

# 2019/2/3 (EN): Theory and method of Carl von Clausewitz

## Theory and method of Carl von Clausewitz

A military scientific outline

**Dirk Freudenberg**

Security policy can only be apprehended comprehensively. That means that the cognitions of military science, as the humanistic approach to the phenomenon "war", characterized by its way, starting in a deductive way from a general and not justifiable principle, proceeding by apprehending this phenomenon in its real meaning, not eliminating it here, but, on the contrary, integrating them in the political scientific context. Thus, war is a part of the whole. In addition to that, the cognitions of military science themselves influence international relationships, (foreign) economic and social policy, and they influence other areas as well. Military science is a part of the theory of war which tries to establish a scientific basis for the decisions which influence warfare. Thus, military science is tasked to contribute to security policy and therewith to political science as a whole. In this respect, the modern policy concept – as opposed to the classical policy concept which was determined by the question as to the purposes of public welfare – is determined by the question as to by which means objectives can be achieved. Nevertheless, military science must not be considered as a political science which serves as a special purpose science for the political education of the people; on the contrary, it must be clearly delimited to it as part of a science of policy, a policy science which disclaims ideological positions and collections. Thus, military science, which has existed since the beginnings of our exceedingly warlike European civilization, and which has been established in other civilizations as well, is interrelated with the other disciplines of science. For this reason the theory of war, as well as war itself, never is an isolated phenomenon, and it would hardly be sensible to deal with it solely in a "military historical" way in connection with the art of war, because success in a mission is always involved in the end, i.e. the military efficiency of the armed forces deployed, and/or, in this case, of the applied overall security system. Clausewitz's theoretical model as well as his methodical approach have been relevant to this day, because he chose an approach rather innovative in his time, not only analysing retrospectively-comparatively, but achieving profound cognitions about his inquiry subject, namely war as an instrument of politics, in a reflective-anticipating way; these cognitions are ageless and, if they are understood and respected, will be useful for acting analytically and anticipatorily as well as for deducing goal-oriented and efficiency-oriented action even today.

