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## Clausewitz

(Pennsylvania Military Museum, T. Gum, Site Admin.)

Disclaimer – this is not a primer or in depth study on Clausewitz, which could be an entire semester or thesis. This is just a peek behind the curtain...



Portrait of Clausewitz.

The mere mention of this name congers up tenets of caffeine fueled tactics and strategy arguments. Rightfully so as much of the western understanding of warfare is based on this gentleman's, Carl von Clausewitz (b. 1 June 1780, d. 16 November 1831), understanding and teachings on the subject. While the mindset has its controversies and weakness... for much of the visiting public to military museum's their only understanding Clausewitz is in cheeky quotes from action movies.

“War is the continuation of politics by other means” is a maxim attributed to Clausewitz – though not the one usually used by Hollywood, it is routinely argued for and against by academics at leading institutions. For just a moment, substitute the word politics with diplomacy, or perhaps economics... war is the way in which a nation state extends its needs or goals through physical means onto another, based on the morals and ethos of the state, and governed by the rules of engagement (ROE) set forth by state or international community.

Another level, victory in warfare is arguably accomplished through the attack of ends, ways, and means utilizing the strategic, operational, and tactical stages of planning and implementation (see prior posts).

Clausewitz's research and writing presents 22 tenets of warfare, ranging from analysis, entry to war, victory, making place for relationships between offense and defense, strategy and tactics (being similar but unique in their layered relationship), the fog of war, etc. While some of his literal teachings are based on the tools being used in his respective period, the idea and point is very much transferable. Perhaps in contemporary times, the relationship between political goals and objectives is transferred to the battlefield and seen in objectives and targets.

Take some time and examine who Clausewitz is, followed by his supporters, detractors, and contemporaries. Tactics and strategy is a subject field to examine to better understand a nation or peoples, along with what they value most. Below are a few notable people to pursue;

- Antoine-Henri Jomini – Summary of the Art of War
- Martin van Creveld – Transformation of War
- Basil Liddell Hart
- US Army Field Manual – FM 3-0
- USMC – MCDP 1-3
- Sun Tzu