

# CLAUSEWITZ'S CONCEPTUALIZATION OF WAR AS AN ONTOLOGICAL STARTING POINT IN ITS RESEARCH AND UNDERSTANDING

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As a one-of-a-kind and complex social phenomenon, war has always been a subject of interest and analysis of different fields of science, chiefly the social and humanistic sciences. Because of its complexity, disciplinary limitations of the fields of science that researched it, and social stigmatisation, war was only partially studied in social and humanistic sciences. Such approach did not facilitate complete understanding of the nature of war, or gaining insight into its core characteristics, relations of cause and effect and links, as well as key processes that take place within it.

On the other hand, because of a multidisciplinary consideration of the essence of war in research done so far, that were dominated by the perception that war was too complex and unpredictable phenomenon to be studied only by one field of study, military theory remained underdeveloped, suppressed by scientifically and theoretically constructed sciences.

To overcome this problem, Clausewitz's conceptualisation of war represents a suitable ontological starting point for an all-encompassing scientific insight and understanding of war. Although conceived more than a century and a half ago, Clausewitz's theoretical postulates of war withstood the criticism of numerous theoreticians who have not managed to confute their validity and durability.

Clausewitz's ideas about the nature and character of war, the processes taking place within this phenomenon and relations between war-

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ring parties, and the role of war as a political instrument, represent a good theoretical base for further research. Characters of contemporary wars, however more complex and different from the wars from previous epochs, still confirm the timeless value of Clausewitz's ideas.

Keywords: *Clausewitz, war, ontology, fight, trinity, friction, climate and fog of war.*

## Introduction

War is a unique, brutal, destructive and devastating social phenomenon. On the other hand, it represents a significant generator of change that cannot be compared with any other social phenomenon (Malešević, 2011: 4). Extensive sociological research that analysed over 450 wars waged in previous two centuries, clearly show that war, as a phenomenon, has considerably influenced the development process of human society (See in detail: Wimmer, Min, 2006: 867-897). It is evident that war has always had a fundamental driving role in politics, economy, culture, concurrently having impact on all other fields of social life. Observed historically, it has always taken key strategic crossroads and turning points in the development of human society, often marking the beginning and end of historical epochs, places of birth, development and destruction of international systems and political orders (Barkawi, Brighton, 2011: 126).

However, regardless of its undoubtedly significant social role, war has been solely partially studied by social and humanistic sciences. Although there is an extensive literature that considers certain aspects of war, the causes of its outbreak, and the consequences in different areas of social life, and analyses individual wars and armed conflicts, very few works have been dedicated to the comprehension of its nature and character, and the analysis of its essential characteristics. The reasons for such "neglect" of war are numerous and complex, and we will examine the most important ones.

## War as a subject of research in social and humanistic sciences

One of the reasons why war, as a significant social phenomenon, has been out of focus of scientific research is the spreading of a general social position about the harmfulness and destructiveness of war, according to which its role in the overall development of human civilisation is knowingly ignored and condemned, given that the modern society has become more aware of the amorality and brutality of violence (Mann, 1988: 143). War is perceived as pathology generated by political elites to achieve certain interests and goals (See: Keane, 1996: 6-14). Therefore, for a long time, there has been no general social and scientific interest in the study of war like with other social phenomena, in its totality, and the field of interest was oriented to-

wards the exploration of causes and effects of previous wars, and the prevention of future armed conflicts. However, despite such widely spread perception on its harmfulness and efforts to suppress its occurrence, modern wars have become ever more violent and devastating (Malešević, 2011: 4).

Because of social stigmatisation, social and humanist sciences predominantly studied war from the perspective of the interest of certain sciences and scientific disciplines, such as political science, international relations, sociology, history, psychology, anthropology, economy and economic science. In each of the mentioned scientific fields, war is observed in the framework defined by previous disciplinary and subject determination in which war, as a phenomenon, is not the main subject of research. In other words, war has not been in the focus of research of the said sciences and scientific disciplines, and they only analyse its connection and relation to phenomena that make immediate subject of research of a concrete science or field of science. More precisely, they research the relation between war and state building process, they analyse the effect of war on elections and public opinion, they consider the influence of war on international relations, and they discuss the ethics and legality of war, they investigate the consequences of war for the society and economy, and they study different dependencies and cause-and-effect relations between war and other social phenomena (Barkawi, Brighton, 2011: 128).

In political science, war is studied as one of the means of projecting political power and achieving certain political interests and goals, whereby the specificities of its waging, or the warfare, are not analysed in greater detail. In theory of international relations, war is often reduced to just one of relationships between political entities, and it is observed to be solely a consequence of much more fundamental processes in the anarchical international system (Brighton, 2011:102). It is most often perceived as the continuation of the process of geopolitical competition, or a violent change of the balance of power in international system (Brighton, 2019:130).

To a large extent, sociology observes war as just one of the forms of organised and collective violence when it tries to comprehend its causes and conditions for its outbreak, the role of society as a collectivity and to analyse its consequences for society and individuals (See in detail: Malešević, 2010). Attempts of certain European sociologists, such as Gaston Bouthoul, Bert Röling and other, gathered around the International Peace Research Association - IPRA, to study more comprehensively the phenomenon of war, as a separate scientific discipline "polemology", have not yielded expected results (Bouthoul, 1968: 104).

On the other hand, history researches wars as crucial and important historical events in the development of human civilisation. It analyses them as concrete and unique phenomena, whereby it focuses on the specificities of the context in which they unfolded, and the roles and behaviour of war participants. Its scientific discipline, military history, investigates the ways in which military power was used in previous wars, and enables a more detailed insight into all forms of warfare (Vego, 2010: 126). And yet, though military history perhaps offers the most complete insight into the past wars and enables a detailed analysis of war experience and lessons learned, military historians do not deal with theoretical abstracting and development of concept that

would reflect essential characteristics of war, describe and explain its nature and processes that unfold in it.

Partial observation of war by social and humanistic sciences is often justified by the position that it is an extremely complex and unique phenomena that is not possible to comprehend through the prism of one science or scientific field (Gat, 2006: ix). That is why they resorted to a multidisciplinary examination of war, as a complex phenomenon, primarily in strategic studies, and then in the studies of war and peace, and in security studies, with an intention to produce one all-encompassing and summary picture of essential determinants of war, its nature and character, and processes that take place between warring parties (Barkawi, Brighton, 2011: 127).

However, weaknesses of the partial observation have not been overcome. Examinations done in strategic studies are not centred around war, but the problem of strategy, politics, use of military power, and projecting other instruments of power to achieve specific interests and goals (See in detail: Gray, 1999). In strategic studies, war is observed solely from the perspective of its strategic instrumentalisation for political purposes (Barkawi, Brighton, 2011: 129). Modern studies of war, practiced in leading world universities, have a rather broad research span, which, apart from strategic studies and military-expert analysis, international relations, political theory, military history and sociology, encompass the study of philosophy, ethics, and other quite diverse scientific disciplines, but without an integrating link in conceptual and theoretical sense (Barkawi, Brighton, 2011:130). By embracing a broader security agenda, through the theory of securitisation, critical study of security and concept of human security, security studies have shifted the focus of research from war to other non-traditional, or non-military challenges, risks and threats to security, and forms of jeopardising security such as religious and ethnic extremism, terrorism, ecological risks, migration, human trafficking, and the smuggling of narcotics (Barkawi, 2011: 3-4).

From previously presented positions, it can be concluded that war has been displaced from the focus of scientific research, and fragmented as the subject of research of different scientific fields and interdisciplinary areas. In the root of this issue lies an even more significant and fundamental problem - understanding and determining the essence of war. When theoreticians explain war, they present an ontological statement since it contains the explicit understanding of the essence of war. Accordingly, the question "What is war?" certainly is an ontological question, and the response should point to the essence of war, or the constants, general and necessary characteristics of war, as well as its specificities that make it different from other forms of social conflicts (Vračar, 2017: 296-297).

## Clausewitz's Conceptualisation of War

To respond to previously asked questions, it is necessary to determine certain ontological starting points on war, and it is necessary to identify, categorise, and describe its fundamental structure, explain internal processes, connections and relations between the actors in a conflict, that would serve to formulate fundamental assumptions

for further research (Barkawi, Brighton, 2011: 134). That is a highly complex problem having in mind that: "Since the times of Heraclitus the ontological foundations of war and peace have been seriously neglected, even though war and peace as social phenomena have been a daily concern." (Durfee, 1975: 549).

Yet, the mentioned ontological foundations can be found in Clausewitz's conceptualisation of war whose fundamental theoretical postulates offer a possibility for further examination of its purpose and analysis of the way war is used as a political instrument. Also, Clausewitz's idea of war creates a theoretical space for a deeper analysis of its structure, elements and internal processes, as well as the nature of relations between warring sides and other actors involved in the conflict (Barišić, Vračar, 2023: 1/23).

Clausewitz's entire idea about war is founded on the examination of relations between purpose, defined by policy, and war as a means, or an instrument for its achievement (Echevarria, 2007a: 22). For this Prussian theoretician and "philosopher of war" war is: "...A real political instrument, the continuation of policy with other means (Clausewitz, 1976: 86), whereby those of violent character are dominant. He believes that war is an instrument where one applies mass, organised and collective violence to compel enemy to submit to the will of the opposing side, or: "...an act of violence to compel our opponent to fulfil our will." (Clausewitz, 1976: 75).

At the same time, for Clausewitz, war is a two-way phenomenon where the fight between warring sides is the ultimate law of war (Echevarria, 2007a: 3). In his "combat-centric" theory: "...the combat is central military activity; all other activities just support it." (Clausewitz, 1976: 268). The essence of the combat he explains using a metaphor of a duel in which opponents, using violence, exchange blows (Clausewitz, 1976: 97). However, for Clausewitz, war was much more than a kinetic interaction, a collision of violent forces, but it represented a conflict of opposing wills (Clausewitz, 1976: 248), where each of the sides strives to achieve its goals, concurrently reacting to the activities of other actors (Echevarria, 2007a: 64).

Understanding war as the fight between warring parties that have their own goals and will, Clausewitz significantly deflected from arithmetical and geometrical conceptualisations of war of his predecessors and contemporaries, such as Henry Lloyd, Antoine-Henri Jomini and Heinrich von Bülow (See in detail: Waldman, 2012: 345-374). He believed that it is necessary to examine sociological and psychological aspects of war, such as hostility, fear, insecurity and chance, stressing that war is more governed by law of probability than the logic of necessity (Clausewitz, 1976: 90). By underlying the position that the nature of war is conditioned by the law of probability, not by laws of deterministic character, Clausewitz clearly observed that the decisions on war are made in conditions of uncertainty, or incomplete information about the adversary and conditions in which it is waged (Clausewitz, 1976: 84-85). Incomplete knowledge about the adversary can have a direct impact on the intensity and scope of violence, having in mind the tendency of war leaders to overestimate or underestimate the power of their adversaries (Cimbala, 1991: 180-181).

From the said reasons, Clausewitz observed the twofold nature of war, claiming that this phenomenon possesses its objective and subjective components (Paret, 1985:154). Objective nature of war, common to all wars, consists of permanent ele-

ments such as violence, friction, chance, and insecurity. On the other hand, subjective nature of war, or its character, is specific to every single war (Gray, 2007: 24). It is reflected in the peculiarities of the organisation, structure, doctrine and tactics of armed forces of warring sides, the way in which weapons are used, and in specificities of the implementation of other instruments of power. At that, Clausewitz stresses that: "... each age has its kind of war, its own limiting conditions and specific preconceptions." (Clausewitz, 1976: 593). For this Prussian theoretician, the character of war refers to its transitory, conditioned and adapted characteristics regarding the application of military force and other instruments of power in relation to different periods of warfare throughout history (Sheehan, 2007: 216). According to Clausewitz's ideas, the character of war evolves continuously in space and time, under the influence of different political, social, economic and technological conditions (Hoffman, 2017: 23).

Interpreting Clausewitz's previous positions, it can be deduced that the objective and subjective nature of war are in a constant mutual interaction. The objective nature of war can be changed due to the changes of elements in its subjective component. More precisely, elements such as violence and uncertainty can vary in intensity, proportion and relative role in a war, because of new types of armament and methods of warfare, and changes of socio-political conditions that can limit or escalate the use of violence, or the use of weapons (Echevarria, 2003: 8). However, to the largest extent, the character of war is determined by the relation between military power and desired political goals, and the relation between confronting sides in a conflict (Milevski, 2016: 441).

In his conceptualisation of war, Clausewitz singles out three dominant elements, which, according to his opinion, can have a decisive impact on the course and outcome of war: violence, chance and purpose, which he metaphorically named "a wonderful trinity" (Echevarria, 2007a: 69). He describes the first element as primordial hatred and animosity, but also as conscious antagonistic intentions (Clausewitz, 1976: 592-593). He observes the second element, the chance, in wider terms, as the interaction between probability and chance, pointing out that it is one of the most influential factors in war (Clausewitz, 1976: 85). In that respect, he addressed this factor more as the product of certain, often unpredictable circumstances, or an interaction between possibilities, probability and luck (Clausewitz, 1976: 86). He would point out that war was more like a game of cards where strengths and weaknesses of the opponent are assessed in the same way, as well as his manner of play, or warfare, and where, at the same time, one takes chance, bluffs, disguises and deceives (Echevarria, 2007a: 72). This renowned Prussian theoretician investigated the third element, the purpose of war, through the subordination of war to politics, which, according to his opinion, defines the character of war, formulates goals of strategy, determines the intensity and scope of the use of violence, the way of engagement of the armed forces, and it defines the criteria for the evaluation of success in the war (Echevarria, 2007a: 70). According to him, all three mentioned elements of the "trinity" are in a mutually dynamic interaction, whereby he links them to certain segments of society: violence to the people, chance to the army/general, and the purpose to the government/ruling elite, whereby all mentioned segments of society can have influence on any of the said



elements of the "trinity" depending on the context in which war is waged (Clausewitz, 1976: 89).

According to Clausewitz, the mentioned views on the nature of war and processes within the "trinity" enable warring sides to appropriately comprehend the character of war and shape strategic approach within it (Echevarria, 2007b: 198). In addition, it is only the comprehension of internal processes and relations within the Clausewitz's "trinity" that enables the understanding of the "universe of war", or the condition within which strategy functions (Waldman, 2009: 43).

Apart from the consideration of the nature of war and the famous "trinity", Clausewitz also analysed other important elements of war such as danger, extreme physical strain, insecurity and chance, which he metaphorically calls the "climate" of war (Clausewitz, 1976: 104). For him, danger is the element in which war exists and which represents a necessary product of the fight between warring sides, comparing it with the state of birds in the air, or fish in the water (Clausewitz, 1976: 85-86, 138). According to his opinion, that is the element that equally influences both intellect and emotions, triggering the feeling of fear, instinct of self-preservation and blurs clear judgement. On the other hand, extreme physical strain, in the form of exhaustion, fatigue, hunger and thirst can largely distort soldiers' judgement in extreme conditions (Clausewitz, 1976: 115). Under uncertainty, he primarily implied almost chronic incompleteness, inaccuracy, and subjectivity of information on adversary and environment, which should be the basis for the action in war (Clausewitz, 1976: 117). That chronic state of information uncertainty, in which warring sides operate, he metaphorically called the "fog" of war (Clausewitz, 1976: 101, 140). Analysing the "climate of war", he interpreted chance as an endless sequence of events and circumstances that may occur randomly disturbing and hindering military activities (Clausewitz, 1976: 119).

In his conceptualisation of war, Clausewitz particularly singled out "friction" as an important element of its objective nature. Under "friction" he implied all difficulties that can happen in war, influenced by various external factors (Clausewitz, 1976: 119). He differentiated between two types of friction. "General friction" occurs because of a cumulative action of previously examined elements of the "climate" of war. "General friction", together with the "climate" of war, he described as the "atmosphere of war" (Clausewitz, 1976: 104, 122). On the other hand, "sporadic friction", according to his opinion, occurs due to the random influence of the factor of "chance" on the course of war which makes even the simplest thing difficult (Clausewitz, 1976: 119). Clausewitz believed that the effects of the both types of friction can often be built and multiplied (Echevarria, 2007a: 107).

Analysing previously stated Clausewitz's ideas on war, and interpretation of his ideas by certain authors, one can express a critical view that it is an insufficiently systematised, incomplete, and slightly vague set of ideas of this famous "philosopher of war". However, the undisputed fact is that Clausewitz's ideas about war have withstood criticism of numerous theoreticians, although the said critical views emerged almost one hundred years after the death of this Prussian theoretician. Their lack of success points to the fact that Clausewitz's work "On War" represented the result of a quest for objective knowledge, since his ideas and positions, stated in the book, were founded and systematised in accordance with the logic of Immanuel Kant, with

which Clausewitz had been familiarised during his education listening to the lectures of Kant's follower and associate Johann Kiesewetter (Echevarria, 2007a: 22).

Unlike his famous and influential contemporary Jomini, who endeavoured in his works to formulate principles, instructions, and recommendations as to how to wage war successfully, Clausewitz tried to theoretically abstract, formulate and objectivise the laws and principles of war in general, that would serve as a basis for the enhancement of critical thinking, judgement, and reflexion on war, as a unique social phenomenon (Echevarria, 2007a: 26). From the said reason, his book "On War" largely deviates from then military works of doctrinal character because it was written with a view to educating military minds on reasoning and making decisions in war (Echevarria, 2007a: 29).

Clausewitz deeply believed that understanding the nature of war significantly impacts its waging, and approaches and ways in which military strategy, doctrine and concepts are developed, and armed forces trained, equipped, and engaged. It is precisely the understanding of the nature and essence of war, its laws and principles, or manners in which the "paradoxical trinity", "climate" of war, "fog" of war, and "friction" influence the course and outcome of an armed conflict, that can trigger considerable critical and creative thinking about this unique social phenomenon (Echevarria, 2007a: 58). Clausewitz thought that it was the reason why the task of theory in the study of war was to explain its nature or, more precisely, to help its clarification (Clausewitz, 1976: 141).

In his efforts to explain the nature of war and its essential characteristics, Clausewitz had to answer the key epistemological question: Is it possible to study war using scientific approaches and methods, or, is war a skill or a science? He believed that this was of fundamental importance, because entire approach to this social phenomenon depended on it (Clausewitz, 1976: 148-150). Although he rejected the idea that war could be studied as a phenomenon, based on strict scientific laws and principles, he advocated for a systematic approach to its research. According to Clausewitz, war could never be compared to some mechanical skill, or craft, regardless of the fact that some specific given truths could be applied objectively and unbiasedly to explain this phenomenon (Waldman, 2012: 356). Also, absolute, so-called mathematical factors, could never take a firm position in military calculations (Clausewitz, 1976: 86). He compared war to art, because, according to his understanding, the essence of art is to create. However, for Clausewitz, all forms of art contain certain scientific knowledge, while an applied science always contains elements of creativity and reasoning, which eventually brought him to the conclusion that: "...it is impossible to separate art from knowledge." (Clausewitz, 1976: 148). He applied the same analogy to war as well, because he believed that a commander's creativity, or the ability to make decisions according to the circumstances on the battlefield, depended on the body of knowledge about relations between the actors, phenomena and processes in armed conflicts (Waldman, 2012: 357).

Previous Clausewitz's positions can lead to the conclusion that war, as a phenomenon, falls into the realm of art, but also in the realm of science, whereby he obviously tends to treat war more like an art chiefly because of its unique and unrepeating nature. However, he warns that the analysis of war, founded on the difference between



art and science can: "...wrongfully place this phenomenon on a par with other arts and sciences, which can result in a mass of untrue analogies." (Clausewitz, 1976: 149).

On the other hand, according to Clausewitz, laws of war that are of determinist character, such as those in mathematics, physics, and technical sciences, were impossible to formulate, because of numerous subjective and difficult to measure factors within this phenomenon, whose relations and interactions are not possible to describe and explain with mathematical precision (Paret, 1985: 153). In that respect, he permanently pointed out the complexity of relations between causes and consequences of war, the constant interaction between the opposites within this phenomenon. Also, he often stressed the changing nature of influences of diverse conditions in a conflict, as well as the important role of difficult to measure social and psychological factors, which theory at that time could not fully comprehend and analyse (Waldman, 2012: 357).

Clausewitz conceptualisation of war represents an immeasurable contribution to military theory and practice, especially having in mind that his theoretical ideas, over the course of time, withstood criticism of numerous theoreticians of war such as Mary Kaldor, Martin van Creveld, John Keegan, Franck Hoffman, Rupert Smith, Kalevi Holsti, William Lind, and Thomas Hammes.

On the other hand, there is a much greater number of those military theoreticians, political scientists, historians and sociologists, as well as scientists from other fields of social and humanistic sciences, such as Peter Paret, Michael Howard, Hew Strachan, Andreas Herberg-Rothe, Colin Gray, Antulio Echevarria, Thomas Waldman, Lukas Milewski, Vasílii Sokolóvskii, Mahmut Gareev, and Vladimir Kvačkov, who emphasise exceptional validity and timeless value of his ideas. Theoretical relevance and duration of Clausewitz's ideas and positions on war are confirmed by the fact that this is one of the most influential military theoreticians whose works are studied at many military academies, staff and war colleges worldwide (See research: Bosio, 2018: 37-38).

Certain shortcomings and inconsistencies of Clausewitz's conceptualisation of war are the product of underdevelopment of military theory and social sciences at the time when his theory emerged, and the inability of the author, due to the set of circumstances, to finish his life work "On War". His ideas on war, key processes within this phenomenon, its essential characteristics, roles and behaviour of actors, military aspects and the relation of war to politics, represent a good theoretical and conceptual framework for further multidisciplinary research in social and humanistic sciences which are at much higher degree of development today than they were almost 150 years ago.

## *Conclusion*

Although there is detailed research done on war by social and humanistic sciences, so far, this unique and complex social phenomenon has been studied only partially in keeping with disciplinary limitations and focus of scientific interests of certain sciences and scientific fields. A systematic multidisciplinary analysis of the complexity of war, as a unique and unrepeatable social phenomenon has not overcome the said

disciplinary limitations, having in mind that there is no generally accepted conceptual and theoretical framework that would unify and guide such research. We are witnesses to the "neglect" of war as the subject of research, because most social and humanistic sciences treat it as a harmful social phenomenon that should be prevented, or whose causes should be eliminated.

Clausewitz's conceptualisation of war, as a set of thoughts and ideas that reflect essential denominators of this phenomenon, represents a favourable ontological basis for further research, regardless of certain shortcomings in terms of theoretical incoherence and vagueness, which probably occurred because of the inability of the very author to complete his capital work.

Clausewitz's theoretical ideas and thoughts about war, although written almost 150 years ago, withstood many criticisms, especially by modern theoreticians of war, which points to the timeless value and validity of his ideas. It is obvious that Clausewitz's conceptualisation can be a good ontological basis for further research on the nature and character of war, primarily from the perspective of war waging, not only using military means, for the purpose of achieving the end goal, which is the victory in war.

The said conclusion can be the starting point for future scientific arguments and discussions about war, firstly having in mind the position of Sun Tsu that war is a phenomenon of life importance for a state and society, about a problem that cannot be neglected by any means.

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## Summary

War, as an extremely destructive and complex social phenomenon, has always been a subject of scientific interest and analysis in social and humanistic sciences, having in mind the consequences that it has for human society as a whole.

The aim of this paper is to explore, based on the analysis of scientific research on war conducted so far, the fundamental problems in the study of this social phenomenon, and offer certain arguments because Clausewitz's conceptualisation of war would make a good ontological starting point for more comprehensive and complete scientific research.

Notwithstanding its undoubtedly significant social role, war has been solely partially studied by social and humanistic sciences. More precisely, certain aspects of war are considered, the causes for its outbreak and its consequences in different areas of social life, also, singular wars and armed conflicts are analysed, while there are but few works dedicated to the comprehension of its nature and essential characteristics.

The reasons for such "neglect" of war are numerous and complex. One of the key reasons is its stigmatisation, as an amoral and destructive social phenomenon, whereby its role in the development of human society is often ignored and condemned. Due to the widely spread social perception of the harmfulness of war, this social phenomenon is researched partially, most often from the perspective of the interest of individual scientific disciplines, meaning that its connectedness and relations with phenomena that are a direct subject of research of a concrete science, or scientific field are observed.

Because of the social stigmatisation of war and partial research of this phenomenon, war is perceived as a way too complex social phenomenon that is impossible to comprehend through the prism of one science, or scientific field, so researchers resorted to multidisciplinary examination of war. However, weaknesses of the partial research on war have not been overcome.

Clausewitz's conceptualisation of war, as a set of thoughts and ideas that reflect essential denominators of this phenomenon, represents a good ontological basis for further research. It is precisely the understanding of the nature and essence of war, its laws and principles, or manners in which the "paradoxical trinity", "climate" of war, "fog" of war, and "friction" influence the course and outcome of an armed conflict, that represent the immeasurable contribution to the military theory and practice. Theoret-

ical relevance and duration of Clausewitz's ideas and positions on war are confirmed by the fact that his ideas about the nature of this social phenomenon are studied in all military organisations and institutions worldwide.

Clausewitz's theoretical ideas and thoughts about war, although written almost 150 years ago, withstood many criticisms, especially by modern theoreticians of war, which points to the timeless value and validity of Clausewitz's ideas, regardless of certain shortcomings in terms of theoretical incoherence and vagueness, which probably occurred because of the inability of the very author to complete his capital work.

Keywords: *Clausewitz, war, ontology, fight, trinity, friction, climate and fog of war.*

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