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Research Article

Strategy as an Open Concept: Clausewitz's Conceptual Relationship between Tactics, Strategy and Conduct of War (Kriegführung)

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In accordance with the findings of other recent research, this article also posits the hypothesis that a broader conceptualisation of strategy, one which extends beyond the “narrow” definition of the term, is an underlying theme in Clausewitz's work. The present analysis aims to investigate the interpretive nuances of the term *Strategie* within the German military lexicon, as it is employed in a fluid and context-specific manner. The investigation will then proceed to present the argument that, in contrast to the Clausewitzian understanding of tactics, his concept of strategy can be considered to be open-ended. The concept oscillates between the poles of tactics and the broader category of conduct of war (*Kriegführung*), with its connotations and scope changing in accordance with these oscillations.

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Introduction

Since the beginning of the 19th century, the concepts of tactics and strategy have been regarded as an essential pair in military thinking, both in terms of practical application and theoretical analysis. In Clausewitz's theory of war, this pair represents the third conceptual “pillar”, alongside the war/policy and ends/means pairs.¹ Christian Müller asserts that the principal advantage of Clausewitz's approach resides in the remarkable lucidity of his definition of strategy, a clarity that has since diminished. It could be added that the respective definitions of strategy and tactics remain stable from the first strategic writings of 1804 up to the main treatise of the author.

Clausewitz's “narrow” definition of strategy does not fit contemporary uses.² It is widely accepted that what Clausewitz defined as strategy is the operational art of contemporary military terminology.³ However, Andreas Herberg-Rothe has put forth the proposition that Clausewitz's work evinces a less parochial conceptualisation of strategy within the context of a dynamic relationship between purpose, aims and means. The author employs Clausewitz's

methodological approach of the “marvellous trinity” to redefine the Clausewitzian approach to strategy as the “maintenance of a floating balance of purpose, aims and means in warfare”.⁴ In shorter terms, Donald Stocker also insisted that the Clausewitzian concept of strategy “encompassed” both the operational and strategic realms in the contemporary sense of the two terms.⁵

This article also suggests that a broader conceptualisation of strategy, beyond the “narrow” definition of the term, is an underlying theme in Clausewitz’s work. However, compared to Herberg-Rothe’s argument, the approach is based on a different foundation. The preliminary phase will comprise an investigation into the fluid and context-specific interpretation of the term *Strategie* as it was utilised within the German military lexicon. An examination will be conducted of a collection of treatises devoted to the art of war that were published between 1777 – the date of publication of *Kaisers Leo des Philosophen Strategie und Taktik* by Johann von Bourscheid (see below) – and 1831, the date of Clausewitz’s death. In this particular corpus, three distinct categories of authors can be identified.

The initial category comprises eminent authors of the era, who have been acknowledged by historiography as such, despite the fact that their reputations have been largely eclipsed by that of Clausewitz in subsequent generations. Of these, five were Prussian. Georg Heinrich von Berenhorst (1733-1814) and Heinrich von Bülow (1757-1807) are recognised as the authors of the two most significant military treatises published in German during the late 18th century. Gerhard von Scharnhorst (1755-1813), a mentor to Clausewitz, hailed from Hanover and subsequently served in the Prussian military. As posited by his contemporaries, August Rühle von Lilienstern (1780-1847) was regarded as one of the most intellectually gifted (*geistreichsten*) military writers of his era.⁶ Another was Constantin von Lossau (1767-1848), in whom Berenhorst discerned the stamp of genius (*Stempel des Genius*).⁷ The sixth is Archduke Carl (1771-1847), who published his *Grundsätze der Strategie* [Principles of Strategy] in 1813.

The second category comprises authors who are generally positioned by historiography in a marginalised or secondary role. Despite their relative obscurity in comparison to the authors previously mentioned, they nevertheless made significant contributions to the development of military thought during this period, a process that was characterised by a collective effort. In this respect, they participated fully in the process of conceptualising strategy within a network of discursive exchanges in which a critical, and sometimes polemical, dialogue took place between intellectual authorities and secondary voices. The majority of these authors are either Prussians themselves or enlisted in the Prussian army: Heinrich von Brandt (1789-1868), Ludwig Friedrich von Ciriacy (1786-1829), Carl von Decker (1784-1844), Johann von Hoyer (1767-1848), Christian von Massenbach (1758-1827), a native of Swabia, Carl von Müffling (1775-1851), Ernst von Pfuel (1779-1866), Heinrich Friedrich Rumpf (1791-?), Georg Wilhelm von Valentini (1775-1834), and August Wagner (1777-1854). Ferdinand Friedrich von Nicolai (1730-1814) and Josef von Theobald (1772-1837) hailed from Württemberg; Heinrich von Porbeck (1771-1809), a Hessian officer in the employ of Baden, established the periodical *Neue Bellona*, in which Clausewitz published a review of a book by Bülow;⁸ Johann Georg Julius Venturini (1773-1802) was from Brunswick, where he taught applied mathematics; Josef von Xylander (1794-1854) was from Bavaria; with regard to Johann Wilhelm Bourscheid (1729-1792), he was born in the Electorate of Cologne prior to enlisting in the Austrian army.⁹

It is evident that a homogeneous category does not emerge when these authors are considered from an intellectual and analytical perspective. In his *Notice sur la théorie actuelle de la guerre et sur son utilité* (The Present Theory of War and its Utility), Jomini highlights the significance of the treatises of Decker, Hoyer, Theobald, Valentini, Wagner and Xylander, asserting that they embody views of varying merit (*plus ou moins des vues excellentes*), without proposing any form of hierarchy.¹⁰ In addition to the list compiled by Jomini, it is pertinent to include Müffling, who is regarded by Berenhorst as one of his most distinguished pupils (*kurz ich bin mit dem Jünger zufrieden*); Pfuel, who is characterised in a review in the *Jenaische allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* as perspicacious (*scharfsinnig*); and Ciriacy, who merits inclusion among the aforementioned.¹¹ Conversely, Bourscheid, who initiated the strategy conceptualisation process, was not renowned for meticulous analysis or astute judgement.

The third category comprises authors who have been disregarded or overlooked by the historiography of military thinking. In his *Notice*, Jomini makes reference to only one of these authors, namely Friedrich Wilhelm von Bismarck (1783–1860), who served as Commander of the Cavalry of the Kingdom of Württemberg. It is conceivable that he contemplated including a second military writer from Württemberg, Moriz von Miller (1792–1866), in his list. However, it should be noted that an erroneous transcription of his name was published, reading “Muller”.¹² In addition, the following authors are considered. Carl Friedrich Wilhelm von Diebitsch (1738–1822) was a Prussian officer who entered Russian service and became the father of Hans-Carl (1785–1831), who would go on to become a Russian marshal. Karl von Seidl (1752–1830) was also a Prussian officer who founded *Bellona, ein militärisches Journal*, in 1781. Carl von Gersdorff (1765–1829) was a Saxon officer. Adam Friedrich August von Lindenau (1771–1845) was also a Saxon officer and aide-de-camp to the Elector of Palatinate-Bavaria. Friedrich Meinert (1757–1828) was a Prussian officer and professor at the Potsdam Academy of Engineering; Karl Christian Müller (1775–1847), the only civilian on the list, was a member of the *Tugendbund* and well versed in military matters.¹³ Gotthard Christoph Müller (1740–1803), a Hanoverian engineering officer, held the position of professor of mathematics and military science at the University of Göttingen. Anton Eberhard Schertel von Burtenbach (1718–1794) of Würzburg was commander and proprietor of a Franconian infantry regiment. Franz Karl Schleicher (1756–1815) held the position of professor of military sciences at the University of Marburg. Victor Emmanuel Thellung de Courtelary (1760–1842) was a Swiss national who served in the Dutch navy and subsequently became a professor at the military academy in Bern. August Venturini was probably a brother of Georg Venturini, regarding whom only very limited knowledge is available.¹⁴ Finally, two last authors in this category deserve mention because of their broader interest for Clausewitzian studies: Friedrich von Gaugreben (1774–1822), a Bavarian officer who entered Prussian service and later became a professor at the military academy in Kassel, whom Arthur Kuhle rescued from obscurity, and Johann Ernst von Bieberstein (?–1845), a Prussian officer, author of a work on which Clausewitz wrote an unpublished review (see below).

This corpus of German-speaking military writers should also encompass authors who have been translated into German or read in their original language. In the initial category, we have the Swedish general Johan Peter Lefrén (1784–1862) and the Bavarian Friedrich Nockern von Schorn (c. 1725–1805), who, whilst in the service of the Netherlands, published in French before his work was

translated into German.¹⁵ In the second category, Antoine-Charles de La Roche-Aymon (1772-1849), a French émigré in the service of Prussia, and, naturally, the Swiss Antoine Henri Jomini (1779-1869), who dominated military thinking in the first half of the 19th century.

This corpus constitutes a segment of the overarching field of meaning in which Clausewitz's texts are positioned, thereby furnishing a substantial insight into the intellectual terrain that the author of *On War* inhabited, along with the concerns that occupied military circles in Germany, most notably within the context of the wars of the Revolution and the Empire. The analysis of the corpus facilitates the reconstruction of a "context of debate", as conceptualised by Elías José Palti, wherein the reciprocal opposition between perspectives results in the reconfiguration of a field of knowledge.¹⁶ This collection of texts does not, strictly speaking, allow us to comprehend the first phase in the history of the idea of strategy. Instead, it serves to elucidate the manifold and often discordant conceptions initially associated with the term *Strategie*. Indeed, during this period, there was no *one* idea of strategy, but rather a plethora of clashing arguments, and the issue at stake was not simply to define a term, but to develop a coherent and comprehensive theory of war. The observations made by Quentin Skinner in regard to art may also be applied to the notion of strategy, which "gains its meaning from the place it occupies within an entire conceptual scheme".¹⁷ In addition, the observations made by Skinner highlight the importance of caution when identifying concepts with specific terms, emphasising the need for a careful consideration of theoretical frameworks and their applications. The same term may be employed by different authors to denote a variety of meanings. The following discussion will shed light on the term "strategy", although it should be noted that the same can also be said of Clausewitz's other central concepts. It is therefore wholly futile to posit the argument that Clausewitz is not innovative on the basis that he employs terms utilised by other military writers, in cases where the corresponding concepts do not bear the same meaning.¹⁸

It is evident that the wars of the Revolution and the Empire served as the catalyst for the theoretical endeavours of German military writers, particularly those hailing from Prussia. The concurrence of these wars with the profound contemplation devoted to the notion of strategy is therefore not a mere happenstance. However, it cannot be concluded that the term *Strategie* was invented to describe a new phenomenon, according to the formula that David Armitage applies to the problem of naming in the context of political ideas.¹⁹ The term – not the concept – appeared in German prior to the commencement of these wars. It was therefore through a process of reinterpretation and redeployment of the term within new conceptual frameworks that the conceptualisation of strategy gradually and laboriously took shape.

The investigation of the corpus will demonstrate that the term underwent a shift in meaning during the period under investigation. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that the term's significance and scope evolved within Clausewitz's theory, despite the remarkable consistency of his dual definition of tactics and strategy. Clausewitz's theoretical framework concerning the interplay between strategy and tactics diverges considerably from the military writings of his era. Clausewitz's perspective on strategy does not encompass it as a matter of intellectual conception of military action, and tactics as a matter of implementation. The author adopts a combinatorial perspective, examining the two components of warfare in terms of their execution and the realisation of

their intended outcome. The argument will then be presented that, in contrast to the Clausewitzian understanding of tactics, his concept of strategy can be considered to be open-ended. In this context, it is crucial to recognise that his applications of the concept exhibit a tendency to oscillate between the poles of tactics and the broader category of the conduct of war (*Kriegführung*).

This approach is inherently limited by the researcher's lack of knowledge. Indeed, it is likely that the military treatise corpus is incomplete. Another limitation is the absence of a systematic examination of periodicals from that period. A comprehensive analysis of this nature would encompass a multitude of German-language journals specialising in military affairs, as well as broader journals that frequently review military literature. Finally, it is important to note that this article does not address unpublished sources. Jacek Jędrzyak adopted this approach in his significant recent study, *Prussian Strategic Thought, 1815–1830*. However, it is difficult to apply his analysis to the subject of this article. Jędrzyak's methodological approach involved using the contemporary definition of the term "strategy" to analyse Prussian strategic thought during the specified period. He decided "not to use its definition from that period".²⁰ It would be more accurate to state these definitions in the plural, and it is precisely their confrontation that the present article aims to address.

An ambiguous concept

The process by which the concept of *Strategie* became a central category of military thought in German-speaking countries remains relatively obscure and under-researched. While this paper does not seek to elaborate on this topic, it is nevertheless crucial to highlight an intriguing paradox: the conceptualisation of strategy has not been synchronised with its institutionalisation as a teaching module in military academies.

As early as 1783, the curricula of the *Hohe Karlsschule* in Stuttgart and the Kassel Military School included the study of strategy.²¹ It is notable that this occurred only a mere few years subsequent to Bourscheid's introduction of the neologism *Strategie* into the German language in 1777 and subsequent popularisation by Nicolai in the context of military circles during the early 1780s. Subsequently, courses in strategy were also provided at the *Académie des Nobles* in Berlin, at the *königliche Artillerie Akademie* and at the *Lehr-Anstalt für junge Infanterie- und Cavalerie-Officiere*, which Clausewitz attended from 1801 to 1803.²² Concurrently, instruction in strategy was provided at the *Kurfürstliches Kadetten-Korps* in Munich and, in Vienna, at the *k. k. Ingenieur-Akademie* and at the Military Academy.²³

The assertion by Lawrence Freedman that this interest in strategy was driven by the desire to "give a name to the higher parts of war" is accurate.²⁴ However, his understanding of the chaotic nature of this endeavour and the prevailing state of confusion within the German-speaking military lexicon at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries is incomplete. As Jeremy Black has proposed, the concept of strategy was characterised by a high degree of semantic flexibility and volatility during this period.²⁵ The ambiguity surrounding this concept persisted throughout the initial three decades of the 19th century, pervading the entirety of military terminology.

Scharnhorst, who had previously delivered a course on strategy in 1803 in collaboration with Karl von Phull (1757–1826),²⁶ was fully aware of the difficulties inherent in the teaching of a topic which was the subject of considerable debate,

with a multitude of disparate perspectives coexisting. In 1804, he wrote to Levin von Geusau (1734–1808), director of the *Lehr-Anstalt für junge Infanterie- und Cavalerie-Officiere*, that there was a wide divergence of opinion on strategy and applied tactics (*angewandte Taktik*), a subject on which no clearly agreed principles had yet been established. Consequently, Scharnhorst argued that the topic should not be taught by a single professor – apparently to preserve differences of opinion – using a turn of phrase that implied that *Strategie* and *angewandte Taktik* were one and the same subject.²⁷

Determining the exact denotation of the term proved to be a challenging endeavour, largely due to the broad nature of the definitions that had been put forward in previous decades. Bourscheid's original definition was formulated elliptically and was expressed as follows: “the art of [conducting] campaigns” (*Kunst der Feldzüge*).²⁸ Following the publication of his oeuvre, which included his pseudo-translation of the Emperor Leo treatise, an analysis of the first campaign of the War of the Bavarian Succession, and a course of tactics and logistics “in the service of strategy”, the concept of strategy was anchored in the German military lexicon, maintaining a broad, and rather imprecise, significance.²⁹ Notwithstanding the affirmative or negative responses to the Bourscheid analyses, it became increasingly accepted that strategy encompassed both the art of planning a war as a whole and the planning of each campaign according to the “nature of the defensive or offensive operation”.³⁰ It was noted by Seidl that the Bourscheid terminology was not fully mastered and lacked clarity. However, it is also noteworthy that Seidl himself made a significant contribution to the popularisation of the term *Strategie*, due to its frequent utilisation in critiques of Bourscheid.³¹

Nevertheless, it was primarily Nicolai, rather than Seidl, who provided the crucial impetus for the adoption of this term within German military discourse. Nicolai, a figure of greater renown at the time than Seidl, published a treatise on the training of officers in 1775.³² This work was identified by Jean-Jacques Langendorf as one of the most extensively read works within German-speaking military communities during the late 18th century.³³ In 1781, Nicolai published an arrangement for the establishment of a military academy, which was also widely read. This was the realisation of the concept of strategy, which the author had now adopted as his own.

It is indisputable that Nicolai's approach was more rigorous and convincing than that employed by Bourscheid, whose use of terminology and historiography could be considered somewhat questionable. The author's conceptualisation of war as a chain (*Kette*) entailed the subsequent integration of strategy as the terminal link (*Schlussknoten*) in the chain, the purpose of which was to facilitate the interconnection of operational elements (*Operationen an Operation zu binden*). This approach was both remarkable and ambiguous. It was remarkable because Nicolai introduced a conceptual opening of strategy upwards: strategy must lead the war to the desired result (*durch regelmäßige Anordnung derselben den Lauf des Kriegs zu verlangten Resultaten zu leiten*). However, the author simultaneously asserted that elementary tactics were a starting point, while strategy was an end point (*Endpunkt*), thereby closing the openness of the concept.³⁴ Furthermore, Nicolai did not propose a precise definition of the term.

The definition proposed by Nockhern von Schorn in 1785 was of a decidedly general nature: “Strategy is the art of commanding and directing war operations” (*Die Strategie ist die Kunst zu commandiren und Kriegsoperationen zu*

führen).³⁵ Disseminated through reviews published in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* and the *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung*, this definition had a significant influence at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries.³⁶ It is to be found in the following reference works: the dictionaries of Johann Christoph Vollbeding and Johann Georg Krünitz; the military encyclopaedias of Gotthard Christoph Müller and Meinert; the *Tables* of the science of war by Schertel von Burtenbach; the cadet training manual of the Vienna Academy of Engineers; and the officers' manual of Diebitsch.³⁷ A closer examination reveals that other authors employ the term in a way that is consistent with this general meaning of the concept, albeit with no discernible attempt to provide a precise definition. This is exemplified by Berenhorst, who associates strategy with command skills (*Anführerkünste*), as well as by Müffling, who distinguishes between tactics and strategy without providing a detailed explanation of the difference between the two concepts.³⁸ Porbeck's article "Ein Beitrag zur Strategie" (A Contribution to Strategy), published in his journal, provides another example. In this article, he explains that, during the Seven Years' War, Ferdinand of Brunswick (1721–1792) developed a method for obtaining a precise and accurate overview of the theatre of operations. This method involved marking the positions and movements of the troops on a map with differently coloured wax cones. The article under consideration features the uncommon feature of including the word "strategy" in its title, though the author does not utilise the term itself in the text; as such, it falls upon the reader to comprehend that the concept pertains to the larger-scale movements throughout the entire theatre of war.³⁹

As Nockern von Schorn's definition was so general, the concept was difficult to apply in practice. Confronted with this impediment, G. Venturini discerned no alternative recourse except to augment the definitions, an approach that merely served to confound the delineation of strategy. The initial definition proffered an interpretation of the concept as the specific science of the general (*besondere Wissenschaft des Feldherrn*), a perspective that was endorsed by Schleicher.⁴⁰ A secondary definition posits that it is the science concerned with the employment of military forces for the attainment of the war objective (*Erreichung des Kriegszwecks*).⁴¹ A third definition posits that it is the partial application (*partielle Anwendung*) of the art of positioning, movement and combat to defend the country (*zur Deckung des Landes*).⁴² The fourth definition attempted to integrate the two previous ones: "strategy itself is the partial application of the three doctrines of the art of war in order to achieve an objective prescribed by the general war plan" (*die Strategie insbesondere, ist die partielle Anwendung der drey Lehren der Kriegeskunst, zur Erreichung eines durch den allgemeinen Kriegesplan vorgeschriebenen Zwecks*).⁴³ The author's evaluation of this application as "partial" was based on the establishment of a distinction between strategy in itself and the dialectic of war (*Kriegsdialektik*). The second of these concepts, which constitutes an integral part of strategy in its generic sense, was defined as the design of the war plan itself (*Entwerfung dieses Kriegesplans selbst*). The consequence of this approach was that the dialectic of war was the application of a war plan that had been developed by strategy. The already complex situation was further complicated by G. Venturini's decision to define the second component of the strategy (dialectic of war) as the "application of the application of the art of war" (*die Anwendung von der Anwendung der Kriegeskunst*).⁴⁴

Despite the fact that G. Venturini did not refer expressly to Bülow, the influence of the latter's work is evident in the conception of the three doctrines (*Lehren*) that constitute the strategy (positioning, movement and combat). However, G.

Venturini did not adopt one of Bülow's seminal ideas, namely the notion of defining strategy and tactics in relation to each other rather than formulating an isolated definition of the former. Undoubtedly, G. Venturini had endeavoured to differentiate between these two concepts, employing a terminology that became increasingly complex as his volumes were published between 1798 and 1800. It was his conviction that the primary function of strategy was to ensure the security of the country (*Sicherheit des Landes*), while tactics were specifically designed to safeguard the safety of troops (*Sicherheit der Truppen*).⁴⁵ Nevertheless, these were not, strictly speaking, definitions: the distinction was highly debatable, and the interaction between strategy and tactics remained unclear.

In hindsight, G. Venturini's approach appears to be somewhat partial, lacking and failing to consider all factors. Nevertheless, he must be recognised for an intellectual breakthrough (*percée intellectuelle*) to which Langendorf refers, namely the assertion of the fundamental primacy of strategy over tactics.⁴⁶ It is true that, at the same time, the hierarchy between tactics and strategy was not clear to everyone. Bieberstein's *Beiträge zur Taktik und Strategie* (Contributions to Tactics and Strategy) offers a striking and revealing example of the ambiguities inherent in German military terminology during the early 19th century.⁴⁷

The author posits that strategy constitutes a division (*Abtheilungen*) of tactics, that is to say, a subdivision. Concurrently, Bieberstein defines strategy, arguably under the influence of Nicolai, as the organisation and coordination of all large-scale military operations, with the objective of achieving the war's primary objective (*zur Erreichung des Hauptzwecks des ganzen Krieges*).⁴⁸ A review of the book identified difficulties in comprehending the art of war within the framework of this approach. A subsequent review highlighted the inconsistency (*Inconsequenz*) of such a classification, which amounted to making general tactics (*allgemeine Taktik*) the art of war itself (*Kriegskunst selbst*).⁴⁹ Indeed, the perplexing terminology employed in Bieberstein's works exemplified the challenges encountered by certain German-speaking military writers in harmonising the traditional paradigms of Frederick's tactics with the novel categories employed to analyse and comprehend the wars of the Revolution. This was not Bieberstein's initial foray into the subject, as he had previously published a treatise entitled *Versuch einer Anweisung zur Logistik* (Attempt at Instructions for Logistics) in which he asserted that logistics belonged to the domain of tactics (*zum taktischen Gebiete gehörig*) and consisted of calculating the spatial and temporal requirements for troop deployment and movement (*Berechnung des Raumes und der Zeit der Truppenstellungen und Bewegungen*).⁵⁰ Hoyer had evidently discerned the issue when he inscribed the assertion that, beneath the pretentious appellations of such titles, there existed no substance but numerical calculations pertaining to the movements and evolutions of troops.⁵¹

Concomitantly, other military writers merely adopted Bülow's definitions and embraced his approach. This was exemplified by Lindenau, who published a military manual for the ordinary reader in the form of questions and answers.⁵² Another example is Valentini, a military writer of a completely different calibre.

As was first stated in Bülow's *Geist des neuern Kriegssystems* (The Spirit of the Modern System of War), published in 1799, his dual definition was as follows: any movement conducted within the enemy's visual field – and therefore within the range of his cannon – is tactical; any movement conducted outside his visual field – and therefore outside the range of his cannon – is strategic.⁵³ In his

treatise on small-scale warfare, published in 1802, Valentini incorporated this dual definition with a view to substantiating his employment of both terms.⁵⁴ From 1802 to the early 1820s, he developed a critical stance towards the geometric nature of Bülow's strategic constructions (*seinen strategischen Constructionen die Eigenschaft der geometrischen beigelegt*), while maintaining an interest in his definition of strategy and tactics.⁵⁵ In the 1820 edition of the treatise on small-scale warfare, the author elected to retain it; however, the following year saw the introduction of a nuance in the first volume of his treatise on large-scale warfare. Valentini conceded that objections might be raised to this dual definition, acknowledging that in practice, the distinction between tactics and strategy was not always clear-cut. However, he rejected the alternative of defining strategy as the art of command, since here too tactics and strategy were intertwined.⁵⁶ In summary, the definitions formulated by Bülow^[1] posed an acute and challenging question to German military thinking: namely, the relationship between tactics and strategy.

To elucidate the aforementioned relationship, A. Venturini undertook the development of a critique of Bülow's definition in an article published in 1806, a task which was directly inspired by the theories of his late brother, G. Venturini. The author's approach was to contest Bülow's assertion that the doctrine of camp organisation (*Lehre von der Anordnung eines Lagers*) was a strategic matter. The demonstration of this doctrine as belonging to the realm of tactics was compelling, particularly since A. Venturini also incorporated the notion that security measures – undertaken out of range of enemy sight – necessary to avoid a damaging engagement were also a matter of tactics rather than strategy. It was concluded that the definition proposed by his brother, whereby tactics were regarded as the safety of troops and strategy as that of the country, was more accurate and comprehensive (*richtiger, umfassender und deutlich genug zu seyn*).⁵⁷

In a subsequent phase, A. Venturini proceeded to formulate a series of personal arguments, thereby establishing a clear distinction between himself and his brother on specific issues. The discrepancy between August and the late Georg von Venturini can be located in the classification (*Eintheilung*) of military science, and more specifically in the subdivision between pure tactics and applied tactics. A cursory examination suggests an alignment with the 1806 article's interpretation of strategy, as evidenced by the reproduction of this article in the second section of *Versuch einer Berichtigung des von G. Venturini im Lehrbuche der Krieges-Kunst aufgestellten Systems der Krieges-Wissenschaften* (Attempt to Correct the System of Military Science Established by G. Venturini in his Textbook on the Art of War), published by A. Venturini^[2]. In actuality, A. Venturini had expanded the perspective by assigning an alternate scope to the notion of strategy. In his highly detailed – indeed, overly so – classification of the sciences of war, the author distinguishes between lower strategy, relating to the science of second-in-command generals (*Wissenschaft der Unter-Feldherren*), and higher strategy, relating to the science of commanders-in-chief (*Wissenschaft der Ober-Feldherren*). In addition to the combination of military enterprises and the doctrine of operations, the author also integrates the politics of war (*Krieges-Politik*) into the higher strategy. The notion of *Krieges-Politik* entailed the consideration of several factors at the war's outset, namely the underlying reasons for the war (*Grund zum Kriege*), the combatant strengths (*Kraft zum Kriege*), and the subsequent selection of the conflict's nature (*Auswahl der Kriegesart*).⁵⁸ This approach provided a novel perspective on the concept of

strategy, yet it failed to resolve the issue of the relationship between tactics and strategy, which remained contingent on the unsatisfactory definitions of Bülow and G. Venturini.

Berenhorst's *Aphorisms*, published in 1805, demonstrate an acute awareness of the issue at hand. Nevertheless, the author had reservations concerning the capacity of the most renowned art of war professors (*berühmtesten Lehrern der Kriegskunst*) to draw a clear line of demarcation (*scharf gezeichnete Linie*) between strategy and tactics. The words were imbued with a subtle irony, also used in the manner in which he adapted Bülow's dual characterisation, asserting that the delineation between the art of military marches (*Kunst zu marschieren*) and the art of combat (*Kunst sich zu schlagen*) represented a concise yet superficial (*weniger tief*) method of answering the issue.⁵⁹ As Valentini described, Berenhorst possessed a sceptical mind (*geistreiche Zweifler*) and his approach to the topic was consistent with his reputation in this regard.⁶⁰ The documentation of his exchanges with Valentini substantiates this assertion, whilst concomitantly serving to illustrate that the issue in question constituted a pivotal facet within the realm of German military thinking during that particular historical juncture.

In the same year that he published his aphorisms, Berenhorst provided commentary on a review of Bülow's *Lehrsätze des neuern Krieges* (Principles of Modern Warfare) – but not the review written by Clausewitz (see below) – highlighting the criticism of the sharp dividing line (*scharfe Grenzlinie*) between tactics and strategy, and contending that Bülow would lose the reputation he had earned if he persisted. In the following year, he composed an addressed letter to Bülow, asserting that the concern for tactics and strategy had become moot, as these sciences were rendered futile in the context of an enslaved people. In 1808, he expressed regret regarding the Prussian military's shift in focus from tactics to strategy. Finally, in 1812, two years before his death, he commented on a text by Clausewitz, stating that he almost agreed (*Uebrigens bin ich beinahe seiner Meinung*) with his conception of the plans of operations, but using ironic wording when referring to his definition of the sacrosanct strategy (*hochheiligen Strategie*).⁶¹

In contrast, other authors elected to undertake a challenge that Berenhorst considered to be futile. To address the issue, Wagner employed an organised methodology, aligning tactics and strategy in accordance with a taxonomic symmetry. In Wagner's analysis, Bülow's concepts are integrated into a comprehensive framework that combines the concepts of pure tactics (*reine Taktik*) and pure strategy (*reine Strategie*), applied tactics (*angewandte Taktik*) and applied strategy (*angewandte Strategie*), and field tactics (*taktische Terrainlehre*) and field strategy (*strategische Terrainlehre*). In this context, the author put forth a distinction between tactics and strategy in terms of scale, postulating that tactics may be conceived of as operating on the micro level, whereas strategy can be regarded as operating on a more macro level (*Uebrigens ist die Taktik im Kleinen, was die Strategie im Großen ist*).⁶²

This approach failed to persuade Rühle von Lilienstern, who identified a concealed motive (*versteckte Unterscheidungsmotiv*) within Wagner's taxonomic system. The former identifies a dichotomy between the physical and the intellectual (*physische und intellektuelle Wechselwirkung*) at the core of the latter's reasoning, which not only underpins the pure/applied conceptual pair but also the tactical/strategic pair. However, this distinction was insufficiently practical, and the application of the terms "strategy" and "tactics" was only partially

aligned with the phenomena under discussion.⁶³ In addition, Rühle von Lilienstern's *Handbuch für den Offizier* [Officer's Manual] – the author's most important text, according to Jędrysiak – offered more general observations that shed light on the ambiguous nature of the concepts of strategy and tactics in the late 1810s.⁶⁴

The author began by pointing out that the use of these terms was not an explicit inheritance from their Greek etymology but an invention (*Erfindung*) of his own time. Rühle von Lilienstern then noted that military writers had used these words in a variety of ways and that none of them had sufficient authority to impose their own usage on others. In the end, he was of the opinion that it was quite possible to do without them and that it would probably be no loss either to practice or to science if they were completely absent from military terminology.⁶⁵

In the preceding years, Karl Christian Müller had also developed the final of these ideas in a publication on the Germanisation of military terminology. His aspiration to supersede the conceptual dyad “tactics/strategy” with the pair “Harsch/Hilde” was somewhat extravagant; however, it offers a more comprehensive understanding of the connotations associated with the two aforementioned terms. The *Hilde* was associated with a fine and calculated direction of war (*feine berechnende Krieglleitung*), whereas the *Harsche* was linked to a brave and effective conduct of war (*brave thatkraftige Kriegführung*). The initial term was intended to signify the objective (*Zweck*), the essence (*Was*), and the spiritual refinement (*Geistig-Feine*); the subsequent term was to represent the means (*Mittel*), the method (*Wie*), and the physical strength (*Körperlich-Kraftige [sic]*).⁶⁶

Müller's approach to the *Zweck/Mittel* relationship and the *Was/Wie* relationship was of interest, despite its allusive nature. Conversely, his physical/intellectual opposition was of a similar nature to that which Rühle von Lilienstern would later criticise. Fundamentally, his endeavour at terminological substitution, characterised by its strange neologisms, reflected the pervasive uncertainty that prevailed in the conceptualisation of strategy and tactics during that period.

Clausewitz never intended to abandon the conceptual pairing of tactics and strategy, but he was well aware from his earliest writings that the two terms were used in very fluctuating ways (*sehr schwankend*).⁶⁷ The issue was not merely a matter of semantics; rather, it pertained to the fundamental discordance in the interpretations of the phenomenon in question. In Clausewitz's own words, it was “the nature of the object” (*die Natur des Gegenstandes*) that was at the heart of this discord.⁶⁸ The divergence in understanding the nature of the phenomenon also gave rise to a similar discordance in the relationship between the concepts.

The formative years

It is no longer necessary to provide evidence that Clausewitz regarded Scharnhorst as the “father and friend of [his] mind”.⁶⁹ During his student's formative years, Clausewitz's mentor developed his own views on the relationship between tactics and strategy in an 1802 article on the Battle of Marengo. This article is derived from one of three lectures delivered on Bülow's book on the 1800 campaign. In accordance with the analysis provided by Kuhle, this article represents the zenith of Bülow's reception in Prussia.⁷⁰ This inquiry

does not seek to evaluate the extent to which Scharnhorst reappropriated Bülow's ideas; consequently, it will not undertake to ascertain whether the passage from Bülow cited by Kuhle in support of his analysis truly pertains to the same principle of Scharnhorst cited below. Nevertheless, Kuhle's assertion that Bülow's work and Scharnhorst's review provided a pivotal theoretical stimulus (*Entscheidenden theoretischen Anstoß*) for Prussian war theory is indeed accurate.⁷¹

Scharnhorst's approach distinguished between strategy and tactics by examining the circumstances under which a military engagement could be considered a victory. He begins by stating that the analysis of a battle must be carried out from two distinct perspectives: firstly, the strategic conditions (*strategischen Verhältnisse*) under which it was fought; and secondly, the tactical routs (*taktischen Unordnungen*) that occurred there. This dual perspective implies a difference in scale between the two spheres of action and a subordination of the latter to the former. This is made clear when the author states that a minor alteration to the strategic conditions of the moment – in this case, the crossing of the Po by the Austrian army – could have resulted in a favourable situation for the French being transformed into a disadvantageous one. Skilful strategic manoeuvring can place the enemy at a tactical disadvantage. Without undertaking a detailed analysis of the battle, it is possible to identify a strategic principle that was enunciated by Scharnhorst: never stand (*stehen*) concentrated, but always fight (*schlagen*) in a concentrated manner.⁷² Whatever the inspiration behind Scharnhorst's concept that could be attributed to Bülow, Kuhle accurately observes its presence in the well-known German adage: *Getrennt marschieren, vereint schlagen!* which translates to “march separately, strike together!”⁷³

Scharnhorst's article contains a second well-known expression that exerts an influence on the development of German military thought.⁷⁴ This expression is articulated in the preceding paragraphs of the aforementioned citation: “all strategy ceases” (*alle Strategie aufhört*) with the Austrians' decision to engage in the Battle of Marengo.⁷⁵ The statement implicitly suggested that the implementation of tactics occurred concomitantly with the cessation of strategic activity. The argument remained undeveloped, and the author did not provide any specific insights into the potential implications of this perspective on the relationship between strategy and tactics. However, it appears that Scharnhorst did not concur with Bülow's assertion that tactics would progressively diminish in significance within the art of war (*also wird die Taktik [...] immer mehr aus des Kriegskunst verschwinden*), with strategy becoming the predominant factor (*die Strategie allein wird alles ausrichten*).⁷⁶

Scharnhorst's article was published in the *Denkwürdigkeiten der militärischen Gesellschaft* (Memoirs of the Military Society), the Berlin-based association within which Clausewitz initially began to develop his opinions and refine his judgement. Did it establish the conceptual basis for Clausewitz's understanding of the relationship between strategy and tactics? It is likely that it did, but Scharnhorst's article did not mean that the question of the relationship between the two concepts had been settled for the members of the *Militärische Gesellschaft*. At a meeting of the Association in May 1804, Bieberstein presented an essay on the classification of the sciences of war, in which he attempted to establish a distinction between tactics and strategy. The minutes of the meeting do not provide the definitions that were discussed; instead, they indicate that none of the proposed definitions included any essential and decisive (*wesentlichen und bestimmten*) characteristics.⁷⁷

The subsequent account of the discussion, which was too brief to ascertain whether Clausewitz, who had become one of the three editors of the *Denkwürdigkeiten* a month earlier, participated actively, is similarly lacking in detail. It is conceivable that he was the author of the somewhat enigmatic observation that, in order to define the difference between tactics and strategy, it is necessary to avoid defining the limit (*Gränze*).⁷⁸ It can be surmised that this was an allusion to Bülow's terminology, which emphasised the necessity of determining the dividing line (*Grenzlinie*) between strategy and tactics.⁷⁹ Should the wording in the *Denkwürdigkeiten* be interpreted as an attempt to avoid the compartmentalisation of the two concepts, it would appear to be in phase with the first definition of *Strategie* posited by Clausewitz in his eponymous manuscript, written in 1804.

Clausewitz's definition

The double definition in the manuscript is virtually identical to that found in *On War*: Tactics is the theory (*Lehre*) of the use of armed forces in the engagement (*Gefecht*), strategy is the theory of the use of each engagement for the aim – or purpose (*Zweck*) – of the war. It is the “elegant expression” of an idea that Clausewitz expressed by insisting on the combination or linking of individual engagements (*durch Verbindung einzelner Gefechte*).⁸⁰ The concept of *Verbindung*, which remains pivotal to the definition of the essay composed in 1812 for the Crown Prince (“[strategy] is the combination of individual engagements to attain the aim of the campaign or war”), is absent in the definitions provided in sections II.1 and III.1 of *On War*.⁸¹ However, this notion is expressed in a verbal form in section II.1, two paragraphs before the well-known definition. In this formulation, the emphasis is placed on the necessity of “coordinating” (*verbinden*) each engagement, that is to say strategy.⁸²

This focus on engagements can be attributed to a disagreement with the prominent military theorist of the period. While Bülow is not explicitly referenced in this particular section of the 1804 manuscript, Clausewitz's critique of the notion that strategy is the sole determining factor in military success and that tactics are inconsequential is clearly directed at Bülow and his ideas.⁸³ In contrast, the critique was notably direct and more penetrating in a review of a work by Bülow that was published anonymously by Clausewitz the following year in the *Neue Bellona*.

This review is notable for two aspects. Firstly, Clausewitz criticises Bülow's definition of strategy, yet does not propose an alternative definition of his own. However, it is established that he had formulated this alternative definition, which was incorporated into his 1804 manuscript. Secondly, the discussion of Bülow's definition represents the sole instance of Clausewitz's explicit and developed criticism of the definitions of strategy formulated by military writers of the time. Indeed, Clausewitz's unpublished review of Bieberstein's *Beiträge zur Taktik und Strategie* did not address the author's definitions, limiting himself to stating that he rarely agreed with them and citing as his only example of disagreement the distinction between the art and science of war.⁸⁴

The definition with which Clausewitz took issue had already been formulated by Bülow^[1], in his *Geist des neuern Kriegssystems*. It states again that any movement conducted within the enemy's visual field – and therefore within the range of his cannon – is tactical; any movement conducted outside his visual field – and therefore outside the range of his cannon – is strategic.⁸⁵ Clausewitz

demonstrated with ease the shortcomings of such a definition. He was not alone in developing this criticism; the author of the review mentioned by Berenhorst similarly considered Bülow's definition to be both overly formal (*sehr formal*) and inaccurate (*nicht so richtig*).⁸⁶ A distinctive element of Clausewitz's approach is the discernible impact of the reviewed author on his own thinking, although this influence is not overtly expressed.

Clausewitz's critique of Bülow's nominalism was based on the perception that Bülow had not comprehended the object (*Gegenstand*) that must be distinguished according to his classification principle (*Eintheilungsprinzip*); more explicitly: the utilisation of given means (*vorhandenen Mittel*) to attain a higher end (*vorgesetzten Zweck*).⁸⁷ In point of fact, Bülow had made a twofold distinction: firstly, between the aim (*Zweck*) of military operations and their objective (*Gegenstand*, here in a different sense from Clausewitz's previous use of the concept); and secondly, between the general purpose (*in diesem allgemeinen Zwecke*) – peace – and the specific aims of operations (*die Zwecke der besonders Operationen*) – harming the enemy, the latter being so many means (*Mittel*) of achieving the former.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, it is accurate to assert that the analysis was not articulated explicitly with his definition of strategy and tactics.

Yet, Bülow had thoroughly contemplated the significance of such an articulation in 1799, formulating the subsequent definition: all operations that have the enemy as their object (*Gegenstand*) are deemed tactical, while all operations that have the enemy as their aim (*Zweck*), but not their object, are classified as strategic. Nevertheless, he was not inclined to accept it at that time, on the grounds that the definition was overly extensive (*umfasst also zuviel*).⁸⁹ Bülow reconsidered this position in 1805, when he appended a significant annotation to the new edition of his *Geist des neuern Kriegssystems*. Consequently, he disavowed (*widerrufen*) his prior definition based on the visual field, opting instead for the definition he had previously dismissed in 1799: tactical is any movement that has the enemy as its object (*Gegenstand*); strategic is any movement that has the enemy as its aim (*Zweck*) and not as its object.⁹⁰

As Langendorf has observed, this turnaround brought Bülow closer to Clausewitz's position.⁹¹ It is challenging to ascertain whether this novel perspective was shaped by the review published in *Neue Bellona*. Bülow meticulously examined the critical reviews of his works; however, the sole indication he provides of his shift in stance is that it occurred subsequent to meticulous reflection (*nach reiflicher Überlegung*).⁹²

It could be argued that Bülow furnished his critics with two elements. Firstly, he provided a rough initial definition of strategy. Secondly, he provided the conceptual means to critique that definition. In the author's "boiling of ideas", as termed by Langendorf,⁹³ elements were brought to the surface that were capable of providing perspicuity to even the most intransigent critics. In this particular instance, Clausewitz's reinterpretation of the issue enabled him to demonstrate that entering the opponent's field of vision neither modifies the intrinsic nature of the ends nor that of the means employed in military operations (*weder die Natur des Zwecks noch der Mittel*).⁹⁴ In essence, Clausewitz employed an analytical framework inspired by Bülow to argue that Bülow had merely inadequately utilised it.

It is demonstrated by Kuhle that the significance attributed to the dialectic of ends and means was not exclusive to what he terms the "Scharnhorst Circle"; nevertheless, this dialectic functioned as a pivotal conception of said circle.⁹⁵

Furthermore, Kuhle's contributions included the identification of a lacuna in the existing historiography, emphasising the significance of an author who had been overlooked by commentators on Clausewitz. The dearth of interest in the work published anonymously by Gaugreben^[3] under the title *Versuch einer gründlichen Beleuchtung der Lehrsätze des neuern Krieges* (An Attempt at a Thorough Examination of the Doctrines of Modern War) warrants an explanation.

On account of the ambiguity in the subtitle of the book, its attribution to Bülow has become customary in library catalogues. A cursory examination of the book is sufficient to reveal its true nature. It is in fact a lengthy review of a work by Bülow; indeed, the same work reviewed anonymously by Clausewitz in the same year in *Neue Bellona*. The process of ascertaining the genuine authorship of the work presented more of a challenge. Kuhle's research led to the identification of the attribution of the work to Gaugreben, as stated in the *Anleitung zum zweckmäßigen Studium der Kriegswissenschaft* (Guidance for the Rational Study of Military Science), which was published in 1828 by Ludwig Friedrich Erck. This assertion is corroborated by the ancient *Katalog der Bibliothek-Abtheilung des K. und K. Kriegs-Archivs* (Catalogue of the Library Section of the Imperial and Royal War Archives), even if the title of the work is slightly different, and by the bibliographical work published by Rumpf.⁹⁶ As Gaugreben was also a member of the *Militärische Gesellschaft* and had published a critical review of Bülow's work, albeit more in-depth than that by Clausewitz, the findings by Kuhle opened up an interesting comparative perspective.

Kuhle persuasively demonstrates the convergence of views between Gaugreben and Clausewitz, and the influence that the former's criticism of Bülow may have had on the development of the latter's ideas. However, the present discussion does not concern itself with the assertion that the corpus of Clausewitz's work represents a late culmination of Bülow's reception (*ein später Höhepunkt der Bülow-Rezeption*), fuelled by Gaugreben's criticism, nor with the interpretation proffered by Kuhle in relation to what he designates as Bülow's "theory of subsistence".⁹⁷ It is essential that both questions are incorporated into the research agenda.

At this present juncture, the focus shall be constrained to two specific points. Firstly, as Kuhle points out, Gaugreben systematically applied the dialectic of means and ends promoted in the Scharnhorst Circle.⁹⁸ Moreover, Gaugreben introduced a distinction between the objective (*Ziel*) of operations – the assembly of enemy armed forces – and the aim (*Zweck*) of operations – the destruction of these forces.⁹⁹ Secondly, it is evident that Gaugreben's^[3] book could not have influenced the definition of strategy and tactics that Clausewitz had already formulated in his manuscript of the previous year. Furthermore, it is implausible that Gaugreben exerted any influence through discussions within the *Militärische Gesellschaft* for a very simple reason: the respective approaches of Clausewitz and Gaugreben to the relationship between strategy and tactics are very different.

Clausewitz's approach

It is worthy of note to observe the rationale behind Clausewitz's decision to abstain from offering his personal definition, although already formulated as we know, in his review published in *Neue Bellona*. The intention was to anchor the definition of strategy in a rationale based on reflections on the art of war in general.¹⁰⁰ This necessitated the development and anchoring of his

conceptualisation of war prior to the presentation of his own definition of strategy.

The aspiration to deliver a completed work to the public and to posterity is explicitly articulated in the “first note” that Marie von Clausewitz incorporated in her preface to the *Hinterlassene Werke (Posthumous Works)*. In this note, Clausewitz asserts his ambition (*Ehrgeiz*) to produce a work that would not be consigned to oblivion after a brief period of two or three years, but rather one that the reader could revisit on multiple occasions.¹⁰¹ Contrary to the tendency exhibited by the majority of his contemporaries in military literature, who were expeditious in the publication of their ideas in a state of incompleteness under the banner of originality, Clausewitz demonstrated a meticulous approach in the development of his theoretical framework. As evidenced by a letter to Marie from 1807, in which he metaphorically likened his own life to a very imperfect work (*ein sehr unvollkommenes Werk*), comprised of fragments and patchworks (*Stück- und Flickwerk*), this comparison aptly encapsulates his intellectual oeuvre, which was in that period undergoing development and refinement.¹⁰² This patchwork was the result of a composite of the author’s own conceptualisations and those of other military writers, including Bülow and Gaugreben, among others. These disparate ideas were assimilated, modified, and integrated within Clausewitz’s conceptual framework, thereby forming a hybrid that was both unique and coherent.

A number of the earlier definitions of the concept of strategy were of some relevance to the progression of Clausewitz’s approach. Bourscheid had established a hierarchy between the concepts of tactics and strategy, while Nicolai had introduced the idea of linking operations according to the aim of war.¹⁰³ An author such as G. Venturini – whom Clausewitz described as an ordinary mind¹⁰⁴ – had conceived strategy as a combination of the events of war (*Kombination der Kriegsvorfälle*) in order to achieve the purpose of war (*Hauptkriegszwecks*) as quickly as possible.¹⁰⁵ In relation to Bülow, in addition to his conception of a hierarchy of aims and ends, he also proposed that strategy should be considered as the “ultimatum” of tactics. In this context, “ultimatum” should be understood as the final proposal. This suggests that tactics fulfil the objectives set out in strategy (*sie vollendet was diese vorbereitet*).¹⁰⁶ Finally, the importance of the interconnectedness of strategy and policy was emphasised by Massenbach, who asserted that these concepts are inextricably linked (*da sie doch nur Eins ausmachen gleichsam*) and both strive towards the same overarching goal (*nach einem Ziele streben*).¹⁰⁷ The conceptual framework put forth by Clausewitz reflected certain ideas previously articulated by earlier military writers engaged in the study of strategy. However, two elements are distinctive to Clausewitz’s approach.

Firstly, the analyses presented by these authors were often confused or partial and lacked conceptual mastery. To illustrate, Clausewitz considered Bülow to have approached the truth (*nahe an der Wahrheit herumstreicht*) but to have lacked philosophical depth.¹⁰⁸ He had himself succeeded in organising his analyses in accordance with a rational structure which enabled him to envisage war as a “structured entity structured by the hierarchy of means and ends”.¹⁰⁹ As demonstrated by Raymond Aron, the means-end “formal pair” serves as the fundamental basis of the Clausewitzian conceptual edifice. In addition to the tactics/strategy pair, this dyad should also be related to the war/policy pair.¹¹⁰

This dual relationship is foundational in ensuring a high level of coherence within the conceptual framework.

However, a complete comprehension of Clausewitz's methodology necessitates an additional element in each of these pairs, a point that the author himself elucidates in a text dated to 1807 or 1808: "As long as there is an aim (*Zweck*) and means (*Mittel*), there is a rational connection between the two (*vernunftmässig Verbindung beyder*), and the art of war is nothing more."¹¹¹ As was stated in the preceding discussion, the concept of *Gefecht* is being examined as a mediator in the relationship between tactics and strategy. The subsequent analysis will examine the hypothesis that this concept is *Kriegführung* in the relationship between strategy and policy.

Secondly, these earlier military writers reasoned about an object whose specificity had not yet been fully revealed. In other words, Clausewitz was fully aware of the changes in military operations at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, that is to say, of what Stéphane Béraud has called the Napoleonic military revolution.¹¹² As demonstrated by his *Portrait of Scharnhorst*, composed between 1814 and 1817, two specific passages are particularly relevant to this argument. Firstly, Clausewitz's observations indicate that Bonaparte's significant historical actions shaped the gradual evolution of warfare on the battlefield (*während der Krieg selbst in Bonapartes Hand sich nach und nach in die neuen Formen umbildete*). Secondly, he regarded war itself, at the time, as standing "at the lectern" and every day offering practical instruction to its students (*während der Krieg selbst gewissermaßen auf dem Katheder stand und täglich praktischen Unterricht gab*).¹¹³ Furthermore, the evolving context of the Napoleonic wars provided the milieu for Clausewitz to transition his theoretical paradigm, as Herberg-Rothe's research has elucidated, thereby giving birth to a political theory of war.¹¹⁴

The wording of the definition of strategy in the 1804 manuscript and in *On War* could lead to the assumption that the problem was resolved at an early stage and that Clausewitz did not have to address it subsequently. This was not the case due to a terminological difficulty pertaining to the concept of higher tactics. As the concept is absent from *On War*, this issue will not be apparent to the reader of the latest version of the oeuvre.

Strategy and higher tactics

It is a misconception that the concept of grand or higher tactics (*grande tactique*) was invented by Jacques de Guibert (1743-1790). In fact, the term had already been used by Jean-Charles de Follard (1669-1752).¹¹⁵ However, it is an established fact that it was Guibert's *Essai général de tactique* and *Eloge du roi de Prusse* (Praise for the King of Prussia) that disseminated the concept throughout German-speaking regions. The term was translated as *große Taktik* and defined as the science of the general (*Wissenschaft der Generale*) and the art of commanding large bodies of troops (*Kunst große Corps zu führen*).¹¹⁶ However, the term *große Taktik* did not gain traction among German-speaking military writers, who swiftly adopted *höhere Taktik* (higher tactics) under Nicolai's influence.

Higher tactics were initially defined as a combination of overall movements (*gemeine Evolutionen*) and the deployment of manoeuvres (*Entwicklung der Manöuvres*) into large-scale military operations, with the entire force operating in accordance with the commander's intentions (*Absicht des Feldherrn*).¹¹⁷ This definition rendered the term equivalent to that of strategy. However, a hierarchy

was swiftly implemented to subordinate higher tactics to strategy, with criteria that varied from one author to another. Meinert's position was that higher tactics were commensurate with the application of mathematics to tactics, while strategy constituted a comprehensive science (*große Wissenschaft*) that synthesised (*zusammenfassen*) the subordinate sciences of warfare.¹¹⁸ In contrast, Nicolai's conceptualisation of higher tactics was intrinsically linked to manoeuvres, and his understanding of strategy was inextricably linked to operations.¹¹⁹

The issue of the relationship between the two concepts was also raised in the French language, resulting in a misinterpretation by a reviewer of the *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* of the work published by La Roche Aymon in Weimar in 1804. The author of the review created a persistent misunderstanding by equating *grande tactique* with the German term *Strategie*.¹²⁰ In reality, La Roche Aymon's argument was certainly ambiguous but nevertheless contained a distinction and a hierarchy between the two concepts. Higher tactics were defined as the science of generals (*la science des généraux*), which is concerned with the execution of large-scale military manoeuvres (*l'exécution des grandes manoeuvres de la guerre*). It is evident that such a definition could be considered analogous to the definitions of strategy proposed by German-speaking military writers. However, La Roche Aymon immediately clarified the intended meaning of the term *la stratégique*, namely the science of campaign plans (*la science des plans de campagne*). From this standpoint, higher tactics are clearly subordinate to strategy, with *grande tactique* being executed in accordance with the dictates of strategy (*la stratégique ordonne et la grande tactique exécute*). La Roche Aymon further elaborated on this assertion, proposing that strategy alone could potentially suffice to guarantee military victory, thereby negating the necessity for tactical manoeuvres (*la stratégique seule suffirait, pour conduire les armées à la victoire, sans qu'il soit besoin de tactique*).¹²¹ Clausewitz's reaction to such a statement was one of sharp disapproval, deeming it to be ridiculous (*lächerlich*).¹²² However, Clausewitz himself had to grapple with the question of the relationship between higher tactics and strategy before he could fully develop his arguments.

In the 1804 manuscript, there is an oblique reference to the concept of higher tactics; however, no definition is provided. An additional manuscript dated 1809 offers a potential definition. The term "elementary tactics" is defined as the theory of the arrangement and deployment of fundamental military units and forces. In contrast, higher tactics (*höhere Taktik*) correspond to the theory of the disposition and movements of the larger components of the army, namely the army corps and armies.¹²³ For Clausewitz, all matters pertaining to combat are to be regarded as inherently tactical in nature. These are tactics which ultimately determine the outcome (*am Ende die Sache ausmachen muss*), as they involve the deployment of armed forces (*Streitkräfte*), with the number of troops deployed determining the respective areas of elementary and higher tactics. In accordance with the 1804 definition, strategy concerns the combination (*Kombinationen*) of engagements of varying importance (*kleinere Gefechte mit größeren künstlich zu verbinden*) in order to weave them into a complex network (*Gewebe in vielfacheren Fäden auszuspinnen*). This constitutes the primary component of the strategy, which employs tactics as its fundamental elements (*Material*) to construct its structure (*Gebäude*) and determine a system of warfare (*Kriegssystem*).¹²⁴

Clausewitz adds a clarification that is absent from the 1804 manuscript. Evidently, the element under discussion constitutes a pivotal component of the

strategy, but it is merely one element of a larger, integrated whole (*Teil der Strategie*). The remaining elements of the strategy encompass the organisation of the army, necessitating the alignment of the strategy's requisites with those of tactics; the transportation of supplies, with the objective of ensuring the deployment of the armed forces; and the fortification of cities.¹²⁵ In this specific instance, the question of whether the said list is systematic and coherent is rendered irrelevant. The fundamental consideration is that Clausewitz's definition is not a definition of strategy in general, but rather a partial definition, that of strategy in relation to tactics. The author does not provide such a general definition of "strategy", and therefore the scope of the concept must be determined through its use as a noun or adjective (see below).

With regard to higher tactics, Clausewitz's approach underwent a notable transformation in the manuscripts that Werner Hahlweg dates to the period between 1808 and 1812 and considers to be the initial drafts of *On War*. In attempting to establish an exact and comprehensive classification of the various elements that make up the science of war, the author displays a certain degree of indecision with regard to the position to be assigned to higher tactics. Primarily, Clausewitz revised his conceptualisation of the two forms of tactics. Elementary or minor (*nieder*) tactics were reinterpreted as the theory of training troops (*Ausbildung der Truppen*), whereas higher tactics were defined as the theory of utilising troops in engagement (*Gebrauch derselben im Gefecht*).¹²⁶ The title of a chapter in the manuscript indicates that the author's intention was also to clarify the distinction between higher tactics and strategy.¹²⁷ While the chapter does not present an explicit definition, it does include elements that would eventually lead Clausewitz to abandon the distinction between elementary and higher tactics.

The centrality of the notion of engagement (*Gefecht*) in Clausewitz's approach to the relationship between tactics and strategy is the most important of these elements. And yet it was precisely the new definition he gave to higher tactics that made this concept virtually synonymous with that of engagement. Although the conceptual triad of tactics/engagement/strategy made the concept of higher tactics redundant, Clausewitz was reluctant to give it up for a reason that illuminates the logic of his conceptual construct.

Clausewitz's premise is that the entire scope of the art of war itself (*das ganze Gebiet der eigentlichen Kriegskunst*) can be defined by the concepts of strategy and tactics.¹²⁸ In his *Vorlesungen über den kleinen Krieg* (Lectures on the Small War), written in the early 1810s, Clausewitz contemplated the applicability of the tactical/strategic dichotomy to this particular form of war. He arrives at the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that in the context of small war, the strategic dimension can be considered to fall within the realm of tactics.¹²⁹ In order to reconcile this apparent contradiction, Clausewitz categorises small war as a subset of higher tactics (*einen Theil der höheren Taktik*).

The reasoning here is that engagements in small-scale warfare almost always pursue tactical aims (*taktische Zwecke*) and thus cannot directly achieve the aim of war (*Zweck des Krieges*) – the realm of strategy – and are therefore a means to achieve subordinate ends (*untergeordnete Zwecke*).¹³⁰ In other words, the means-ends dialectic at the heart of the relationship between tactics and strategy applies equally to the large-scale war and the small war, but since the latter cannot be covered by the concept of strategy, it is the concept of higher tactics that takes its place.

The perspective adopted in the chapter of *On War* (VI.26) devoted to *people's war* (*Volkskrieg*) is very different, and significantly, Clausewitz does not incorporate the concept of higher tactics. In contrast to his approach to small-scale warfare, which is characterised by its exclusively tactical function, his approach to *people's war* is defined by its status as an important component of strategic defence (*großen strategischen Verteidigungsmittel*). Clausewitz specified that a fundamental principle of people's war is to avoid resorting to tactical defence (*taktischen Verteidigung*). In order to illustrate this principle and characterise the action of the insurgents, the metaphor of fire is employed: for the fuel of the insurrection to produce a great flame, it is important that it has enough air to develop and is not extinguished all at once (*nicht mit einem großen Schlage erdrückt werden kann*). In other words, insurgents should avoid direct confrontation with tactically superior enemy troops, instead operating peripherally at the extremities of the theatre of war (*auf den Flügeln des feindlichen Kriegstheaters*). The objective of insurrection is not the destruction of the enemy's core (*Kern*), but rather the erosion (*nagen*) of its surface (*Oberfläche*), its peripheral limits (*Umgrenzungen*).¹³¹

Azar Gat and Sibylle Scheipers have placed particular emphasis on the significance of section VI.26 of *On War*. Nevertheless, the question of whether there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the content of this section constituted the “last straw” that led Clausewitz to revise his theory of war, as Gat contends, remains to be addressed.¹³² The issue that this interpretation poses pertains to the presence of the themes of section VI.26 in the *Bekennnisdenkenschrift* (Memorial of Confessions), a text written by Clausewitz in February 1812, approximately fifteen years prior to the “intellectual crisis” that prompted the author to revise his approach.

Scheipers' elaborate explanation, devised in support of her argument for the systematised incorporation of people's war into Clausewitz's theory of major war, does not provide a sufficiently lucid account of the shift in perspective that differentiates the *Bekennnisdenkenschrift* from section VI.26 of *On War*.¹³³ In the context of the issue addressed by the present paper, this new perspective is characterised by the considerably more explicit linkage between the *Landsturm*, people's war and strategic defence.¹³⁴ In the *Bekennnisdenkenschrift*, the issue of strategic defence is addressed in an appendix that does not prioritise the concept of people's war. In relation to this, Scheipers's approach is confusing, as she associates the term *Lokalität* with the support of the local population for the defensive strategy.¹³⁵ In this particular context, the term is employed to denote geographical locations, with a specific reference to fortifications (*Festungen*).¹³⁶ In fact, the entire first part of the appendix devoted to tactical and strategic defence does not concern people's war, as evidenced by the sentence: “So far, we have not said a word about this truly great defence, which is provided by an entire nation by means of a mass uprising (*Bisher haben wir kein Wort gesagt von derjenigen wahrhaft großen Verteidigung, welche vermittelt eines Landsturms durch eine ganze Nation geleistet wird*)”.¹³⁷ The second section of the appendix does indeed address the *Landsturm*, but surprisingly, Clausewitz does not explicitly link the concepts of strategic defence and people's war.

The articulation of these two concepts in section VI.26 of *On War* introduces a number of novel developments. These include the moral factor, the psychological effects of insurrectionary action, the temporal factor in the growth of the insurrection, the combination of the action of the *Landsturm* and the regular army, the endangerment of the enemy's lines of communication, and the ability

of people's war to take the enemy in "strategic enfilade" (*strategisches Flankenfeuer*). This shift in perspective is undoubtedly consistent with Clausewitz's novel approach; however, with respect to this study's salient question, it appears that the conceptualisation of people's war is particularly at variance with Liddell Hart's constrictive interpretation of Clausewitz's definition of strategy. The aforementioned author proposed that this definition "narrows the meaning of strategy to the pure utilization of battle".¹³⁸ The translation of the term *Gefecht*, as employed by Clausewitz in his definition, as "battle" is not, in itself, erroneous. The term is undeniably polysemic, yet Liddell Hart's choice – or rather the choice of Thomas D. Pilcher (see below), unquestioned by Liddell Hart – is incongruent with certain passages in *On War*, specifically the chapter devoted to the concept of the people's war. Indeed, the *Landsturm* plays a key role in strategic defence (*großen strategischen Verteidigungsmittel*), although insurgents must avoid engaging in frontal combat with enemy troops. In other words, insurgents can influence the outcome of the war strategically without resorting to frontal confrontation, for example by threatening the enemy's strategic flanks through the mere existence of the insurrection. Thus, the strategy involves coordinating various engagements (*Gefecht*) or means in order to achieve the objectives of the war, rather than just battles.

In section VI.26 of *On War*, the German term that Michael Howard and Peter Paret translate as "insurgent actions" is *Landsturmgefecht*.¹³⁹ This literally means "combat conducted by a mass levy", and in this case, Clausewitz means that the fighting ability of the *Landsturm* is that of a mediocre troop engaged in battle. Nevertheless, the translation successfully conveys the spirit of the original text, as Clausewitz's argument posits that the strategic significance lies in the general action of the *Landsturm*, rather than its combat capabilities to be engaged in battle.

The scope of strategy is subject to variation depending on the translation of *Gefecht* in the definition. The term *Gefecht* can be translated as "battle", "combat", "engagement" or even "action". It is evident that Clausewitz employs the term *Gefecht* as a synonym for *Schlacht* in certain instances, that is to say, in the sense of "battle". It is equally clear that in the fourth Book of *On War* he draws a distinction between *Gefecht* and *Schlacht*. An argument could be made that an example from the Seven Years' War suggests that the author conceptualises engagement as a small-scale battle. Indeed, Clausewitz's characterisation of the action at Katholisch-Hennersdorf (23 November 1745) as a *Gefecht* stands in contrast to his designation of the battle of Kesselsdorf (15 December 1745) as a *Schlacht*.¹⁴⁰ This is consistent with contemporary military terminology. As Mungo Melvin has noted, the predominant interpretation of the concept of engagement comprises two distinct significations: local action within the context of a battle and tactical action.¹⁴¹ However, this does not represent the fundamental interpretation of the concept of *Gefecht* as outlined by Clausewitz. A more comprehensive understanding of this concept can be attained by employing a reverse approach to the problem. It is not the engagement that is a small battle; it is the battle that is a large engagement. In other words, whilst *Gefecht* is indeed a specific concept in certain of its uses, in others it is a generic concept corresponding to an abstract category, which includes the subordinate categories of battle (*Schlacht*) and main battle (*Hauptschlacht*). One of the challenges inherent to Clausewitz's argument pertains to the ambiguity of the generic concept of *Gefecht*. The concept does not inherently imply the realisation of engagement as a distinct category of armed action. In order to comprehend

this apparent paradox, it is imperative to read Book IV of *On War* and section I.2 in parallel.

In the opening of section IV.3, Clausewitz establishes the equivalence of the concepts of *Gefecht* and *Kampf* (*Gefecht ist Kampf*).¹⁴² *Kampf* is another polysemic term, with several meanings. These comprise the following: combat, struggle, fight, wrestling, conflict, strife, battle and fray.¹⁴³ The military dictionary authored by Friedrich Wilhelm Streit (1772-1839) provides an overly restrictive translation, offering solely the term “conflict”.¹⁴⁴ This choice most likely reflects the tendency of Prussian military personnel to utilise the term in an abstract sense. This is exemplified by Clausewitz, although it should be noted that he also employs the term in the sense of “fight”. In section I.2, the author defines *Kampf* as a “whole” made up or structured of a plurality of constituent elements (*ein vielfach gegliedertes Ganzes*). Each of the aforementioned elements, or units (*Einheiten*), is categorised explicitly under the overarching designation of engagement (*Gefecht*). In principle, *Gefecht* ought to be considered a subordinate concept to *Kampf*. A closer examination reveals that the equivalence established in section IV.3 also appears to extend to section I.2, as both concepts, when employed as generic terms, are quasi-synonyms of warlike activity (*kriegerischer Tätigkeit*).¹⁴⁵

This is the manner in which the subsequent two arguments proposed by Clausewitz should be comprehended. The initial assertion posits that all warlike activity is inherently associated with engagement, whether directly or indirectly (*Es bezieht sich also alle kriegerische Tätigkeit notwendig auf das Gefecht, entweder unmittelbar oder mittelbar*). The second postulate asserts that all “threads” of warlike activity lead to engagement (*Endigen sich also im Gefecht alle Fäden kriegerischer Tätigkeit*).¹⁴⁶ The use of *Gefecht* as both a general and specific concept in the same argument can pose significant interpretative challenges. The issue is encountered in section IV.3, in a formulation analogous to the previous quotation that presents the concept of *Kampf* as a “whole”: Every engagement is a whole, in which the individual engagements combine to form an overall success (*jedes Gefecht ist ein Ganzes, in welchem die Teilgefechte sich zu einem Gesamterfolge vereinigen*).¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the idea that the whole is different from the sum of its parts is understood, even if the same concept is used to refer to both the whole and the parts. This approach was in perfect alignment with the definition of strategy outlined in the 1804 manuscript, which placed significant emphasis on the combination of individual engagements (see above).

The subject is rendered more complex in section I.2, where Clausewitz expounds the notion that the objective of engagement can be realised even in the absence of engagements. The apparent contradiction in the original text is absent from Howard and Paret’s translation, which translates *Gefecht* as “engagement” in its first occurrence and as “fighting” in its second.¹⁴⁸ The German text proffers a slightly divergent interpretation, namely that engagement, as a generic concept, is not inherently contingent on actual partial engagements. It is sufficient for these partial engagements to be interpreted as potentially effective for the objective of the engagement – warlike activity – to be achieved. Clausewitz provides an illustration of this through the example of entire military campaigns that can be conducted with “great activity” without real engagements playing a significant role (*so wird es erklärlich, wie ganze Feldzüge mit großer Tätigkeit geführt werden können, ohne daß das faktische Gefecht darin eine namhafte Rolle spielt*).¹⁴⁹ This conception was already present in the 1804 manuscript:

Clausewitz specified that engagement could be effective (*wirklich beabsichtigtes*) or simply simulated (*vorgespiegeltes*). It can thus be concluded that the fundamental concept underpinning the utilisation of armed forces (*Streitkräfte*) was the “idea of engagement” (*Idee eines Gefechts*), rather than effective engagement. This suggests that the willingness of an adversary to abstain from direct confrontation may arise if they perceive the potential consequences of engagement to be unfavourable.¹⁵⁰

Clausewitz’s incorporation of the concept of annihilating the enemy’s military forces (*Vernichtung der feindlichen Streitkraft*) into his rationale undeniably complicated the task of comprehending Section IV.3 of *On War* for its readers. The reasoning is nonetheless coherent and introduces an important nuance. The argument can be synthesised into three components. Clausewitz’s primary proposition is that engagement constitutes the sole effective factor in war (*Das Gefecht ist die einzige Wirksamkeit im Kriege*). In his subsequent proposition, he asserts that the annihilation of enemy forces is a means to an end in the engagement (*im Gefecht ist die Vernichtung der uns gegenüberstehenden Streitkraft das Mittel zum Zweck*). In conclusion, it was determined that this is the case even in the absence of an actual engagement (*ist es selbst da, wo das Gefecht nicht faktisch eintritt*).¹⁵¹ In summary, the decision (*Entscheidung*) may be the result of the potential annihilation of enemy forces, without the engagement necessarily being realised in its entirety. This argument appears to be in some degree of discrepancy with other passages in *On War*. However, this is not contradictory, provided that the concept of annihilating the enemy’s military forces is not misunderstood. Clausewitz is unambiguous in his assertion that this concept (*Begriff*) is not confined to physical force alone (*auf die bloße physische Streitkraft zu beschränken*), but must also – and even more so – encompass moral force (*sondern vielmehr die moralische notwendig darunter mit verstanden werden muß*).¹⁵²

The developments made to the concept of *Gefecht* in *On War* – the idea of potential engagement – hold ramifications for the definition of strategy. In *On War*, the concept of engagement is imbued with a connotation that brings it closer to the notion of warlike activity than to that of actual physical combat. It is evident that Clausewitz’s interest persists in the domain of combat, with a particular emphasis on the main battle. Nevertheless, this was no longer the sole means of acquiring a decision in warfare. Therefore, the extent of the concept of *Gefecht* as it pertains to the definition of strategy is subject to variation, depending on the specific interpretation of the concept. When categorising this definition as one of the “bad” elements in Clausewitz’s work, Gat employs a restrictive approach, in this case the approach of Liddell Hart.¹⁵³

The issue is not confined to the term *Gefecht* in the definition; the translation of *Zweck* is also challenging. The matter will be addressed in part by the well-known distinction between *Ziel* and *Zweck* set out at the beginning of Section I.1 of *On War* (see below). Nevertheless, as Herberg-Rothe has demonstrated, the challenge remains contingent on the translations selected for these concepts.¹⁵⁴

Was Clausewitz, from the very beginning, fully aware of the scope of his definition of 1804 and of the analytical potential of the dialectic between the ends and the means? There is every reason to believe that his ideas matured gradually, and that it was not until the early 1810s that the full potential of the 1804 definition became clear to him. This is illustrated by his use of an economic metaphor that illuminates both his concept of engagement and the relationship between strategy and tactics. Readers of *On War* will be familiar with this

metaphor from its appearance in Chapter 2 of Book I, which deals precisely with the ends and means in warfare: “The decision by arms [*Waffenentscheidung*] is for all major and minor operations in war what cash payment [*bare Zahlung*] is in commerce [*Wechselhandel*]”.¹⁵⁵ In this regard, Aron’s assertion that Clausewitz had already employed the “same formula” in his 1804 manuscript is somewhat imprecise.¹⁵⁶

Originally, the metaphor concerned the concept of *Gefecht* and was expressed in a slightly different way: engagement (*Gefecht*) is to strategy (*Strategie*) what cash money (*bare Geld*) is to commerce.¹⁵⁷ A slightly different formulation is given in an advanced version of Chapter 2 of *On War*: engagement is to war (*Krieg*) what cash money is to commerce (*Handel*).¹⁵⁸ In a letter to Gneisenau in 1811, he illustrated his approach by saying that “engagement is money and goods, and strategy is trade in bills of exchange [*Wechselhandel*]”.¹⁵⁹ The idea is that the value of the one depends on the other, and so those who do not know how to fight will not be able to achieve anything at the strategic level (in the metaphor, will go bankrupt in the exchange business). Finally, in an earlier version of Book II of *On War* from the early 1820s, Clausewitz uses a metaphor that does not appear in the published version of 1832: “Strategy relates to tactics as commerce relates to the production of goods”.¹⁶⁰

Each of these metaphors was intended to illustrate the argument that strategy and tactics are two activities that are at once distinct and yet interpenetrating (*sich einander durchdringende*), to use the phrase from *On War*.¹⁶¹ A full understanding of their interrelationship (*Verhältnis zueinander*) required a conceptual effort which, according to Clausewitz, had long been overlooked (*Dies hat man lange Zeit übersehen*), and which he himself had achieved through the development of his 1804 definition. This notion of a neglected conceptual effort is only present in the *Aphorismen*; Clausewitz makes mention of it in a sentence that follows the aforementioned passage, which is identical in *On War* and in Aphorism 60.¹⁶²

It can be surmised from these *Aphorismen* that the author was receptive to the efforts made after 1804 to clarify terminology; however, he was not persuaded of their efficacy. It is unfortunate that there is no text that can be used to shed light on Clausewitz’s perspective on these endeavours in a way that is comparable to the review of the Bülow work. Furthermore, as Hew Strachan notes, Clausewitz was inclined to refrain from referencing authors whose perspectives he aligned with.¹⁶³ It would be unwise, therefore, to attempt to examine the precise points of disagreement between Clausewitz and the military writers of the period, or indeed any possible influences on the latter’s conception of strategy. It is thus suggested that a more nuanced approach be adopted, entailing an examination of the degree of compatibility between Clausewitz’s conceptions and the definitions of strategy proposed by military writers subsequent to 1804. This will facilitate an understanding of the specificity of his conceptual framework.

Other military writers’ approaches

In a manner akin to Clausewitz, Gaugreben repudiated Bülow’s definition, as it failed to meet his standards of satisfaction.¹⁶⁴ However, his approach to the issue was divergent, and culminated in the formulation of a conception of the relationship between strategy and tactics that was incongruent with that of his fellow at the *Militärische Gesellschaft*. Gaugreben’s approach involves first

determining the characteristics (*Merkmale*) of strategy. The key notion here is that of project or conception (*Entwurf*). The strategy encompasses the following elements: the conception of the operational plan of a war; the draft operational plans of the various campaigns; the draft operational plans of a specific campaign; the projects considered as parts of the operational plan of a campaign; the battle projects; and even the projects of specific operations, such as the destruction of an enemy convoy. The author concludes that strategy is the part of the art of war that is devoted to conception (*Entwurf*), while tactics is the domain of execution (*Ausführung*).¹⁶⁵

This standpoint was predominant among German-language military writers during the period spanning from the 1810s to the 1820s. Six years prior to Rühle von Lilienstern's formulation of the aforementioned critique of Wagner's theses, he had published an article that was likely to have served as a catalyst for the development of such a perspective. Published anonymously in the *Neue militärische Zeitschrift* in 1811, this article constituted the inaugural systematic endeavour to conceptualise the interrelationship between strategy and tactics on what we would currently designate as a methodological and epistemological level. It is reasonable to hypothesise that this article may have had an impact on the development of the views of subsequent authors on strategy and tactics, despite the absence of citations. Indeed, certain ideas and wordings of Karl Müller, Decker and Xyländer are not dissimilar to those of Rühle von Lilienstern.

The argument put forth by the latter is not without ambiguity. He posits that strategy is purely intellectual (*rein intellektuell*), whereas pure tactics (*reine Taktik*), by contrast, concerns itself exclusively with the physical realm, with the machine (*mit dem Physischen, der Maschine beschäftigt*). Rühle von Lilienstern's objective was to differentiate between the intention (*Absicht*) and the manner (*Art*) of its realisation, between the what (*Was*) and the how (*Wie*).¹⁶⁶

In proposing that the science of the general (*Feldherrnwissenschaft*) should align with the doctrine (*Lehre*) of the actions required to achieve the objective of war (*Kriegszweckes*), Rühle von Lilienstern does not present a fundamentally novel perspective. This is because the approach had already been outlined by Bourscheid, subsequently adopted by Nicolai and developed by Bülow. The additional step, therefore, consists in explicitly introducing the theme of intentionality and, just as explicitly, combining it with an analysis expressed in terms of ends and means. The author's subsequent assertion that the terms "strategy" and "tactics" could be set aside should be interpreted in light of this viewpoint, namely that it is not the terms themselves that are of consequence, but rather the relationships they represent.

As perceived by Rühle von Lilienstern, this relationship is only partially congruent with Clausewitz's approach. This is not in regard to the analysis of the relationship between ends and means or the close interconnection (*Verbindung*) between tactics and strategy. Rather, the incompatibility lies in the fact that strategy and tactics are confined to two distinct spheres. On the one hand the sphere of the intellect for strategy, on the other the physical sphere for tactics. The interconnection between these two realms is exemplified by the metaphor of the soul (*Seele*) and the body (*Körper*), as elucidated in the concluding section of the article.¹⁶⁷

As Jędrysiak has previously indicated, this metaphor served as a means of circumventing the issue of the divergent definitions of strategy and tactics by accentuating the inherent interconnectedness between the two elements, which could not be disassociated.¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the ambiguity of this approach

stemmed from the utilisation of a dichotomy that also conveyed the notion of a compartmentalisation between the mental and the physical realms. The hidden motive that Rühle von Lilienstern would discern in Wagner a few years later was, in fact, quite explicit in his own work. However, he was unable to provide a satisfactory solution to the issue in his *Handbuch für den Offizier*.

In one respect, the author replaced the strategy/tactics pairing with the strategist/tactician pairing, which merely shifted the issue. In another respect, Rühle von Lilienstern accentuated it by introducing the idea of anteriority and posteriority in the contribution of the two actors in military activity. The strategist is the individual who directs (*des Dirigenten*) and outlines the general contours (*allgemeinen Umrisse*) within which the “great whole” – that is, war – is to be situated and moved (*bewegen*). The tactician is the individual responsible for execution (*des Executors*), and it is this individual who gives rhythm and direction inside these general contours.¹⁶⁹ Despite the author’s proposition that the roles of strategist and tactician, conceptualised as ideal types (*ideale Personen*), could be amalgamated into a single entity, the resulting theoretical construct maintains a temporal breakdown in the established sequence of planning (*Anordnung*) and execution (*Ausführung*).¹⁷⁰

To summarise, Rühle von Lilienstern was confronted with two challenges. Firstly, he found himself unable to disown the concepts of *Strategie* and *Taktik*, which he persisted in utilising to advance his argument. Secondly, he was incapable of resolving the dichotomy between conceiving and execution with the concept that nothing is ever purely tactical or strategic in isolation, but rather always in relation to one another (*es ist im Grunde nichts taktisch oder strategisch an sich, sondern immer eins nur in Beziehung auf das andere*).¹⁷¹ The fundamental challenge was to conceptualise a reciprocal relationship that was not confined to a rigid dichotomy between intellect and action.

Archduke Carl’s definitions, as adopted by Bismarck, imply a similar dichotomy. In the view of the Archduke, the term “tactics” is employed to signify the art of war (*Kriegskunst*), whereas “strategy” is taken to be the science of war (*Kriegswissenschaft*).¹⁷² From this perspective, strategy is limited to the conception of operations and tactics are confined to their execution (*die Art nach welcher strategische Entwürfe ausgeführt werden soll*).¹⁷³ As Jomini implied in a critical note to the French translation of the work, such a distinction would result in the two concepts being confined to different spheres of the art of war. This would effectively entail the abandonment of the idea of the respective but cumulative contributions of strategy and tactics to the implementation of the conduct of warfare.¹⁷⁴

While we cannot ascertain whether Lossau had perused Rühle von Lilienstern’s article, it is evident that his approach evinced a discernible correlation with the dualistic tenet of the soul and the body. The concept of tactics, as defined by the author as the art of positioning and moving troops, is not inherently incompatible with that of Clausewitz. In contrast, Lossau’s conceptualisation of strategy does not incorporate combinations of fights or engagements. Conversely, he postulates that the determining factor in strategy is the personal character of the general. The leadership of an army is primarily dependent on talent and genius, which cannot be acquired through study or theoretical knowledge alone. As Lossau observes, the adage “all art lies in the artist” (*die ganze Kunst in der Künstler liegt*) is particularly applicable in this context.

Consequently, he concludes that it is an accurate interpretation of strategy to understand it as the personal qualities that a general-in-chief must possess.¹⁷⁵

It is probable that Thellung Courtelary's conception of strategy was influenced by Lossau's viewpoint, whereby strategy was regarded as a synthesis of the attributes necessary for commanding an army.¹⁷⁶ Rumpf's position on this matter is considerably more elaborate; a position that was initially developed in an article in *Militär-Wochenblatt* (Military Weekly), and subsequently expanded upon in a detailed entry devoted to strategy in his *Allgemeines Kriegswörterbuch für Offiziere aller Waffen* (General Military Dictionary for Officers of Every Branch of the Military).¹⁷⁷

Following a comprehensive examination of the definitions proffered by Bülow, the Venturini brothers, Wagner, Pfuel and Decker, as well as Rühle von Lilienstern – albeit with the notable exception of Lossau, whom he does not address – Rumpf is only able to conclude that there exist substantial discrepancies in opinion (*so verschiedener Meinungen*) among military writers. Consequently, he arrives at the personal conviction that strategy should not be regarded as either an art or a science, but rather as a superior intellectual faculty of human beings (*die höhere Geistskraft des Menschen selbst*). In this perspective, strategy would be twofold (*zweierlei*): firstly, pure and natural strategy (*reine natürliche Strategie*), which corresponds to innate genius and warrior talent (*angeborene Kriegs-Genie und Talent*); secondly, *Strategik*, which corresponds to warrior genius combined (*verbunden*) with experience and the study of the art of war. This approach, which exclusively linked strategy to a manifestation of the mind, led to the paradoxical conclusion that this natural gift (*Mitgabe der Natur*) was distributed across all levels of the military hierarchy. This development signified that a skirmisher possessed the capacity to act as strategically as a general within the confines of his assigned field (*der einzelne Tirailleur in seinem Wirkungskreis eben so gut strategisch handelt, wie der Feldherr in dem seinigen*). Rumpf designated this innate talent the strategic element (*strategische Element*).¹⁷⁸

Ciriacy only links strategy to the personality of the commander-in-chief (*Persönlichkeit des Feldherrn*) and thus to the art of command. However, the use of the term also refers to the external nature of strategy in respect of the strategist: “In the hands of great generals, strategy has retained its natural character, which springs from the natural genius of men” (*In den Händen großer Feldherren hat also die Strategie den natürlichen Charakter behauptet, der aus dem natürlichen Genie der Menschen entspringt*). In a manner similar to other authors, including Clausewitz, Ciriacy seeks answers to questions raised by the relationship between the internal and external aspects of strategy in an analogy with art. It is evident that the author has been influenced by Romanticism, as he believed that the artist should be faithful to nature (*immer der Natur treu bleibt*) and attempt to sublimate it (*Veredlung darzustellen*). The idea of effective warfare is thus predicated on the symbiotic relationship (*innige Uebereinstimmung*) between two “natural” components: the genius of the general, which is intrinsic, and the constraints imposed by the conduct of operations, which are extrinsic. From this perspective, it appears that strategy oscillates between these two poles. Despite the fact that the concept remains partially undefined, it is understood to refer to the sublimation of external constraints made possible by the considerable room for manoeuvre (*großer Spielraum*) afforded by political and military initiative (*politisch-militairischen Initiative*).¹⁷⁹

The military initiative is of particular interest to Theobald, Xylander, Pfuel and Decker, who firmly located strategy within the sphere of operational art.¹⁸⁰ Nevertheless, the approach adopted is still influenced by the dichotomy between conception and execution, or planning and action. In Theobald's view, strategy is the art of conducting warfare in a planned manner; "tactics" is employed to denote the art of interaction (*beziehen*) with an opposing army.¹⁸¹ Xylander's perspective asserts that strategy delineates the geographical disposition of military movements and engagements, while tactics determines the *modus operandi* of the military.¹⁸²

An analysis of Pfuel's case reveals a complex set of challenges, stemming from the ambiguity surrounding the authorship of several texts. These include an article published in *Pallas* in ^[4], which Langendorf attributes to Pfuel and Kuhle to Rühle von Lilienstern.¹⁸³ Additionally, a work edited by Decker contains reflections attributable to himself, Pfuel, and Joseph de Rogniat (1776-1840): *Ansichten über die Kriegführung im Geiste der Zeit: Nach dem Französischen des Rogniat und nach Vorlesungen welche im Winter 1816/17 den Offizieren des Generalstaabes in Berlin gehalten worden sind* (Views on Warfare in the Spirit of the Times: Based on Rogniat's French Text and Lectures Given to Officers of the General Staff in Berlin in the Winter of 1816/17). The article published in *Pallas* appears to align more closely with Rühle von Lilienstern's viewpoint than Pfuel's. Following a thorough examination of the topic, the author concludes that it is preferable to undertake an examination of the essence of war while eschewing the terms "strategic" and "tactical", which are employed rather subjectively (*und vermeide übrigens die Benennungen: strategisch und taktisch, wie man Luft und Belieben hat*).¹⁸⁴ In contrast, the *Ansichten über die Kriegführung* provides a superior opportunity to examine Pfuel's ideas.

With regard to the issue under consideration in this paper, it can be determined that Rogniat's *Considérations sur l'art de la guerre* does not address the concept of strategy. Consequently, it can be disregarded in the context of this analysis of the *Ansichten*. It is therefore reasonable to hypothesise that the section of the work entitled "Thoughts on words, strategy, and tactics" was composed by Decker on the basis of lectures given by Pfuel to staff officers. As stated in the preface to the second edition, Decker asserts that his objective was to trace the intellectual trajectory of the author of the lectures in question (*Dem Ideengang dieser Vorlesungen habe ich zu folgen versucht*), thereby offering the reader Pfuel's conception of the matter.¹⁸⁵ Pfuel's proposal constitutes a more elaborate structure than that of Theobald and Xylander, with the objective of clarifying the separate domains of strategy and tactics. In a way analogous to Gaugreben's proposition, Pfuel advanced the argument that strategy constitutes a domain of the project (*Entwurf*) and the planning of operations, while tactics pertain to execution (*Ausführung*).¹⁸⁶

In the second edition of *Ansichten über die Kriegführung*, a modification in the wording of the paragraph preceding this argument underscores Decker's unwavering alignment with this perspective. The author adopts a first-person perspective to ascertain that the feedback on the initial edition has not influenced his perspective, and that he is unable to alter the fundamental arguments due to his unwavering conviction.¹⁸⁷ In subsequent years, specifically in ^[5], he refined his position, articulating that tactics should be regarded as a means (*Mittel*), whereas strategy should be considered an aim (*Zweck*).¹⁸⁸

While the approach was not entirely new, it encountered a difficulty. Pfuel and Decker's dichotomy of project/execution may be a valid conceptual framework not only at the level of the army's supreme command but also at every level of the military hierarchy. To address the issue, Decker introduces the concept of the "strategic element" (*strategisches Element*), deriving this notion from the work of Rumpf. The strategic element is present at all levels of the armed forces and must even "inhabit" (*wohnen*) the skirmisher.¹⁸⁹ In a sense, Decker is anticipating Charles Krulak's concept of the "strategic corporal".¹⁹⁰ Despite Decker's insistence on the conceptual distinction between strategy and the "strategic element", his approach ultimately resulted in a dilution of the meaning of the former concept. Furthermore, it led to a dissociation between strategy and the implementation of operations, which in turn diminished the distinction between ends and means.

In reaction to Decker's initial publication, Brandt articulated his scepticism concerning the futile (*fruchtlos*) endeavours undertaken to delineate strategy and tactics.¹⁹¹ The argument he subsequently develops, however, is paradoxical. It is asserted that the French paid little attention to the distinction between tactics and strategy. Nevertheless, it is noted that they demonstrated considerable aptitude in strategic matters (*strategisch nicht übel operiert*).¹⁹² Pfuel and Decker had previously observed a similar issue but did not conclude that the distinction between tactics and strategy was ultimately futile. Indeed, Brandt is compelled to employ the lexicon of strategy – in its adjectival form – to substantiate the notion that terminological subtleties are superfluous. As Jędrysiak correctly asserts, Brandt was not exempt from the "strategic jargon" he condemned in other military authors.¹⁹³ Additionally, he appeared to lack an understanding that the issue did not reside in the formal definitions of strategy and tactics, but rather in the interrelationship between the two dimensions of warfare that these concepts represented. In this regard, it is evident that the scepticism demonstrated was incompatible with Clausewitz's approach, in which the relationship between the pair of concepts was established as a structuring component of the conceptual framework.

The respective approaches adopted by Lefrén and Jomini were more compatible with Clausewitz's views. The former posited that the same principle governs tactics and strategy, with the objective being to break through (*durchbrochen*) the enemy's battle line in the first instance, and, in the second instance, to break through a theatre of operations (*Kriegsschauplatz*).¹⁹⁴ With regard to Jomini, his conceptualisation evolved in two distinct phases. Firstly, an alternative definition is proposed in opposition to that put forth by Archduke Carl: "strategy is the art of directing the masses to the decisive point, and tactics the art of engaging them there".¹⁹⁵ Secondly, all operations conducted in the theatre of war (*qui embrassent le théâtre de guerre*) are classified as strategy, whereas the fighting and manoeuvres on the day of battle are designated as tactics. Additionally, Jomini asserted that the discussions surrounding the absolute demarcation between tactics and strategy were "futile", thereby indicating the interpenetration of the two domains in operational conduct.¹⁹⁶

There are two reasons why Lefrén and Jomini's perspectives were more compatible with Clausewitz's. First, because they kept strategy within the realm of the conduct of war operations. Second, because they avoided a rigid dichotomy between intellect and action, projected onto the strategy/tactics dyad. However, in contrast to Clausewitz, Lefrén and Jomini do not include in their

respective definitions an opening towards the function that is fulfilled by strategy.

Strategy as an open concept and the conduct of warfare

The designation of strategy as an “open concept” does not represent an extension of contemporary art theory into the domain of Clausewitz’s work.¹⁹⁷ It was the latter author who explicitly introduced this concept in section II.2 of *On War*. He highlights that the theory of tactics is more straightforward in that its “field of objects” is “almost closed” (*fast ein geschlossenes Feld der Gegenstände*). In contrast, the theory of strategy is a more intricate and sophisticated field of study. As it concerns “purposes” (*Zwecke*) that ultimately result in a state of peace, the theory of strategy “opens” (*öffnet*) itself to a vast range of potential outcomes.¹⁹⁸

This openness of strategy is undoubtedly incorporated into the definition, which makes reference to the *Zweck*, which corresponds to the political purpose of war. It is at the very least true in the context of *On War*, since the meaning of *Zweck* in the definition in the 1804 manuscript could correspond to what Clausewitz called *Ziel* in section I.1 of his magnum opus. The term *Ziel* is not present in the 1804 manuscript. Nevertheless, the author has already made this distinction in his thinking and communicates it using a single term, *Zweck*, with an added nuance: the purpose of war, and the aim in war (*Zweck des Krieges, Zweck im Kriege*).¹⁹⁹ It is the establishment of a clear demarcation between *Ziel* and *Zweck* in *On War* that has resulted in the definition being given new scope.

This definition does not explicitly indicate that strategic activity (*strategische Tätigkeit*) has the potential to deviate (*entfernt*) from the domain of tactics and border (*grenzt*) on the realm of policy.²⁰⁰ This point is made in Chapter 13 of Book III on the strategic reserve. More specifically, it aims to demonstrate that strategic uncertainty tends to diminish when strategy moves away from tactics. Nonetheless, Clausewitz does not explicitly derive an implication from this consideration, and indeed, new relationships are expected to replace the fading tactical and strategic relationships based on engagement.

What Clausewitz calls the higher relations of the state (*höheren Staatsverhältnisse*) correspond to these relations, which characterise the relationship between strategy and policy. However, one example of this concept poses a problem insofar as it is not related to strategy but to the conduct of war. The issue is not apparent to the English-language reader of *On War*, as Howard and Paret have made a terminological substitution: “On that level strategy [*Kriegführung*] and policy coalesce: the commander-in-chief is simultaneously a statesman”.²⁰¹ The supposition that the terms *Strategie* and *Kriegführung* are sometimes used interchangeably is a proposition that requires further examination. In particular, the objective is to examine the relationship that Clausewitz establishes between the two terms and to determine the conditions that enable strategy to deviate from its intrinsic conceptual connection with tactics. In this sense, the concept of strategy does not, strictly speaking, “combine” the realms of the operational and the strategic, to use Stocker’s expression.²⁰² Rather, its connotation changes according to whether it approaches or deviates from the realm of tactics.

The concept of *Kriegführung* is pervasive in Clausewitz's work, particularly given its appearance in the titles of the volumes of his posthumous edition. However, it has elicited less interest among commentators than strategy and tactics, likely because it has not been regarded as a genuinely analytical concept. The noun and its verb form (*Krieg führen*) appear to be self-evident, serving merely to attest to the fact that warlike activity (*kriegerische Tätigkeit*) is taking place. In other words, waging war would be nothing more than the general activity of belligerents (*Kriegführenden*). This is the meaning given to the word in the title of the *Hinterlassene Werke*; it is also the meaning given to it by Clausewitz when he states in section II.1 that the art of war proper (*die Kriegskunst im eigentlichen Sinn*) can only be designated by the name of *Kriegführung*.²⁰³

But when the notion is directly linked to other terms in Clausewitz's system of concepts, it takes on a more specific meaning. It constitutes the overarching category of tactics and strategy, which are two distinct fields (*Feldern*) within it; that category to which strategy opens up.²⁰⁴ Concurrently, it can be regarded as one of the fundamental elements of the higher relations of the state. More specifically, it is the element that corresponds conceptually to the relationship synthesising policy and war. The well-known passage in section I.1, which addresses serious means (*ernsthafte Mittel*) employed to attain a serious end (*ernsthafte Zweck*), is an illustrative example of this perspective. The concept of war as a political act (*politischer Akt*) implies an inherent harmony (*Harmonie*) between the political sphere (*Politik*) and the conduct of warfare (*Kriegführung*). However, according to Clausewitz, the absence of this harmony has led to the emergence of erroneous theoretical conceptions that dissociate these two elements.²⁰⁵

Although the political purpose "traverses" (*durchziehen*) the entire military action (*den ganzen kriegerischen Akt*), it is not a "tyrannical legislator" (*despotischer Gesetzgeber*) in the sense that it is required to modify its approach in line with the nature of the means it deploys. This nuance leads to the transition to another renowned passage in section I.1, in which Clausewitz defines war as a political instrument (*politisches Instrument*). This is to say that war is the means (*Mittel*) which cannot be conceived independently of the political intention (*politische Absicht*) which constitutes the purpose (*Zweck*).²⁰⁶

The phrase has become a part of the historical record, but its interpretation has sometimes failed to take account of the nuances that preceded its formulation in *On War*. The primacy of political intention over the conduct of war is undoubtedly posited; however, this does not signify the absence of interactions between means and purpose. In other words, the conduct of war, as a higher relation of the State, is a place of synthesis, to varying degrees of harmony, and not of strict subordination. This is where strategic choices are made; it is the nexus of political and military considerations, to use Aron's terminology.²⁰⁷

This argument is exemplified by a passage from Clausewitz's historical study of the 1799 campaigns. It should be noted that this was Clausewitz's final work, written contemporaneously with the revision of section I.1 of *On War*. The author's intention was "to elucidate the ambiguous concepts inherent to the conduct of war".²⁰⁸ The passage is found in the conclusion, where the author questions the effects of Austria's political intentions. After noting that the Austrians' selfish political views had prevented them from exploiting the successes they had achieved in Italy and had led to the unnecessary expenditure of forces on the Rhine, Clausewitz goes on to describe the errors in judgement and misperceptions that had been superimposed upon these initial missteps.

The source of these errors can be attributed to the difficulty of ministers and cabinet advisers in envisaging the consequences of their intentions in the context of warfare and in comprehending the interrelationship between means and purpose. However, as Clausewitz observed, there is no area of human activity (*nirgend so sehr*) where this reciprocal action (*Wechselwirkung*) between means (*Mittel*) and purpose (*Zweck*) is more constant (*beständiger*) than in the conduct of war (*Kriegführung*). He reiterates the aforementioned passage from *On War*, yet with a heightened level of explicitness, emphasising that the means must never be regarded as an inactive instrument (*totdes Instrument*). Those versed only in Clausewitz's magnum opus may be surprised by what is to follow. Indeed, the author highlights that a multitude of factors may be implicated in the conduct of war, which may prove to be more pivotal and more substantial than the initial political factors (*wichtiger und gebieterischer werden können als alle ursprünglichen politischen [Motive] es waren*).²⁰⁹

The proposition is not that the primacy of politics should be reversed; rather, it is about affirming the necessity of developing an understanding of the concepts of the conduct of war (*klare Vorstellungen bis jetzt über die grosse Kriegführung*) – and thus of the reciprocal relationship between means and purpose – among those who seek to exert regulatory influence (*regelmäßigen Einfluß*) on military operations, but who are not directly present in the theatre of war.²¹⁰ From a terminological standpoint, *Kriegführung* can be understood as the concept that denotes the synthesis of policy and war. It represents the pole towards which strategy swings when it moves away from tactics, as it is the pole where the *Zweck* assumes a military form. The greater the influence of this pole upon strategy, the more the latter concept is deprived of its operational connotation. This point is particularly evident when the concept is expressed in adjectival forms.

A case in point is the conjunction of the notions of uncertainty, which justifies the formation of a reserve, and strategic activity: as strategic activity (*strategische Tätigkeit*) becomes more distant from the tactical level, uncertainty will diminish until it is almost non-existent at the point where strategy and policy converge (*diese Ungewißheit nimmt ab, je weiter sich die strategische Tätigkeit von der taktischen entfernt und hört fast ganz auf in jenen Regionen derselben, wo sie an die Politik grenzt*).²¹¹ In a similar vein, the notions of strategic judgement (*strategische Urteil*), strategic value (*strategischer Werth*), strategic issue (*strategische Frage*), and strategic relationship (*strategische Verhältnis*) do not systematically evince a robust operational connotation.

The principal act (*Hauptakt*) of strategic judgement is to identify the centres of gravity (*centra gravitatis*) of enemy forces.²¹² Although Clausewitz does not explicitly address this point, the other three concepts can also be considered an integral part of the strategic judgement process. During the 1799 campaign, Lombardy was of “strategic value” due to its significant political importance, as the region provided an opportunity for political compensation.²¹³ Similarly, the evacuation of the State of Genoa represented a significant “strategic issue” for General Moreau, insofar as he was compelled to consider that the course of action he deemed necessary might not align with the intentions of the Directoire.²¹⁴ Ultimately, the “strategic relationship” between the Swiss and Italian theatres of war was shaped by the Austrian government's political decision to view Italy as the primary theatre of conflict.²¹⁵ However, the most significant example of the adjectival use of the term strategy is found in section I.1 of *On War*. Clausewitz asserts that the first and most comprehensive of all

strategic issues (*die erste, umfassendste aller strategischen Fragen*) facing statesmen and commanders-in-chief is that of correctly establishing the type of war they are undertaking.²¹⁶ Hahlweg emphasises the lasting significance and relevance of this formulation, which established a fundamental connection between the concept of war and its function as a political instrument.²¹⁷ It can also be argued that this particular formulation does not place Clausewitz's conception of strategy within a strictly operational perspective.

In all of the aforementioned cases, there is an intricate and close interplay between strategy and policy. The use of the adjectival form is entirely consistent with the incorporation of *Zweck* in the definition of strategy. This concept, originally theorised by Clausewitz to denote the aim of military action, underwent a semantic shift to accommodate the novel perspectives articulated by the author.

The limitations of this paper preclude a comprehensive examination of the concept of policy as articulated by Clausewitz. However, one observation is germane to the subject matter. The argument proposed by David Zabecki, namely that Clausewitz's notion of policy is equivalent to the modern concept of strategy and that his concept of strategy corresponds to what is currently designated as operations, represents an inaccurate interpretation of the subject matter.²¹⁸ This argument is deficient in its failure to take into account the openness of Clausewitz's concept of strategy. Furthermore, it does not acknowledge the contemporary relevance of Clausewitz's terms in the conception of policy, a point that is exemplified by Tobias Wille.²¹⁹ The complexity of Clausewitz's concept of *Politik* is also ignored in this argument.

In a pinch, and if we extend the contemporary meaning of the concept of strategy, we could imagine correspondences between this concept and what Aron and Herberg-Rothe call the "subjective" dimension of policy in Clausewitz: the intelligence of the personified State (*die Intelligenz des personifizierten Staates*).²²⁰ On the other hand, it is more difficult to see these correspondences in the "objective" dimension: the representatives of all interests of the whole society (*Repräsentanten aller Interessen der ganzen Gesellschaft*).²²¹ This last quotation, taken from section VIII.8, supports the very broad interpretation of the term by Panajotis Kondylis, who considers that in some of its uses *Politik* denotes the organisation of society (*gesellschaftliche Verband*).²²² In summary, as Aron proposed, strategy represents a component of a partial totality, that is to say war, which in turn constitutes a subset of a broader totality, namely policy.²²³

Kuhle has argued that, in formulating his well-known maxim on war as the continuation of policy with other means, Clausewitz merely required to extract (*hervorgeholt*) one of Bülow's concepts.²²⁴ The citation provided for substantiation of the argument is drawn from a late work by Bülow entitled *Friedrich und Napoleon*, which was published in 1806. This quotation contains elements that attest to Bülow's early thematic discussion of the relationship between policy, strategy and tactics, and to the primacy of policy (diplomacy for the author) over war, which is regarded as a mere means (*Mittel*) of achieving diplomatic purposes (*diplomatischer Zwecke*). This quotation also encapsulates the notion that strategy is subject to a constant oscillation between the tactical and the political: the strategy is categorised as "high" when it is employed for the attainment of political purposes (*politische Zwecke*), and as "low" when its intention is to achieve tactical aims (*taktische Zwecke*).²²⁵

Although the present example does not necessarily demonstrate Bülow's direct influence upon the evolution of Clausewitzian thought (in order to prove this, it would be necessary to explain why Clausewitz did not adopt Bülow's ideas on policy more quickly), it does demonstrate the value of adopting a more systematic, comparative approach to the two works. Furthermore, it demonstrates that Bülow did not remain a prisoner of his initial definition of strategy. Indeed, he went even further than Clausewitz in explicitly taking strategy out of its military denotation by putting forward the concept of political strategy (*im System jener höchsten politischen Strategie*).²²⁶ As with Bülow, the definitions of Clausewitz that are often quoted in a narrow sense are insufficient – in isolation – to capture the full complexity of the oeuvre.

Liddell Hart's evaluation of Clausewitz's definition offers a final illustrative example of this point. This evaluation is derived from Liddell Hart's own narrow interpretation of Clausewitz's arguments, which is both a limitation in itself and of interest to scholars of military studies and the history of military thought. In his study, *Strategy*, the author disregards the fact that Clausewitz did not formulate a general definition of strategy. Indeed, Liddell Hart failed to recognise that the Prussian military author was confronted with a theoretical challenge that preoccupied German military thinkers of that era: the articulation of tactics and strategy within a conceptual framework. This task was undertaken by the concept of *Gefecht*, which cannot be reduced to the meaning of "battle". Furthermore, Liddell Hart considers it to be a "defect" of this definition that it "intrudes" upon the sphere of policy.²²⁷ However, his own definition of strategy, with its Clausewitzian overtones, is no differently constituted: "The art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy."²²⁸ The question therefore arises as to how such a contradictory position can be explained. Jay Luvaas's analysis drew parallels between the two authors' definitions, while refraining from directly interrogating Liddell Hart's paradoxical posture. Notwithstanding, it provides a critical element to the understanding of the issue: The experience of reading *On War* in the 1920s resulted in a significant "mental deadlock" for Liddell Hart, from which he was unable to extricate himself, and it is probable that he did not undertake a subsequent reading with a more open mind.²²⁹

The critique of Clausewitz's definition was indeed articulated in the inaugural edition of Liddell Hart's book^[6], with no subsequent attempts made to delve into the matter in greater scrutiny.²³⁰ It is worthy of note that Liddell Hart did not base his citation of Clausewitz on the translation by James J. Graham. Instead, he based it on the abridged version by Pilcher^[7], which was published.²³¹ However, this translation was not without its own set of issues. Firstly, Pilcher's translation and accompanying commentary exclusively comprise Books I to IV of *On War*. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that, at least at that time, Liddell Hart had not read section VI.26, which is devoted to the subject of people's war, or book VIII of the work. Secondly, Pilcher did not seek to reproduce the complexity of the original text. The objective he set himself was to render the Clausewitz ideas "into readable English" without, however, "attempting to abide strictly by the text".²³² In the opinion of a reviewer, the author's rendition of the original text was deemed to be "not always very happy", and the recommendation was thus made for readers to instead consult Graham's translation, a republication of which had been undertaken by Frederic Natusch Maude in 1908.²³³ Thirdly, the context in which Pilcher's translation was published could not fail to exert a certain influence on his work.

Notwithstanding the author's professed aim to eschew "all criticism of current events" (i.e. the First World War), the conclusion of the preface saw the assertion of the primacy of interpreting Clausewitz's message in the present context as fighting "until the enemy is *crushed*".²³⁴ In summary, it is evident that Liddell Hart's understanding of *On War* was constrained in its scope, and his interpretation of the original text was significantly influenced by Pilcher's translation and remarks.

Nevertheless, Pilcher's emphasis on the unlimited nature of the First World War is inadequate to provide a comprehensive explanation for Liddell Hart's reinterpretation of the relationship between war and policy in Clausewitz: "For he [Clausewitz] was the source of the doctrine of "absolute war", the fight to a finish theory which, beginning with the argument that "war is only a continuation of state policy by other means", ended by making policy the slave of strategy".²³⁵ The quotation is taken from a work published by Liddell Hart^[8] and is apparently still inspired by Pilcher's translation. The question arises as to whether this constitutes a genuine misunderstanding or, as Christopher Bassford suggests, a deliberate attempt to devalue Clausewitz's analyses in order to present himself as an original thinker.²³⁶

Regardless of the precise explanation, Liddell Hart based his criticism of Clausewitz's inclusion of the political factor in his definition of strategy on this misinterpretation, and took credit for formulating a definition that, in fact, paraphrased the original. As early as the 1920s, Spenser Wilkinson, professor of military history at Oxford University, had noted that Liddell Hart caricatured Clausewitz's thinking and appropriated some of his concepts by reformulating them. It is important to note that two further points should be added to these two criticisms identified by Bassford. Firstly, Wilkinson elucidated the rationale behind Liddell Hart's erroneous interpretation of Clausewitz, attributing it to the failure to "work out the trains of thought" of the latter.²³⁷ This is exemplified by Liddell Hart's exclusive association of the "higher conduct of war" with the domain of policy, thereby overlooking Clausewitz's delineation between *Kriegführung* and *Politik*.²³⁸ Secondly, Wilkinson's position was that strategy should not be regarded in isolation, and should be considered in conjunction with tactics.²³⁹ Indeed, Liddell Hart failed to discern the inherent interconnection between strategy and tactics in Clausewitz's work, nor did he comprehend the significance of this nexus as the pivotal focal point within military discourse in Prussia and Germany during the transition from the 18th to the 19th century. Even a cursory analysis would have enabled Liddell Hart to formulate a different conclusion from the one to which he ultimately arrived: "Clausewitz contributed no new or strikingly progressive ideas to tactics or strategy; he was a *codifying* thinker, rather than a *creative* or *dynamic* one".²⁴⁰

Conclusion

When viewed in the context of the initial discussions concerning the precise definitions of strategy and tactics at the beginning of the 19th century, the perspective put forth by Clausewitz is notable for its originality and insight. In contrast to the approach typically taken by military writers of the time, who tended to view strategy as a matter of the intellectual conception of military action and tactics as a question of implementation, the author adopts a combinatorial perspective that considers the two components of the conduct of war in terms of their execution and the realisation of their intended outcome.

His dual definition is a more effective and far-reaching approach because it implies two different yet complementary relationships. In the first relationship, it is the concept of *Gefecht* that links tactics to strategy, the former being the means by which the latter achieves its aims. In the second relationship, it is the concept of *Zweck* that links strategy to political intention, which remains implicit in the definition, making the former the instrument by which the latter is achieved. The existence of an intermediate term that performs a mediating function can also be observed in the other two “pillars” of Clausewitzian thought. The conceptual means/ends pair in fact comprises the three elements retained by Herberg-Rothe in his analysis: the political purpose (*Zweck*) being mediated by the achievement of the aim in war (*Ziel*) obtained by military means (*Mittel*). With regard to the war/policy pair, it is also mediated by a third concept: the conduct of war (*Kriegführung*), understood as the specific domain in which military and political concerns converge.

The interplay of interconnections between these notions is fundamental to the coherence and analytical power of Clausewitz’s conceptual system. Clausewitz’s concept of strategy should not be regarded solely in a narrow relationship to the specific domain of tactics, but instead understood as an open concept. The 1804 definition incorporates an opening element that alludes to the aim of war (*Zweck*), yet while the definition appears permanent, it has undergone semantic evolution. The *Zweck* of 1804 shares the same meaning as the *Ziel* of section I.1 of *On War* – a concept that was not included in the 1804 manuscript. This observation suggests that the initial definition of strategy has followed the development of Clausewitz’s thought while undergoing semantic change and expansion in scope.

The *Zweck* of the definition in *On War* must be understood in the context of this opening up of Clausewitz’s thought to policy. Strategy, as the application of violence in the theatre of operations, is no longer simply the means to achieve a military objective. As a component of the conduct of war, it is the instrument that enables political intentions to be put into practice in the field. The notion exhibits a robust operational connotation when subjected to the attraction of tactics; however, as it “deviates” from tactical considerations towards political ones – to employ Clausewitz’s metaphor – it acquires novel connotations that underpin its adjectival uses and resonate with contemporary strategic interpretations.

Statements and Declarations

Data Availability

The corpus of historical texts analysed in this study is based on publicly available sources, which are fully cited in the References section.

Author Contributions

The sole author was responsible for the conceptualisation, investigation, writing – original draft, and writing – review & editing of this work.

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remarks have significantly contributed to the enhancement of the quality of the initial text. During the revision process, the manuscript underwent considerable additional development and clarification, resulting in an expansion of its length beyond the customary word count threshold for submissions to major academic journals. Therefore, the decision has been taken to publish on *Qeios*, the platform on which it has been shaped.

Footnotes

¹ [\[9\]](#), 144.

² [\[10\]](#), 6. [\[11\]](#): 34.

³ [\[12\]](#): 19.

⁴ [\[13\]](#): 923.

⁵ [\[14\]](#): 15.

⁶ [\[15\]](#), 235.

⁷ [\[16\]](#), 1: 348.

⁸ The journal was published in Leipzig from 1801 to 1806, with the subtitle *Beiträge zur Kriegskunst und Kriegsgeschichte* (Contributions to the Art and History of War). *Neue Bellona* was an extension of another military publication, *Bellona*, which was published by Karl von Seidel in Dresden in the 1780s. [\[17\]](#), 3: 1815. In accordance with the approach established by the *Bellona*, Porbeck declared his intention to erect a new temple to the goddess upon the ruins of the former journal. However, the *Neue Bellona* placed particular emphasis on the necessity of impartial scrutiny of the experiences during the revolutionary wars. The journal also addressed the misfortunes of the coalition armies, conveying its objective to offer historians and the discernment of posterity facts and analyses unencumbered by partisan bias. [\[18\]](#): 1-6.

⁹ With the exception of Bourscheid, Brandt, Ciriacy, Pfuel, Porbeck, Rumpf and Xylander, the authors in this category are mentioned in Azar Gat's reference work, [\[19\]](#). In her major work, *The Evolution of Strategy*, Heuser makes reference to the following authors: Bourscheid, Brandt, Decker, Hoyer, Valentini and Wagner.

¹⁰ [\[20\]](#), 1: 19-20.

¹¹ Berenhorst to Hugo, 13 December 1808, in [\[16\]](#), 1: 294. [\[21\]](#): 114.

¹² Jomini, *Précis*, 1: 14.

¹³ The *Tugendbund*, or League of Virtue, was a semi-secret, patriotic association founded in the year 1808. Its stated objective was the revival of national spirit and promotion of moral and intellectual ideals.

¹⁴ He served as an engineer lieutenant in the Brunswick service, and subsequently assumed the role of building inspector (*Bauverwalter*) in Blankenburg. [\[22\]](#), 16: 85.

¹⁵ The dates of Nockern von Schorn's birth and death are derived from a contribution by Olaf Nimwegen ([\[23\]](#), 151). However, the available biographical information concerning this individual, whose name is orthographically rendered in a variety of ways, remains limited in scope. The appellations "Nockhern de Schorn", "Nokhern von Schorn", "van Nockern van Schorren" and

“Nockherrn von Schora” are all used to refer to the same individual. He served in the Van Aylva Regiment, then the Frisian Nassau Regiment from 1748 to 1775; he was promoted to the rank of captain in 1768, and to lieutenant-colonel in 1772. He concluded his military career with the rank of colonel and married in Holland in 1777. He then retired to Regensburg.

¹⁶ [24]: 401.

¹⁷ [25], 1: 164.

¹⁸ The concept of centre of gravity is a particularly illuminating example in this regard. Hervé Couteau-Bégarie contested the attribution of the concept to Carl von Clausewitz, instead proposing that it “belonged” to Jacques Antoine Reveroni de Saint-Cyr (1767–1829), who he asserted was the first to develop and theorise the concept systematically. [26], 73. The crux of the issue in this interpretation pertains to Reveroni de Saint-Cyr’s conceptualisation of the centre of gravity. The latter is defined as a mathematical ideal point, derived from the relative positioning of army corps in relation to one another (un point idéal, mathématique, resultant de la position relative des corps entre eux). For the author, this is not an analogy with mechanics, but a genuine “application” of the principles of mechanics to calculate the centre of gravity in a “mathematical spirit”. [27], 11-14. Reveroni de Saint-Cyr’s “mathematical spirit” can be readily contrasted with Clausewitz’s analogy of card games, which he perceives as the human activity that most closely resembles war. Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 14. <https://www.clausewitz-gesellschaft.de/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/VomKriege-a4.pdf>. It is furthermore likely that Clausewitz was not inspired in this matter by Reveroni de Saint-Cyr’s work, but rather by the teachings of the physicist Paul Erman (1764–1851). [28], 310. [29], 6.

¹⁹ “[...] We have to invent new terms for new phenomena [...]”. [30]

²⁰ [31], 40.

²¹ *Militair-Bibliothek*, IV, (1784): 120. *Description de l’Académie-Caroline de Stouitgard* (Stouitgard: Imprimerie de l’Académie-Caroline, 1784), 104, 316.

²² [32], 96. [33], 36, 114. The designation of this school (*Lehranstalt*) as an “institute” was made by Frederick William III himself (1770–1840). [34], 3: 23.

²³ [35], VII. [36], 119. [37], 151.

²⁴ [38]: 99

²⁵ [39], 136.

²⁶ [40], 45.

²⁷ “Da aber die angewandte Taktik und Strategie noch gar nicht auf reine übereinstimmende Grundsätze gebracht sind, da die Ansichten hier sehr voneinander abweichen, so wär es nicht zu wünschen, dass dieser Gegenstand auf immer einem Lehrer übertragen würde.” [41], 4: 41. Scharnhorst writes *dieser Gegenstand*, not *diese Gegenstände*.

²⁸ [42], 1: 98.

²⁹ [43][44].

³⁰ [45]: 348.

³¹ [46], 1: 57.

³² [47]. A 1773 edition is sometimes cited, but this is not one that has come to the author's attention.

³³ [48], 61.

³⁴ Ferdinand Friedrich von Nicolai, *Die Anordnung einer gemeinsamen Kriegsschule für alle Waffen* [The Establishment of a Joint Military Academy for all Branches of the Armed Forces] (Stuttgart: Mezler, 1781), 2-3.

³⁵ [49], 209.

³⁶ [50]: 1. [51]: 592.

³⁷ [52], 177. [53], 52: 87. [54], 6. [55], 523. [56], 30. *Taktisches Lehrbuch zum Unterrichte der Kadeten*, XIII. [57], 235.

³⁸ [58], 67. [59], 118, 129.

³⁹ [60].

⁴⁰ [61], 2: 56. It is evident that the original text by Bernard Forest de Bélidor (1698-1761) was devoid of any entries pertaining to strategy.

⁴¹ [62], 6, 10.

⁴² [63], 85.

⁴³ [64], 1, no. 2: XVIII.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, XVIII-XIX.

⁴⁵ Venturini, *Lehrbuch der angewandten Taktik*^[62], 7-8.

⁴⁶ [65], 2: 168-169.

⁴⁷ [66]. Gersdorff ascribes the work to Marschall von Bieberstein, yet omits the author's first name. [67], 43. It is evident that the individual in question cannot be the statesman from Nassau-Usingen, Ernst Franz Ludwig (1770-1834), nor the Württemberg naturalist and explorer, Friedrich August (1768-1826). It is also not Hans Christian Friedrich (1763-1842), who was a major in the Berlin cadet corps. As evidenced by the *Denkwürdigkeiten der militärischen Gesellschaft* (4, 1804, 546), the author of the work *Beiträge zur Taktik und Strategie* is identified as "Lieutenant Bieberstein". This individual is indisputably the same person who delivered a lecture on the distinction between tactics and strategy at the *Militärische Gesellschaft* in 1804 (see below). Ernst von Bieberstein is a relatively obscure figure, with little documentation concerning his life and career. It is known that he served as Inspector of Pioneers in Berlin, and subsequently as Commander of the Silesian Pioneers in Breslau. He concluded his military career with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In addition to the two works cited in this essay, the author also published the following: *Die Taktik, hergeleitet aus der Kriegskombinationslehre* (Tactics, Derived from the Theory of Military Combinations), Magdeburg, 1816 and *Ueber die Verwandtschaft der militairischen Wissenschaften. Eine kriegskünstlerische Abhandlung* (On the Relationship between Military Sciences: A Treatise on the Art of War), Breslau, 1817. [22], 22: 257.

⁴⁸ [68]: 10.

⁴⁹ [69]: 1228. [70]: 398.

⁵⁰ [71], 1.

⁵¹ [72]: 311.

52 [73], 83.

53 [1], 83–84.

54 [74], 421.

55 [75], 296.

56 [76], 1: 2.

57 [77]: 238–248.

58 August Venturini, “Versuch einer Berichtigung des von G. Venturini im Lehrbuche der Krieges-Kunst aufgestellten Systems der Krieges-Wissenschaften, und der von den Herrn von Bülow gemachten Grenzbestimmung zwischen Taktik und Strategie [Attempt to Correct the System of Military Science Established by G. Venturini in his Textbook on the Art of War, and the Distinction between Tactics and Strategy Made by Mr von Bülow],” in *Beurtheilung des Operationsplans der Preussischen Armee im Jahr 1806* [Assessment of the Prussian Army’s Operational Plan in 1806] (Quedlinburg: Basse, 1809), 19–21.

59 [78], 81–82.

60 Valentini, *Abhandlung*, 1: 1.

61 Berenhorst to Valentini, 21 March 1805, 23 January 1806, 20 May 1808, 19 June 1812, in *Aus dem Nachlasse von Georg Heinrich von Berenhorst*, 1: 216, 237, 276, 336. Berenhorst’s reference is to *Die wichtigsten Grundsätze des Kriegführens zur Ergänzung meines Unterrichts bei Sr. Königlichen Hoheit dem Kronprinzen* (The Most Important Principles of Warfare to Supplement My Instruction to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince), a text which had been circulating in Prussian military circles and which Valentini had sent to Berenhorst. Paret, *Clausewitz and the State*, 205. On Clausewitz’s definition, see below.

62 [79], XIV, 4.

63 August Rühle von Lilienstern, *Handbuch für den Offizier* [Officer’s Manual] (Berlin: Reimer, 1817), 2: 100–101. Wagner posited that tactics comprised troop movements with the objective of engaging in combat, whereas strategy involved the orchestration of movements that could be described as *Märsche*.

64 Jędrysiak, *Prussian Strategic Thought*, 317.

65 Rühle von Lilienstern, *Handbuch*, 87.

66 [80], 274–275. The term *harsch* in German signifies “hard”, yet in this context, it is employed by the author to denote the trumpets and war horns (*Harschhorn*) of the Swiss, thereby imparting a connotation of belligerent violence to the neologism. The etymology of *Hilde* can be traced back to Old High German, and by the time Müller was writing, it was only found in first names and surnames. Nevertheless, his assertion that the term connotes active skill is erroneous. In point of fact, the term *Hild* denotes “battle” in the Proto-Germanic language.

67 [81]: 255.

68 *Ibid.*, 285.

69 Carl to Marie, 28 January 1807, in [82], 66. In the phrase *der Vater und der Freund meines Geistes*, *Geist* seems to refer to intellect (mind) rather than emotion (spirit).

⁷⁰ [83], 197.

⁷¹ Ibid., 183.

⁷² [84].

⁷³ Kuhle, *Die preußische Kriegstheorie*, 238.

⁷⁴ In addition to the elements of the discussion proposed by Kuhle, the famous formula of Helmuth von Moltke must also be considered: “No operational plan extends with any degree of certainty beyond the initial encounter with the enemy’s main force” (*Kein Operationsplan reicht mit einiger Sicherheit über das erste Zusammentreffen mit der feindlichen Hauptmacht hinaus*). Further on, Moltke adds: “In the face of a tactical victory, strategic demands are muted; they adapt to the newly created situation” (*Vor dem tactischen Siege schweigt die Forderung der Strategie, sie fügt sich der neu gefchaffnen Sachlage an*). [85], 13: 1-4.

⁷⁵ Scharnhorst, “Über die Schlacht bei Marengo,” 54.

⁷⁶ [86], 227.

⁷⁷ *Denkwürdigkeiten der militärischen Gesellschaft* 4, no. 2, (1804): 515.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ [1], 83.

⁸⁰ [87], 62. For a discussion of the terms “aims” and “purpose” in the context of the German word *Zweck*, see Herberg-Rothe, “Clausewitz’s concept,” 905. In this context, the alternative between “aim” and “purpose” is retained on the assumption that the meaning of *Zweck* in the 1804 definition is closer to “aim” than to “purpose”. However, the meaning of *Zweck* in *On War* has accompanied the extension of the concept of strategy in Clausewitz, thus being closer to “purpose” (see below).

⁸¹ [88], 3: 240.

⁸² Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 50.

⁸³ Clausewitz, *Strategie*, 47-48. A subsequent epistle to Gneisenau leaves no room for doubt regarding the allusion to Bülow. Clausewitz to Gneisenau, 17 June 1811, in [89], 1: 647.

⁸⁴ Clausewitz, “Rezension der Beyträge zur Taktik und Strategie, 1^{te} Abth[eilung], Glogau 1803,” in *Schriften, Aufsätze, Studien, Briefe*, 2: 100-102.

⁸⁵ [90], 1.

⁸⁶ [91]: 247.

⁸⁷ Clausewitz, “Bemerkungen,” 257.

⁸⁸ Bülow, *Lehrsätze*, 10.

⁸⁹ Bülow, *Geist*, 86.

⁹⁰ [92], 110.

⁹¹ Langendorf, *La pensée*, 209.

⁹² Bülow, *Geist* [92], 110.

⁹³ Langendorf, *La pensée*, 218.

⁹⁴ Clausewitz, “Bemerkungen,” 259. The term *Zweck* appears to have a different meaning here, as it seems to correspond to the concept of *Ziel* as discussed in *On War*.

⁹⁵ Kuhle, *Die preußische Kriegstheorie*, 260.

⁹⁶ *Katalog der Bibliothek-Abtheilung des K. und K. Kriegs-Archivs* (Wien: K. u. K. Reichs-Kriegs-Ministerium, 1896), 472. The adjective *gründlich* is absent from the title in the catalogue. ^[93], 1: 168.

⁹⁷ Kuhle, *Die preußische Kriegstheorie*, 282.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 288.

⁹⁹ ^[3], 8.

¹⁰⁰ Clausewitz, “Bemerkungen,” 260.

¹⁰¹ ^[94], 1: X.

¹⁰² Carl to Marie, 3 July 1807, in *Carl und Marie von Clausewitz*, 97.

¹⁰³ ^{[42][95]}.

¹⁰⁴ ^[87].

¹⁰⁵ ^[63].

¹⁰⁶ ^[1].

¹⁰⁷ ^[96].

¹⁰⁸ ^[81]. Kuhle proposes the theory that Clausewitz and Gaugreben failed to comprehend the model proposed by Bülow.

¹⁰⁹ ^[97]

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹¹¹ ^[89].

¹¹² ^[98].

¹¹³ ^[99].

¹¹⁴ ^[100].

¹¹⁵ ^[101].

¹¹⁶ ^{[102][103]}. In 1788, an additional translation was published, bearing a different title and proposing a divergent definition of higher tactics: the science of combining large parts of an army into a whole and assigning them every position required by the commander’s plan and the terrain (*die Wissenschaft, die grossen Theile eines Heers zu einem Ganze zu verbinden, und ihnen jede Stellung zu geben, welche der Plan des Feldherrn und der Boden erfordern*). ^[104].

¹¹⁷ ^[105].

¹¹⁸ ^[106].

¹¹⁹ ^[95].

¹²⁰ ^[107].

¹²¹ ^[108]. The author employs the neologism coined by Paul-Gédéon Joly de Maizeroy (1719–1780): *stratégique* was a synonym for *stratégie*, the former term

having fallen into disuse.

122 [\[89\]](#).

123 [\[87\]](#). The author does not make any mention of divisions; however, it is evident that prior to the establishment of the army corps by Napoleon, divisions were recognised as the predominant formations within armies during the period of the Wars of the Revolution.

124 *Ibid.*, 79–80.

125 *Ibid.*, 80–81.

126 [\[89\]](#).

127 [\[89\]](#).

128 [\[89\]](#).

129 “Man kann also sagen die Strategie des kleinen Krieges ist ein Gegenstand der Taktik, und da nun die Taktik des kleinen ganz gewiss ein Theil der Taktik überhaupt sein muss, so fällt der ganze kleine Krieg in die Taktik, d.h. er wird ein besonderes Kapitel derselben ausmachen”. [\[89\]](#).

130 [\[89\]](#).

131 [\[109\]](#).

132 [\[110\]](#).

133 [\[111\]](#).

134 The term *Landsturm* is defined as the generalised arming of the entire population, with the objective of safeguarding territorial integrity in an immediate manner. [\[89\]](#).

135 [\[111\]](#).

136 [\[89\]](#).

137 *Ibid.*, 748.

138 [\[112\]](#).

139 [\[113\]](#).

140 [\[109\]](#). The engagement at Katholisch-Hennersdorf was a vanguard action that enabled the Prussians to capture more than 800 prisoners, including a general, a colonel, and 24 officers, while they themselves suffered the loss of 7 officers and 110 men. At Kesselsdorf, the Prussians suffered significant casualties, with a total of almost 5,000 men killed or wounded. In return, they inflicted almost 3,800 casualties on their opponents, capturing a total of nearly 6,500 prisoners. [\[114\]](#).

141 [\[115\]](#).

142 [\[109\]](#).

143 John Ebers, *The New and Complete Dictionary of the German and English Languages* (Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1798), 2: 286.

144 [\[116\]](#).

145 [\[109\]](#).

146 *Ibid.*

147 [\[109\]](#).
148 [\[113\]](#).
149 [\[109\]](#).
150 [\[87\]](#).
151 *Ibid.*, 25.
152 *Ibid.*
153 [\[110\]](#).
154 [\[13\]](#).
155 [\[113\]](#). *Wechselhandel* should be understood as financial transactions or trade in bills of exchange.
156 [\[97\]](#).
157 [\[87\]](#).
158 [\[89\]](#).
159 [\[89\]](#). This is the same letter as the one quoted by Stocker, in which Clausewitz insists on the need to *define* strategy. [\[14\]](#).
160 [\[89\]](#).
161 [\[109\]](#).
162 [\[117\]](#).
163 [\[118\]](#).
164 [\[3\]](#).
165 *Ibid.*, 1-4.
166 [\[119\]](#).
167 *Ibid.*, 70.
168 [\[31\]](#).
169 [\[120\]](#).
170 *Ibid.*, 108-111.
171 *Ibid.*, 108.
172 [\[121\]](#), 1: 3. [\[122\]](#), 5.
173 Carl, *Grundsätze*, 1: 3.
174 [\[123\]](#), 1: 2.
175 [\[124\]](#), 2, 111, 156-157, 243, 287.
176 [\[125\]](#), 6.
177 [\[126\]](#).
178 [\[127\]](#), 2: 407-409.
179 [\[128\]](#), 235-242.

¹⁸⁰ This is similarly evidenced in the work of Hoyer and Miller, who, nevertheless, refrain from elaborating on the reciprocal conceptualisation of strategy and tactics. The former asserts that strategy refers to the operations of war themselves (*Kriegsoperationen selbst*) and deals with the movements of entire army corps (*Bewegung ganzer Armeen*). The latter, for his part, has chosen to limit his commentary to the assertion that the term refers to the area (*Gegend*) in which one must fight to achieve one's objectives. ^[129], 4: I, 17. ^[130], 2: 96.

¹⁸¹ ^[131], 210.

¹⁸² ^[132], 19.

¹⁸³ Langendorf, *Faire la guerre*, 2: 238. Kuhle, *Die preußische Kriegstheorie*, 171.

¹⁸⁴ ^[4]: 157. In addition, the following section of the article provides a comprehensive analysis of the concept of the line of operation as outlined in Wagner's treatise. Had Pful been the author of the article published in *Pallas*, one might have anticipated the presence of more explicit references to the argument developed in this article in a subsequent article where he engages with the same concept in Jomini's work. ^[133].

¹⁸⁵ ^[134], VII.

¹⁸⁶ ^[135], 62

¹⁸⁷ ^[134], 74.

¹⁸⁸ ^[5], 179.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

¹⁹⁰ ^[136]: 14-17.

¹⁹¹ ^[137], 78.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁹³ Jędrzyśiak, *Prussian Strategic Thought*, 434.

¹⁹⁴ ^[138], 121-122.

¹⁹⁵ Charles, *Principes*, 1: 2.

¹⁹⁶ ^[139], 60.

¹⁹⁷ In a neo-Wittgensteinian approach, Morris Weitz proposed in the 1950s that art was an open concept, that is to say, a concept whose conditions of application could be modified and corrected. ^[140]: 27-35.

¹⁹⁸ Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 68. The translation by Howard and Paret makes partial reference to the denotation of closure and openness, which is particularly evident in the German text. Clausewitz, *On War*, 147.

¹⁹⁹ Clausewitz, *Strategie*, 50.

²⁰⁰ Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 124.

²⁰¹ Clausewitz, *On War*, 111. Furthermore, the translation eliminates the relational connotation of *höheren Staatsverhältnisse* by translating it as "national policy".

²⁰² Stocker, "What's in a Name?" 14.

²⁰³ Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 50.

- ²⁰⁴ Ibid., 68. Aron reverses this relationship when he posits that “strategy embraces the conduct of the war”. ^[97], 107.
- ²⁰⁵ Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 15.
- ²⁰⁶ Ibid., 15-16.
- ²⁰⁷ ^[97], 108.
- ²⁰⁸ ^[141], 1: 147.
- ²⁰⁹ Clausewitz, *Die Feldzüge von 1799*, 2: 382.
- ²¹⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹¹ Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 124.
- ²¹² Ibid., 364.
- ²¹³ Clausewitz, *Die Feldzüge von 1799*, 1: 377.
- ²¹⁴ Ibid., 540.
- ²¹⁵ Clausewitz, *Die Feldzüge von 1799*, 2: 4.
- ²¹⁶ Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 17.
- ²¹⁷ ^[142], 45.
- ²¹⁸ ^[143], 16.
- ²¹⁹ ^[144]: 59-60.
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- ²²¹ Ibid., 469.
- ²²² ^[145], 19.
- ²²³ ^[97], 112.
- ²²⁴ Kuhle, *Die preußische Kriegstheorie*, 171.
- ²²⁵ ^[146]: 105.
- ²²⁶ Ibid., 105-106.
- ²²⁷ Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 319.
- ²²⁸ Ibid., 321.
- ²²⁹ ^[147], 211.
- ²³⁰ ^[6], 147.
- ²³¹ The following is Pilcher’s translation: “The art of the employment of battles as a means to gain the object of the war”. The following translation of the relevant passage is provided by Graham: “The employment of the battle to gain the end of the War”. In various editions of *Strategy*, Liddell Hart employs the initial formulation rather than the second. ^[7], 91. ^[148], 1: 165.
- ²³² ^[7], VI.
- ²³³ ^[149]
- ²³⁴ ^[7], VIII, 252. Italics in original.
- ²³⁵ ^[8], 120.

²³⁶ ^a, ^b, ^c, ^d, ^eBlow AHD von (1799), 131-133.

²³⁷ ^a, ^b, ^c, ^d, ^e

²³⁸ Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 319.

²³⁹ ^a, ^b, ^c, ^d, ^e

²⁴⁰ Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 340. Tony Corn's positive assessment of this quote from Liddell Hart is not, it can be argued, justified. In order to take Liddell Hart at face value in this instance, it would have been necessary for him to possess a minimum of knowledge of the military discourse in Prussia and Germany in the early 19th century, as well as to adopt a more systematic and less cursory approach to Clausewitz's oeuvre.^[153]

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