

# IDEAS OF POWER AND THE POWER OF IDEAS: ALIGNMENT, APPLICATION, ADAPTATION, ARTICULATION IN JOMINI'S AND CLAUSEWITZ' STUDIES OF STRATEGY

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## THE '4 AS' OF INTERPRETIVE HERMENEUTICS

How best to begin an inquiry into whether Jomini and Clausewitz 'wrote about strategy'? Do we, like Heuser (2010b: 3), apply to them retrospectively our own definition of "Strategy with a capital 'S'" – knowing that our current Transatlantic understanding thereof primarily reflects the latter's conceptualization rather than the former's? Do we stick to their original texts and focus on their definitions of 'strategy', as Strachan (2007: 24) seems to advise? Or does an "adequate treatment" of the two giants of modern strategic thought entail that we attempt, with Herberg-Rothe (2007a: 306-307), to think both "with" and "beyond" them? Four decades ago, Aron (1976) had already explained that each such point of view constitutes a separate interpretative level and Lefort (1977: 1269) had approvingly commented that each such hermeneutic circle adds a necessary and necessarily critical perspective to a coherent and comprehensive assessment of the original question.

We have entered the third decade of the 21st century – a time when the notion of 'strategy' is experiencing an unexpected regain in popularity. Old regional and global frameworks of governance seem to fade away whilst 19th

century Europe's 'Great Game' of 'balance of power competition' (Kissinger, 1994) is being played again, only this time on a 'Grand Chessboard' at the planetary level (Brzezinski, 1997) and "[w]ith GPS" (Gray, 1999a). It is therefore more important than ever that we come to terms with what "Strategy with a capital 'S'" means to us today.

This essay takes on Herberg-Rothe's challenge of identifying "the best way to begin" doing so by sketching out – exactly two centuries after the French and Prussian frenemies' 'ideas on Power' began to change their world (and ours!) through the 'power of their Ideas' (Cozette, 2004) - both a methodological and substantive outline of how we should engage in a process of reflexive analysis of our question. Specifically, it applies throughout its four main sections Aron's and Lefort's iterative approach to Clausewitz's and Jomini's discourses on 'Strategy'. For this purpose, it successively deploys to their treatises on war (and operationalizations of 'Strategy') the '4 As' of interpretive hermeneutics – namely prefigurative Alignment, configurative Application, refigurative Adaptation and transformative Articulation (see Fig. 1 below)". It then concludes by highlighting a creative answer capable of illuminating the strategic challenges we ourselves face amidst the uncertainties of our rapidly unfolding Connexity Era (Mulgan, 1998).

Figure 1: Interpretive hermeneutics' '4 As' concentric circles:  
Alignment, Application, Adaptation, Articulation

	Strategies@Strategy	Jomini's Strategy	Clausewitz's Strategy	Aron's Strategy
<b>Levels of Analysis</b>				
<b>A1: Alignment (History &amp; Theory) [Prefiguration]</b>  Q1H: How does it reflect the spirit of a given time & its problems? (M.L. Handel)	<b>Enlightenment Rationalism Revolution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategy as scientific conduct of warfare</b></li> <li>• War is offence, concentration of forces and decisive victory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Philosophical roots: first Montesquieu and Kant, later Hegel (after 1827)</i></li> <li>• Strategic principles of warfare</li> <li>• Reason of State</li> <li>• Translation question (Howard &amp; Paret)</li> </ul>	<b>A3: Adaptation (Praxis &amp; Politics) [Refiguration]</b> 'Most elaborate and comprehensive analysis of Clausewitz's work' (Graz) Q3H: How was the work interpreted in different periods & circumstances?
	<b>Romantic Nationalism Counter-revolution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commander Genius</li> <li>• Troops' Elan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategy: alignment of ends, means, purpose (Ziel, Mittel, Zweck)</b></li> <li>• 'Wonderous Trinity'</li> <li>• Troops' Moral</li> <li>• 'War is continuation of politics by other means'</li> </ul>	<b>Re-alignment:</b> Re-fits Clausewitzian theory into 'new realist theory' matching realities of 20 <sup>th</sup> century's Nuclear Era.
<b>A2: Application (Theory &amp; Praxis) [Configuration]</b>  Q2H: What is the theory it advances to explain or solve specific problems?	<b>Frederick II of Prussia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Defence</b></li> <li>• Generally critical opinion</li> <li>• Linear negative static evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Limited war</b></li> <li>• Reversal from critical to positive after 1827 point of inflection</li> <li>• Progressive evaluation</li> </ul>	<b>Re-application:</b> 'Peace is not war by other means'; Clausewitz as precursor of 'conflict resolution' approach to IR.
	<b>Napoleon Bonaparte</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Offense</b></li> <li>• Constant admiring opinion</li> <li>• Linear positive static evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Absolute war</b></li> <li>• Reversal from admiring to critical after 1827 point of inflection</li> <li>• Regressive evaluation</li> </ul>	<b>Re-Articulation: Strategy as Praxeology</b>
<b>A4: Articulation (Theory &amp; Politics) [Transformation]</b>  Q4H: In what ways has the theory become obsolete?  L.J. Blanken synthesis: 'strategic choice' framework	<b>Hew Strachan</b>	<b>@A4.1 Interpretative</b> Theory of war and warfare: Primarily positive because of 'operational' focus.	Theory of war and warfare: Primarily critical – adopts narrow interpretation of 'war is politics by other means'.	<b>@A4.2 Reflexive</b> Current political & military praxis: <b>Military strategy:</b> "Universal Principles of war" school ('Jominian')
	<b>Andreas Herberg-Rothe</b>	Theory of war and warfare: Primarily critical – rejects military autonomy model.	Theory of war and warfare: Primarily positive - adopts a Clausewitz-Plus approach to War & Strategy in 21 <sup>st</sup> century.	Current political & military praxis: <b>Political strategy:</b> "Context-dependent" school ('Clausewitzian')
	<b>Beatrice Heuser</b>	Theory of war and warfare: Primarily neutral – balances sound operational principles with lack of political oversight over military.	Theory of war and warfare: Primarily constructive criticism -embraces Clausewitzian analysis of war and Strategy but regrets failure to explicitly address ethics and just war.	Current political & military praxis: <b>Ethical strategy</b> as just war and lasting peace: Howard; "Paradoxical logic" ('neo-Clausewitzians'): Luttwak and Gray

## STRATEGY AS ALIGNMENT

The first dialectic circle of interpretative hermeneutics as elaborated by Aron and Lefort consists of prefiguring how Jomini's and Clausewitz's substantive theoretical frameworks align with the historical contexts of their socio-cultural ecosystem. It thereby provides an answer to the first of Handel's (1986: 4) four key questions in light of which any great work of political theory must be analysed – namely, the manner in which it reflects “the spirit of a given time and its problems”.

The three-quarters of a century spanning Frederick II's invasion of Silesia, in 1740, and Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, in 1815, constitutes a period of almost incessant warfare in European history. This era of upheaval and conflict marks three important interdependent transitions that reshaped the destinies of the Old Continent and of the entire world: from Enlightenment Rationalism to Romantic Nationalism (Gat, 1992: 1-2; Calhoun, 2011; Niebisch, 2011); from limited 'Wars of Princes' to total 'Wars of Nations' (Hagemann, 2015: 136); and from an almost exclusive preoccupation with the scientific study of the specific principles of warfare to a philosophically-anchored investigation of the full complexities of war (Herberg-Rothe, 2001; 2009). Colin Gray best explains this critical distinction when he states that:

*“War is a relationship between belligerents; it is the whole context for warfare. Warfare is defined as ‘the act of making war’.” (2006: 82)*

The concept of Strategy emerged and developed in the interstices of the tension between the theory and practice of 'war' and

'warfare' and is critically shaped by all three transitions mentioned above. The two catalysts for Strategy's rise as the primary practice connecting the emerging European national states' networks of power – political, military, diplomatic, legal, and civic – were Prussia's Frederick the Great (1712-1786) (von Hohenzollern, 1999; Kunnisch, 2005) and France's Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) (Bonaparte, 1999; Colson, 2015). Although neither ruler used the word 'Strategy' as such whilst in power, they were its greatest practitioners and served as inspiration for the three individuals who together defined and clarified the meaning and importance of Strategy during this era: the French Comte de Guibert (1743-1790) (Chaliand, 1994; Heuser, 2010d), the Swiss Antoine-Henri Jomini (1779-1869) (Howard, 1965; Shy, 1998) and the Prussian Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) (Parkinson, 1970; Paret, 1976).

De Guibert first defined strategy in his 'Essai général de la tactique' as “the entire art of movement or large-scale army manoeuvres”, within an emerging vision of unlimited war of movement of massive 'citizens' armies' (Bonaparte, 1999; Colson, 2015). Jomini followed suit concentrating on the operational level by dividing “the art of war” in five “purely military” branches – Strategy, Grand Tactics, Logistics, Engineering, and Tactics – and describing 'strategy' as “the art of properly directing masses upon the theatre of war, either for defense or for invasion” (2007: 7). For Clausewitz, “the distinction between tactics and strategy is now almost universal... [T]actics teaches the use of armed forces in the engagement; strategy, the use of engagements for the object of war” (1976: 128). Critically, for him, the object of war can only be politically determined, hence his

famous statement that “war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means” (1976: 87).

Although both Jomini and Clausewitz focus on the operational level of warfare when defining ‘strategy’ (Strachan, 2011) and each develops a set of applicable principles (Strachan, 2007: 83) in the conduct of ‘engagements’, the objectives of their studies are radically different (Aron 1976). Jomini aims to establish the scientific nature of warfare by devising a set of universally applicable principles. These tenets must be, in his view, free of political control and capable of being deployed in practice by the military commander’s ‘genius’ irrespective of time, place or technological change (Niebisch, 2011). Conversely, Clausewitz rejects this approach (Paret, 1976: 153) because he realises that “there is more to war than warfare” (Gray, 2006: 86). Therefore, he focuses first on the nonlinear contingencies (Beyerchen, 1992), interactive uncertainties and risk probabilities (Waldman, 2010) of war and on the need to constantly adapt its practice to specific spatio-temporal contexts (Fleming, 2009; Drohan, 2011). Secondly, he emphasizes that political aims constitute war’s very reason for being deployed to either threaten one’s adversary or to physically submit it to one’s will (Schuurman, 2014; Milburn, 2018).

## STRATEGY AS APPLICATION

The second dialectic circle of interpretative hermeneutics resides in configuring how Jomini’s and Clausewitz’s theoretical systems apply to the key practical examples they deploy to substantiate their main

tenets – in our case, to the strategic praxis of Frederick II and of Napoleon, both instrumental in substantiating the strategies and principles of warfare advanced by our two authors (Luvaas, 1986; Shy, 1988). It thus addresses Handel’s second interrogation regarding works of political philosophy, focusing on the substance of the theory designed to “explain or solve specific contemporary problems” (Handel, 1986: 4).

Both Jomini and Clausewitz used the ‘vicarious experience method’ (1986: 18) in their dialogue with their ‘two great captains’ – Frederick and Napoleon (1986: 18-19). Jomini first studied Frederick’s battles to develop his principles of warfare, then adapted them to Napoleon’s strategy in combat (Gat, 1989). He then criticized Frederick for often failing to implement his principles by being overly timid (Gat, 1989: 122) and eventually Napoleon for forgetting “that the mind and strength of man have their limit” (Handel, 2005: 272). In doing so he aimed to establish the scientific universality of his principles of warfare – an aim which remained virtually unchanged throughout his long life (Shy, 1998: 145). Clausewitz deployed in addition a ‘critical analysis’ method’ (Handel, 1986: 19) to the study of Frederick and Napoleon by means of a dialectical “application of theoretical truths to actual events” (Bonaparte, 1999: 141). He went far beyond Jomini’s ‘manual of warfare’ containing static principles of operational strategy by positing that strategy varies with the nature of the war being conducted and with its ultimate political purpose (Heuser, 2002). Clausewitz thus succeeded in devising a conceptual framework of war as a system capable of accommodating both Frederick’s limited war practice and Napoleon’s ‘total war’ approach” (Bonaparte, 1999; Esdaile, 2008). Human knowledge develops in specific socio-

historical contexts, through dialectical exchanges of views between members of interconnected multi-generational intellectual clusters, each of whom attempts to occupy the central nodal role of his cluster in terms of reputation and influence as well as of career and personal benefits (Collins, 1998). Such a cluster developed in Europe with respect to the study of war and strategy from the 1740s to the 1840s. Pioneering authors such as Henry Lloyd (1718-1783) (Howard, 1965: 6-8), Dietrich von Bülow (1757-1807) (Palmer, 1998) and the Archduke Charles of Austria (1741-1847) (Heuser, 2010b) were supplanted by a remarkable trio: Guibert set the terms of a new approach to Strategy in 1772 (Chaliand, 1994; Heuser, 2010b: 18-19); Jomini articulated his Principles of Warfare and published them in 1804 (Gat, 1989); Clausewitz read Jomini's initial work, criticized it (Gat, 1989: 123-124) but also re-interpreted and re-defined, after 1827, his own way of thinking about War and Strategy (1989). Finally, Jomini studied Clausewitz's On War, first printed in 1832, then used it to adapt and modify his own seminal work, The Art of War, published in 1838 (Shy, 1998: 153-155). It is this creative tension and iterative dialectical development (Howard, 1965: 10) that have bequeathed us not only a three-dimensional concept of 'Strategy' aligning Policy Process, Power Praxis and Political Purpose (von Clausewitz, 1976: 372; Strachan, 2013: 58), but also a corresponding analytical framework of its deployment in various specific spatio-temporal environments. Both of these remain remarkably current to this day and are fully mapped out here for the very first time.

'Strategy' thus came to encompass a new "amazing Trinity" (Howard, 2007: vii) connecting the Process, Praxis and Purpose of War. First, it

refers to the iterative Process of aligning the aims, assets, and actions of a polity's sovereign Crown, political Counsel, legal Constitution, military Command and civic Community networks active within a specific dynamic spatio-temporal, cultural, economic and technological Context (*jus ad bellum*). Second, it imposes in actual Praxis, through a dialectical confrontational clash of wills carried out in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous crucible of conflict (Mackay, 2020), that polity's objectives upon its adversary(ies) by means of applying the threat or use of legitimate force (*jus in bello*). Third, it does so for the conclusive Purpose of achieving a fair and just outcome for all participating parties, resulting in the contestants' conciliation and ultimately in a sustainable peace (*jus post bellum*)" (see Fig. 2).

The analytical framework mapped out by this definition encompasses three 'ideal' paradigms of Grand Strategy (Wallach, 1986: 302-303), differentiated by the alignment dynamics between Crown, Counsel, Constitution, Command, Community and Context: the primary Functional Fusion Paradigm (Luvaas, 1986: 167; Gray, 1999b: 77-78) to which Guibert, Jomini and Clausewitz all contributed; the Jominian Divisional Differentiation Paradigm (Shy, 1998; Strachan, 2013); and the Clausewitzian Complex Connexity Paradigm (von Clausewitz, 1976: 130). In 'reality', each polity structures its own type of Grand Strategy during specific historical eras. The substantive content and subjective interpretation memorialising the past, analysing the present and pointing towards the future (Strachan, 2013: 235) of such Grand Strategies are defined by the interaction between the type of leadership structure and nature of conflictual system deployed in each particular circumstance. This double continuum,

already prefigured in Clausewitz's writings (1976: 378-379), succeeds in connecting the 'Fusion', 'Differentiation' and 'Connectivity' leadership modalities on the one hand, with the 'Total', 'Real' and 'Guerrilla' warfare (Strachan, 2013: 62) conflictual systems on the other, within an overall conflict classification matrix (see Fig. 3).

Figure 2: Clausewitzian System of Grand Strategy-as-Practice

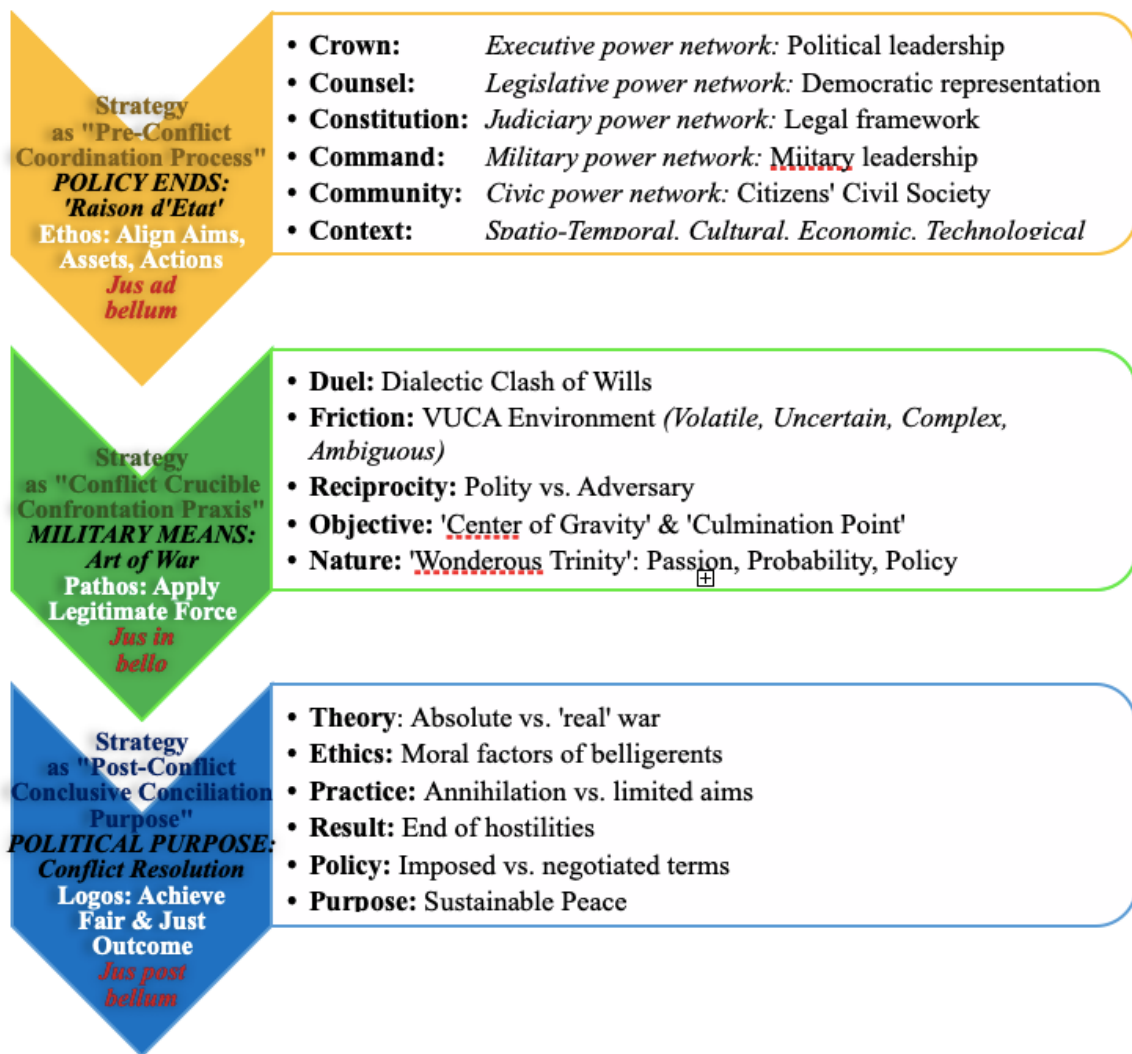


Figure 3: Classification of Wars in the Guibert/Jomini/Clausewitz Conflict Ecosystem

<i>Leadership Structure</i> <i>Conflictual System</i>	<b>Functional Fusion Paradigm</b> <i>(Guibert, Jomini, Clausewitz)</i>	<b>Divisional Differentiation Paradigm</b> <i>(Jomini)</i>	<b>Complex Connectivity Paradigm</b> <i>(Clausewitz)</i>
<b>Total War</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Napoleon, 1799-1815</li> <li>❖ Stalin, World War II</li> <li>❖ Hitler, World War II</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ World War I Germany</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Coalition Allies, 1813-1815</li> <li>❖ World War II Allies</li> </ul>
<b>Real War</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Frederick II of Prussia, 1740-1786</li> <li>❖ Atatürk, post WWI Turkey</li> <li>❖ Putin in Georgia, 2008</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Von Moltke in Austria 1866 and France 1870</li> <li>❖ USA in Iraq &amp; Afghanistan since 1991</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ NATO in Cold War, 1948-1991</li> <li>❖ Israel, 1945-1973</li> </ul>
<b>Guerilla War</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Franco, Spain, 1930s</li> <li>❖ Mao, China, 1930s-1949</li> <li>❖ Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, 1950s-1970s</li> <li>❖ Castro, Cuba, 1950s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ UK in Boer War, 1890s</li> <li>❖ USA in Vietnam, 1962-1973</li> <li>❖ Israel in Lebanon and 'Palestine', since 1982</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Mandela, South Africa, 1980s</li> <li>❖ Fretilin, Timor Leste, 1974-1999</li> </ul>

Whereas only the Strategy variations encompassed by the 'Complex Connectivity Paradigm' correspond to our current Transatlantic theoretical understanding of the proper relationship between military power and civilian politics (Herberg-Rothe, 2008; 2014; 2016), this analytical framework maps out for explanatory purposes all other options deployed by various state and non-state actors over the past two centuries, without evaluating them from normative or practical perspectives. By deploying this definition and analytical framework of Strategy, we gain a much clearer perspective of the evolution of the notion and application of Strategy from the mid-18th century onwards. This helps us to master both the philosophical and historical tools enabling us to assess their deployment in specific spatio-temporal contexts. We also come to appreciate why Frederick's and Napoleon's Fusion Paradigm was replaced by Jomini's Divisional Differentiation Paradigm after 1815 (Harsh, 1974; Shy, 1998; Dighton, 2018), why the latter

turn began to be supplanted by 1870 by Clausewitz's Complex Connexity Paradigm (Heuser, 2007; Schuurman, 2014; Binkely, 2016) – and why all three re-emerged at various historical conjunctures across the 20th and 21st centuries in multiple forms and variations (Griffin, 2014; Hensch, 2017; Johnson, 2017; Hughes and Koutsoukis, 2019). It is in this sense that Paret aptly observed that:

*"[w]ith an efficiency that never ceases to be impressive, each generation chooses those features of an idea [of Strategy] that seem immediately useful, while disregarding or even falsifying the total intellectual concept from which they stem".*  
(Howard, 1965: 23)

### STRATEGY AS ADAPTATION

The third dialectic circle of interpretative hermeneutics posits that an interpreter of Jomini's and Clausewitz's texts active in a different spatio-temporal setting –in our case,

20th-century French philosopher Raymond Aron who in his seminal book *Penser la guerre, Clausewitz*, published in 1976 (Aron, 1976), “offers the most comprehensive and elaborate analysis of Clausewitz’s work and theoretical conceptions” (Gat, 1989: 170) – attempted to refigure their works in such a way as to adapt their historically-bound praxis to his own distinctive political environment. It thus proposes a reply to Handel’s (1986: 4) third seminal question regarding great works of political philosophy, namely in which ways it was “interpreted in different periods and circumstances”.

In contrast to B.H. Liddell Hart (Beaufre, 1965; Strachan, 2013: 126-127), whom he criticizes for a superficial reading of Clausewitz (Aron, 1976), Aron focuses on the Prussian’s post-1827 reworking of *On War* and on his two Notes (Aron, 1974; Lefort, 1977). Like Hart, Aron develops an ‘indirect’ strategy of armed conflict (Aron & Tenenbaum, 1972: 599-621; Emmanuel, 1986: 248-268), but one based on the Clausewitzian insight that the threat of war deployed for policy purposes in order to avoid an actual clash of arms often constitutes the most effective available strategic option. The French author aims to distil therefrom a new strategy of war capable of avoiding direct military confrontation, that best explains the ‘cold war’ of the bipolar nuclear world in which he lives (Aron, 1976: 139-183; Freund, 1976: 643-651). He analyses Clausewitz’s and Jomini’s approaches to war by defining the central debate opposing them as the existence of a universal “key to the science of war [...] a theory capable of revealing to military leaders the secret of victory” (Aron, 1976: 282). He then deploys the use the two authors make of Frederick II and Napoleon’s campaigns (Aron, 1976: 446-450) to demonstrate that Jomini not only failed to fully grasp the “solidarity between politics and strategy”

which excludes “the autonomy of the military conduct of operations” (Aron, 1976: 282-283), but was also unable to envisage the topic central to Clausewitz’s entire work: the relationship between concepts and history (Aron, 1976: 283). Aron shows that whilst Jomini proclaimed that the fundamental principles of strategy remain the same and unchanged for all times because they are “independent of the nature of the weapons and organisations of hosts” (Aron, 1976), Clausewitz wrote that “each epoch develops its own strategic doctrine” (Aron, 1976; Luvaas, 1986, 168). Aron goes on to elaborate a concept of nuclear deterrence based on Clausewitz’s insight of war as an instrument of politics and derives therefrom a theory of peaceful conflict management as the highest form of strategy (Cozette, 2004; Cooper, 2011), one uniquely suited for an international community defined by a limited sovereignty of states resulting from the real threat of total nuclear annihilation (Arndt, 1977).

## STRATEGY AS ARTICULATION

The fourth dialectic circle of interpretative hermeneutics asserts that contemporary critics of both Jomini’s and Clausewitz’s work and of their earlier interpreters’ application of the two theorists of war’s writings to their own era will perform a transformative task of double articulation. First, they will engage in an interpretative articulation effort aimed at elucidating Jomini’s and Clausewitz’s original texts on their own terms and in their specific contexts based on the totality of the information pertaining thereto currently available. Second, the critics in question will undertake a reflexive articulation exercise of “refracting” (Barkawi and Brighton, 2011: 535-536; Neibisch, 2011: 260) these interpretations through the adaptation lenses of earlier commentators, such as Aron.



This will inform the latest critics' aim of distilling a new and relevant conceptualisation of the original texts, capable of providing meaningful insights for current theoretical understandings and future practical actions. This methodology corresponds to Handel's (1986: 4) fourth key question regarding a work of political philosophy, namely "[i]n what ways has the theory become obsolete" and to its logical corollary, focusing on the work's internal resources to overcome obsolescence and remain relevant when applied to contemporary spatio-temporal ecosystems.

We will briefly touch here on three well-known experts of 'Strategy' in general and of the 'Napoleonic war paradigm' in particular: Hew Strachan, Andreas Herberg-Rothe and Beatrice Heuser. All three authors wrote influential monographs analysing Clausewitz's *On War* (Heuser, 2002; Herberg-Rothe, 2007b; Strachan, 2007), made important contributions to the insightful 2007 book entitled *Clausewitz in the 21st Century* (Strachan and Herberg-Rothe, 2007) and critically addressed various aspects of Raymond Aron's commentaries on Jomini and Clausewitz (Herberg-Rothe, 2007a: 306-307; Strachan, 2007: 24; Heuser, 2010b: 3).

Strachan takes a Jominian 'military strategy' approach (2007) by defining strategy in terms of 'universal principles of war' (2005; 2011; 2019). He believes Clausewitz's late insight on the relationship between war and policy has been overemphasized (2013: 13; 2007: 96-97) and disagrees with Aron's attempt to integrate his writings into the theory of a peaceful liberal international order (Herberg-Rothe, 2007: 306-307). Herberg-Rothe adopts a very different, context-dependent 'political strategy' approach (2001; 2007b; 2014) leading him, like Aron, to

make a direct connection between Clausewitz's late notion of 'limited war' and the emergence of a states' system capable of progressively limiting war and violence for its own self-preservation (2007a; 2008; 2016).

The third school of thought comprises scholars who analyse Clausewitz's thoughts on the ethics of war from complementary angles. Colin Gray believes that grand strategy is a process that serves as a "bridge relating military power to political purpose" (2006: 1) and that "history's strategic winners, are the ones who decide what is just and what is not" (1999b: 55). Edward Luttwak focuses primarily on operational strategy's "paradoxical logic" (2001: 3) aiming to suspend, however briefly, the opponent's capacity to react effectively by successfully deploying the element of surprise (2001: 4). Heuser shares Gray's and Luttwak's commitment to Clausewitz's continuing relevance as a strategist of war (2007; 2010c). However, she goes beyond them by drawing on Michael Howard's work (Howard, 1967) to identify throughout the Prussian's entire oeuvre an immanent concern with an ethical foundation for strategic action (Heuser, 2007), capable of being fruitfully rearticulated for the contingencies of the 21st century (Heuser, 2020). Like Clausewitz, Heuser deploys a dialectical critical analysis of history (2001; 2002) to develop a theoretical perspective of the 'ideal' ethics of war. She then nuances her approach in light of war's realities (Heuser, 2010a; 2010b; 2018), so as to ultimately arrive at a dynamic concept of 'ethical strategy' (Mattox, 2008; Heuser, 2013) inhabiting this continuum connecting a universal 'ideal' and a context-dependent 'reality'. Leo Blanken deploys this insight to deny the incompatibility of the three

schools of thought outlined here and to integrate them into an overarching framework of “strategic choice” providing “a more transparent method for choosing among strategies” (Blanken, 2012).

## JOMINI'S AND CLAUSEWITZ' ENDURING DOUBLE DIALECTICS ON WAR AND STRATEGY

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Clausewitz's enduring double breakthrough was first to recognise that social and institutional change happens dialectically and second to apply this insight to his study of war in general and of ‘Strategy’ in particular. Anticipating Thomas Mann's central thesis in ‘The Magic Mountain’ (Mann, 1969: 726-727) by a century, he intuited that dialectical change is not deterministically unidirectional and progressive, but radically open-ended and multi-directional - and can therefore be regressive as well. Clausewitz's and Jomini's attempts to come to terms with the meaning of ‘Strategy’ were and continue to be shaped by a double dialectic: first, an ever-evolving internal tension between their two contrasting visions of the theoretical meaning and practical application of the term; and second, a shifting binomial pairing reversing its polarity both positively and negatively with each successive external historical and interpretative iteration. It is out of this double-dialectic dynamic connecting internal conceptual epistemology and external systemic ontology unfolding over the course of the past two centuries that our own understanding of ‘Strategy’ has emerged and continues to evolve in the rapidly-changing ecosystem of the 21st century.

Clausewitz's and Jomini's texts discussing the practice of Strategy in times of conflict thus take pride of place in an uninterrupted line of disquisitions going back to Plato and Cicero (Heuser, 2010b: 44-45; Freedman, 2013: 38-40), all of which have as ultimate aim to answer a timeless and universal question, retaining its actuality to this day. This question was best articulated by Michael Howard half-a-century ago: “Under what circumstances can armed force be used, in the only way in which it can be legitimate to use it, to ensure a lasting and stable peace?” (Howard, 1967: 64-65). As Beatrice Heuser reminds us in her *Evolution of Strategy* (2010b: 45; 2020), the essence of this answer was already outlined exactly two millennia ago by influential first-century A.D. Greek philosopher Onasander, as he summed up his treatise, *Strategikos* (The General). He did so by incisively describing the ideal Strategist (Chaliand, 1994: 154-156) in a manner entirely consistent with Clausewitz's view on the matter, as someone capable of effectively combining the human soul's ‘amazing Trinity’ (Howard, 2007: vii) – ethos, logos, pathos – with an ethical vision of *eudaimonia* – a virtuous life well lived (Stricker, 1987: 183):

*“[...] a good man, then, will be not only a brave defender of his country and a competent leader of an army but also for the permanent protection of his own reputation will be a sagacious strategist”.*

*(Chlup, 2014: 57)*

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