyaroslavetz and the ensuing battle ruined the contested town. Rather than pushing on to Kutuzov’s defensive positions at Kaluga Napoleon made the controversial decision to turn northwards and retrace his steps over spoilt ground already depleted of supplies. Clausewitz believed the invaders had little choice but to retreat the way they had come into Russia, relying on depots, rather than plunging into unknown and hostile territory: ‘What officer would have been willing to ride ahead of the army to organize the collection of food and what Russian officials would have obeyed his orders?’
The horrors of retreat

The Grand Armée was frequently harassed by Cossacks, irregular partisans and outraged peasants who hacked down faltering French soldiers with an animal-like lust for slaughter that frightened even the Russian landlord classes. Clausewitz makes a few references to the actions of partisans mentioning that they blocked the capture of food and scooped up prisoners. Segur’s account complains repeatedly about how the Cossacks blew up bridges, interfered with the collection of food, picked off stragglers, recaptured lost ground and necessitated wearisome tactical deployments to stave off potential attacks to the main bodies of troops. Prince Eugène’s Army of Italy for example lost over 2,000 soldiers, as well as its cannon and baggage train crossing the River Vop and dragging itself to the town of Dukhovschina while under harassment from partisans.

The retreat was so horrific that of the 100,000 troops who left Moscow only 50,000 reached Smolensk on 13th November. There were desperate scenes at the storehouses as the men ransacked what food was left before stumbling onwards in search of food, warmth and shelter. The Russians were reluctant to attack this disintegrating mass directly because they too were experiencing their own share of horrors as Clausewitz recalled: ‘Wittgenstein also lost a good third of his troops in the last four weeks of the campaign, for he had above 40,000 men at Czaniski and scarcely 30,000 at Vilna.’

It is important to bear in mind that armies of the pre-modern age were accompanied by a considerable number of non-combatant helpers including women and children who shared the toils and dangers. Clausewitz had been little more than a child when he first experienced the life-threatening fatigue of going on a military campaign. The Grande Armée had by this point accumulated some 40,000 civilian refugees and helpers of all sorts who Segur identified as former French residents of the capital, Russian women of easy virtue, and hordes of greedy peasants staying close to the baggage train. He described how these refugees perished from starvation, the cold and enemy attack.

The starving and frostbitten exodus was caught trying to cross the Berezina River at the point of Studenka, close to Borisov on 26-29th November. The bridges were blown on the last day leaving behind thousands of terrified people to face slaughter or try their chances swimming the freezing waters. The exact number of soldiers and civilians involved is difficult for modern historians to gauge. Clausewitz’s puts the figures of enemy troops at 30,000 plus 40,000 unarmed stragglers. It is generally believed that during the three days of fighting on
both banks the French lost up to 25,000 people (including as many as 10,000 non-combatant stragglers), of which a third were killed. Russian losses have been estimated to be somewhere around 15,000.99

The massacre at Borodino was the most traumatic experience in Clausewitz’s already hard life. ‘What ghastly scenes I have witnessed here’ he wrote to his wife back home. ‘If my feelings had not been hardened it would have sent me mad. Even so, it will take many years before I can remember what I have seen without shuddering with horror.’100 Clausewitz said he would never forget the smoking ruins, the corpses, the dying ghostlike men crying for crusts of bread.101 ‘I hear that we are being condemned’ he wrote to Marie when he learned that tribunals were being held against him in Prussia. ‘Let them do it in God’s name! Anyone who has witnessed the scenes of misery and need here, which the German governments helped bring about, will not feel his pride broken their condemnations.’102

In early December the skeletal soldiers of Napoleon’s starving army reached Vilna where they devoured all the remaining rations of biscuit, plundered the city’s inhabitants and abandoned them to the mercy of the oncoming Cossacks. By mid-January the survivors reached the relative safety of Posen and East Prussia.103 The true extent of the disaster is difficult to ascertain: the invading army set out with a paper-strength of approximately 600,000-655,000 men but less than 93,000 returned.104 The Russians meanwhile lost between 110,000-150,000 military dead.105 These figures cover servicemen so it is impossible to tell how many civilians perished from battles, sieges, or simply from cold or hunger as a result of having to flee their homes. The figure could be anywhere between 150,000-1,000,000 dead divided between both sides.106 Three-quarters of Moscow lay in burnt ruins and damages to the country as a whole were estimated by the Russian finance ministry to be around 200,000,000 rubles.107

Switching to the offensive

Prior to this awful campaign Clausewitz had wrote The Principles of War with a warning that if one side remains on the defensive, submitting to the blows of an adversary without ever striking back and running the war at a disproportionate expense, that side will become exhausted and would succumb eventually.108 In On War Clausewitz repeats that the exhaustion and tiring out of enemy can work on special occasions in reality but the theory of war or combat demands a more positive threatening aim.109 Frederick the Great could not stay entirely passive and launched minor offensive operations in the form of raids, diversions, capturing fortresses and the seizure of assets.110
Clausewitz admits there are two reasons why an indefinite struggle might exhaust the defender sooner: firstly, he is usually the weaker party anyway so losses tend to hurt him more; secondly, 'the enemy will usually deprive him of part of his territory and resources.' Russia was so big it could absorb the blow and Napoleon's boundless ambition had already stretched his resources to the limit. Congratulations were in order for the Tsar and his subjects because they had not caved in to his invasion. 'The highest wisdom could never have devised a better strategy than the one the Russians followed unintentionally.' Clausewitz was not morally insensitive to the terribly high price in blood and perils in person, but he could celebrate the power of the defence in historical hindsight or in theory:

'The Russian campaign of 1812 demonstrated in the first place that a country of such size could not be conquered (which might well have been foreseen), and in the second that the prospect of eventual success does not always decrease in proportion to lost battles, captured capitals and occupied provinces, which is something that diplomats used to regard as dogma, and made them always ready to conclude a peace however bad. On the contrary, the Russians showed us that one often attains one's greatest strength in the heart of one's own country, when the enemy's offensive power is exhausted, and the defensive can then switch with enormous energy to the offensive.'

While there may be confusion about how to formulate a winning strategy On War leaves the reader with little doubt that violence must be inflicted with a positive purpose at some point. As early as 1804 Clausewitz could not accept idea of unitary war of one side against an unresponsive combatant; the defensive must nurture the idea of attacking the enemy. Defence is only justifiable to gain some temporary advantages whenever physical and moral superiority is lacking, or if one wanted to preserve one's armed forces and state assets until a better time. Even a limited aim can never be absolute negation or passivity; it must bear some adherence positive aim of combat and to the final aim of war. Clausewitz envisaged defence to be like a shielded warrior, who parries the blows of his opponent, and then returns well-directed counter-attacks as soon as opportunity and strength permitted. In order to avoid repeated onslaughts that reduce one's state to ruins the defender must make a transition to the offensive using the flashing sword of vengeance ('das blitzende Vergeltungsschwert'): how, when, and where that reaction is to happen will depend on many circumstances.

There is of course the danger that as the defender moves over to attack he may end up doing more violence and damage than was originally intended. Readers can anticipate situations involving haphazard violence against enemy civilians as strategists struggle to gauge their efforts, or deliberately set themselves on a course of completely ruining their enemy's state. The resurgence of Prussia dredged up a passionate desire for revenge against
more than just the soldiers of Napoleon but also his confederates and civilian national base. A feeling of shame and enslavement over the years had produced a groundswell of nationalistic hatred which found its unofficial expression either in secret societies like the Tugendbund or the works of fiery intellectual’s Fitche, Kleist, Arndt, as well as Theodor Köner and Josef Görres. The massive outpouring of plays, poetry, essays, sermons and speeches in 1813 called for a purifying crusade against the French. Patriotic women and clerics were just as vocal in their calls for war and played an active role by supporting the soldiers.

State policy and the passions of the people

It was fortunate that this popular passion was tempered and controlled by the state government. After the fall of Moscow, Clausewitz was designated chief-of-staff to the Russo-German Legion under the command of Count Ludwig von Wallmoden-Gimborn. Until it became operational Clausewitz was given a temporary assignment with the army of General Wittgenstein and General Hans Karl Ludwig von Diebitsch. In late December these forces pursued Marshal Macdonald’s X Corps into East Prussia and came into contact with a force of 14,000-20,000 demoralised Prussian soldiers bound by a hated treaty to the French.

In reluctant command was Hans David Yorck von Wartenberg who was willing to defect if it could be done without breaking allegiance to the king. Clausewitz was among the truce-feelers sent out by Diebitsch and on 29th December he won Yorck over through the cogency of his arguments and sincerity of his conviction. The next day the general undertook what Clausewitz considered to be one of the boldest decisions in Prussia’s history: he signed the Convention of Tauroggen and established a base at Königsberg for rallying the nation. ‘He is now our king,’ wrote a subaltern, ‘he concludes peace and makes war.’

This unsanctioned policy of a non-state actor was helped by Stein who returned as a plenipotentiary for the Russian and grasped the opportunity to liberate Germany by instigating a something close to people’s war. In January Clausewitz wrote a paper about organising the male population in militia for the defence of Lithuania, East and West Prussia. All fit and eligible men aged 18-40 would supplement the regular army by serving in the Landwehr reserve, all those aged 40-60 would serve in the Landsturm homeguard. Yorck adopted the plan the following month by calling upon the local political authorities for a Landwehr of 20,000 and 10,000 additional reserves.

The provincial governor Hans Jakob von Auerswald was naturally hesitant to throw in his lot with the insurrection. Count Dönhof believed it was despotic and selfish of Stein to
ask men essential for working the land to go get themselves killed trying to be amateur
soldiers. The East Prussian estates, presided over Auerswald’s deputy, assembled for a
special session on 5th February. Yorck added weight to Stein’s cause by stressing that he
intended to fight on behalf of the king who was assumed to be held under duress. The estates
secured some get-out clauses and by 9th February it was agreed to reinforce Yorck’s corps
with volunteers and conscripts. On 11th February a Königsberg newspaper published an order
for all officers on half-pay in the province to report to Clausewitz for assignments.

Clausewitz later justified Yorck’s actions as speeding up the whole process of
overthrowing Napoleon. It should be pointed out that Yorck was conservative by nature
and wanted his actions legitimised by the state. As early as the 3rd January he wrote the king a
letter professing his personal loyalty but dared to presume that he could arbitrarily decide the
policy of the ‘nation’ towards its ‘true enemy’. It is difficult to discern the king’s true
intentions: Frederick William initially ordered Yorck court-martialed then rescinded his
orders under pressure from the Russians and public opinion. The early rumours of French
setbacks in Russia had been greeted with heartfelt schadenfreude and the survivors limped
through Königsberg, Berlin and Neustadt where they entered ‘an atmosphere poisoned by
hatred’ in the words of Ségur.

Frederick William received a flood of petitions pleading the case for war and as the
Russians liberated Berlin he joined his restless subjects and reasserted his role as the chief
policy-maker. Prior to the declaration of war the king had already begun to take steps
towards national rearmament. Napoleon had already permitted the Prussian army to expand
by 20,000 soldiers for the war against Russia. Blücher and Scharnhorst were now recalled
to help coordinate the bustling activity in Breslau and Silesia. A general call went out in
February for anyone wealthy enough to provide their own military clothing and equipment to
form themselves into to light volunteer detachments of freiwillige Jäger. Major Ludwig Adolf
Wilhelm von Lützow’s ‘Black Band’, or ‘unruly volunteers’ in Clausewitz’s opinion, rose
1,200-3,000 troops in Silesia where they were blessed by a local pastor as honourable
crusaders for the Fatherland.

The Landwehr and Landsturm

On 17th March the king issued an address ‘An Mein Volk’ calling upon all the Prussian,
Silesian, Pomerian and Lithuanian subjects left under his control to support his declaration of
war. Men of all economic backgrounds including the middle classes and landed peasantry
were liable to universal and compulsory military service. Special Jäger formations existed for
higher classes and reserve units for all those able-bodied males aged 18-40 not enlisted in regular regiments of the line. The Landwehr decree (18-19\textsuperscript{th} March) was followed up with a much more radical development towards popular war. According to the Landsturm decree on 21\textsuperscript{st} April everyone was to disobey the orders of the enemy. Every man aged 18-60 and physically-capable of bearing arms was to help local army commanders, district governors and committees with local civil defence by harrying the enemy troops with whatever came to hand including clubs and pitchforks.\textsuperscript{134} The decrees were designed to channel popular resistance through legitimate means which satisfied an ethical preference for openly displaying one’s status as a combatant in the service of a state-government. Armed action, scorched-earth activities or the confiscation of property outside the framework of military hierarchy was likely to be seen as mutiny.\textsuperscript{135}

Clausewitz was committed to the establishment of the Landsturm under these conventional auspices. A paper dated to April 1813 mentions how companies of Jäger and squadrons of Husaren should be the core or heart of the Landsturm. They can also work with bodies of regular troops 5,000-6,000-strong and take exploit the advantages of terrain and the inability of the enemy to concentrate in mountains. In addressing matters of supply Clausewitz mentions that towns like Landshuth and Liebau should be made into munitions depots and military hospitals. It is interesting that he says that hospitals need not be fortified because the sick and injured make bad conquests: ‘Ein Lazareth braucht nicht befestigt zu seyn, denn Kranke sind eine schlechte Eroberung.’ It is difficult to tell whether this means the enemy would preserve the humanitarian decencies towards captured and wounded insurgents, or the French would not bother diverting their manpower to attacking hospitals simply because they are worthless targets and would add to their medical burdens.\textsuperscript{136}

It would be anachronistic to claim that Clausewitz and his contemporaries were forerunners of international law but it is remarkable how similar their views were with the requirements for combatants as laid down by the Geneva Conventions and Hague Rules of Combat. Both the Landwehr and Landsturm decrees proved enormously popular with even Fichte drilling in a Landsturm unit, although such parade ground antics were better propaganda than practical help.\textsuperscript{137} The Landwehr and Landsturm did yield significant military benefits such as the alert response (or ‘Great Fear’) in Neumark, the rising of Halle on 25\textsuperscript{th} May and the ambush of a French artillery convoy at Halberstadt five days later.\textsuperscript{138} Lützow’s freicorps was however almost annihilated near the village of Kitzen on 17\textsuperscript{th} June when it was ambushed by Rhenish forces violating an armistice.\textsuperscript{139} There was a general distain for militiamen as somehow lacking stamina and discipline; one chaplain recorded how military
service had a barbarising effect on the civilian-soldiers. Stein therefore insisted that the commanders of popular units had to exhibit a great deal of humanity and firm discipline.

The king and the more conservative elements of Prussian society still questioned the military effectiveness of the Landsturm and worried that any scorched-earth operations would degenerate into destructive unruliness. Strict disciplinary orders were issued against looting and assaults on friendly subjects or allied peoples. The government regarded the militia as a desperate measure of last resort and feared that French retaliation would treat all adult males as insurgents and the rest of the civil population as potential spies and guides. Legal experts were anxious to avoid the savage reprisals and banditry that came with guerrilla wars, as seen in America and Spain, by clearly defining the legal status of combatants (proper insignia, bearing arms openly) and bringing them under state control. The French indeed acted with cruelty to risings of Hessian and Silesian peasants and the Landsturm was unable to stop looting by the enemy troops or within their own rank and file.

The regular armies check Napoleon

The liberation of Germany did not see the horror of Spain for two major reasons. Firstly, the political regimes and populations did not have the same character for guerrilla actions. Secondly, the military campaigns were decided along orthodox lines in the most colossal battles of European history. Clausewitz wrote that by this stage Napoleon’s fearful sword had been blunted by its failure in Russia. Napoleon regained his military strength for 1813 by calling up conscripts, national guards and allies. His intent that year seems to have been to defeat his enemies in battle, then punish the intriguers and political daredevils who had misled the Germans into rebellion. Frederick William regarded Clausewitz in much the same vein and left him serve in the Russo-German Legion on the Baltic flank until the former Prussian officer proved enough loyalty and distinction to be recommissioned in April 1814.

Clausewitz later recalled how precarious Prussia’s situation looked in the spring and summer of 1813. The army was scattered in at least separate contingents of 20,000-30,000 each under Blücher, Yorck and Bülow. The number rose to almost 80,000 front-line soldiers which was just enough to help the Russians break the tide of French resurgence in the costly battles of Lützen-Grossgörschen and Bautzen during the month of May. These battles shook up the allies and mutual recriminations abounded to the point that the Russians wanted to fall back of Poland and abandon Prussia. The danger of re-conquest must have been terrifying to the civilian population; when the French threatened Berlin that month Marie and her mother left the city convinced that as relatives of such a well-known enemy of France
they would be exposed to ‘special dangers’. Clausewitz warned Marie on 31st May to stay away from Landshut because it was exposed to great danger and to remain calm as rumours and unrest spread throughout the land.

The aforementioned battles fought the French to a standstill. Clausewitz approved the Armistice of Pläswitz (signed on 4th June and extended to 10th August) because it gave Prussia the time it needed to complete the reincarnation of the field army (whittled down to 60,000 men) and overcome the resistance to popularised forces. Over the spring and summer of 1813 the Landwehr was built up to thirty-eight infantry and thirty cavalry regiments (about 120,000-150,000 men) complimenting the regular regiments of the line. Through a combination of volunteers, conscripts and augmentations of militia the regular army overcame many exemptions on military service and increased in troop numbers to 130,000-160,000 by 10th August. Prussia’s total men under arms would go on to a level of 270,000. This was a remarkable per capita effort from a population of fewer than five million souls.

Clausewitz celebrated the rising of Germany in *On War* as the amazing culmination of recent trends in Austria, Spain and Russia. War was made a concern of the people and thus waged with an exceptional degree of energy and resourcefulness; without money or credit Prussia mobilised a force twice as large as the one annihilated in 1806. Historians have questioned whether this effort represented a true national war or just a stronger form princely war with a greater degree of popular support than was usual. The nobles, middle class merchants and city dwellers of Berlin and Silesia objected to their loss of privileges while the great mass of the population obeyed the political authorities and remained passive unless otherwise instructed.

The majority of the manpower came from East Prussia and the resistance to conscription was more widespread in parts of West Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia or from certain demographic groups such as the Catholics, Poles and Jews. Royal ordinances allowed Jews to buy their way out of military service because money was deemed more valuable to pay for equipment. The uneducated lower classes were likely reacting to the requisitions and abuses inflicted upon them the passing French armies rather than out of a sense of German nationalism. Despite the blurring of distinctions between combatants and non-combatants there were so many frictions working against conscription that Prussia’s effort felt far short of a true people’s war.
By mid-October the opposing sides had each amassed a field force over half a million-strong, not counting the thousands of men in second-line reserves or in garrison duty. The treaties of Reichenbach and Teplitz bound the coalition forces closer together and Metternich’s efforts to arrange a Habsburg peace with Napoleon floundered on the latter’s intransigence. Even with the advantage of numbers the allies adopted the so-called ‘Trachtenberg plan’ to wear down Napoleon’s forces in a campaign of mutual attrition. Clausewitz recognised a key weakness in Napoleon’s strategy was his inability to be everywhere at once. Subordinate commanders sent off to capture and possibly take revenge on civilian objectives like Berlin were caught off guard by animated Prussian commanders: Ney’s march towards Berlin in May had to be called back for the Battle of Bautzen, Marshal Nicolas Oudinot was stopped at Luckau (6th June) and Groß Beeren (23rd August), Macdonald was defeated at Katzbach (26th August) and Ney was finally rebuffed at Dennewitz (6th September).

It was the fight at Dresden (26-27th August) and the Völkerschlacht or Battle of the Nations at Möckern and Leipzig (16-19th October) which finally settled the struggle in the favour of the allies. ‘The highest satisfaction in life is to avenge oneself upon an arrogant enemy’ wrote Gneisenau to Blücher. The aftermath of battle was appalling: 90,000 dead or wounded men lay around the ruined area creating pestilential conditions for the inhabitants cleaning up the mess. Clausewitz was not there and omits the human costs by simply citing the Leipzig campaign in On War as a clear example of what can be done with superior numbers. It was an immense gamble and the wear and tear of marching and fighting had a weakening effect on Blücher’s forces. The feigned defence on the Rhine further sufficed to bring the main allied armies to halt for several weeks, although swarms of Cossacks and light troops were still very active.

The defection of the German states

After the Battle of Leipzig there was confusion and procrastination over what political course to take over the surrender of the city so it was simply bombarded and stormed. Unlike Prussia, the kingdom of Saxony and the states of the Rheinbund were less resentful towards France, partly due to the better economic conditions and the collaboration of the ennobled and middleclasses. The princes of the Rhine stayed loyal to Napoleon despite his heavy demands for new recruits and resources. This complicity brought into question of what one should do against the enemy allies or neutrals standing in one’s way.
Clausewitz addressed the problem of enemy confederates in purely military terms for *On War*. If the enemy’s political power lies in two or more states the centre of gravity lies in the common interests and cordiality so it is there that one’s blows should fall. Clausewitz conceived this violence in conventional terms against the strongest ally of an enemy coalition. This excluded the targeting of non-combatants belonging of weaker third parties in order to force them into neutrality or to switch sides as was commonly the case with from the Punic Wars to the colonial conflicts in North America.

The reasoning for targeting third parties and neutral powers is always political in motivation. It can also be an expression of hostile passion or an attempt to undermine the enemy’s overall war-making capability. Vattel upheld the principal of free access to the sea and non-interference for neutral nations; although he did concede the right to obstruct trade and confiscate useful war commodities including provisions ‘when we have hopes of reducing the enemy by famine’. The British had for centuries thwarted the overseas ambitions and war-effort of France by using their superior naval power to destroy warships, intercept shipping and pluck away colonial possessions.

During the Revolutionary-Napoleonic Wars, both Britain and France clamped one another in a naval blockade and only allowed food and war materials to slip through when it was perceived to suit one sides interests more than the other. Napoleon’s Continental System was unfortunately enforced to the economic detriment of Prussia, the Hanse towns, and the major trading ports of France. The pressure Britain exerted on France brought them into open war against civilian and state property belonging to America, Denmark and Prussia. Unlike many of his countrymen Clausewitz admired the English because they were the most implacable opponents of France. Yet he appreciated that Britain’s supremacy at sea could not guarantee the balance of power on the continent unless the German powers actively kept French arrogance in check.

The English landings in Holland in 1799 and 1809 had failed due to poor logistics, sickness, enemy action and a lack of support from the Dutch. In the former case the English achieved little except fighting desultory battles, rounding up cattle and ruining the countryside. According to Clausewitz, both operations could only be justified by the fact that the troops could not be used in any other way and they did at least serve to divert enemy forces to coastal defence. When landings can count on the support of the area’s inhabitants against its government then such diversions can really stir up a situation. In 1813 the British could pour in money and equipment to aid the rising of Prussia and Austria.
Gneisenau put it simply to all the other states when he said the world is divided between those who fight, willingly or unwillingly, for Napoleon’s ambition and those who oppose him.\textsuperscript{187}

By the Treaty of Breslau March 1813 the Prussians and Russians agreed to a Central Executive or Administrative Council. Presided by Stein, it was charged with virtually dictatorial powers for dividing areas up into civil-military districts and levying manpower and requisitions for the allied war effort.\textsuperscript{188} A proclamation to the princes and people of Germany on 25\textsuperscript{th} March invited them to help with the liberation or lose their estates and risk ‘destruction through the strength of public opinion and the power of righteous arms’.\textsuperscript{189} The business communities of Cologne, Aachen and Rhineland simply went about raising money and running their areas in the interests of France until they were relieved by allied administrators.\textsuperscript{190} Johann August Sack and Justus Gurner wanted to stop public disorder and retaliations against collaborators and propagandists by focusing popular passions against the French.\textsuperscript{191}

Clausewitz was not happy about the character of some the other individuals Stein had appointed and was conscious about the negative consequences of making overbearing demands.\textsuperscript{192} From Neustadt in Mecklenburg-Schwerin he wrote Marie on 1\textsuperscript{st} September that the arrest of local officials, including a certain \textit{Amtshauptmann} v. St., risked causing a stir throughout the land. When Clausewitz discovered that of the 60,000 rations promised, only 6,000 were presented, the soldiers of Mecklenburg did not see the funny side. ‘Had we not urgently put provision-commissars to the task, so they would have given way to plundering the whole countryside.’\textsuperscript{193} Mecklenburg-Schwerin adhered because the duke was related to the Tsar and was compelled to renounce the Confederation by the arrival of Cossacks.\textsuperscript{194} Saxony on the other was despoiled by Prussians because Frederick Augustus had aligned his kingdom so firmly with Napoleon.\textsuperscript{195}

The self-righteous and punitive policy towards Napoleon’s former German accomplices was held-back by the Tsar and Metternich who were keen to restrict Stein’s authority.\textsuperscript{196} Metternich was diplomatically adroit to exploit the common fear of Prussia to get Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg and Westphalia to transfer their allegiance and contribute military resources to the coalition in return for Austrian guarantees of protection. There were a civil uprisings in the Hansa ports, the Grand Duchy of Berg and Jerome was driven out of the kingdom of Westphalia by defections and political instability.\textsuperscript{197} The revolt of Hamburg was not so fortunate: after years of economic hardship the burghers rose against the imperial garrison in anticipation of liberation. A flying column of 1,500 Cossacks did make it to the city only to be overmatched by the arrival of a stronger 6,000-man force under Marshal
Davout. Those citizens who could not flee were bombarded into surrender whereupon the French sequestered the property of notable rebels such as Frederick Perthes.¹⁹⁸

As the empire recoiled in central and northern Germany many garrisons were left stranded in fortified towns and cities Dresden, Torgau and Mainz. The resultant sieges worsened the destitution, hunger and disease for the civilian inhabitants.¹⁹⁹ To conserve food supplies in Hamburg 20,000 people were expelled around Christmas and New Year (an unknown number of whom died of exposure and starvation) and Davout prolonged the city’s agony by holding out until the end of May.²⁰⁰ Clausewitz must have been aware of these events because the Russo-German Legion helped lay siege to Harburg-Hamburg and crossed the Rhine in mid-March to blockade Antwerp.²⁰¹ Clausewitz does not always go into civil affairs because of most of his writings are from a military perspective. In *On War* he thus criticises the ‘senseless march through Switzerland to get to Langres’ without acknowledging the financial and political pressure 200,000 men brought to bear on the country to sever its ties with France.²⁰²

In other writings Clausewitz did express great moral concern about the side-effects of military supply. The passage of armies, the effects of bad harvests, rises in debts, the disruption of trade and reduced revenues of state all meant that the Rhineland region was in a poor economic condition after the wars.²⁰³ Clausewitz witnessed the poverty first-hand when he was sent to draw up plans for the defence of Cologne and Trier.²⁰⁴ During a month-long tour through the Eifel Mountains in April 1817 he witnessed the pitiful effects of famine and described the ‘wasted figures, scarcely human in appearance, creeping around the fields trying to glean some nourishment from unharvested, immature, and already half-rotten potatoes.’²⁰⁵ Clausewitz protested that quartering of troops on the Rhinelanders without adequate compensation was not helping the situation and his concerns were passed on to Gneisenau, Chancellor Hardenberg and Minister of War General Boyen.²⁰⁶

**Conclusion**

During the campaign in Russia Clausewitz witnessed terrible humanitarian suffering and he opposed scorched-earth actions as ineffective because Napoleon’s army would face logistical disaster regardless of whether the Russians ruined their own land or not. Despite the immense costs to civilians the protracted defence did exhaust the invaders thereby allowing Russia, Prussia and Austria to mount a successful counter-offensive. The dreadful aspects of a people’s war were averted by the subordination of popular energies to state control and conventional warfare. The decisive battles of 1813 led to the conquest of Saxony and
dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine. Although Clausewitz did not provide a proper course of action toward enemy confederates he did oppose the harsh exploitation of lands like Mecklenburg-Schwerin or the Rhineland. This finally brings the narrative back to France and how the allies managed to invade the country without kindling the same kind of national resistance as in the revolutionary period.


14 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21, pp. 49-50; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 22, pp. 29-30; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21, p. 93.

15 CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21-26, pp. 50-51; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21-27, pp. 30-31; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 21-26, pp. 93-94; CvC, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 56-58, p. 59; Graham, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 57-59, pp. 37-38; H&P, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Para. 56-58, p. 98; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 8, Para. 4, p. 343, <http://clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegel832/Book8.htm#8>; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 8, Para. 3, <http://clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk8ch08.html>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 8, Para. 3-4, p. 613.


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40 H&P, Bk. VII, Ch. 6, Para. 8-9, p. 529; CvC, Bk. VII, Ch. 6, Para. 7-8, <http://clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegel1832/Book7.htm#6>; Graham, Bk. VII, Ch. 6, Para. 7-8, <http://clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK7ch06.html>.


166.


52 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, pp. 160-163.


56 Connelly, p. 162.

57 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 163.

58 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 163.


61 CvC, Bk. V, Ch. 12, Para. 12, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book5.htm#12>; Graham, Bk. V, Ch. 12, Para. 12, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/Bk5ch12.html>; H&P, Bk. V, Ch. 12, Para. 12,
62 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, pp. 159-163.


65 Ségur, pp. 32-43, 167.


68 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 164.

69 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 164, p. 169; Parkinson, pp. 176-177.

70 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, pp. 165-167; Paret (1976), p. 225.

71 Ségur, pp. 93-98, 106-114.

72 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 168.


74 Clausewitz, 'From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)', eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 168; Parkinson, pp. 173-176.

101; Parkinson, pp. 173-176.

76 Clausewitz, ‘From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, pp. 168-169; Parkinson, p. 176.

77 Connelly, p. 172.

78 Clausewitz, ‘From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, pp. 201-202; H&P, Bk. II, Ch. 5, Para. 60, p. 166 and Bk. VIII, Ch. 9, Para. 75-76, p. 627; Aron (1986), pp. 207-208; Seeley (1895), pp. 176-177.


83 Clausewitz, ‘From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 172; Parkinson, pp. 179-180.

84 Clausewitz, ‘From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 170.


86 Ségur, pp. 155-158; Parkinson, p. 182.


90 Clausewitz, ‘From the Campaign of 1812 in Russia (1823-1825)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p.


97 Segur, pp. 140-141, 224-225; Beardsley, p. 87.

98 Segur, pp. 259-262.


103 Segur, pp. 281-286; Connelly, pp. 179-181; Parkinson, p. 194-195.


105 A. M. Martin, p. 259; R. E. Dupuy and T. N. Dupuy, p. 830.


342-343, 347; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 8, Para. 1-8, 18;
<http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK8ch08.html>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 8, Para. 1-10,
16, pp. 613-614, 616; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 9, Para. 75 , p. 363; Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 9, Para. 76,
<http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK8ch09.html>; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 9, Para. 72, p.
626; Brodie (1989b), pp. 678-680; Martin van Creveld, 'The Eternal Clausewitz', in Handel, ed.
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116 Graham, Bk. VIII, Ch. 4, Para. 48,
<http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK8ch04.html>; CvC, Bk. VIII, Ch. 4, Para. 48,
pp. 322-323; H&P, Bk. VIII, Ch. 4, Para. 47, p. 600.

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‘Your dear mother’s health worries me. In Landshut the two of you can on no account stay, because we take position at Schweidnitz today and either give battle, so the stay in Landshut is too risky, or in a few days retreat further still, so Landshut will be totally exposed. In addition, the anxiety and number of rumours in this place will rise with every moment. My advice is therefore, go immediately over the
Bohemian border, and perhaps in Theresienstadt [modern Terezin] or otherwise a small place in Bohemia, wait on the news out of Prague and other further events, or go to Cudowa, where you are near the border and will be assuredly be safe up the last moments of the war. The journey in such fine weather will not harm your mother, only I recommend you rest [along the way]. There are no grounds for dejection, because the worst thing that we can encounter, the only thing I fear, is a bad peace arrangement of the Princes among each other [with Napoleon], but that cannot be the subject of personal distress and anxiety for you. The army is in a very good condition and is probably now stronger than the enemy. The military situation of the enemy is a desperate one and only the miserable pusillanimity of the Führer [Frederick William III] could see things differently. Later one will see this clearly and everyone will be indignant. I urge you and Mamma to remain calm; we will see through this epoch of concerns happily because there is no possibility that we can encounter ultimate disaster.' 


159 Blumenthal, p. 111; Hippler, p. 198; Paret (1976), pp. 218-219, 236.


161 Dörpapel, p. 509.


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178 Vattel, Bk. I, Ch. 23, Sec. 279-295, Bk. III, Ch. 6, Sec. 78-102, Bk. III, Ch. 7, Sec. 103-135, trans. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 249-258, 512-541.


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Chapter Six
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The Fall of France

Up to this point the dissertation has largely focused on Clausewitz’s ideas and experiences of waging defensive warfare and the implications for civilian populations. The final campaigns in France and Poland provide a better opportunity to discuss the dilemmas of attack and address certain questions from Clausewitz’s point of view. Namely, why did France fall so easily despite Napoleon’s genius for war? Where was the people’s war Clausewitz so feared? How should one treat a conquered nation in his opinion? What can be done to defeat an enemy people should they take up arms? Finally, why was Clausewitz so harsh on the Polish desires for independence? These inquiries will reveal a Clausewitz who urged political restraint towards the French people and understood that it was their lack of involvement which brought the wars to a speedy conclusion. On the negative side, Clausewitz expressed some militarist or cynical views regarding Prussian policy and the future of war.

The prelude to invasion

By the end of 1813 the Napoleonic Empire was coming apart all over Europe: the Continental System broke down; Wellington completed the conquest of Spain; Bavaria signed a treaty of alliance, as did various other German satellites; Holland was evacuated; the Illyrian provinces were lost to the Austrians and a Croat rising; the kingdoms of Italy and Naples were destabilised by civil insurrections and Joachim Murat entered into negotiations.1  When Napoleon rejected an ultimatum to restore France back to its old boundaries the allies pledged themselves on his overthrow. To that end, success would ultimately depend on how the people reacted to foreign armies on their soil.2

In The Campaigns of Frederick the Great of 1741-1762 Clausewitz concedes the military potential of raiding with the purpose of causing divisions or capturing/destroying magazines and material. He then lays down three warnings: first, that while this form of attack costs little we must be sure the enemy does not punish us with stronger methods; second, that while there is some leverage to be had in letting the troops run wild this provokes cruelty and evil on all sides; and third, one must consider the mood of the people in order not to arouse new enemy forces in the equivalent of a Landwehr or Landsturm.3

It is interesting that in On War Clausewitz advocated cooperation with the enemy’s disaffected subjects rather than doing their lives and property any harm in order discredit the enemy government or tempt a portion of the enemy’s military forces away from a decisive
engagement where its presence could make a difference. Clausewitz did not probe the humanitarian or escalatory effects of tit-for-tat raiding or diversions, nor did he think that such operations had much potential of success: he instead warns against dividing one’s strength in the face of a strong force or arousing a people in arms. \(^5\)

Just like the possibility of an emotional backlash against defeat in battle, a penetrating venture into previously untouched enemy territory, whether it be a full-blown invasion or a simple diversion, could bring previously dormant forces to life. When a region is suddenly threatened capable officials on the spot may be able to mobilise a militia by distributing arms to the populace. The attacker should always try to avoid provoking the enemy nation into arming itself for guerrilla resistance because in that case ‘one may be digging one’s own grave.’ \(^6\) A chapter on the culminating point of victory attributes the decreasing strength of attack partly to the increased resistance aroused in the enemy populace: sometimes they may be stunned and panic-stricken enough to lay down arms, at other times they may be seized by a fit of enthusiasm and rush to arms. The probable reaction will depend on the character of the people and the government, the nature of the country, and its political affiliations. \(^7\)

**Weakening public support**

In October-November 1813 an English army crossed from northern Spain into south-western France where Wellington repeated a threat made by the Spanish twenty years ago: unless the French fought openly the civilian population would face reprisals. \(^8\) Wellington was actually so worried about the Iberian troops taking revenge that he dismissed these contingents and put his forces at a numerical disadvantage. \(^9\) Fortunately, the opposing forces withdrew, the Bonapartists fled, and the cities of Bordeaux and Toulouse welcomed the invaders as liberators. \(^10\) There was no revolutionary government or Terror to keep people in check as was the case in the early 1790s; Jeanbon Saint-André had been a Jacobin member of the Committee of Public Safety before he became a Napoleonic prefect and scoffed at the way France folded in the face of the defeat. \(^11\)

Clausewitz had sensed long ago that enthusiasm for military service was somehow lacking in France. While a prisoner there he saw thirty to forty conscripts tied two by two and led by gendarmes to the prefectures. This gave him hope ‘because the shameful procedure suggests [the need for] extreme compulsion’. \(^12\) His travel journal remarked that although French state may exhibit extreme militarism, ‘no trace of this tendency could be found in the character of the nation’. \(^13\) By 1814 the dissipation of popular support was evident in the widespread draft avoidance and the failure of prefects and deputies to fulfil their obligations.
Old grievances resurfaced in regions like the Vendée and Gard, while public opinion in Lyon, Burgundy, Dijon, Alsace-Lorraine tended to be more pro-Napoleon. It was fortunate that Napoleon had little time or personal inclination for an ochlocratic people’s war and stuck to a more exclusive soldier’s war.14

The campaign of 1814

If Napoleon could destroy Marshal Blücher’s Army of Silesia, the centre of gravity in Clausewitz’s opinion, he could then turn on General Schwarzenberg’s Army of Bohemia. In February, Napoleon inflicted a string of defeats on invaders by hitting their over-extended and divided forces at Champaubert, Montmirail, Chateau-Thierry, Vauchamps, Étages, and Mormant and Montereau.15 These victories helped inspire the nation and peasants living in Champagne and Île de France to take up arms.16 The general fear was heightened by the appearance of the Cossacks and the pillage of Soissons.17 The Tsar reiterated that the political purpose of the campaign was not the contrivance of destruction and strife but the restoration of France so that her sciences, arts and trades could flourish to advantage of all nations.18

Even with these attempts to keep the war within the bounds of humanity and sound political reason there was a real danger of escalation. Wellington’s niece Lady Burghersh had witnessed the collateral damage and scorched-earth caused by the campaigns in Germany and feared that the same kind of pillaging and requisitioning by the invaders of France would inflame its inhabitants with hatred.19 Blücher pushed his soldiers so hard that Bülow and Yorck complained the half-starved army would resemble a shameful band of robbers.20 ‘If we stand still and wait we exhaust our supplies and render the people here desperate’ wrote Blücher, ‘they will rise en masse against us’.21 Clausewitz noted that Blücher’s victory at Loan on 9th March had no great military effect. Fear and defiance was meanwhile being instilled in those who witnessed the exhaustion of the provinces.22

Napoleon was unable to decisively destroy any of the allied armies and inflicting minor defeats fired the Prussian rank and file with a greater desire for revenge.23 The Austro-Prussian forces rallied from their setbacks, bypassed Napoleon’s field army and by marching on Paris precipitated a political crisis which forced his abdication.24 Paris had been left relatively unfortified as a show confidence and after a brief and bloody battle on the outskirts, its many liberal, royalist and Jacobin inhabitants welcomed the prospect of foreign liberation.25 Marshals Auguste de Marmont and Édouard Mortier took it upon themselves to save Paris from armed assault by requesting an armistice. Napoleon honoured their agreement and chose not to prolong the country’s suffering by inciting a people’s war.26

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The failure of peace

For Clausewitz the campaign of 1814 was not free of human errors, weak personalities and diplomatic considerations, all of which act like water on the blazing fire of war. Both sides were nevertheless driven by greater political motives and human energies so war closer approached its natural state. He was amazed at its speed and intensity: ‘In the space of only eight months the theater of operations changed from the Oder to the Seine. Proud Paris had for the first time to bow her head, and the terrible Bonaparte lay bound and chained.’

Clausewitz was at first disgusted by the lenient terms of the Treaty of Fontainebleau (11th April) by which the allies, from a position of weakness, had not prosecuted Napoleon for his atrocities (‘Gräuelthaten’) but instead granted the emperor and his dependents some six million francs to continue their life of luxury: ‘Bonaparte is as obstinate as a Jew and just as shameless’ fumed Clausewitz. He worried that under the electrified circumstances and political tensions a new king would struggle to gain the support of the generals and unsatisfied parties.

Once Napoleon was banished to Elba the allied politicians got down the business of redrawing the map of Europe. The House of Orange was restored to the Netherlands and the Belgian departments were incorporated under Dutch rule. After much squabbling and the possibility of war between the former allies Congress of Poland reached a settlement: the Grand Duke Constantine took charge of the parts of Poland-Lithuania for the Tsar; Austria retained Galicia and district of Tarnopol; and Kraków became free city. Prussian got the Duchy of Posen, the cities of Danzig and Thorn, as well as parts of the Rhineland and Saxony. In response to patriotic demonstrations in Leipzig General-Commandant Bismarck told people to calm down or face harsh punishment. The Austrians also found it hard to stop civil violence in the Veneto. The kingdom of Naples was destabilised by bands sent over from Sicily by Ferdinand IV and Murat was eventually executed by the re-established Bourbon authorities.

The restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in France was undermined by post-war economic and political problems. Clausewitz identified the passion of the nation, the affection of the marshals, the lack of gold and condition of the National Guard to be the fundamental liabilities. In March 1815 Napoleon returned to France where he was well-received by the citizens of Grenoble and Lyon. Government troops under Marshal Ney who were sent to apprehend the outlaw defected to Napoleon’s cause and Louis XVIII fled the capital on 19/20th March. Napoleon tried to broaden his base of support to encompass old
revolutionaries like Barère and Carnot and liberal opportunists like Benjamin Constant. The government worked to promulgate a more liberal constitution and plebiscites showed strong public support in east, less so in the south and west. When Clausewitz heard of Napoleon’s escape he worried most of all about the reaction of the French people. He felt assured that beyond the screams of the Parisian mobs the majority of soldiers and civilians would continue to support of the Bourbons or remain passive bystanders. To avert the possibility of civil war and unite the nation Napoleon would try quick conquests to awaken the vanity of the people and the army. It was of utmost importance in Clausewitz’s opinion to intervene quickly and save another year or more of fighting.

The campaign of 1815

At the Congress of Vienna the Quadruple Alliance renewed their mutual pledges for a second invasion to overthrow the regime. Displaying once again his amazing energy and determination Napoleon extemporised a field force some 188,000-men strong with another 100,000 regulars stationed in forts and depots. An additional 300,000 hastily-raised levies went into training from March to June. This was not quite enough to match the 680,000-700,000 allied soldiers being mobilised so Napoleon went on the offensive. He first set his sights on the forces gathering in Belgium: Wellington’s Anglo-Dutch army of 95,000 men and Blücher’s 124,000 Prussians (not including a corps of 26,000 in Luxembourg). Clausewitz experienced the campaign first-hand by serving as chief-of-staff to General Johann von Thielmann’s III Army Corps. This force indirectly helped the victory at Waterloo by using the battles of Ligny and Wavre as distractions.

Clausewitz later pondered over the reasons why Napoleon took just 130,000 against Wellington and Blücher and left almost two-thirds of his strength on other fronts or on internal guard duty. The reason was political: Napoleon’s position was so tenuous he had to maintain a strong impression in the eyes of the people and guard against uprisings. Napoleon may have talked about raising all Frenchmen aged 20-60 years into 3,000 battalions of National Guards, thus giving him over 2,000,000 combatants but Clausewitz thought this was a fantasy impossible to put into practice. Even if Napoleon had destroyed the Anglo-Prussian forces he would still have to face the overwhelming might of Austria and Russia.

Put simply, political conditions had not been aligned for Napoleon to draw on the manpower, materials, fortified cities and other national assets of France. To fight a defence-in-depth or a true war of insurrection required in theory a completely loyal, devoted, undivided and enthusiastic people. The Bonapartist party was in reality opposed openly in the
Legislative Assembly by royalists and republicans. The National Guard served to watch over the city-populace rather than defend them from attack. The nation was too divided and unprepared to meet the costs of a protracted and exhausting war so Napoleon was forced to adopt an aggressive battle-centric strategy more akin to Alexander of Macedonia than Alexander of Russia. Had he won the Battle of Waterloo (Belle Alliance) on 18 June the victory would have electrified the 'self-satisfied French' and demoralised both his external and internal enemies. The psychological and political effects of defeat however meant the way lay open to Paris and overthrow of the regime.

It is interesting that Clausewitz notes the allies adjusted their line of advance to avoid areas not already traversed and spoilt by the retreating army so they could arrive at Paris not too unduly weak. The Prussian advance instilled fear and Gneisenau had a terrifying drumbeat sounded out at the head of the 4th Corps deliberately for this effect. Clausewitz explains how the Prussian army marched in two columns, the left wing consisting of I Corps, the right consisting of IV Corps, with III Corps following. The left column advanced to Avesnes, Guise and La Fère, subjecting each garrisoned-place to bombardment with mixed degrees of success. General Zieten and the guns of I Corps targeted the military defences of Avenses (held by 1,700 national guardsmen and 200 veterans). Unfortunately, one shell hit the fort's main powder magazine and laid the town waste. Clausewitz's travelogue described the collateral damage inside Avesnes when its garrison surrendered:

'This place has a rather strong fortress and the city itself is not without significance. General Zieten had shelled it for several days, and by chance one of the shells hit the powder magazine. The explosion was so enormous that two-thirds of the city lay in ruins. I have never seen a picture of such destruction in my entire life. We stayed in the house that had suffered the least damage; even so the door of my room had been lifted out of its hinges and the main entrance to the house had been wrecked to such an extent that it could not be opened. The number of inhabitants killed by the explosion was estimated at more than 100. Entire streets were full of rubble and impassable; in other streets all the roofs were gone. The scene was highly depressing, and I will never forget the impression made on me by a young child, who was looking out the window of such a shattered house and rejoiced at the sight of our troops marching by.'

From Dammartin at Paris on 29 June 1815 Clausewitz wrote that he found the mood of the people totally dull with no trace of decisive hate against Napoleon, and even less supporters for the Bourbons. In the best case they were open to a republican constitution, the son of Bonaparte, or even an Orleans. His campaign history explains that Napoleon's support in the National Legislature and Chamber of Deputies had dissolved due to the intrigues of Joseph Fouché and the emperor was again forced to abdicate on 22 June. The chambers named a commission of five and a diplomatic delegation was sent to the invaders appealing
for a ceasefire to once again spare Paris from a bloody siege. On 3rd July all sides agreed on the cessation of hostilities, I Corps marched into Paris on the 7th and Louis XVIII returned the following day. Clausewitz’s life-long struggle was finally over and his hatred of the French had by now turned to a grudging admiration of their martial spirit as well as the nation’s beautiful art, architecture, royal palaces and countryside. Clausewitz was too exhausted for thoughts of revenge and just wanted to enjoy peace with his wife.

Winning peace

The dilemma of how exactly to make the transition from war to peace, or the *jus post bellum* tradition of how to treat a defeated enemy in order to ensure a lasting peace was not entirely explored by Clausewitz. ‘Wars begin at the will of anyone, but they do not end at anyone’s will’ wrote Niccolò Machiavelli. His treatise *The Prince* addressed the problem of how deal with the inevitable grievances of a defeated people by arguing while there may be those willing to change masters in nearly every case there would be certain individuals and potential troublemakers to remove by means of exile, imprisonment or execution.

Machiavelli advised that when one was conquering a mixed principality for the first time local languages, customs and institutions should be left untouched and the country garrisoned with a minimum of troops because it was merely an expensive way to cause resentment. Going to the effort of a second conquest or squashing a rebellion was generally seen as justification for harsher punishment. The choice and severity of methods varied from case to case according to the history of the two sides and unique political conditions such as whether the enemy society was an empire centralised around a single overlord like Darius III, a patchwork of feudal lords loosely assembled around a weak king like medieval France, or a popular republic; the latter being the worst situation.

Machiavelli explained that the Romans and medieval city-states resolved their wars by bringing the enemy to battle or laying waste to his territory, after which they would either augment a defeated people and win their loyalty, or ruin them so frightfully that they could never be a threat again. The oration of Cato and the destruction of Carthage had a powerful resonance in European culture because it encapsulated the cleansing notion of cartharsis. Over the centuries, notions of chivalry and religion as well as political reason and sense of balance of power encouraged disputing princes to wage wars according to just aims and confer mercy on the subjects taken from a rival. Eighteenth century philosophers expected rulers to wage war in defence, to prosecute their rights, or prevent some injury, but never to aggressively destroy other states.
Returning once again to Vattel we find the argument that all nations are entitled to certain rights such as independence, equality, justice, and the freedom to interact with other nations as they all strive to better the existence of mankind.\footnote{Vattel rejected the Roman treatment of conquered peoples yet he did permit reprisals against property and people so long as it fell short of death or corporal punishment.} One may wage war for security and self-defence and assist another people to uphold such values or punish offenders, madmen and religious fanatics.\footnote{It is dishonourable to kill the opposing king, execute prisoners, or harm the ordinary people unless they take up arms.} Vattel rejected the Roman treatment of conquered peoples yet he did permit reprisals against property and people so long as it fell short of death or corporal punishment.\footnote{If a fierce and savage people do not submit to the conqueror then a state of war still exists so he may even, if necessary, keep them some time in a kind of slavery until their impetuous spirit has been curbed.}

In language similar to Clausewitz's note dated 10 July 1827, Vattel argues one may punish the enemy by depriving him of some his rights, taking from him some towns and provinces, imposing tribute.\footnote{In Clausewitz's estimation Görres was an intelligent man with an admirable ability to rouse the feelings of others. He was dangerously unreliable in his political allegiances and subject to the same kind of passions which had consumed the} It is dishonourable to kill the opposing king, execute prisoners, or harm the ordinary people unless they take up arms.\footnote{If a fierce and savage people do not submit to the conqueror then a state of war still exists so he may even, if necessary, keep them some time in a kind of slavery until their impetuous spirit has been curbed.}

\textit{Political reason and the passion for revenge}

The Revolutionary Wars had brought forth primordial passions for destruction with the rhetoric of national survival, regenerative struggle and righteous fury. Men like Saint Just had compared the struggle to the Punic Wars and talked of exterminating their enemies like Carthage. Napoleon on the other hand preferred to dominate and exploit defeated societies for economic advantage and glory.\footnote{In Clausewitz's estimation Görres was an intelligent man with an admirable ability to rouse the feelings of others. He was dangerously unreliable in his political allegiances and subject to the same kind of passions which had consumed the} The policy of his enemies by contrast was in danger of being emancipated by popular passions for revenge. Stein had once confessed a desire in 1794 to see the capital destroyed,\footnote{In Clausewitz's estimation Görres was an intelligent man with an admirable ability to rouse the feelings of others. He was dangerously unreliable in his political allegiances and subject to the same kind of passions which had consumed the} and Russian colleagues derogatively likened him to Cato.\footnote{In Clausewitz's estimation Görres was an intelligent man with an admirable ability to rouse the feelings of others. He was dangerously unreliable in his political allegiances and subject to the same kind of passions which had consumed the} Years of humiliating oppression had nurtured intensely Francophobic feelings in Clausewitz yet he usually distrusted those who were ruled more by their hearts than their heads.\footnote{In Clausewitz's estimation Görres was an intelligent man with an admirable ability to rouse the feelings of others. He was dangerously unreliable in his political allegiances and subject to the same kind of passions which had consumed the} Clausewitz disparaged for example the journalist Josef Görres who wrote for the \textit{Rheinischer Merkur} until the journal's suppression in 1816:

\begin{quote}
'During Bonaparte's reign Görres kept quite still, like all others who later became so noisy. Once the power of France was broken, however, he came out enthusiastically for the German cause in his Merkur.'\footnote{In Clausewitz's estimation Görres was an intelligent man with an admirable ability to rouse the feelings of others. He was dangerously unreliable in his political allegiances and subject to the same kind of passions which had consumed the}
\end{quote}

In 1815 Görres felt that while it was physically impossible to annihilate 30,000,000 people the allies had to take revenge against the French for the violation of persons and goods during their arrogant conquest of Europe.\footnote{In Clausewitz's estimation Görres was an intelligent man with an admirable ability to rouse the feelings of others. He was dangerously unreliable in his political allegiances and subject to the same kind of passions which had consumed the}
revolutionary leaders. For all the rhetoric and propaganda of fiery civilian intellectuals and soldiers it was the politicians who resolved on a policy to liberate France from the tyranny of Bonaparte.

The Treaty of Paris (30th May 1814) was quite lenient by the standards of other centuries; there were no mass shootings of civilians or the burning down of cities. Metternich and the English Viscount Castlereagh were so committed to the Bourbon restoration that no war indemnity was imposed and the country was accorded the boundaries of 1792. When this peace failed the Prussian military chiefs and the British Prime Minister Lord Liverpool wanted to punish the French people for embracing Napoleon. Castlereagh, Wellington, Metternich and the Tsar were more suspicious of Prussia’s intentions and persevered for a long-term settlement to reinstall the monarchy and restore France to the European balance of power.

Blücher and Gneisenau had wanted a triumphant entry into Paris, Napoleon executed in revenge for the murder of the Duke of Enghien and the monuments of his victories destroyed because they were affronts to the sorrows inflicted upon the violated nations of Europe. The vindictive nature of the soldiers was cause for much complaint over lodgings, rations and day-to-day civil-military relations. The authorities protested that the violence could escalate into another full-blown conflict. Wellington and Frederick William waded into the crisis and the embittered Prussian chiefs relented. Clausewitz was not a participant of the decision-making process and was moved around with Thielmann’s Corps through Paris to Fontainebleau, then Orleans and finally to Le Mans to assure public order in the north-west. In a letter to his wife dated 12th July Clausewitz expressed the opinion that the best policy was to deprive French of their weapons without damaging their pride so the self-righteous attitude of the Prussians was wrong:

‘You can easily judge in how false and hostile a position this puts us toward the French and toward Louis XVIII, the more so since the English secretly favored the king’s entry [into Paris], since they remain in camp, don’t levy contributions, and don’t loot. The worst seems to me that we fall between two stools—we spoil our relations with the French government and the French people simultaneously—and we don’t really know what we want. Our king arrived in Paris the evening before last, and as he revoked the order to blow up the Pont de Iéna (after three small mines had been set off without the least effect) the drama turned to farce and the French displeasure with us is not much increased. Be that as it may, I find our behaviour lacking in that nobility that best suits the victor, and in the conflux of these peculiar actions and reactions it even acquires a degree of gaucheness and absurdity.’

Clausewitz wrote that his greatest desire was for this shameful epilogue to come to an end:
I dislike this position of having my foot upon someone’s neck, and the endless conflicts of interests and parties are something I do not understand. Historically, the English will play the better role in this catastrophe, because they do not seem to have come here with a passion for revenge and for settling old scores, but rather like a master who wishes to discipline with proud coldness and immaculate purity; in brief, with greater distinction than ourselves.\textsuperscript{83}

The English had under differing historical circumstances in the past brought fire and sword to France and her colonial settlements in the past.\textsuperscript{84} The burning of Washington the previous August showed that British commanders could be extremely vindictive towards the civilian property.\textsuperscript{85} Clausewitz knew what it felt like to have one’s country conquered and wrote that love and loyalty take time to take root in the heart of men but hatred and vengeance can be ignited in an instant.\textsuperscript{86} Repression only produces more hatred and enmity.\textsuperscript{87} “No disaster can make the French give in completely, not even humiliation” wrote Clausewitz in 1815, “They regard us with a fierce, cold arrogance, with a scarcely concealed air of wickedness”.\textsuperscript{88}

Clausewitz opposed disrespectful measures towards an enemy laid prostrate on moral as well as practical grounds. In his experience the targeting of civilians only enraged human passions; the burning of Smolensk and Moscow had an inflammatory effect on the Russians and new disgraces committed in France would only provoke another people’s war.\textsuperscript{89} From Etampes he wrote to Gneisenau on 24th July that military defeat and a punitive occupation had not sufficed to reduce the people to humility and deception.\textsuperscript{90} Carnot was already spreading false rumours and the military occupation risked arousing an armed rebellion. The experience of Spain had shown that a rising of the land (‘Aufstand des Landes’) is not an easy thing to disarm.\textsuperscript{91}

In another letter sent from Le Mans dated 18th August Clausewitz repeated the danger of arousing a people’s war in the Vendée.\textsuperscript{92} He suggested Gneisenau read Alphonse Beauchamp’s Histoire de la guerre de la Vendée et des Chouans (Paris: 1806) and the Mémoirs de Madame la Marquise de La Rochejaquelin (Paris: 1815).\textsuperscript{93} It will be recalled that Le Mans had been the place where the insurgents and their civilian followers suffered a massacre on 12th December 1793. Clausewitz describes how his room still bore the collateral damage of the battle and to this day the land is mainly royalist while are the towns more republican. There was now a common hatred gathering toward the new government and its foreign guardians:

‘... the requisition of cloth and shoes, the confiscation of public moneys, the nature of foreign occupation, which has been unknown in these parts since the Hundred Years’
War, the disarming of the National Guard and of the countryside to the extent already carried out—these measures have already alienated opinion, and I believe that inconsiderate treatment could easily provoke people into insurrection.\textsuperscript{94}

If the people were to rebel Clausewitz does not offer a practical military solution. Any attempt at an unconditional disarmament of the land would encounter various difficulties such as the ‘disgusting’ nature of the terrain and the fact the people could simply hide their weapons thus reverting to non-combatant status.\textsuperscript{95} In short, it was useless to try and would only increase the bitterness: ‘It is unwise to push to the limit the exasperation of these people, who took up arms from the same cause as we did, only with more enthusiasm and greater daring’.\textsuperscript{96}

In other letters Clausewitz warned Marie that the country was too unsafe to visit since there were bands of armed men openly roaming the Champagne. He lamented the diminished magnanimity of the allies since the Congress at Vienna, Prussia’s punitive attitude, the unpopular requisitioning of its armies, and the division of the country between royalists, revolutionaries and Bonapartists. If the nation had to be pacified by force the armies would occupy the whole country in a matter of weeks only to find this would cause more tensions.\textsuperscript{97} On 21\textsuperscript{8} July he wrote:

‘[We] have lots of unpleasant collisions [with the inhabitants] because we find conditions so confused that the idea of friend and foe is hardly distinguishable. I have little peace of mind about the future ... it is with horror that I think we should spend the whole summer in this situation.’\textsuperscript{98}

It is not easy to understand why Clausewitz avoided the issue of how to deal with an insurrection and subscribed to the idea that it was so difficult to suppress when in other materials, particularly those written in the later 1820s, he suggests it cannot withstand regular forces. Granted, there was no clear counter-insurgency doctrine at this time. General Hoche had nevertheless set an good military example; less disdainful at least than the scorched-earth and massacres Turreau had used against the Vendée.\textsuperscript{99} The region rose again in 1815 and the Chouans reappeared in Brittany only to be held in check by Napoleon’s security forces. A division of regulars under the charge of Jean Maximilien Lamarque crushed the Vendéans at Légué on 20\textsuperscript{6} June and peace was made five days later.\textsuperscript{100} Government troops proved sufficient to suppress the royalists and insurgent militia or miquelets in the department of the Gard.\textsuperscript{101}

Despite these examples it was generally believed by the Germans who served in Spain that a united people’s war was unstoppable and involved uncontrollable horror which neither side could entirely control.\textsuperscript{102} In 1815 Albert Jean Michel Rocca for example
published his account of the French atrocities he witnessed there and helped perpetuate the myth that a national war was impossible to subdue because the terror of arms had no effect.\textsuperscript{103} That year there were a warning signs of an impending humanitarian catastrophe: in the Alsace region the Prussian and Hessian occupiers under Grand Duke of Würtemberg took reprisals against guerrilla resistance by razing villages and executing inhabitants.\textsuperscript{104}

\textit{Peace prevails}

It was fortunate that the difficult job restoring a lasting peace within France fell into the skilful hands of Wellington and the French Foreign and Prime Minister Armand-Emmanuel du Plessis, Duke of Richelieu.\textsuperscript{105} There were of course incidences of sporadic mob violence such as the massacre of Maulmont's garrison at Nîmes and state-organised repression, which claimed the lives of many Bonapartists including General Ramel and Marshal Brune and Ney.\textsuperscript{106} The White Terror gradually abated as administrators and civil servants were replaced and the regime concentrated on more liberal reforms and manipulative policies designed to stave off the revolutionaries and ensure that moderates and royalists kept winning elections to the Chamber of Deputies.\textsuperscript{107} Wellington was careful not to undermine the reputation of the Bourbon regime and attempted to reduce the imposition of the British army with strict disciplinary regulations for both rank and file, as well as prompt legal responses to the complaints of civilian communities.\textsuperscript{108}

The Second Treaty of Paris (20\textsuperscript{th} November 1815) was much more stringent than the first. France was forced to give up more territory, pay an indemnity of 700,000,000 \textit{francs}, bear the costs of 150,000-200,000 allied troops, and find daily forage for 50,000 horses. The total costs of such indemnities and foreign occupation were in excess of 1,500,000,000.\textsuperscript{109} By late 1816 and early 1817 the huge strain of these financial demands led to a temporary suspension of payments and the allies agreed to reduce the size of their occupation forces.\textsuperscript{110} France was able to pay the war indemnity without interest and a conference of Aix-Chapelle transferred the remaining obligations to the banking houses Hope and Baring and Rothschild. The claims for damages and debts contracted in occupied countries went beyond what France could realistically pay so Wellington arbitrated for a fair settlement for all parties and even tried to tone down the hostile press in the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{111}

In the long run Richelieu, Wellington and thousands of other individuals such as Madame de Stael worked behind the scenes, pulling strings and soothing tensions.\textsuperscript{112} So successful were they at creating the right political, economic, and social conditions for France to fulfill the treaty stipulations that the occupying forces were able to pull out two years ahead.
of schedule. In later years Clausewitz wondered whether the allies had been too lenient in their caution not to inspire revenge. The flaring up of international tension and the potential threat of millions of armed Frenchman in 1831 showed that even a seemingly disarmed and pacifist nation could revive its spirits for war.

The future of war

After the wars, Clausewitz and contemporaries such as Lossau, Lilienstern and Jomini had time to reflect on events and the implications for the future. They were all impressed by the sheer scale and intensity with which armies and whole societies had gone to war. The result manifested itself most clearly in a higher incidence and scale of battles. Sometime around 1817-18 Clausewitz wrote Gneisenau an essay entitled ‘On Progression and Pause in Military Activity’. Like On War, it explains that the essence of war is like a swift, unstoppable or unimpeded advance: violent, bloody, and decided quickly by battle.

The essay then tries to explain why war in reality does not always conform to logical necessities and why both opponents are either unwilling or unable to achieve a major decision to throw the other down. The reasons most obvious to Clausewitz are the gambling mentality (‘Spieler Philosophie’) of the human mind, the dynamic between attack and defence and the concept of friction in the military machine. He comes close to linking the answer to changes in armed forces, their societies and the degree of involvement by the masses. If the war making-power of a people is only represented by the army which marches off to battle, the battle and campaign will be decisive. The battles of the ancients in Asia happened so fast and without hesitation because the troops could only stay together for short periods of time.

Clausewitz goes on to say that the wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the separation of the masses from war so it became a contest of armies and sieges. The art of war was largely preoccupied with tents, baggage, flour wagons, bakeries rather than bloody fighting. The Revolution and arrival of Bonaparte meant that a new structure of resistance had to be constructed: the Landwehr or arming of the people. The false weapons (‘die flashchen Waffen’) of war created in the eighteenth century were destroyed by the new outbreak of raw elements more accordance with the violent purpose or spirit of war. The old civilised ways were now a peculiarity of history:

‘The future will also have to show what wars will really look like. In the 17th and 18th century wars, only the first few battles are seen as the real war and what followed appears more as a management of the armed peace. In the first anger of the raised passions and offended interests, the parties attack each other heavily – through injury
and loss of blood they are brought back to their senses and cool down. But they still remain armed against each other, expecting from the other side words of surrender and peace. Each believes that during that time his opponent will commit a mistake or that they themselves will benefit from a lucky circumstance. It is not difficult to realise that if these beliefs are not based on real causes, they cannot be possible for both sides at the same time – these fantasies of hopes and expectations cannot find a place in theory.\textsuperscript{122}

The logic of war was inherently pressing towards destruction and the increasing involvement of the people only helped it to achieve that violent aim, and more suffering besides. Recent experience had revealed to Clausewitz and Fichte that war was longer about destroying armies and taming arrogant rulers like Napoleon but also subjugating entire peoples.\textsuperscript{123} It was fortunate that by 1815 Napoleon’s passion and political reason to make war was only faintly echoed by French people so the failing conqueror could not fall back on the support of people.\textsuperscript{124} After France was rehabilitated back into family of European nations its military strength was restored to a level that outmatched Prussia.\textsuperscript{125} Clausewitz predicted that European wars of the future would colossal struggles waged by millions of men and the full national resources of the state.\textsuperscript{126}

It was little wonder that Clausewitz was skeptical about the ability of humanitarianism or international relations to control war. Apart from the Congress of Vienna and a balance of power system, which had tended to check ambitions rulers like Frederick Barbarossa, Frederick the Great and Napoleon in the past, there was really no supranational authority or reliable mechanism for building coalitions to stop smaller states like Prussia or Poland being swallowed up by predatory powers. There was no moral authority to define or enforce the protection of non-combatants.\textsuperscript{127} Clausewitz therefore stood by the militaristic belief, which was consistent with Enlightenment philosophy, that a civilised state must stay strong and counteract the softness and human desire for an easy life, which debases a people in times of peace and growing prosperity, with an invigorating war from time to time.\textsuperscript{128}

After the wars the Prussian government tried to undo its military reforms, disband the Landsturm and incorporate the Landwehr units into the regular army because it was feared they would become vehicles for social revolution.\textsuperscript{129} As a professional soldier, Clausewitz had his fair share of criticism for part-time amateur soldiers. He pointed to their lack of horses and equestrian experience, sloppy drill, poor discipline and unreliability in combat. He also recognised that there was a social distain among the noble classes about serving alongside peasants and a horror of revolution. The risk of the latter was marginalised by the external danger of the giant powers to the East and West. The Landwehr and Landsturm were essential
safety mechanisms for raising large numbers of combatants and engaging the martial passions of the people to fend off foreign invasion.130

Public opinion and counter-insurgency

It is interesting that Clausewitz thought so much about popular passions being used in defence and gave little thought about how to defeat such elemental forces when mobilised on the enemy's side.131 The 1812 Principles of War fails to elaborate on how to gain public opinion other than to say it is won through great victories and the occupation of the enemy's capital.132 According to Beatrice Heuser Clausewitz 'doesn't solve this riddle of whether it is one's own or the enemy's public opinion one has to win, or perhaps even 'world opinion', a subject on which Clausewitz's colleague Rühle von Lilienstern was much more articulate.'133 In On War Clausewitz prescribes little on how to change the enemy's will or how to calm down, neutralise or remove the passions aroused in their people other than winning big spectacular battles, capturing capitals and negotiating a peace settlement from which he hopes the peace-loving or reasonable majority will accept.134

As we have shown, Clausewitz championed the defensive potential of guerrilla warfare and drafted some excellent ideas on its organisation, operational conduct and combat technique.135 Where he really failed was to offer a clear prescription of how to counter a hostile people's war and stop enemy civilians taking up arms.136 In 1812 Clausewitz hoped that there would be wars of the future in which neither side would be forced take recourse to the last measure of a people's uprising.137 Writing sometime in the mid-1820s he speculated that should Prussia ever go to war with France again, it could choose a line of advance from Strasbourg partly because it 'runs through rich, level, populated areas with few warlike inhabitants' and there was less danger of being exposed to 'extraordinary means of defense' by which he meant guerrilla operations.138 In some cases the problem will not materialise because the weaker side cannot take refuge in a Volksbewaffnung or lacks a proper militia system ('Landwehrstande').139

When insurgency does indeed become a problem On War merely hints at what might be done to stop it. One option is to garrison and police a hostile area in order to protect one's own lines of communication and officials.140 Clausewitz almost seems to repeat the advice of Johann von Ewald that soldiers should be kept disciplined and well-behaved towards the population, help repair any damages and earn the people's respect.141 Where there are periodic raids from irregular bands or partisans one's convoys and traffic can seek refuge in fortresses, staging posts and stopping places.142 Another passive measure, or action without a positive

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purpose, to oppose national levies is to provide armed escorts for vulnerable convoys or detach units to install military outposts and guard key stations, defiles and bridges.\textsuperscript{143} This obviously depletes the force of attack of an invading army but such is the ‘need to occupy the area in the rear so as to secure their lines of communication and exploit its resources’.\textsuperscript{144} The French had to assign some 70,000 troops for this purpose in Spain, more than the whole British force committed.\textsuperscript{145}

The horrifying example of the Vendée and Spain had shown Clausewitz that a counter-insurgent could try to demoralise the rebels by inhumane treatment and executions. The insurgents could in turn ‘repay atrocity with atrocity, outrage with outrage’ and lead the enemy ‘back into the boundaries of self-control and humanity.’\textsuperscript{146} In \textit{On War} Clausewitz drops hints about the punitive measures of the enemy: if inhabitants are collected in villages, the most restless and troublesome villages could be made to endure the imposition of troops garrisoned on them, or have their homes looted and burned down as punishment.\textsuperscript{147} This particular passage was referred by Sir Charles Dilke to oppose the scorched-earth and concentration camps used to undermine the guerrillas during the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902).\textsuperscript{148} Clausewitz does not advocate such methods of barbarism on either moral or practical grounds. The great emphasis on combat throughout \textit{On War} rather encourages the reader to disregard interdiction and terrorisation as minor investments that can yield only minor dividends.\textsuperscript{149}

Clausewitz’s work as a whole leads one to assume that the physical and moral resistance of a people’s war will collapse under concentrated blows of a professional army. Although counter-insurgency was more demanding in military virtues, because it required one’s own soldiers to be split up from the genius of commander,\textsuperscript{150} Clausewitz felt it was not beyond one’s power to conquer a general uprising.\textsuperscript{151} If the reader accepts that enemy insurgents are most useful in the framework of a national war (Nationalkriege) conducted principally by the regular army (das Heer), and operate best in difficult terrain by avoiding battle then it seems logical for their opponent to catch the insurgents in the open and subject them to the same demoralising slaughter deserving of the professional combatants.\textsuperscript{152} Clausewitz writes one can ‘direct sufficient force at its core, crush it, and take many prisoners. When that happens, the people will lose heart and, believing that the issue has been decided and further efforts would be useless, drop their weapons.’\textsuperscript{153}

This dissertation has already highlighted numerous cases in Switzerland, Italy and the Tyrol where this approach worked. It has also indicated that Clausewitz was dismissive of insurgents and militia as second-rate troops who cannot function in a debilitating atmosphere
too full of danger or cope with too many defeats because they lack special military virtues.\textsuperscript{154}
The last chapter of book eight forecasts a future war in France where the allies may have to face militia, national levies and hurriedly-mobilized rabble (‘Landmilizen, Volksbewaffnung, zusammengerafftes Gesinde’) in wooded country and mountainous areas and passes.\textsuperscript{155} A hostile local populace, supported by raiding parties or partisans (‘Streifparteien’), could disrupt the communications and supply of the armies. Clausewitz assumes that a corps of about 10,000 or 15,000 men, particularly strong in cavalry, will be able to drive off every partisan band (‘Parteigänger’) and serve as a link between the two offensives.\textsuperscript{156}

This may strike the reader as rather blunt and simplistic in light of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Yet other cases of guerrilla warfare in Western Europe, Africa, India and the Caucasus seemed to confirm its weakness to decisive combats.\textsuperscript{157} Clausewitz looked at the problem purely from the military standpoint of major war and did not develop a ‘hearts and minds’ approach, which should in itself be seen merely as policy by other means. It seems more natural and in keeping with the logic of war that the destruction of enemy combatants, soldiers, insurgents, militia, armed peasants, or whatever else they are called, will go on indefinitely until, as Jomini put it, the storms of human passions abate and people are brought back to their more rational senses or politics intervenes to make them put down their weapons.\textsuperscript{158}

The logic propounded in \textit{On War} and other texts like Vattel’s \textit{Law of Nations} largely supports the concept of destroying anyone and everyone who takes up arms. When an individual (whether they are a man, a women or a child) picks up a weapon (be it a rifle or rock) to use with hostile intent and make themselves a combatant they immediately expose themselves to the logical object(s) of war, strategy, combat, defence and attack all of which lead to the disarmament or destruction of the enemy armed forces. By merely picking a weapon the individual forfeits whatever peculiar protection that has been has socially defined by political conditions and enters an unforgiving realm of violence where they will remain a target for destruction so long they remain armed. ‘The day a man picks up his pike to become a soldier is the day he ceases to be a Christian’ wrote the sixteenth-century Spanish soldier Francisco de Valdés.\textsuperscript{159} Renowned jurists and theologians like Francisco de Vitoria similarly argued that anyone capable of bearing arms was a potential enemy.\textsuperscript{160}

If this military philosophy was not terrifying enough Clausewitz was also alarmed by the human passions and ideological politics fuelling the destructive wars of his lifetime maybe because, as Hans Rothfels put it, ‘they involved the very existence of the nations concerned and, as in the religious wars of the sixteenth century, they involved opposing
principles, opposing philosophies of life." In his own reflections on Clausewitz and war, T. E. Lawrence thought that it was ‘idiotic’ to put two incompatible philosophies or religions to the test of force ‘for while opinions were arguable, convictions needed shooting to be cured; and the struggle could end only when the supporters of one immaterial principle had no more means of resistance against the supporters of the other.’ When individuals resort to war they have essentially decided to kill their way to a political solution and the violence is restrained, barely, by humanitarian sentiment and political control. Unarmed persons will be targeted depending on human passions, political conditions, or whether it is an effective means to a political end, which it rarely was in Clausewitz’s opinion.

Ultimately, Clausewitz does not address the big problem of neutralising the passions aroused in a people’s war and cops out with the rather weak excuse that it was all relatively new. He wrote that arming the people brought about an erosion of conventional barriers and questioned whether it was salutary for humanity but he conveniently avoided addressing the moral implications and left the question for the philosophers. The attacker enters hostile territory in the hope that the defender will become discouraged and disarmed thus allowing for efforts to slacken off on both sides. Clausewitz naturally cautions that this can backfire if the defender is fired into greater resistance. Heuser is quite right to assert that Clausewitz’s perspective was that of the would-be insurgent. How to counter enemy insurgents was not a subject to which he gave much attention, notwithstanding the fact that he witnessed a brutally successful counter-insurgency against Poland.

The final campaign

It seems natural to finish the narrative on the final campaign against Poland and find out why Clausewitz supported the forces of counter-reaction. There were of course numerous other cases of insurgency and state-suppression in the 1820s, particularly in Spain and Portugal where the monarchist authorities repudiated on promises for constitutional reform with bloody results. Clausewitz read Leopold von Ranke’s *Die Serbische Revolution* (Hamburg, 1829) and was no doubt aware of the massacres and enslavements carried out in the Balkans and Greece. It was the disturbances in Belgium and Poland in late 1830 which dominated the thoughts of Clausewitz’s in the run up to his premature death because they were so closely connected to the threat of a resurgent France.

Clausewitz was reinvigorated by the crisis and made chief-of-staff to Field Marshal Gneisenau. His war plans stated that if an enemy government in Paris has a strong hand of victories and does not hurt the interests of the people it can count on their support. It was
essential then to cause a divisive split separating the people from their government in order to compel the latter to do one’s will. At the start of the war when passions are running high the allies should aim for Paris where the knot of all parties is located.\textsuperscript{171} Unfortunately, even the best armed successes could never defeat or enforce obedience from a totally united French nation.\textsuperscript{172} Where the people are in a state of agitation one has to consider the problem of home guards and national militias.\textsuperscript{173} Clausewitz was surprisingly cautious about launching a penetrative invasion into France and recommended that Prussia may be better served waging a defensive campaign to start then teaming up with the allies for one unstoppable drive on Paris. Clausewitz later amended his plans for an offensive dive through Belgium in order to take advantage of its geostrategic importance, transportation networks, links with England and Holland, as well as local Orangist support.\textsuperscript{174}

It is worth noting that after the wars Prince William of Orange returned to the Netherlands to reign over Holland and Belgium. Years of socio-economic grievances culminated in a major revolt when the Belgians from the middle and peasant classes took up arms in late August 1830. The disorganisation of the royalists and the delay they allowed for offers of amnesty to expire gave the rebels time to barricade Brussels and organise a provisional government. Dutch troops were harassed by insurgents out in the open and the garrisons of Antwerp, Luxembourg and Maastricht were quickly surrounded. In October the commander-in-chief and garrison commander at Antwerp, General Hendrik Chassé, ordered his men to open fire on the city causing a large loss of civilian life, which only strengthened anti-Dutch feeling. Diplomatic intervention by England and France helped assist the Belgians achieve independence much to the chagrin of Gneisenau and Clausewitz. Both men questioned the wisdom of the English and German public opinion for supporting the Franco-Belgian cause. They did concede that an intervention in Belgium and preventative war against France without a strong coalition and the hearts of the people was not in Prussia’s interests.\textsuperscript{175}

The Dutch had requested the Tsar’s assistance from the start and as Russia mobilised its resources an insurrection broke out in Warsaw on 29\textsuperscript{th} November. The conspirators were lucky to capitalise on old grievances and the revolt sent to viceroy’s forces into flight, abandoning valuable stores of ammunition to the insurgents in the process.\textsuperscript{176} The dictator nominated by the Poles, General Józef Chłopicki, tried to profess peace and friendship towards the Tsar because he knew that the western powers would not intervene to save the extremists in the parliament who were inviting their own destruction by declaring the House of Ramanov forfeit. When Chłopicki resigned in mid-January a new national government was formed under Prince Adam George Czartoryski who was disclined to act in the dictatorial manner needed to master the situation. Squabbling factions within the Diet of Warsaw, now
in permanent session, could agree on little except to reject Nicholas I and all projects for peace. Beyond their do-or-die rhetoric the patriots could not accept the peasant emancipation and other policies necessary to support a field army beyond 85,000 men. Nor did they call on Poles in lands possessed by Austria and Prussia for fear of provocation.177

It was to Clausewitz’s intense dissatisfaction that he was forced to observe this conflict with Prussian security forces stationed in the Grand Duchy of Posen.178 He had little sympathy with the Warsaw insurgents, their provisional government or the Polish people in general. There was rivalry between Prussia and the Poland that went back centuries and Clausewitz confessed his prejudices.179 ‘The whole existence of the Poles,’ he wrote to his wife in one pernicious letter, ‘is as though bound and held together by torn ropes and rags. Dirty German Jews, swarming like vermin in the dirt and misery, are the patricians of the land. A thousand times I thought if only fire would destroy this whole anthill [Anbau] so that this unending filth were changed by the purifying flames into clean ashes.’180 Clausewitz certainly admired the energy and determination of the Poles in the days of Sobieski but had contempt for the present day aspirations of the half-Tartar state because it had no place in the precarious balance of power.181 The Poles were a liability to Prussia’s security because they had always conspired to regain their independence by strengthening their historic ties with France.182

In January-February 1831 he wrote two papers basically arguing that a restored Poland would play to the advantage of France, which had less to fear from her neighbours than England, Prussia and Austrian combined did from a new revolutionary government in Paris. Unless these powers could exploit the disconnection between the French people and the radical Volkspartei in order to achieve an easy peace, they would have to go beyond a cabinet war and summon up the same kind energy exhibited by their people in 1813. The documents also indicate how much Clausewitz had backed away from the passions of the people since his youth. He thought the involvement of the masses and their explosively violent energies in the foreign affairs of the state would bring an unpredictable volatility that was neither effectual nor morally desirable. He had little faith in the Kantian belief that constitutional government or national self-determination was the best road to peace. Rather he shared Machiavelli’s belief that mankind was not universally driven towards ethical, intellectual progress but was for the most part temperamental, fickle and fad-ridden.183

According to Peter Paret the rising was for Clausewitz a conflict based less on reasons of state, but on foolish and irrational psychological motives, whose growing significance Clausewitz had repeatedly predicted in his manuscripts.184 As in Belgium
Frederick William III and Christian von Bemstorff had no interest in intervening in Poland. Prussia assumed a non-combatant role and safeguarded its own provinces from insurrection by disabling the local Landwehr, enforcing strict censorship of the press and making threats to confiscate civilian property. By confiscating arms, intercepting diplomatic agents and putting funds under seal the Austrians and Prussians helped suffocate the Polish insurrection from international support and indirectly helped the Russians in their advance towards Warsaw.185

When the Polish generalissimo Jan Zygmunt Skrzynecki complained publically about this fact in June Clausewitz wrote an anonymous response to a local newspaper pointing out that neutrals were entitled to provide supplies just as Poland had done in the past. Clausewitz does not stress enough that the assistance Poland made to foreign powers during the Seven Years War was done under extreme duress. Not only was the land affected by the passage of troops, recruitment and levying of foodstuffs, their currency was debased when the Prussians mass produced their national coinage. Even after the wars Saxon and Polish women were secretly abducted to repopulate devastated provinces such as Pomerania. In On War Clausewitz at least repeats a proverb likening Poland to an inn where any rowdy crowd could come to partake whatever they wanted and leave whenever they pleased.186

Since the Polish insurgents were denied legal recognition by the international community the Prussian government was legally entitled to assist the Russians with regard to food, wagons and legitimate purchases. The bravery of the Poles was admirable to Clausewitz, their political cause was not because it would set a destabilising precedent.187 It was the French and demagogues like Joachim Lelewel who Clausewitz blamed above all for disturbing the international waters with their Jacobinism, as if disloyal revolt was the most sacred of rights.188 It is worth remembering that not until the 1970s were the rights of self-determining peoples against colonial regimes and foreign domination properly specified in international law. Bemstorff did insist on observing accepted legal procedures in the treatment of soldiers and refuges to facilitate a quick resolution of the crisis and reduce the movements of terrified and diseased refugees seeking asylum.189

The Russian aim in principle was to defeat the insurgents in combat and restore civil law and order. Field Marshal Diebitsch’s Russian army crossed frontier and issued manifestos calling on all loyal subjects to help this effort.190 A series of pyrrhic victories won by the Poles in early February were undone by a terrible defeat at Ostrołęka on 26th May.191 The Russians were unable to exploit their victories due to exhaustion and threats to their lines of communication by civil uprisings in Lithuania and the Ukraine. Without Polish units for support these were snuffed out using conventional combats and threats to local nobles.192
Under the new leadership of Marshal Paskevich the Russians made progress while the Polish commanders, politicians and people went in divergent directions. Half-hearted attempts to impose taxes, conscription and requisitions caused peasant resentment while also angering the extremists. Despite the problems of gathering intelligence during this time Clausewitz read the situation quite accurately and wrote on 9th June:

'I reckon if a strong hand takes hold of the Russian sword, the free-willing/unimpeded overthrow of Poland will happen fairly quickly. Their armed forces are exhausted, the shoe is starting to press everywhere and put them under pressure, and the conflict of the aristocratic and democratic parties, which at the moment is developing further, could be the cause for the banner of nobility to be lowered earlier.'

On the 23rd Clausewitz writes to Marie that trust in Skrzynecki was so weak, one expects his fall any day. The latest political acts and impositions for supplies have caused such divisive and violent opposition, even among the nobles, that many inhabitants begin to wish heartily for the brisk arrival of the Russians. The fall of Warsaw would help calm down the uprisings in the Russian rear. Clausewitz appreciated the problems facing their advance and grew impatient by the lack of single-minded purpose to go to the heart of the matter:

'I'm very uncertain whether the Polish will get a tremendous scare and Skrzynecki will fall. Nonetheless they will defend themselves in Warsaw and it would take the energy of a Suvorov to pull off a decisive advantage. If Warsaw is to be defeated through hunger, then a dense and strong encirclement of both sides is required, and moreover, I am afraid that the Russians are not really strong enough now after so many postings. They have really fallen into the mistake, which we saw three months ago, of wanting to quash the insurrection in Lithuania and Volhynia on the spot and not in Warsaw. ... You know, I trust him [Paskevich] because of his campaigns in Armenia. For the time being, General Toll has sent a few Cossack detachments over the River Vistula and spread great fear throughout the country; if Paskevich wanted to go across the Vistula, the concern for the success of the transition would at least be lifted this way.'

The passions of the Polish people were not fired into greater resistance and the insurrection consumed itself in the sort of civil strife that Clausewitz had downplayed in his own calls for a people's war in Prussia. By mid-August Warsaw fell into discord as radical mobs murdered General Jankowski and went on rampage for enemy spies, sympathisers and Jews. Czartoryski fled and General Jan Krukowiecki stepped in as provisional president to begin negotiations for surrendering the capital. Soon after its evacuation on 8th September the Polish military leaders declared the insurrection over and the politicians fled into exile. The suburbs of Warsaw lay in ruins and the repression under Paskevich was severe in all respects: the ringleaders were executed, the diet was abolished, the constitution annulled, the language proscribed, the University of Wilno closed, the Catholic and Uniat Church were persecuted.
and thousands of families were transplanted to Russia or fled to other countries. Poland lost its separate status by the Organic Stature of 15th March 1832.\textsuperscript{199}

Further insurrectionary disturbances such as the risings of 1846 and 1863 were crushed by Austria, Prussia and Russia ensuring that Poland lacked a political existence until the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{200} In light of these events C. B. A. Behrens later questioned the political position of Clausewitz. His inconsistent support of parliamentary institutions, his hardness to Polish demands for self-determination, and his acceptance of state authority, seemingly placed Clausewitz with the forces of reaction.\textsuperscript{201} Clausewitz indeed supported the hated policies of Oberpräsident Flottwell which included confiscating the property of disloyal nobles in Posen,\textsuperscript{202} and he did call for harsher crackdowns on the pro-liberal press.\textsuperscript{203} If these views against revolutionary liberalism have left a black mark on Clausewitz's reputation in retrospect they were not usual for the time and were exaggerated by a concern for international security rather than support for cruel autocracy.\textsuperscript{204} When Clausewitz died in November 1831 the king lamented his passing with deep regret and an obituary in the Silesian Zeitung praised the 'high degree of humanity, justice and mercy' of the deceased.\textsuperscript{205}

\textit{Conclusion}

In conclusion, Clausewitz thought it very fortunate that popular resistance did not materialise in France and the campaigns were resolved along conventional lines. Clausewitz called for lenient peace because he believed that a punitive policy risked provoking a people's war. Given that Clausewitz forecast wars of the future to be costly national struggles it is interesting that he prescribes very little on how to defeat the enemy other than smashing their armed forces in combat until the government and its people have neither the political reason or the passion to continue fighting. The counter-insurgency campaigns in Belgium and Poland tended to reinforce Clausewitz's belief that an insurgency could not stand against a regular army without the support of its own regular army or international support. His support for the suppression of Poland also seems consistent with his prejudices against the political aspirations of those particular people and his growing mistrust of popular passions in war.


225.


16 Broers (1996), pp. 257-259


287

36 Lyons, pp. 284-290.


58 Machiavelli, Prince, Ch. 3, ed./tran. Penman, pp. 44-47.

59 Machiavelli, Prince, Ch. 4, ed./tran. Penman, pp. 53-56; Ibid, Prince, Ch. 5-6, 10, 20, 24, (1847), pp. 419-423, 438-439, 373, 480.


63 Emer de Vattel, Le droit des gens ou Principes de la loi naturelle, appliqués à la conduit & aux affaires des nations & des souverains (1758), trans. Béla Kapossy and Richard Whatmore as The Law of Nations (Indianapolis: Literary Fund, 2008), Bk. I, Ch. 1, Sec. 1-12, Bk. I, Ch. 2, Sec. 13-25, Bk. I, Ch. 15, Sec. 186-191, Bk. I, Ch. 23, Sec. 282-283, pp. 5-79, 81-91, 203-206, 251.

64 Vattel, Bk. II, Ch. 1, Sec. 1-20, Bk. II, Ch. 4, Sec. 49-62, Bk. II, Ch. 5, Sec. 63-70, Bk. III, Ch. 1, Sec. 1-5, Bk. III, Ch. 3, Sec. 24-50, eds./tran. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 259-273, 288-298, 469-471, 482-500.

65 Vattel, Bk. II, Ch. 9, Sec. 116-130, Bk. II, Ch. 12, Sec. 181, Bk. II, Ch. 17, Sec. 278, 309, Bk. II, Ch. 18, Sec. 323-354, Bk. III, Ch. 3, Sec. 30, Bk. III, Ch. 8, Sec. 142, tran. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 319-326, 354-355, 415-416, 440-442, 448-467, 485, 545-546.

66 Vattel, Bk. III, Ch. 8, Sec. 141, Ch. 13, Sec. 193-202, tran. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 544, 593-603.

67 Vattel, Bk. III, Ch. 8, Sec. 136-159, trans. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 541-566.

68 Vattel, Bk. III, Ch. 13, Sec. 201, trans. Kapossy and Whatmore, pp. 598-602.


72 Parkinson, pp. 57, 118.


93 Alphonse Beauchamp, Histoire de la guerre de la Vendée et des Chouans, 3 Vols. (Paris: 1806); Marie Louise Victoire de Donnissan, marquise de La Rochejaquelein played an active role in the original war in the Vendée and was involved in the royalist revolt of 1814-1815, see Madame de La Rochejaquelein, Mémoirs de Madame la Marquise de La Rochejaquelein. Avec deux cartes du théâtre de la guerre de la Vendée (Paris: 1815, reprint. 1848), <http://www.archive.org/details/mmoiresdemadam00lar0>, retrieved 07/01/2013.


100 Lefebvre, p. 363.

102 D. Gates (2003), p. 112; R. M. Felder, Das Deutsche in spanien, oder Schicksale eines Wurtembergers während seinem Aufenthalt in Italien, Spanien und Frankreich (Stuttgart, 1832-1835); J. Schuster, Das Grossherzogliche Würzburgische Infanterie-Regiment in Spanien 1808-13 (Munich, 1909); J. Walter, A German Conscript with Napoleon (Lawrence, Kansas, 1938).


105 Vene, pp. 4-7.


108 Vene, pp. 35-36, 67-75, 83-86.


110 Vene, pp. 113-115.

111 Hobsbawm, p. 96; Vene, pp. 138-140, 167-169.

112 Fairweather, pp. 430-432.

113 Vene, pp. 147, 159, 167-169.


116 The two thousand-word essay sent to Gneisenau in 1817 was entitled ‘Über das Fortschreiten und den Stillstand der kriegerischen Begebenheiten’. This was to provide the basis for chapter sixteen of Book three and chapter three of book eight in On War. It was first published by Hans Delbrück in the Zeitschrift für Preussische Geschichte und Landeskunde, 15 (1878), pp. 233-240; also in Hahlweg, ed., Schriften—Aufsätze—Studien—Briefe, Vol. 2, Part 1, pp. 248-255; for the accompanying letters see Clausewitz to Gneisenau, 4 March 1817 and Gneisenau to Clausewitz, 6 April 1817, in Pertz and Delbrück, ed., Vol. 5, pp. 192, 199-200; Paret (1976), pp. 361-366; Strachan (2007a), p. 138.


138 Clausewitz, ‘Some Comments on the War of Spanish Succession after Reading the Letters of Madame De Maintenon to the Princess des Ursins (1826 or later)’, eds./trans. Paret and Moran, p. 17.


142 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 10, Para. 20, [http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book6.htm#10]; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 10, Para. 21, [http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK6ch10.html]; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 10, Para. 21, p. 296.


147 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 11, p. 255; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 11, pp. 310-311; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 13, p. 480.


149 CvC, Bk. VII, Ch. 6, Para. 6-8, [http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book7.htm#6]; Graham, Bk. VII, Ch. 6, Para. 6-8, [http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK7ch06.html]; H&P, Bk. VII, Ch. 6, Para. 7-9, p. 529.

150 CvC, Bk. III, Ch. 5, Para. 9, [http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriege1832/Book3.htm#5]; Graham, Bk. III, Ch. 5, Para. 10, [http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK3ch05.html]; H&P, Bk. III, Ch. 5, Para. 9, p. 188.

151 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 12, p. 255-256; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 12, pp. 311-312; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 14, p. 481.


153 H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 15, pp. 481-482; CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 13, p. 257; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 13, p. 312.


157 Callwell, pp. 100-113.


163 CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 1, 16, p. 252, 259; <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegel832/Book6.htm#26>; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 1, 16, p. 308, 314; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 26, Para. 1, 18, pp. 479, 483.


168 Clausewitz to Gneisenau, 8 July 1829, in Hahlweg, ed., Schriften—Aufsätze—Studien—Briefe, Vol. 2, Part 1, 549; Paret and Moran, p. 13; see Leopold von Ranke, Die serbische Revolution (Hamburg,


174 Clausewitz, ‘Promemoria über einen möglichen Krieg mit Frankreich (August 1830)’ and ‘Einige Gesichtspunkte für einen Frankreich bevorstehenden krieg (February 1831)’, printed as ‘Zwei Denkschriften von Clausewitz 1830/31’, Militär-Wochenblatt, Nos. 29-31 (1891); Ibid, ‘Betrachtungen über den künftigen Kriegsplan gegen Frankreich’ (late 1830), printed in Moltkes Militarische Werke, 4 (Berlin 1902); Paret (1976), pp. 402-404; after events in Belgium Clausewitz revised his plans as ‘Betrachtungen über den Kriegsplan gegen Frankreich’. These took into account recent revolts and speculated on Belgium as the target of operations since a Prussian campaign could receive support from Holland, England and any local Orangists who supported the union with the Netherlands, Roques, pp. 86-87; Parkinson, p. 323.


181 Clausewitz, 4 June 1831, in Schwartz, ed., Vol. 2, pp. 348-349; CvC, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 8-18, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/VomKriegie1832/Book6.htm6>; Graham, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 8-18, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK6ch06.html>; H&P, Bk. VI, Ch. 6, Para. 8-18, pp. 373-376; Paret (1976), pp. 420-421.


189 Baack, pp. 203-204.

190 Church, pp. 112, 114; Leslie, pp. 163-164; Paret (1976), p. 410.


197 Church, p. 115; Leslie, pp. 240-244; Wandycz, pp. 115-116; Zawadzki, pp. 316-317.

198 Church, p. 115; Leslie, pp. 244-256; Wandycz, pp. 115-116.

199 Church, pp. 114-115; Eversley, pp. 291-293; Halecki, pp. 187-188; Leslie, p. 262; Parkinson, pp. 322, 325; Rappoport, pp. 147; Wandycz, pp. 122-126; Zawadzki, pp. 318-319.


202 Clausewitz, 16 April 1831, in Schwartz, ed., Vol. 2, pp. 335-338; see also Hagen, pp. 72-91.


204 Baack, p. 203-204; Hagen, p. 82.

At the outset of undertaking this research it was unclear if Clausewitz wrote much about the participation and suffering of civilians or non-combatants in war. The dissertation thus set out to explore what exactly Clausewitz had to say on the general subject. It wanted to answer outstanding questions relating to whether or not Clausewitz supported deliberate attacks against such persons and their property. Despite the problems of using documents alternative to *On War*, it was necessary to widen the frame of reference beyond the treatise to cover campaign histories, military memoranda, working notes and personal letters. On the basis of the evidence consulted the author has reached a conclusion: Clausewitz was morally and theoretically inclined towards conventional warfare between regular armed forces. He generally regarded the targeting of civilians, at least in his own times, as morally wrong, strategically ineffective and politically counter-productive.

To support this thesis the paper has shown how Clausewitz condemned the Revolution, the terror used against the Vendée and the way the French let loose their armies to pillage and plunder foreign lands, smacking down insurrectionary resistance with bloody success whenever it was caught unsupported by regular armies. To fight back Clausewitz preferred battle-centric warfare, not the massacre of enemy civilians. He seemed rather dismissive of the agricultural ravaging and atrocious sieges of the past and suggested that such warfare was a historical peculiarity due largely to the weaknesses of the armed forces and their host societies. The fact that civilians were becoming an important factor in the capacity to make war and did not lead him to advise harming them directly in either defence or attack.

Clausewitz downplayed the scorched-earth strategy used in Russia as unnecessary and was deeply distressed by the side-effects of collateral damage, burdensome contributions and general disruption to civil society. After the conquest of France, Clausewitz called for a lenient peace because he worried that punitive treatment would spark a people’s war. Clausewitz provides very little in the way of a practical solution to terminate war in that case except to keep smashing the enemy’s forces until the enemy policy-maker(s) and people give up their passion or political reason to fight. His study of insurrectionary warfare tended to reinforce the belief that such units stood little chance of success outside the framework of major military operations by the regular army and state government.

On the negative side, this dissertation has highlighted some very disturbing elements in Clausewitz’s thoughts about war and mankind. Although Clausewitz was imbued with the
values of the Enlightenment he was critical of civilian publicists and military theorists striving for a bloodless form of war. Clausewitz instead propounded the logic of destroying the enemy's combatants, which could engulf those forfeiting their non-combatant status by taking up arms. Clausewitz had little faith that the natural tendency towards violence could be limited by a temperamental sense of humanity or advancing levels of civilisation. As political weakness of states and the human ignorance about war and the methods of waging it disappeared the scale and intensity of its destruction would most likely increase.

Clausewitz makes it quite clear that a higher political aim and the increased involvement of the people can help war approximate its absolute conception. He especially distrusted impassioned political figures and revolutionary politics as key conditions likely to set forth a war of extermination. Clausewitz believed that political reason or rational intelligence stood a better chance of taming war to be merely an instrumental means to an end. The direct targeting of enemy civilians was not a legitimate means. He was however resigned to the fact that the suffering of civilian populations was inevitable, especially with regard to supply and collateral damage. He even accepted the possibility of enemy atrocities against non-combatants when resorting to people's war and supported the suppression of Poland, which had terrible civil consequences.

What this all means for students of Clausewitz is that we should exercise caution and undertake more detailed research. Those fluent in the German language must step up to the challenge of translating sources other than *On War*. This inquiry has merely skimmed the surface and hopes to encourage others to delve deeper into these murky waters of war and civilians. Academics already seeking to understand the phenomenon more generally may perhaps retrieve some stimulating insights like the trinity and better appreciate why armed combatants are deviated from the logical job of destroying their opposite number. The study of Clausewitz and civilians ultimately makes one further appreciate the tenous distinction between combatants and non-combatants and how truly vulnerable the latter are unless humanitarian and political protections are asserted vigorously during all times of war.
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