

## *Fighting Doctrines and Revolutionary Ethics<sup>1</sup>*

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Understanding how and why the communists 'connected' only imperfectly with Clausewitz, while the anarchists shunned him and 'connected' instead with Hegel<sup>2</sup>

A 'Clausewitz connection' has often been evoked to describe the link between Marxists and the author of what is without question the greatest opus ever undertaken on the subject of war, *On War*. However, the problem with this idea of 'connection' is that it suggests a direct, immediate and natural link between the two, which is not so clear-cut once we actually dive into the details. As dialecticians sharing a common philosophical link to Hegel and Kant, we might indeed have expected that when the

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<sup>2</sup> The Graham translation of *On War* is used as the primary source in my work because, while the Howard/Paret has become the norm among scholars, I find that its omission and misrepresentation of philosophical terms makes it less than ideal for my comparative approach with Hegel and Kant. Thus, my primary source for Clausewitz is: Clausewitz, *On War*, tr. J. J. Graham, ed. F. N. Maude, intro. Jan Willem Honig, (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2004). With regard to Hegel, I stick to two standards in academia, the Baillie translation of the *Phenomenology of Mind*: Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, volumes 1 & 2, tr. J. B. Baillie, (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), and the T.M. Knox translation of the *Philosophy of Right*, specifically, G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, tr. T.M. Knox, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967).

Marxists discovered Clausewitz, they were predisposed to appreciate the methodology, because it was so closely intertwined with their own. One might go so far as to suggest that Marx was to political economy what Clausewitz was to war, the one who, having inherited the modern dialectical method, would be the first to apply it to a specific subject of inquiry, economics and war, respectively.<sup>3</sup> And yet, despite this methodological unity the convergence was not immaculately conceived amongst communists, but actually required some tinkering, and it was not Marx and Engels who became devout Clausewitzians, but rather the next generation of communists, Trotsky and Lenin.

With revolution now entering the forefront of the communist experience, the works of Clausewitz did in fact take centre stage. However, what they extracted from the opus was in no way its methodological or dialectical aspects, but a mere distillation for particular strategic gains. Pending some distortions and much cherry-picking of ideas, the communist revolutionaries had a very practical and isolated reading of Clausewitz, rather than a comprehensive one.

Meanwhile, in the same family lineage, the fathers of anti-bourgeois anarchist thought Bakunin, Proudhon<sup>4</sup> and Kropotkin did not deign make any references to Clausewitz at all.<sup>5</sup> They shunned him altogether. It is indeed surprising, since they too shared in this common methodological background, and would undoubtedly have come across Clausewitz, given that he had been introduced to left-wing circles. Instead, we find that in anarchist thought, there evolved a parallel, distinct, and direct 'Hegel connection' in their concept of the revolution and their fighting doctrine. The split between the two factions is clear and total, and once we take the time to understand where it comes from, it is actually quite logical. The breakdown tells us something

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<sup>3</sup> A discussion of the convergence in the works of Hegel and Clausewitz is available in another article of mine, entitled *Hegel and Clausewitz: Convergence on Method, Divergence on Ethics*, for which a peer-review process has been completed with the *International History Review*, but final publication offer at the present date is pending revisions.

<sup>4</sup> I mention Proudhon here for the sake of widening area in which Clausewitz appears to be absent, that is, what the anarchist fighting doctrine 'was not', but have chosen, for the sake of expediency rather than exhaustiveness, to exclude this author from the discussion that actually 'describes' the anarchist fighting doctrine, later in this article.

<sup>5</sup> This observation is made possible thanks to keyword searches and the availability of vast archives of works by these authors on the website of the Marxist Internet Archive found here: [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org).

about how the two groups understood the ethics of political violence as 'instrumental' in the Clausewitzian tradition, or as a 'right' in the Hegelian tradition. While this distinction complicated the integration of Clausewitz into communist doctrine, it made him altogether irrelevant to anarchist doctrine. Methodological keenness therefore had little to do with the two distinct 'connections'; it was rather the ethical dimensions on either side that led one group to identify its fighting doctrines with Clausewitz, while the other chose Hegel.

The reason why this historical set of questions is of relevance to anyone currently reading Clausewitz or Hegel on the subject of war is that uncovering why all this picking and choosing happened in the first place allows us to distinguish and understand the systems of logic found in either of these two founding works in the school of 'dialectical war theory', and most importantly, the ethical and strategic implications of these differences. By showcasing the distinction in a parallel study, we gain insight into how overarching, abstract ethical frameworks can, and indeed have, shaped fighting doctrines in real and concrete ways.

### **The Communist 'Clausewitz Connection'**

It is difficult to frame communism into a single family of revolutionaries and thinkers, and the danger in doing so is to risk finding ourselves with a blanket term that does not quite apply in encompassing all the nuances that one variation on communist thought might have relative to another. That being said, since this question is outside the scope of this essay, I should specify a limit to my use of the term, which consists of those anti-bourgeois revolutionaries who advocated for a political revolution that would *precede* the economic and cultural revolution, which is to say, those who believed in the necessity of a revolutionary state to carry out the program of revolution as its policy.

The 'Clausewitz connection' refers to the fact that many prominent communists cited him, including Marx and Engels, Mao, Trotsky, and Lenin. One might be tempted to assume that since the two founders are included among the lot of 'connectees' it would explain in what sense the remaining followers followed. It is an easy trap to fall

into, and the reality is rather that the earlier two were actually quite critical of Clausewitz and made little use of him. It was the later revolutionaries who would make use of the text, but only in a shallow fashion, citing a few key snippets that could be easily adapted to Marxist thought.

Indeed, it was necessary to 'adapt' Clausewitz to make him relevant to the communists, and provide them with a useful guide in their politico-strategic deployment of the revolution, under the auspices of a revolutionary state. This was achieved by Lenin, not Marx and Engels, as the first who provided the proper basis with which to work out the contradictions and kinks, and integrate Clausewitz's ideas to the revolution. This was no easy problem to resolve, but something quite fundamental: if the state is a central pillar in the works of Hegel and Clausewitz, how can a group intent on attacking and dismantling the state find a coherent logic which balances the use of a statist method against the state itself? However, before we answer this larger question, let us first step back, and show in what sense prior to Lenin, Clausewitz occupied little or no place in Communist thought generally, and particularly in their conception of a fighting doctrine.

Marx and Engels discussed Clausewitz in their correspondence on the subject of war between the years 1857-1862. That being said, many academics have exaggerated the significance of these short snippets, which is best exemplified in Sigmund Neumann's writing that not only was Engels 'greatly impressed', but that Clausewitz became 'stock-in-trade' for the revolutionaries and 'axiomatic' for Engels.<sup>6</sup> Lenin too was convinced that Engels and Marx were fundamentally Clausewitzian, as he alludes to in this passage:

War is the continuation of politics by other (i.e. violent) means. This famous aphorism was uttered by one of the profoundest writers on the problems of war, Clausewitz. Marxists have always rightly regarded this thesis as the theoretical basis of views concerning the significance of

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<sup>6</sup> Sigmund Neumann. 'Engels and Marx on Revolution', in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 265-266.

every given war. It was precisely from this viewpoint that Marx and Engels always regarded different wars.<sup>7</sup>

This paragraph does not make an argument, let alone demonstrates, that Marx and Engels were all that influenced by Clausewitz. It achieves neither, but instead takes this for granted. The only conclusion we can draw from this passage is rather the confirmation that Lenin himself was probably keen on Clausewitz. Lenin was in fact 'deeply impressed' by *On War*, referring to it in speeches, texts, after first having commented in the margins of his copy and transcribed sections in his notebook.<sup>8</sup>

Opposing this claim made by Lenin and later by numerous others including Neumann, Azar Gat's Clausewitz and the Marxists proposes a more detailed counter-argument, which cuts the legs from under such an interpretation, by balancing the one aspect of enthusiasm that Marx and Engels showed with regard to the single analogy 'Combat is to war what cash payment is to commerce,'<sup>9</sup> relative to their overall appreciation, which lags far behind. Gat notes that before describing this passage as 'witty' [witz], Marx's letter first stated that he was 'hunting through [Clausewitz] more or less', which can hardly be considered keenness; in fact, the passage on commerce was cherry picked by Engels and sent to Marx, knowing that it would be 'a piece of picantry in a field which could be of interest to Marx',<sup>10</sup> which makes sense since, as we shall delve into more further below, Marx was the economist of the two, while warfare was Engels's area, and his friends even called him 'The General' for it.<sup>11</sup> Regarding the word 'Witz' it might be worth adding the possibility that while Marx made this compliment

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<sup>7</sup> Vladimir Ilitsch Lenin, 'Socialism and War, The Attitude of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party Towards the War', in Lenin Selected Texts, Foreign Languages Press, 1970, Peking, Volume 21, pp. 295-338, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/s+w/>

<sup>8</sup> Beatrice Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz* (London: Pimlico, 2002), pp. 19, 46-47. Azar Gat also notes in Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought From The Enlightenment To The Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) p. 504, that Lenin was enthusiastic about all passages that referred to war's historical nature, next to which he repeatedly placed annotations.

<sup>9</sup> Marx, Letter to Engels Jan. 11, 1858, Marx/Engels Collected Works, Volume 40, International Publishers, New York, 1983. p. 241

<sup>10</sup> Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought From The Enlightenment To The Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 499. It is worth noting that this chapter entitled 'Marxism and Military Theory' is a polished version of Gat's 1992 article, 'Clausewitz and the Marxists', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 27 (1992),

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 496.

with regard to Clausewitz's analogy, he may also have chosen the term for the sake of making a playful jest on the name Clause-witz. (And indeed, we find occasional banter in the letters between the two friends. Another example of this playfulness is forthcoming.) If that were the case, it would further taper the extent of its significance.

Another example, which Gat also includes in his text, comes from the same series of letters: Engels wrote that *On War* was 'per se very good', which again is not a grand compliment, especially given that these words lead up to it, '[Clausewitz has an] odd way of philosophizing' and in the same exchange Marx complains that he had to 'spend so much time reading Clausewitz', which might explain indeed why he wound up reading it only 'more or less'. That being said, it is impossible to determine, simply in the one line where it appears, whether Marx's mention of the word "witty" is in reply, as Gat suggests, only to the commerce analogy and not a wider reading of Clausewitz.<sup>12</sup> If it had been the only introduction he had to Clausewitz this would be a logical assumption, but as Gat notes himself, Marx had read pieces of *On War* several months earlier. It was indeed Marx who introduced the subject of Clausewitz into the conversation several months earlier.<sup>13</sup>

One must therefore tread carefully in making sense of such a disparate set of somewhat positive, somewhat negative reactions. Citing the same passages above, Gat concludes that, '[neither Marx or Engels] had any special interest in, or appreciation of Clausewitz's work.'<sup>14</sup> This might be slightly too strong, at least in the case of Engels. As for Marx, it is not a stretch to say that he showed little or no interest, it was true of war in general. He was far more interested in economics, and preferred relegating the topic of war to Engels, going so far as to offer some friendly teasing at the expense of the latter, 'It strikes me that you allow yourself to be influenced by the military aspect of things a little too much. As to the economic stuff, I don't propose to burden you with it on your journey.'<sup>15</sup> Knowing this about Marx, it becomes frankly laughable, to stand with Vincent Esposito, who wrote that 'Marx rejoiced at finding in such an eminent military authority substantiation for his own theory of the relationship between war

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<sup>12</sup> Gat, p. 499

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 498

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 494

<sup>15</sup> Marx, Letter to Engels Sept 10, 1862, Marx/Engels Collected Works, Volume 40, International Publishers, New York, 1983. p. 415

and politics. Thereafter, Clausewitz became imbedded in revolutionary doctrine.<sup>16</sup> Marx had no such interest at all.

However, given that Marx and Engels worked so closely together, and were at times ghostwriting<sup>17</sup> for one another or co-signing articles and texts, it is not enough to demonstrate that one of the two was not interested, since the two in many ways were but one. In the case of Engels, claiming a complete detachment from Clausewitzian thought can only be achieved by elevating some passages at the expense of others, just as those who claim an opposite viewpoint did.

The text that Gat cites to nail his case shut is not an altogether fair assessment of the relationship. It is a letter to J. Weydemeyer from 1853, in which Engels writes '[in the end] Jomini gives the best account of [the Napoleonic Wars]; despite many fine things, I can't really bring myself to like that natural genius, Clausewitz.'<sup>18</sup> The fact is that this reaction predates the discussion with Marx by five years, and represents Engels's earliest reading of the text. As late as June 1851, Engels had not yet read Clausewitz, as he explains in a prior letter to the same man,<sup>19</sup> but soon thereafter, in early 1853, he knows *On War* well enough to comment on the whole, negatively. The timeframe is relatively precise, we can essentially pinpoint Engels first reading of Clausewitz within an 18 month range, which corresponds well with Gallie's suggestion that an article written for the *New York Daily Tribune* in September 1852 showed a 'trace of a hasty first reading of Clausewitz in the opening sentences.'<sup>20</sup> This fits exactly where we would expect it.

It is therefore rash to cite such an early reaction by Engels, in arguing a formal dislike of Clausewitz, since anyone who reads *On War* for the first time could in all

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<sup>16</sup> Vincent J. Esposito. 'War as a Continuation of Politics', *Military Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Spring, 1954), pp. 19-26

<sup>17</sup> See Gat, p. 496. Engels wrote articles that appeared under Marx's name in the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, for example.

<sup>18</sup> Engels, Letter to Joseph Weydemeyer April 12, 1853, Marx/Engels Collected Works, Volume 39, International Publishers, New York, 1983. p. 303

<sup>19</sup> Engels, Letter to Joseph Weydemeyer June 19, 1851, Marx/Engels Collected Works, Volume 38, International Publishers, New York, 1982. p. 370.

<sup>20</sup> W. B. Gallie, *Philosophers of War and Peace: Kant, Clausewitz, Marx, Engels and Tolstoy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 82.

honesty feel that way, but upon returning to it for a second or third read they might arrive at a complete different take on the matter. The same can be said regarding the works of Marx and Engels.

We should therefore focus our attention to the letters that appear after 1858, at which point we know that Engels has become sufficiently well-acquainted to with Clausewitz, enough to introduce Marx to a few points of interest, including a reference to the war as a science vs. an art and the analogy with commerce.<sup>21</sup> Here we find ourselves forced into a middle ground between Gat's stance and those on the other extreme, or rather an off-centre ground which is much closer to Gat's viewpoint. If neither Engels nor Marx had been influenced by Clausewitz beyond the mere snippets exchanged in the three letters of 1858, it should have been expected that the subject would have disappeared altogether, among all the other considerations the two had to keep in mind in their political activism and literary contributions. However, we find rather that the two continued to refer to Clausewitz in the years that followed, even Marx began a text in 1859 in which he cites *On War* on the subject of Austrian war plans. Engels uses Clausewitz in 1862 in his discussion of the American Civil War, and refers to him again in 1871 on the topic of the Napoleonic wars. If Clausewitz were as insignificant as Gat seems to indicate, why would he still be on Engels's mind roughly 20 years after he first read the book?

That being said, while the 'Clausewitz connection' to Marx and Engels was long-lasting, it remained somewhat weak and definitely sporadic. Engels's interest in Jomini is well-evidenced in Gat's work,<sup>22</sup> and it appears all the more true when one turns Engels's writings on the American Civil War, where three additional examples are striking. Engels uses what Jomini describes as the 'fundamental principle'<sup>23</sup> in two distinct ways, first in discussing the need to 'cut the secessionists' territory in two and

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<sup>21</sup> Engels, Letter to Marx Jan. 7, 1858, Marx/Engels Collected Works, Volume 41, International Publishers, New York, 1985. p. 358

<sup>22</sup> Gat. pp. 498-501. Gat's quotations include Clausewitz writing that 'Jomini gives the best account [of the Napoleonic campaigns' and a reference to Engels's reaction the Austo-Prussian war of 1866 which sounds like classic Jominian doctrine. (In the article form, Gat text spells out the fact that he is referring Jomini's idea that one should not divide his forces, but this was dropped from the chapter version.)

<sup>23</sup> This fundamental principle consists of 'bring[ing] forth, through strategic combinations, the bulk of the forces of an army, successively upon decisive points in a theatre of war [... and] manoeuvr[ing] against fractions of the enemy army.' Antoine-Henri Jomini, *Précis de l'art de la guerre* (Paris: Perrin, 2001), p. 158



enable the Unionists to beat one part after another,'<sup>24</sup> and later in arguing that the north should sacrifice minor positions in order to strike harder on the decisive points. And finally, in a most damning example of a non-Clausewitzian point of view, Engels completely undermines the moral aspects of war, when writing, 'The seizure of Richmond and the advance of the Potomac army further south — difficult on account of the many rivers that cut across the line of march -could produce a tremendous moral effect. From a purely military standpoint, they would decide *nothing*.'<sup>25</sup> The continued references to Clausewitz years after Engels first discovered him suggest some affinities, albeit not on the most important of his ideas, such as the moral forces, and, evidently, *On War's* highly effective refutation of Jominian positive doctrines. It therefore appears all the more likely that Engels and Marx were not in any serious way devout Clausewitzians, and that Engels, at least, shows much closer ties to Jominian than to Clausewitzian thought. That being said, the fact that Marx and Engels introduced Clausewitz to the communist movement did make its mark, and no doubt contributed to its uptake in communism's revolutionary phase.

In the end, any attempt to pinpoint the views of Engels and Marx on war must inevitably hit the unfortunate realization that it was not actually central to their theorizing on communism. Engels, who was the analytical mind, rather than the synthetic mind of the two, was busy contextualizing and understanding conflicts, but did not produce any compelling overall 'communist theory of war'. And Marx would not either, simply out of general disinterest in these matters. A communist theory of war would emerge logically, and in due time, when it was needed: when communism entered its revolutionary phase.

If war had not been a central pillar of early communist theorizing, eventually Lenin is the one who would 'put it there.'<sup>26</sup> The main problem was how communists understood statehood and policy as subjective, rather than objective.

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<sup>24</sup> Friedrich Engels, *The American Civil War* (originally published in Vienna: Die Presse, March 1862), Marx/Engels Collected Works, Volume 19, International Publishers, New York, 1983. p. 186

<sup>25</sup> Idem.

<sup>26</sup> Jacob W. Kipp. 'Lenin and Clausewitz: The Militarization of Marxism, 1914-1921', *Military Affairs*, Vol. 49, No. 4 (Oct., 1985), p. 184.

Apply [Marx and Engels's] view to [World War I]. You will see that for decades, for almost half a century, the governments and the ruling classes of England, and France, and Germany, and Italy, and Austria, and Russia, pursued a policy of plundering colonies, of oppressing other nations, of suppressing the working-class movement. It is this, and only this policy that is being continued in the present war.<sup>27</sup>

The issue of Marx's disagreement with Hegel is alluded to in Gat's discussion of Lenin,<sup>28</sup> but is worth developing it slightly further, in order to see not only how it influenced Lenin's interpretation of Clausewitz, but in a larger sense, how this argument complicated the direct or coherent uptake of Clausewitz towards communist doctrine. To appreciate the problem, it is best to go back to the origin, when Marx, in the process of applying a Hegelian methodology to his interrogations on society and economics, eventually found himself in disagreement with Hegel. Marx built a conceptual history of the world in which the proletariat and bourgeoisie were inherently opposed, and historically bound towards their historical transcendence, a formula quite similar to the master slave dichotomy presented in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*. In the *Phenomenology*, the overcoming of dichotomies, or 'Aufhebung', is described as an '... abstract negation, not the negation characteristic of consciousness, which cancels in such a way that it preserves and maintains what is sublated, and thereby survives its being sublated.'<sup>29</sup> The revolution represented a reaction to the idea that the bourgeoisie exists only insofar as it subjugates the proletariat (much as there can be no master without a slave), the act of creating it represents in fact the creation of a negative reciprocation of itself; and more importantly, the more the bourgeois class exploits and organizes the proletariat to maximize its efficiency and wealth-productiveness, the more it empowers it with the capacity to overthrow the capitalist order of production and provides reasons for doing so. The end point is anti-political, in that once the revolution is achieved, only stateless free, classless men and women remain; to reach this end goal is a political process, a policy-making initiative that dictates warfare *towards* building the socio-economic and cultural bases of an anti-

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<sup>27</sup> Lenin, 'Socialism and War, The Attitude of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party Towards the War', *Lenin Collected Works*, Foreign Languages Press, 1970, Peking, Volume 21, pages 295-338. <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/s+w/ch01.htm>

<sup>28</sup> Gat, p. 505-506.

<sup>29</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, vol. 1, tr. J. B. Baillie, (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2002), p. 181.

political society. The relationship is linear. And what remains of the proletarian and bourgeois class is merely their history, their moment in leading towards a classless human existence ... their 'Aufhebung'.

Marx explains in *Capital* that while his methodology Hegelian in spirit, he was in fact challenging the system as a whole, referring to his own work as Hegel's 'direct opposite', turning the methodology onto itself and 'standing it on its head.'<sup>30</sup> Years earlier, Marx had also written in his doctoral dissertation that he disagreed with Hegel on the threshold that separates the mystical from the political, that is, in Hegel, the state is understood as a 'vehicle of cosmic spirit'<sup>31</sup> or 'Geist', the spirit of rationality making itself manifest in the world. Since the concept of the state in Hegel is understood as a necessary, natural, and rational development of freely constituted peoples, inherently embodying their collective greater good, this poses a problem to Marx, who, seeing an entire class of exploited people having become the means of production, without having either access to the decision-making bodies or even the fruit of their own labour, he wonders if these men are indeed free. And are they in fact freely-constituted, or have they inherited an authority structure which coerces them into a dehumanizing role in society? This is the root of Marx's disagreement with Hegel. For Marx, the state is not an end in-itself or a means to a higher spiritual end, and thus not a result of a universal, objective idea, but rather an instrument that would generate and maintain a subjective idea, in this case, capitalism, and its usurpation of political power towards its own ends. As the paragraph below explains, the state is a subjective idea that attempts, strives to pass itself off as objective:

The fact is that the state issues from the mass of men existing as members of families and of civil society; but speculative philosophy<sup>32</sup> expresses this fact as an achievement of the Idea, not the idea of the mass, but rather as the deed of an Idea-Subject which is differentiated from the fact itself) in such a way that the function assigned to the individual (earlier the discussion was only of the assignment of individuals to the spheres of

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<sup>30</sup> Karl Marx, Afterword of 1873, *Capital*, Vol. 1, ed. Frederick Engels, tr. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1999), . <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/p3.htm>

<sup>31</sup> Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 119.

<sup>32</sup> Speculative philosophy is the term Hegel uses to describe his own writings.

family and civil society) is visibly mediated by circumstances, caprice, etc. Thus empirical actuality is admitted just as it is and is also said to be rational; but not rational because of its own reason, but because the empirical fact in its empirical existence has a significance which is other than it itself. The fact, which is the starting point, is not conceived to be such but rather to be the mystical result. The actual becomes phenomenon, but the Idea has no other content than this phenomenon. Moreover, the idea has no other than the logical aim, namely, 'to become explicit as infinite actual mind.'<sup>33</sup>

Since the Marxists question from the very onset the idea that states possess an objective universality, it would be impossible for them to come to terms directly with Clausewitz's 'intelligence of the personified state'<sup>34</sup> or his 'continuation of policy by other means'.<sup>35</sup> They would be asking questions like, 'the intelligence of whose state?' and 'the policy of which class?' Thus, the link from the communists to Clausewitz is not at all direct, but requires some modification to be logical. It is actually formed out of a careful addition of words.

The first step for Lenin to develop coherence between Clausewitz and communism was to begin reflecting on the subject of the causes of war:

It seems to me that the most important thing that is usually overlooked in the question of war, a key issue to which insufficient attention is paid and over which there is so much dispute useless, hopeless, idle dispute, I should say is the question of the class character of the war: what caused that war, what classes are waging it, and what historical and historico-economic conditions gave rise to it.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Karl Marx, *The State as Manifestation of Idea or Product of Man: Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, ed. Joseph O'Malley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

<sup>34</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, tr. J. J. Graham, ed. F. N. Maude, intro. Jan Willem Honig, (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2004), p. 18

<sup>35</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 17

<sup>36</sup> Lenin, 'War and Revolution, A Lecture Delivered on May 14, 1917', in *Collected Works*, tr. Isaac Bernard (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), Vol. 24, pp. 398-421.

Upon this analysis, he would come to the conclusion that that imperialism and capitalist states made war inevitable, and only an armed struggle of the working class could eliminate war.<sup>37</sup>

The formulation of war as the ‘continuation of policy,’ becomes very significant in this context, because Lenin had uncovered what seems to be opposing policies or ideas existing not merely in the state itself, but even at the juncture that explains the causes of war. Using this formula alone would have been problematic in serving this purpose. In the Hegelian sense especially, and the Clausewitzian sense depending on one’s reading of it, the state represents a single focal point of policy, a universal policy which is either representative of the people’s political greater good, or is essentially the people’s will and freedom, materialized in-itself-and-for-itself. Therefore, to embark on the state-toppling adventure would be a self-defeating project, an attack against one’s own institutions. Before Marxists could fully adopt the terminology of ‘continuation of policy’ they needed to clarify its distinction from the state. Instead of being a universally objective thing, or in Hegel’s words, the ‘actuality of concrete freedom’<sup>38</sup> of those who make it up, the state would come to be presented as a subjective entity, an instrument of the bourgeoisie, and its ‘policy’ not a higher purpose in itself, but the very reason for revolt: the antagonism between bourgeois policy versus proletariat policy. From this point of view, like all facets of the bourgeois state, even its wars represent one of the many forms which the exploitation of the proletariat can take. One class is sent off to fight imperial wars for the enrichment of another class. Lenin had in fact stumbled upon the fundamental problem between Marxism and the concept of war as continuation of policy – that it assumes there can be a *single policy*, when in fact many (or at least two, in this case) policies are struggling against one another. He writes:

How, then, can we disclose and define the “substance” of a war? War is the continuation of policy. Consequently, we must examine the policy pursued prior to the war, the policy that led to and brought about the war [World War I]. If it was an imperialist policy, i.e., one designed to safeguard the interests of finance capital and rob and oppress colonies and foreign countries, then the war stemming from that policy is imperialist. If

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<sup>37</sup> Kipp. *Lenin and Clausewitz*, pp. 184-191.

<sup>38</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, # 260, pp. 160-161

it was a national liberation policy, i.e., one expressive of the mass movement against national oppression, then the war stemming from that policy is a war of national liberation.<sup>39</sup>

If the 'continuation of policy' was at first contrary and destabilizing to the idea of a revolution against the state, Lenin had thus made it into its absolute opposite: an ultimate justification for the revolution, which in the very process of being stated, also served to better identify the enemy, not only in theory – the bourgeois class – but more importantly, seeing it as a usurper of political power, anchored firmly in the state as an institution in its own image, it became possible for the communist to see an attack on the state as an attack on the bourgeoisie itself. The pursuit of an alternative 'policy', a policy of the proletariat, and conceptualizing the war as a 'continuation' of *this policy*, as opposed to an objective and universal concept of 'policy', further anchored the premise of communism's justification for the revolutionary state. Clausewitz's formula was in effect reinforcing the communist doctrine in being applied.

That is why there should be no surprise to find just how important and how well cited this idea of 'continuation of policy' becomes amongst the revolutionary communists. It dominates all other quotes from Clausewitz. Lenin cites it regularly and one occasion cites it three times in a single text.<sup>40</sup> Trotsky made use of the term 116 times altogether,<sup>41</sup> and it also appears in repetition at times. Eventually, this idea also found its way into the dark and poetic, dichotomous interpretation proclaimed by Mao, 'Politics is war without bloodshed; war is politics with bloodshed.'<sup>42</sup>

Whereas we might have expected that methodological affinities would explain why the 'Clausewitz connection' took form, what we find instead is that on the one hand, the founders of the Marxist methodology were not all that interested in Clausewitz, and those later Marxists, who were very Clausewitzian, were fond of only a

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<sup>39</sup> Lenin, 'The Marxist Attitude Towards War and Defence of the Fatherland', tr. M.S. Levin, in *Lenin Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, 1964, Moscow, *Volume 23*, pages 29-35  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/carimarx/1.htm#v23pp64h-029>

<sup>40</sup> Lenin. 'War and Revolution', pp. 398-421.

<sup>41</sup> This observation is based on a search of the archives of the works of Leon Trotsky available on [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org). It can be assumed that more citations would be found if the search was extended beyond this archive and in other languages as well..

<sup>42</sup> Mao Tse Tung, 'On Protracted War' a lecture given from May 26 to June 3, 1938, in *Selected Works*, Vol. II, (Peking : Foreign Language Press, 1965) pp. 152-53.

few maxims and simple concepts they could distil, not bothering at all with Clausewitz's methodology or larger analyses. The revolutionaries were very practical and choosy in their reading. They cited Clausewitz, often, very often, but did not cite him widely or in depth. Only a pocketful of ideas made it through the communist distillation and only those which were particularly *strategic* in solving specific problems or achieving specific gains.

One specific case, which Gat discusses at length, is that of Trotsky who made much use of *On War* and showed himself in direct opposition to Engels, during a brief period of strife between the ranks, while he was serving as Minister of Defence. A disagreement emerged on the question of defining war plans and tactics within the communist movement. Trotsky referred heavily to Clausewitz in attempting to ward off a group of young military officials (Frunze, Gusev, Tukhachevsky, and others) who sought the creation of a 'Unified Military Doctrine' which would spell out the character of a communist revolutionary fighting force.<sup>43</sup> In order to quell their ambitions, Trotsky referred to Clausewitz's discussion of positive doctrines, rejecting the notion that there existed a science of war, based on internal principles.<sup>44</sup> 'There is not and there never has been a military "science"', argued Trotsky. 'What is commonly called the theory of war or military science represents not a totality of scientific laws explaining objective events but an aggregate of practical usages, methods of adaptation and proficiencies.'<sup>45</sup>

Inherent to this discussion of the science of war, the moral forces in war and the historical conditioning of war could not be far behind. Thus, Trotsky also referred to these other features of Clausewitzian thought in order to deepen and strengthen his argument against the 'Unified Military Doctrine'. In this case, he was completely turning his back on Engels's viewpoint, which was to pay little heed to the role of moral factors in war:

War is a specific form of relations between men. In consequence, war methods and war usages depend upon the anatomical and psychical qualities of individuals, upon the form of organization of the collective man, upon his technology, his physical or cultural-historical environment,

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<sup>43</sup> Gat, p. 507.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 507.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 508.

and so on. The usages and methods of warfare are thus determined by changing circumstances and, therefore, they themselves can in no-wise be eternal.... An army leader requires the knowledge of a whole number of sciences in order to feel himself fully equipped for his art. But military science does not exist; there does exist a military craft which can be raised to the level of a military art.<sup>46</sup>

Of greater interest to our overall examination regarding why communists adopted Clausewitz and anarchists did not has little to do whether or not there could be a scientific combat 'doctrine' for the revolutionary state and its forces, but rather what overarching, abstract doctrine was framing the whole, that is, the meaning and definition of tactics, strategy, objectives, and concept of victory. This turned out to be of grave consequence because, on the one hand, it brought forward the revolutionary fervour, the concept of 'absolute war', which both Fichte and Clausewitz understood as being a product of revolution. Fichte, who first coined the term used it to describe how a people rises up against a tyrant, which is to say that their political objective is absolute, because no truce or compromise is possible when the goal is to dethrone a prince and found a new government.<sup>47</sup> Clausewitz, who was familiar with this discussion by Fichte (he had read the essay and sent a letter to Fichte about it in 1809), improved the concept of 'absolute war' by making it more abstract and ideal, as a way to better study the propensity of war to escalate. In Clausewitz, 'absolute war' becomes a 'total-concept' [Total-Begriff] which is purely ideal and implies a concept of war devoid of all limits, material as well as to its political objectives. It is 'barely conceivable in the purely logical sense'.<sup>48</sup> This was intended not as a real measure of war's material potential, but more so its conceptual potential, not the wars we fight, but the wars that might be *dreamt up*. The revolutionaries entertained this idea of absoluteness in their war, a political objective to which there was no compromise, and for which the linear movement to this end could justify the means, and render them ever more unlimited. This clarified both the instrumentality of their war, as well as idea that the war could not be won until the other duellist was overthrown, through a series of engagements

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<sup>46</sup> Leon Trotsky, Speech at the meeting of the Military Science Society attached to the Military Academy of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, May 8, 1922, in *The Military Writings of Leon Trotsky*, Volume 5: 1921-1923, tr. Brian Pearce, (London: New Park Publications,1973), p. 118-119.

<sup>47</sup> Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Machiavel, et autres écrits philosophiques et politiques de 1806-1807*, tr. and ed. Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut (Paris : Payot, 1981), pp-56-57.

<sup>48</sup> Antulio J. Echevarria. *Clausewitz & Contemporary War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) p. 67.



leading to a victory that is total: the opponent has been altogether annihilated politically. As Trotsky wrote:

If we consider that the purpose of our action is the overthrow of the autocracy, then, of course, we have not attained that aim .... But our tactics, comrades, are not at all based on that model [of protesting and striking]. Our actions are a series of consecutive battles . . . Understand this: in discussing whether or not we should continue the strike, we are in substance discussing whether to retain the demonstrative nature of the strike or to turn it into a decisive struggle, that is, to continue it to the point of total victory or defeat. We are not afraid of battles or defeats. Our defeats are but steps to our victory.<sup>49</sup>

From this paragraph, we can see that Trotsky fully adopted Clausewitz's view on the relationship between tactics and strategy, where the former consists of how one wins a battle and the latter represents how one uses successive battles towards a final outcome.<sup>50</sup> The logic of this sequence allowed him to imagine the notion of a 'total victory' or 'total defeat' for the revolution, based on the earlier premise that the two opposing factions or classes are in a gruesome, existential duel: failure to dismantle the bourgeois state would imply the failure to achieve the revolutionary, given that one was perceived as the complete opposite and negation of the other.

This strategic understanding of war consisting in a linear sequence of battles towards gains against the opponent is precisely the conceptual frame that explains the 'Clausewitz connection' among communists, because first as a political party and then as a revolutionary state, the movement is a strategic entity, it is a centralized approach to policy making that takes possession of war towards ends that it has defined and for which it thereafter takes responsibility. The idea that war is an instrument of policy is only intelligible insofar as there is agency, some entity to incarnate this 'intelligence of the personified state'<sup>51</sup> to act as both the policy-maker and the executor of its will: war is to the communist state what the hammer and sickle are to the carpenter and a farmer.

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<sup>49</sup> Leon Trotsky 'The November Strike', in 1905, tr. Anya Bostock, (London: Vintage Books, 1972) permission granted to the Marxist Internet Archive, 2006.  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1907/1905/ch15.htm>

<sup>50</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, p. 65.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The insignia itself is a reminder of the underlying logic of the communist movement, which is a linear relationship between means and ends.

### The Anarchist 'Hegel Connection'?

Despite the similarities between the communist and anarchist project to topple the bourgeois states by applying violence, the early anarchists snubbed Clausewitz altogether. Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin made no references to Clausewitz, even though they were writing at a time when his works were already quite renowned, including on the Left, as we saw above. In exchange, anarchist ideas about war, most strikingly in the works of Bakunin, were strictly Hegelian. Having seen what Clausewitz had to offer the communists, what made the anarchists exclude him? Not only was war as an instrument not ethically in line with the anarchist project, it was altogether unintelligible within their *non-linear, anti-political* concept of the revolution.

Indeed, the distinct doctrines of the communists and anarchists were shaped by their understanding of the political element of revolution, and most specifically, the goods and evils of the *revolutionary state*. Bakunin perceived the state as an anti-revolutionary and repressive institution by definition, which must not be maintained for a single instant, once the revolution is accomplished, no matter what pretext.<sup>52</sup> 'Bourgeois socialists' is the term Bakunin used to describe those who advocated that a political revolution should precede the social and economic revolution, which necessarily included all those who advocated for a revolutionary state to politically engender the remaining two facets of the revolution.<sup>53</sup> Bakunin explained:

...equality should be established in the world by a spontaneous organization of labor and collective property, by the free organization of producers' associations into communes, and free federation of communes — but nowise by means of the supreme tutelary action of the State .... It is this point which mainly divides the Socialists or revolutionary collectivists from the authoritarian Communists, the partisans of the absolute initiative of the State. The goal of both is the same. same. [...] Only the Communists

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<sup>52</sup> Jean Preposiet, *Histoire de l'anarchisme* (Paris: Tallandier, 2002), p. 247.

<sup>53</sup> Donald Clark Hodges. 'Bakunin's Controversy with Marx: An Analysis of the Tensions within Modern Socialism', *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (April 1960), p. 261.

imagine that they can attain through development and organization of the political power of the working classes, and chiefly of the city proletariat, aided by bourgeois radicalism — whereas the revolutionary Socialists, the enemies of all ambiguous alliances, believe, on the contrary, that this common goal can be attained not through the political but through the social (and therefore anti-political) organization and power of the working masses of the cities and villages.<sup>54</sup>

This provides us with an important clue into Clausewitz's absence from anarchist thought. If the revolution is to be 'anti-political' as Bakunin wrote, what is the use of conceptualizing the revolution and the war between classes as Clausewitz did, subjected to the political? If the whole revolution did not have to be preceded by political revolution, but could instead be achieved as a simultaneous process of socio-cultural and politico-economic liberation, then what would this revolution look like? How could violence rise to the purpose of revolution, without taking the shape of a linear policy, nor for that matter as the policy of a revolutionary state? According to Bakunin, and those who were committing targeted acts of violence, it could, insofar as these acts were coherent in themselves and with the project. They did not need to be organized in the Clausewitzian tradition as a sequence of tactics, adding up to the pursuit of strategic goals, because revolutionary acts, from the anarchist perspective, inspired revolution in being carried out and therefore contributed to the philosophical emancipation of those who perceived the deeds and admitted their legitimacy.

Hegel is omnipresent in this perception of violence as having within itself the capacity to awaken the people. Beneath it lies another idea, interconnected to the concept of 'Geist': that the revolution is not an end, but a process. There is no revolutionary state required because the revolution is itself this Spirit. Bakunin was borrowing heavily from ideas taken in the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right*, in suggesting that:

Civil war, so destructive to the power of states, is, on the contrary, and because of this very fact, always favourable to the awakening of popular

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<sup>54</sup> Mikhail Bakunin, 'Stateless Socialism: Anarchism', excerpts taken from G.P. Maximoff, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin* (New York, The Free Press, 1953), <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/bakunin/works/various/soc-anar.htm>

initiative and to the intellectual, moral, and even the material interests of the populace. And for this very simple reason: civil war upsets and shakes the masses out of their sheepish state, a condition very dear to all governments, a condition which turns peoples into herds to be utilized and shorn at the whims of their shepherds. Civil war breaks through the brutalizing monotony of men's daily existence, and arrests that mechanistic routine which robs them of creative thought.<sup>55</sup>

The revolution and its violence which are referred to in this passage reminds us of Hegel's notion that "the ethical health of peoples is preserved in their indifference to the stabilisation of finite institutions; just as the blowing of the winds preserves the sea from the foulness which would be the result of a prolonged calm, so also corruption in nations would be the product of prolonged, let alone 'perpetual', peace.'<sup>56</sup> where the idea of self-justification resides in the act itself, and for this reason, Hegel can also maintain the argument that 'war is not to be regarded as an absolute evil and as a purely external accident.'<sup>57</sup> Indeed, the above statement from Bakunin strikes deeply Hegelian chords and appears to borrow its essence from this passage in Hegel's *Phenomenology*:

In order not to let [the citizens] get rooted and settled in this isolation and thus break up the whole into fragments and let the common spirit evaporate, Government has from time to time to shake them to the very centre by War .... By thus breaking up the form of fixed stability, spirit guards the ethical order from sinking into merely natural existence, preserves the self of which it is conscious, and raises that self to the level of freedom and its own powers.<sup>58</sup>

If war must indeed 'shake' the masses, as Hegel and Bakunin seem to agree on, then the methods of war should inspire this motion. Indeed, this is the central aspect of the anarchist fighting doctrine, the propaganda of the deed, whereby the idea is infused

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<sup>55</sup> Mikhail Bakunin. 'Letters to a Frenchman' in Bakunin on Anarchy, ed, and tr, Sam Dolgoff, (New York: Knopf, 1971) <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/bakunin/works/1870/letter-frenchman.htm> ,

<sup>56</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, # 324, p. 210

<sup>57</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, # 324, pp. 209-210.

<sup>58</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, vol. 2, tr. J. B. Baillie, (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2002) , p. 449

directly into the action. Though it was first coined by the Italian Carlo Pisacane,<sup>59</sup> Bakunin was also amongst those who jumped on board and made use of the term soon thereafter. In fact, in the same letter quoted above, Bakunin also wrote:

We must spread our principles, not with words but with deeds, for this is the most popular, the most potent, and the most irresistible form of propaganda.<sup>60</sup>

What shape would these revolutionary actions take? It is a aspect of history which is perhaps too often forgotten in the mainstream today, but the anarchists of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century succeeded in carrying out many high-profile acts of terror: the Wall Street Bombing of 1920, as well as the assassination an American president, two Spanish prime ministers, a French president, a Russian Tsar, a King of Greece, an Empress of Austria, an heir to the Austro-Hungarian empire and many other high ranking officials, and prominent nobles. Kropotkin argued that political assassinations were ethical even on the grounds which normally should exclude murder altogether, the Golden Rule itself: that one should treat others as one wishes to be treated. To this he replied, 'To kill not only a tyrant, but a mere viper. Yes, certainly! Because any man with a heart asks beforehand that he may be slain, if ever he becomes venomous; that a dagger may be plunged into his heart, if ever he should take the place of a dethroned tyrant.'<sup>61</sup> For anarchists, the choice of targets, attacking symbolic figures and never aiming at allies, peasants or proletarians, was in fact the justification for the act, embodied in the action itself.

Anarchists had no need for Clausewitz. They were not seeking *a policy* to guide their war, nor were they even institutionalized in way that would allow them to frame and generate centralized policy in the first place. What they sought instead was justification in the act itself as opposed to its potential, eventual outcome. So powerful was this principle that each element of the revolution had to be internally coherent, and

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<sup>59</sup> F. della Feruta, ed. *Scrittori politici dell'Ottocento*, Tomo.1: *Giuseppe Mazzini e i democratici* (Napoli; Ricciardi 1959), pp. 1249-1252.

<sup>60</sup> Mikhail Bakunin. 'Letters to a Frenchman' in Bakunin on Anarchy, ed, and tr, Sam Dolgoff, (New York: Knopt, 1971) <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/bakunin/works/1870/letter-frenchman.htm> ,

<sup>61</sup> D. Novak. 'Anarchism and Individual Terrorism', *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (May 1954), p. 177.

justified in-itself that Kropotkin, for example, maintained that he would rather be killed than to kill someone who had done him no harm.<sup>62</sup> By making this exclusion, the anarchists were able to infuse violence with right directly, and by excluding the principle of instrumentality, they reached a conceptual end-point to their ethical claims.

The problem which emerged is that they were in fact transposing the ethical logic that defines war as a right of peoples into a legitimization of the purified violence itself. The revolution was the process itself, for having extracted itself from the ends/means formula, and eventually, this implied that the revolution was in itself violence and only violence, that is, unlike the communists who could delineate between the violence of the revolution and the outcomes or other policies of the revolution, the anarchists, having so closely intertwined violence and revolution into a single set of self-justified acts and an internally coherent whole, could not distance themselves from the violence. New targets necessarily emerged each time one was put down, because there could be no deliberation to establish frame or limit this preconceived form of violence.

### **Conclusion**

Both the anarchist's understanding of violence as an objective right and the communist's violence as the instrument of policy of the subjective revolutionary state (against the subjective bourgeois state) must eventually attain an impasse in the hearts and minds of any free citizen, or citizen aspiring to political emancipation. In the former case, attempting to justify violence in-itself will necessarily breed critique, resentment, fear, etc. because, in associating violence directly, rather than indirectly to right, the anarchists turned the Hegelian logic of war as a 'right' inside out. In Hegel, the right to wage war was not inherent, but rested on the logos of 'actualized freedom', a voice of reason that forms in the confines of the state and frames its ethos upon the development and constitution of the individual through phases of development in the family, in civil society, and the state; however, the anarchist's notion of a right to violence is not built and constituted, it is assumed, and it is not deliberated upon and rendered a manifestation of reason or collective intelligence, but acts silently, and according to its

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<sup>62</sup> Peter Kropotkin, *Anarchist Morality*, in *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets*, (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2005), p. 100

preordained logic, *a designed war*. It is the opposite of enacting war as a legitimate and free activity of citizens. As such, its violence does not include the citizen, but *excludes* him, and this exclusion self-defeats the notion of right, since this very right is derived from the inclusive ethical realm which the political community generates in the process of making policy manifest. Without this right, any application of force calls for resistance, because eventually the exclusion catches up, calling into question even the most basic anarchist assumption, that monarchs, bourgeois statesmen, and other perceived *usurpers* are *necessarily legitimate* targets. But this self-proclaimed legitimacy of violence is itself a product of usurpation, since it is a right belonging to constituted citizens, which has been extracted and detached via their exclusion from deliberation, and attached to pre-conceived notions of who the enemy is and what should be done to punish him. When war is not an instrument of policy, it eventually reaches an end point in its legitimacy and uptake amongst citizens, since their exclusion from policy is in effect a form of tyranny, in this case, tyranny of an immutable idea.

In the case of the communists, even though they claimed to frame instrumentality in policy, they nonetheless arrived at the very same impasse, because their revolution being pre-ordained, it may have been instrumental, it may have been a 'continuation of policy', but the mistake was to think that the project was in fact 'policy'. There is no true 'policy' without free and open deliberation. The communists were implementing the 'continuation of ideology' not a 'continuation of policy'. Both groups were therefore condemned to exerting violence to sustain their inner logic, because there existed no means for policy-based checks and balances to this violence: the only possible containment or possibility of limiting their use of force was to meet it with a counter-force, on observation that Clausewitz had indeed made on the subject.<sup>63</sup>

In the end, the most dramatic manifestation of both the necessary dependence on violence and the distinct ethics and doctrines pitting anarchist against communist was how despite fighting a common enemy, they also fell regularly into serious in-fighting. With violence as both the tool and inner logic of their movements, when the two arrived face to face with an ethical and conceptual impasse between one's 'instrumentality' and one's 'right', the tension was unavoidable and the fighting inescapable.

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<sup>63</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*. pp. 2-3.

The communist held a deep distrust of the anarchists because they thought their methods 'disarmed' the proletariat and 'prepared the ground for the politics of the enemy class.'<sup>64</sup> Meanwhile, the anarchist rejected the consolidation of state power in the hands of the communists, going so far as to attack, on one particular occasion, the Communist Headquarters in Moscow, during the Revolution, killing 12 and wounding 55, including Yuda Roshchin, the one anarchist leader who had tried to reconcile the two factions, but was jeered off as a traitor to the cause.<sup>65</sup> On another occasion, when Kropotkin died, Lenin wished to offer him a state funeral, but the family of the late anarchist rejected it, and instead, 20,000 people marched along his cortege waving placards and banners bearing demands for the release of all anarchists from prison and such mottoes as 'Where there is authority there is no freedom' and 'The liberation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves.'<sup>66</sup>

The instrumentality / right divide depended on different temporal schemes and therefore, it did not matter that the anarchist and communist were fighting for a same end purpose. The temporality of communism was sequential and that of the anarchists was simultaneous, and consequently, these two concepts of time being categorically exclusive, the linearity of one group was ethically inconsistent with the holistic vision of the other, since for one it meant the ends justifying the means, and for the other means being self-justifying. If either saw in the other the impossibility of revolutionary success or dangers of tyranny which it implied, it was because they were both right in their apprehensions regarding the other, though their idealism may have warped their ability to see the fault underlying their own self-defeating tyranny within.

Choosing Clausewitz as a mentor made sense to those who set out to fight a war *towards* their revolution. And choosing Hegel made sense to those who thought they could *embody* the 'spirit' of their revolution in itself. But in the end, the sheer violence of the propositions on either side ultimately killed their idols. Both instrumentality and right are only ethical insofar as they are limited in their scope, and submitted to the living ethos of deliberative population who conceptualize what the 'greater good'

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<sup>64</sup> Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution in Spain*, tr. Morris Lewitt, (San Francisco: Bolerium Books, 1952) <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1931/spain/spain04.htm>

<sup>65</sup> Paul Avrich. 'Russian Anarchists and the Civil War', *Russian Review*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Jul., 1968), pp. 297-298.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 297-298



entails, but the revolutionaries had dreamt up an unlimited, absolute war that marched forward regardless of consent: it might have been a war waged 'for the people', but instead of being achieved 'by the people', it was achieved 'by the book'. Therefore it could not claim the legitimacy that this 'by the people' clause bestows on political (or anti-political) action.