CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The history of the United States Army lies in the mainstream of modern Western military development. Heir to European traditions, the American Army has both borrowed from and contributed to that main current. Molded by the New World environment, a product of democratic and industrial revolutions, it has at the same time evolved, along with the nation it serves, uniquely. To the present generation of Americans faced by complex challenges to their national security, the role that force and military institutions have played in American history becomes of increasing interest and importance. This volume is an introduction to the story of the U.S. Army, and of American military history, of which that story is an integral part.

What Is Military History?

Narrowly defined, the term *military history* used to connote conflicts in arms—campaigns and battles. In the eighteenth century, when the American Army was born and before the French Revolution introduced the modern concept of the "nation in arms," such eruptions in the Western World usually involved clashes by soldiers of the opposing armies and left the civilian masses largely unaffected. Until the latter part of that century, wars were relatively simple and restricted in area, forces, and objectives. The wars of the French Revolution and of Napoleon became mass conflicts of whole nations in arms. With the spread of the industrial revolution, warfare grew more complex and exerted an ever-increasing influence on society. This new era in warfare coincided with the evolution of the United States as an independent nation. In the first half of the twentieth century the effects of large-scale wars became so pervasive that they were felt not only by the combatant nations but throughout the entire world, now grown more compact. The outcome in those wars was no longer measured in terms of the preservation of national honor or the winning of territory, familiar in eighteenth century warfare, but in terms of national survival. Thus, as warfare in the past two centuries has broadened to involve more and more people and more and more of the energies and resources of

society to fight it—or in more recent days, to deter it—the definition has had to be extended to encompass more activities.

Broadly defined, military history lies on the frontier between general history and military art and science. It deals with the confluence and interaction of military affairs with diplomatic, political, social, economic, and intellectual trends in society. To understand it therefore requires some knowledge of both general history and military art. In its American context it represents many interrelated facets. Certainly it involves wars—all kinds of wars. It may surprise Americans, who traditionally have regarded themselves as a peaceable and unmilitary people, to learn that the range of warfare in their national experience has been quite wide, and the incidence quite frequent. Born in a revolution, a violent struggle often considered a prelude to other "peoples' wars," the United States has since endured a bitter Civil War and participated in seven international wars. In American national experience war itself has undergone considerable change and oscillation from one mode to another. The American Revolution was a limited war of the eighteenth century variety; the War of 1812 and the Korean conflict of 1950–53 were two later models of limited conflict. The Civil War introduced the age of total war to which World Wars I and II added their bloody chapters. War cut deeper and deeper into the life of the nation. Since World War II, under the shadow of nuclear weapons that threaten all civilization with annihilation, warfare has returned to earlier forms. Guerrilla wars, foreshadowed in American experience by the long-continuing Indian wars and the Philippine Insurrection of 1899–1902, have come into vogue again and American forces have become engaged in counterinsurgency warfare, notably in Vietnam.

Wars used to be regarded as clearly definable exercises in violence when diplomacy failed and statesmen handed over to soldiers the burden of achieving victory. They were usually marked by formal ceremonies—a declaration at the beginning and a surrender and peace treaty at the end. Since World War II these formalities are no longer the fashion. War and peace have become blurred. Neither in Korea nor in Vietnam was war declared. No peace treaty followed the surrender of Germany in World War II, or the truce in Korea in 1953. While this change in the nature of warfare has affected the conduct of war and the role of the military and society in it, participation in organized violence in all its forms is a component of military history that must be treated. Not only must the traditional three C's of warfare—causes, conduct, and consequences—be studied, but as the line between war and peace becomes more indistinct, the periods between the wars gain in interest to students of military history.

Besides war in the broad sense, there is another major facet that military history must deal with and that military historians of this generation have found more and more integral to their subject. To apply force, armies are organized. Reflecting the national culture and varying in their impact on it, armies are institutions, social entities in themselves. Some armies have close relations with the societies from which they are drawn; others are separate and a class apart. For example, in much of United States history the Army was scattered in frontier posts and physically isolated from the rest of society. But in the period since World War II, as in the founding era, civil-military relations have been close. As institutions, armies take form and character. Their institutional outlines are manifested in a number of ways, some overt, some subtle: their organization and administration, system of training, mode of supply, planning for mobilization and the conduct of war, methods of fighting on the battlefield, weaponry and utilization of technology, system of command and control, selection of manpower and leaders, and relations with the civilian population and authorities. The whole host of policies, doctrines, customs, traditions, values, and practices that have grown up about armies are an important part of the institutional story. All of these facets represent histories in themselves and reflect change in the nature of warfare, technology, the country's internal development, and external responsibilities. A shift in one component will inevitably have impact within the institutional structure. For example, a fundamental change in weaponry, equipment, or technology, be it the adoption of gunpowder, the rifle musket, the airplane, the tank, or the atomic bomb, will affect the traditional modes of fighting and reverberate throughout the institutional framework. The phenomenon of cultural lag evident in other human institutions applies to military organizations too, and some armies have been slower to adopt changes than others, often with fatal results in the test of battle.

While the U.S. Army as a social entity has evolved to meet its primary mission—to fight—in its American institutional context military history must also treat the Army as a social force in peace. From the beginning the Army has played a role in developing the country—in exploring, guarding the frontier, and constructing roads, in engineering, transportation, communication, sanitation and medicine, and in flood control. At the same time the Army has served as a vehicle for social mobility of certain disadvantaged groups—for example, European immigrants in the 1840's and 1850's and Negroes in the 1950's and 1960's. The mixture of the European legacy, native environment, democratic ideals and values, and national experience in war and peace have combined to mold the Army into a distinct institution in American life—a unique blend of professional and civilian elements. Indeed, as Russell F. Weigley, a student

of the Army's institutional history, has well expressed it, the story of the American Army is really a history of "two armies"—"a Regular Army of professional soldiers and a citizen army of various components variously known as militia, National Guards, Organized Reserves, selectees."

It has been said that every generation rewrites its history. Its own needs and problems inevitably make it take fresh looks at its own past for light, understanding, guidance, and alternative courses of action. Nowhere is this necessity more evident than in the field of American military history today—broadly conceived. During most of the national existence of the United States the liberal democratic tradition and geographic isolation combined to subordinate in the public mind the role of force and military institutions in its history. Blessed by relatively weak neighbors on the north and south and safe behind its ocean barriers, the United States could define its security in terms of its own boundaries and frontiers. The military factor in its heritage, birth, and development tended to be discounted. But when scientists began to conquer space and time in the twentieth century, and the European system that had maintained order in the nineteenth century began to crumble under the impact of two world wars, Americans began to find their security bound up with the fate of other countries. The nation that began the twentieth century with a strong sense of security by mid-century began to feel insecure. As George F. Kennan, former director of the Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State, put it, "A country which in 1900 had no thought that its prosperity and way of life could in any way be threatened by the outside world had arrived by 1950 at a point where it seemed to be able to think of little else but this danger." Not since the era of the founding fathers has survival in a dangerous world become such an urgent issue and the foundations of national security of such concern.

Theory and Practice of War

The question of whether warfare should be treated as science or art has long interested students of military affairs. In the eighteenth century, the age of enlightenment, when the systematic study of war began, military theory regarded warfare as "mathematical" and "scientific." A general who knew mathematics and topography, the theorists optimistically maintained, could conduct campaigns with geometrical precision and win wars without bloody battles. The violent shock of Napoleonic warfare put a rude end to the notion of war as a purely scientific or mathematical game. But insofar as the application of physical pressure upon the enemy involves the use of mechanical

tools under certain predictable or calculable conditions, it is possible to speak in terms of military science. The systematic application of science to the development of weapons and to technology in general is a comparatively recent development. Since World War II, techniques of research and analysis have been enlisted from scientific fields to make calculations and choices among complex weapon systems and in the management of huge defense programs more exact. Over and above the techniques, the successful conduct of war at all levels of command requires assessing unpredictable variables and taking calculated risks under circumstances for which no precise precedent exists. Since the "fog of war" still holds and wars involve men as well as machines, warfare remains in many ways what it has always been essentially—an art.

Military theorists have long searched for the principles underlying the art of war. They have sought to distill from the great mass of military experience over the centuries simple but fundamental truths to guide commanders through the fog of war. The lists of principles they have evolved have been derived from an analysis of the campaigns and the writings of the great captains of war, such as Caesar, Frederick the Great, Napoleon, von Moltke; occasionally the masters have provided their own set of precepts. Foremost among the analysts have been Jomini, Clausewitz, Ardant duPicq, Mahan, Foch, Douhet, Liddell Hart, and Fuller. Almost 2,500 years ago, in 500 B.C., Sun Tzu, a Chinese general, set down thirteen principles. The axioms range from the Confederate General Nathan B. Forrest's oft-quoted advice, "Git thar fustest with the mostest men," to Napoleon's 115 maxims. The lists differ in emphasis as well as in number. Some theorists have stressed that the battle is all and the defeat of the enemy's armed forces the correct objective; others, that the best path to victory is by indirect methods and approaches, by what has been termed obliquity.

Today, all great nations recognize principles of war and incorporate them in army doctrine. The lists vary from nation to nation. In their modern dress in the Western World, the accepted principles are essentially a post-Napoleonic conception, advanced by Clausewitz, the great Prussian philosopher of war in the early nineteenth century, and his contemporary, Jomini, the well-known French general and theorist. Since the United States shares a common military heritage and a common body of military thought with Europe, American students of war have also sought to reduce the conduct of war to certain essential premises. The United States Army recognizes nine principles and includes them in its *Field Service Regulations*. Their proper application, the Army holds, is essential to the exercise of effective

command and to the successful conduct of military operations. The Russians and Chinese have a principle of annihilation and the British a principle of flexibility that do not appear on the American list. Indeed, Mao Tse-tung and his disciples in their philosophy of protracted conflict have given the principles a new twist and have challenged conventional Western doctrine.

Despite differences over their precise number and meaning, principles of war are taught in military schools throughout the world. Some cautions are usually attached to the American Army set. The principles are not absolute and have been successfully violated at times for special reasons that have been carefully considered beforehand. The principles are interrelated. They do not operate with equal force under all circumstances. In particular cases they may reinforce each other or be in conflict. They are applied in combination to specific situations. The combinations will vary according to the factors that influence operations, such as the nature of the terrain, the relative strength of the opposing forces, the effect of weather, and the mission of the command. The art of generalship, consequently, is to be found in the proper application of the principles.

The nine principles are concisely stated as objective, offensive, mass, economy of force, maneuver, unity of command, security, surprise, and simplicity. They are set forth in *Field Manual 100–5* as follows:

Objective. Every military operation must be directed toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective. The ultimate military objective of war is the destruction of the enemy's armed forces and his will to fight. The objective of each operation must contribute to this ultimate objective. Each intermediate objective must be such that its attainment will most directly, quickly, and economically contribute to the purpose of the operation. The selection of an objective is based upon consideration of the means available, the enemy, and the area of operations. Every commander must understand and clearly define his objective and consider each contemplated action in light thereof.

Offensive. Offensive action is necessary to achieve decisive results and to maintain freedom of action. It permits the commander to exercise initiative and impose his will upon the enemy; to set the pace and determine the course of battle; to exploit enemy weaknesses and rapidly changing situations, and to meet unexpected developments. The defensive may be forced on the commander, but it should be deliberately adopted only as a temporary expedient while awaiting an opportunity for offensive action or for the purpose of economizing forces on a front where a decision is not sought. Even on the defensive the commander seeks every opportunity to seize the initiative and achieve decisive results by offensive action.

Mass. Superior combat power must be concentrated at the critical time and place for a decisive purpose. Superiority results from the proper combination of the elements of combat power. Proper application of the principle of mass, in conjunction with the other principles of war, may permit numerically inferior forces to achieve decisive combat superiority.

Economy of Force. Skillful and prudent use of combat power will enable the commander to accomplish the mission with minimum expenditure of resources. This principle is the corollary of the principle of mass. It does not imply husbanding but rather the measured allocation of available combat power to the primary task as well as secondary tasks such as

limited attacks, the defense, deception, or even retrograde action in order to insure sufficient combat power at the point of decision.

Maneuver. Maneuver is an essential ingredient of combat power. It contributes materially in exploiting successes and in preserving freedom of action and reducing vulnerability. The object of maneuver is to dispose a force in such a manner as to place the enemy at a relative disadvantage and thus achieve results which would otherwise be more costly in men and materiel. Successful maneuver requires flexibility in organization, administrative support, and command and control. It is the antithesis of permanence of location and implies avoidance of stereotyped patterns of operation.

Unity of Command. The decisive application of full combat power requires unity of command. Unity of command obtains unity of effort by the coordinated action of all forces toward a common goal. While coordination may be attained by cooperation, it is best achieved by vesting a single commander with the requisite authority.

Security. Security is essential to the preservation of combat power. Security is achieved by measures taken to prevent surprise, preserve freedom of action, and deny the enemy information of friendly forces. Since risk is inherent in war, application of the principle of security does not imply undue caution and the avoidance of calculated risk. Security frequently is enhanced by bold seizure and retention of the initiative, which denies the enemy the opportunity to interfere.

Surprise. Surprise can decisively shift the balance of combat power. By surprise, success out of proportion to the effort expended may be obtained. Surprise results from striking an enemy at a time, place, and in a manner for which he is not prepared. It is not essential that the enemy be taken unaware but only that he becomes aware too late to react effectively. Factors contributing to surprise include speed, deception, application of unexpected combat power, effective intelligence and counterintelligences, to include communication and electronic security, and variations in tactics and methods of operation.

Simplicity. Simplicity contributes to successful operations. Direct, simple plans and clear, concise orders minimize misunderstanding and confusion. If other factors are equal, the simplest plan is preferred.

Many examples of the successful employment or of the violation of these principles can be cited in American military history and illustrations will be given in appropriate places in the text. Each case requires careful study in its own context. Here, we may note briefly that the proper objective has often eluded commanders in war. The British in the American Revolution, for example, were never clear as to what their prime objective was, whether to capture strategic positions, to destroy the Continental Army, or simply to try by an appropriate show of force to woo the Americans back to their allegiance to the Crown. As a result, their victories over Washington's army in the field seldom had much meaning. Not until after many years of fighting the elusive Seminoles in the Florida swamps did Col. William J. Worth realize that the destruction of their villages and sources of supply would end the conflict. In the Civil War the North's infatuation with the "On to Richmond" strategy long obscured what proved to be the real objective, the destruction of the enemy forces and control of the principal lines of communications. In the limited wars since 1945, however, the United States has sought to achieve objectives short of the total

destruction of the enemy or his productive capacity. The traditional concept of "victory" and "winning" has taken on a different meaning in the new political context of warfare in the nuclear age. Force has been applied with restraint. Fresh support has been given to Clausewitz' reminder that a successful war is one in which the political objectives for which it is waged are achieved by suitable means and at appropriate cost.

No principle has been more ingrained in American military thinking than the belief that only offensive action can achieve decisive results. Many examples can be cited: Washington's brilliant attacks at Trenton, Princeton, and Yorktown, Grant's and Sherman's campaigns of 1864–65, Pershing's insistence on attack by American units in France in 1918, and Eisenhower's invasion of Normandy in 1944. But opponents of the principle argue that the defense has in certain cases more advantages than the offensive. In Sir Edward Creasy's *The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World,* ten were won by the defending commander. Some of the most notable actions in American military history have involved the defense—Jackson's stand at New Orleans, the retreat of Chief Joseph and the Nez Perces, McAuliffe at Bastogne, and Ridgway's spoiling tactics on the stabilized front in Korea.

The principle of mass, often called concentration, probably offers more examples of successful and unsuccessful application than any other. Washington at Trenton and Eisenhower in Normandy are two obvious illustrations of how application resulted in success. Conversely, Lee on the second day at Gettysburg, Custer at the Little Bighorn, the Huertgen Forest battle in Germany in World War II, and the Viet Cong in the Ia Drang valley battle show a failure to apply the proper amount of force at the proper place and time. No principle has been more successfully violated by great generals than that of mass. Lee's division of his army at Chancellorsville is a classic case. However inadvertent, dispersal, not concentration, during American airborne operations in Sicily and Normandy during World War II led to a disruption of German communications and tactics. Indeed, the one airborne landing deemed a virtual failure, in Operation MARKET-GARDEN in the Netherlands in 1944, involved the greatest concentration of troops.

The successful application of economy of force has usually resulted in brilliant gains. Lee's battle at Chancellorsville, MacArthur's bypassing of the Japanese stronghold at Rabaul in World War II, and his decision in Korea not to reinforce in great strength Lt. Gen. Walton H. Walker's troops on the Pusan perimeter in order to conserve forces for the Inch'on landing are notable cases in point. No principle of war is probably more important today, in this era of limited war, than restraint in the use of force.

No one would deny the necessity of maneuver to success in military operations. Brilliant examples have occurred throughout American military history: Morgan at Cowpens, Scott at Cerro Gordo, Grant before Vicksburg, Eisenhower in Normandy, Patton's shift of the Third Army's offensive from an east-west axis into Germany to a north-south axis into Luxembourg during the Battle of the Bulge, and MacArthur at Inch'on. Attempts at direct assault, rather than maneuver, have often led to bloody and indecisive actions: Gage at Bunker Hill, Burnside at Fredericksburg, Hodges in the Huertgen Forest. Even a successful maneuver can be subject to criticism—witness the controversy over Eisenhower's decision to advance across Europe along a continuous broad front rather than permit one of his major forces to thrust deep into Germany.

Unity of command was successfully achieved for the Union under Grant in 1864, for the Allies under Marshal Foch in World War I, and for the Allied forces under General Eisenhower in the European Theater of Operations in World War II. Divided command of British forces in America played an important role in leading to the surrender at Saratoga. The lack of unity of command or even effective co-operation between Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet and MacArthur's landing force in Leyte might have cost American forces dearly in 1944. The interservice conflicts between MacArthur and Nimitz during World War II indicate that this principle can in some respects be violated and military victory gained. For the armchair critic, an interesting case in divided command was MacArthur's failure to place X Corps of the United Nations forces under the command of the Eighth Army in Korea during the fall and early winter of 1950.

Security and surprise are obvious necessities and closely related. The Antietam battle saw security violations on both sides—by Lee whose courier allowed the operations plan to fall into Union hands and by McClellan who failed to reconnoiter the approaches to the battlefield before the action took place. Elaborate security precautions taken by the Allies before the Normandy invasion permitted them to deceive the Germans as to the precise time and place of the attack. The success of the Chinese Communist intervention in Korea resulted both from a United Nations' security failure and from a carefully planned deception by the Communist forces. From the time Washington trapped the Hessians at Trenton to the time MacArthur caught the Koreans unaware at Inch'on the principle of surprise has been an effective weapon of commanders. But there have been occasions when commanders have openly flaunted their power in order to demoralize an enemy. Thus, Henry Bouquet marched into the Ohio country in 1764 with a show of British power to impress the Indians engaged in the Pontiac conspiracy.

Of all the principles of war none is now probably harder to follow above the battalion level than the principle of simplicity. Modern warfare, involving mechanization, electronic equipment, and airborne and seaborne operations, is inherently not simple. Even the ostensibly easy movement of a small tank-infantry-artillery team cannot be termed "simple." In counterinsurgency operations the integration of military with political, economic, sociological, and psychological factors often leads to a high degree of complexity. But operations sometimes can become too complex for the commanders to execute. Washington's plan for the attack on the British at Germantown in 1777, involving convergence of four columns of inexperienced troops moving over different roads at night, proved too complicated for successful execution.

The growing complexity and variety of modern warfare have led students of military affairs to take a fresh look at the principles. Since World War II a debate has been raging in military literature over the precise meaning and application of the principles, a debate fed by the new circumstances of nuclear and counterinsurgency warfare. The discussion revolves around three major questions: Are the present principles too exclusive? Are they too inclusive? Does modern insurgent and nuclear warfare make them obsolete? To some extent this is a debate over semantics. The defenders point out that the principles are as valid in modern as in ancient warfare; that each age must make its own applications of the "fundamental truths." Critics argue that they are not immutable scientific laws of universal applicability; that they require constant re-examination; that no two military situations are ever completely alike; that the principles are merely methods and common-sense procedures adopted by great captains in the past and that changes in the conditions of war alter their relative importance; that the new weapons have destroyed whatever infallibility remained; that the principles are not pat formulas for victories to be followed rigidly. They argue that the new conditions of warfare do not allow for the traditional Napoleonic concepts embodied in the principles; that limited conflicts restrict the principles of the offensive and the objective; that in any future nuclear conflict the principle of mass will be severely limited and that dispersion, not concentration of men and equipment, will become critical on the battlefield. The principles, these critics conclude, are no substitute for imaginative thinking, logical analysis, broad professional knowledge, and highly developed qualities of leadership.

Perhaps the key point to be remembered, whatever the outcome of the present debate among the theorists, is that war remains fundamentally an art. Dennis Hart Mahan, famed West Point professor and teacher of the Civil War generals, put it well: "In war, as in every other art based upon settled principles,

there are exceptions to all general rules. It is in discovering these cases that the talent of the general is shown." Even the defenders of the principles stress that the art of war lies in their interpretation and application. Within limits, the principles of war nevertheless remain a useful tool for analysis, a general frame of reference, and a checklist, for examining past campaigns. Themselves an inheritance from the past, these adages offer no substitute for real historical inquiry or for thinking and action on the part of the officer. They represent generalizations and premises rather than fixed immutable rules. They provide general guides to conduct, guides that on the whole have in the past led to military success. Nuclear and counterinsurgency operations undoubtedly will demand a modification or application different from so-called conventional warfare. As in the past, the victorious captain will have to adapt concepts or improvise others most suitable to the particular circumstances facing him.

All theorists agree that, in the final analysis, the art of war is what men make it. To quote Mahan again, "No soldier who has made himself conversant with the resources of his art, will allow himself to be trammelled by an exclusive system." He must be flexible. He must learn to deal with men. Napoleon stated that in war, "The moral is to the physical as three to one." The ability to penetrate the fog of war and make the correct decision is the heart of leadership. Indeed, flexibility and leadership might well be added as tenth and eleventh principles, basic concepts inherent in all the others. It is not surprising therefore that the qualities that make for good leadership have long interested the Army and that a whole body of literature has grown up about the theoretical and practical foundations of this phase of the military art.

The military profession, like other professions, has developed its own language to make for easy communication. Aside from the principles of war, it is useful for the student of military history to become familiar with other terms commonly encountered in the literature. In the theory of warfare, strategy and tactics have usually been put into separate categories. Strategy deals with both the preparation for and the waging of war and has often been defined as the art of projecting and directing campaigns. To tactics, its close partner, military jargon has reserved the art of executing plans and handling troops in battle. Strategy is usually regarded as the prelude to the battlefield; tactics the action on the battlefield. As society and warfare have grown more complex, the term *strategy* has been gradually broadened from its eighteenth century connotation as the "art of the general," far beyond its original, narrow military meaning. In the nineteenth century, and even more in the twentieth, distinctions began to be blurred between strategy as a purely military phenomenon and national strategy of a broader variety involving a combination of political, economic, techno-

logical, and psychological factors, along with the military elements, in the management of national policy. As a result, the term *grand strategy* (or *higher strategy*) has come to connote the art of employing all the resources of a nation, or coalition of nations, to achieve the objects of war (and peace). The broad policy decisions governing the over-all conduct of war, or its deterrence, are the prerogative of the chief of state and his principal advisers. The strategist, whether in the narrower or broader sense, deals in many uncertainties and his art is the art of the calculated risk. At the opposite end of the scale are *minor tactics,* the term used to describe the maneuver of small units.

Despite distinctions in theory, strategy and tactics cannot always be easily separated in practice. The language of strategic maneuver—putting one's army into the most favorable position to engage the enemy and depriving the enemy of freedom of movement—is also largely the language of tactics. Thus, *envelopment* is an attack on an enemy's flank and toward his rear, usually accompanied by an attack on his front. A *turning movement* is a wide enveloping maneuver, passing around the side of the enemy's main forces and attacking him from the rear. *Double envelopment* involves an attack on both flanks of the enemy while his center is held in check. A *penetration* is an attack on the enemy's front by driving a wedge into it or piercing it completely. It may be followed by an enveloping attack on one or both flanks. In connection with these four basic forms of attack, two terms often are used: *main effort*—concentrating on the critical point in the enemy's position—and *holding attack*—pinning down the remainder of the enemy. To *refuse* a flank is to draw the flank of a line or command to the rear in order to prevent an envelopment by an enemy.

Linking strategy and tactics and attracting more and more attention among the theorists is a third field, *logistics,* simply defined as the art of planning and carrying out the movement and maintenance of forces. This field too has been greatly broadened as warfare has expanded and grown more technological and complex. Logistics deals with the deployment of military forces and their equipment to the area of war, and with innumerable services, such as feeding, clothing, supplying, transporting, and housing troops. The connecting links, the network of railways, waterways, roads, and air routes by which an armed force in the field is reinforced and supplied from its base of operations in the home or friendly area, are called the *lines of communications.* The *theater of operations* comprises the combat zone as well as the supply and administration area directly connected with military operations.

In modern warfare the major divisions of the military art—strategy, logistics, and tactics—are closely interdependent. One field merges into the other, and changes in one inevitably lead to changes in the others. Sometimes weapons

have appeared on the battlefield before military theory and planning have fully absorbed them, and adjustments throughout the art have been slow to follow. In the Civil War, for example, the widespread use of the rifle musket upset the relation among the combat arms; the range and accuracy of these weapons in the hands of defending infantry shattered the effectiveness of the concentrated attack in which Napoleonic strategy culminated. But, as often has been observed in the history of warfare, armaments and weapons are more readily changed than ideas. Napoleon's principles continued to be held, sometimes with disastrous consequences on the battlefield. An oft-cited case of the appalling repercussions of holding concepts too long or rigidly is the French offensive spirit in World War I. It is small wonder in light of the carnage of World Wars I and II that the coming of the atomic bomb has caused strategy in the Western World to focus on the deterrence of war and fostered tactics to seek means of dispersal on the battlefield.

It is clear that in modern warfare theory and practice have not always been the same. Wars, particularly in the great coalition conflicts of the twentieth century, are simply not run by rules or theories. Once joined, modern war has had a way of breeding its own strategy, tactics, and weapons. For successful commanders more than ever flexibility has become the only sure guide. World War I, beginning as a war of mass offensives, was a classic case of arrested strategy requiring new tactics and weapons to dig the war out of the trenches. Anglo-American strategy against Germany in World War II proved a compromise of the theory of mass and concentration upheld by the U.S. Army and Winston Churchill's peripheral theory. Despite attention to "principles," Allied strategy in World War II was a hybrid product hammered out largely on the "anvil of necessity." In war, moreover, military strategy varies with political direction and goals. In this vein Clausewitz had argued that military strategy must respond to national policy and political aims. Perhaps he best summed up the political context of modern war in his assertion, "War is not merely a political act, but also a real political instrument, a continuation of policy carried out by other means." "War," he concluded, "admittedly has its own grammar, but not its own logic."

The American Military System

To organize for national security, each nation adopts the military system most suited to its culture, needs, and policies. Some nations have traditionally tended to concentrate significant segments of their economy on the maintenance of huge military forces and to determine national policies largely in terms of their military implications. While the United States shares with Europe a legacy of

military thought and practice, whose roots lie deep in the past, its military system has grown out of its own national experience.

The form of government, the traditions of the people, the nature of the country, and its geographical position in relation to other powers have had a profound influence upon American military institutions. In turn, those institutions are a reflection of the American culture and way of life. Indeed, the Army is essentially an institutional form adapted by American society to meet military requirements. The American military system has been developed so as to place a minimum burden upon the people and give the nation a reasonable defense without sacrificing its fundamental values. From the beginning, the United States has sought to reconcile individual liberty with national security without becoming a nation in arms.

Chief among the characteristics of American culture that have a bearing on its military system are the value placed upon human beings as individuals; life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and peace as basic goals; the desire to achieve decisive results quickly; a talent for the design and use of machinery; highly developed productive capacity and managerial skills; and great material wealth. These characteristics underline the American penchant for absolutes—the sharp distinction between war and peace, the insistence on complete victory and on short, decisive, offensive action in warfare. They help account for the traditional American attitude toward war as an aberration in which the bully who disturbed the peace must be soundly and quickly thrashed so that American society can return to normality. They also point to the vital importance of public opinion in a democracy in raising and supporting armed forces and to the reason why wars against disturbers of the peace are apt to take on the character of moral crusades. They help explain the traditional rhythm of sharp expansion of the armed forces in wartime and precipitate contraction immediately thereafter.

In turn, these characteristics and attitudes have shaped the Army in its organizational relationships and in its philosophy of operations. They account also for such distinctive Army features as the development of great mechanical power, the stress on firepower rather than sheer manpower, and the concentration on victory by offensive operations.

Throughout its existence the United States has been compelled to provide for military security. The degree to which the provisions were made has varied with the nature and magnitude of the particular threat. Until technology reduced the distance separating the United States from the Old World, the forces in being could be, and were, small. At the same time the deep-seated American reluctance to devote a large proportion of the national wealth to

the support of a standing military force played an important part in the development of a system based upon a small professional nucleus that could be expanded in time of need by the induction of citizen soldiers. This initial system took advantage of the ocean barriers favoring the United States and the balance of power existing in Europe. In accord with Washington's injunction, it held forth the possibility of acquiring greater strength by temporary alliances in extraordinary emergencies. Since World War II the rise of new foes and the destruction of the balance of power in Europe and the Far East have caused a drastic change in the American military system. Accordingly, the United States now maintains large air, land, and sea forces ready for immediate action and for co-operation with forces of its many allies.

The American Army as it exists today has evolved through a historical process paralleling the social, economic, and political development of the United States. Its evolution may in general be divided into three periods: colonial, continental expansion, and overseas operations. During the colonial period (1607–1775) the militia of the various colonies defended the settlers while they were establishing themselves in America, and helped England eliminate the French from North America. This was the period of roots and origins, of the transplanting of military institutions from abroad, particularly from England, and of their modification in the New World. During the era of continental expansion (1775–1898) the militia and volunteers and the Continental Army and its successor, the Regular Army, played a significant role in bringing the United States into being, in winning important extensions of national territory, in saving the nation from internal destruction, and in exploring, policing, and governing vast regions of the west. This was the period of national independence and consolidation. In the wars of this era, the Army's activities were concentrated on problems vital to the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of a nation based on new concepts of individual freedom and representative government. Only once in this period did the Army fight with the help of allies—during the Revolutionary War—and then on a temporary basis.

The year 1898, which saw the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, the symbol of "looking outward," was an important turning point. It marked the emergence of the United States as a world power. In the third period (1898 to the present) the Army has carried the flag to the four corners of the earth. Its assigned role has been to serve as a principal instrument for promoting American policies and American interests overseas and protecting the nation against the menace of tyrannical power. In the two great world wars of the twentieth century, and in Korea and Vietnam, it has fought alongside associated

or allied nations, and in the increasing complexity of modern war its operations have become inseparably intertwined with those of the Navy and the Air Force. In the history of the nation and the Army in the twentieth century, World War II marked an important dividing line whose full implications are still not entirely clear. Since World War II the revolution in the strategic position of the United States, its emergence as leader of the free world and of allies in military combination, the cold war, and the nuclear age, have presented unprecedented challenges to traditional American concepts and institutions in national security. Under the nuclear threat the spectrum of war has broadened and theorists have been engaged in great debate on the future of war and military institutions. Berlin, Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam are symbols of the pressures confronting the nation and its army in the new phase of world power, in which the role of force appears to be taking on new meaning and new functions.

Whatever its future contribution, it is as an instrument of force—the primary mission of an army—that the United States Army has played its major role in American history. From desperate hand-to-hand engagements with savages to vast battles with motorized and armored forces, from revolutionary war to world war, civil to foreign war, guerrilla to counterguerrilla war, from hot to cold war, the Army has figured prominently in the nation's conflicts. And the Army has also made important contributions to the general welfare and to the preservation of domestic order in peacetime.

The leaders of the U.S. Army have consistently adhered to the principle basic in the American military system, that the Army is an instrument of civilian authority. This principle, firmly established in practice by General Washington during the Revolutionary War, was embodied in the Constitution of the United States as a fundamental safeguard of republican institutions. The supremacy of civilian authority is the American solution to the problem of forestalling any possible danger from a standing army. Until recently, American military policy has also been based upon the maintenance of very small Regular forces and reliance on citizen soldiers in case of national emergency. In the colonial period almost every able-bodied man was a member of the militia and could be called out in case of need, and this system continued in force at least theoretically during the first century of national existence. It was usually, nonetheless, the citizen volunteer who swelled the Army's ranks in earlier wars. Both the militia and the volunteer principle gave way in the wars of the twentieth century to the idea of universal obligation for military duty under selective service in time of national emergency.

In an age when forces in being may determine the outcome of a war or an emergency action in peacetime, the principle of reliance on masses of citizen soldiers appears to be giving way to the concept of large, efficient professional forces supported by a selected body of trained reserves. The increasing complications of modern warfare, the great rapidity with which attacks can be launched with modern weapons, and the extensive overseas commitments of the United States have negated the traditional American habit of preparing for wars after they have begun. But whatever the future composition of the Army, it will still have to incorporate the historic principle, ingrained in the nation's military system, of being representative of the people and subject to civilian control.

To be truly progressive, a military system, like most evolving human institutions, must operate in two planes of time, the present and the future. In the field of national security, the choices in the twentieth century have never been easy and in a world in ferment since the end of World War II are likely to be crucial. The citizen and the soldier cannot know what path to follow unless they are aware of the breadth of alternatives that have been accepted or rejected in the past. Santayana's dictum that those who ignore the past are condemned to repeat its mistakes is nowhere more apt than in military history. At the same time the blend of the historical with the military art reinforces the caution that no two periods or operations are precisely alike, that the easy analogy and the false comparison must be avoided, that the past must be interpreted in proper context and depth, and that the soldier must not "be trammelled by any exclusive system." For the fledgling officer, as well as the citizen, American military history provides a laboratory of experience, an accumulation of continuities and disparities, a rich storehouse of courage, sacrifice, and knowledge, and a source of inspiration and wisdom. It is to the multifaceted story of the American Army—how it originated and developed, and what it contributed to the nation in war and peace—that we now turn.