Military Theory, Julian Lider, 1983

**Definition** 1

* Military theory is the study of military affairs and its findings in the form of concepts, categories, propositions, laws, and theorem. There is agreement on scientific status of military study.

**Focus of military theory** 1-2

* Ancient times the focus was on two problems:
  + What is war? The answer to this is called philosophy of war
  + How can war be won? Dealt with by strategy[[1]](#footnote-1).
* Armies are instruments, less attention on social functions. Theory of war was dealing with war between political entities.

**Expansion of military theory scope 2-3**

* 1st extension: Technological developments, armies become complex, study of military problems became a seperate field of research.
* Military force use in upheavals: society increased: Previously only in revolution. Now: everyday occurance. Internal wars become part of military theory.
* Revolutionary development of military technology: New function (IAT used to attain of foreign policy): to prevent nuclear war:, armed forces has the power to destroy mankind. Approach of world powers to war is restrained. 2 consequences:
  + Because of the fear of such wars, threat of war has become a means of policy.
  + Focus in application of military forces shifted away from total wars to local.
* Impact on social factors: Wars become much more than clash between armed forces. Whole society at stake.Preparation includes all territory and population, new role of leaders.

**Traditional conceptions of theory of war** 4-5

* **war centered appoach,** not coincidence titled “On War”, consider both political and military nature of war, develops the theory of conduct of warfare in which military strategy is main theme. Fullers main subjects -100 year later- was causes and nature of war, its conduct, and the prediction of its consequences. Variants:
  + confine strategy of conducting war, and the analysis of the ways attaining victory
  + dominating trend: combine theory of the conduct of war with the analysis of nature of war and its relations with areas of social activity (pol, eco etc)
  + focus international wars as instruments of foreign policy.
* Nuclear missile age changed this war-centric approach in 2 respects:
  + causes of war become much more important**,**
  + prevention of war (before it was dealing with successful conduct of war).
* These two changes in military theory caused changes in the use of military force to attain political aims.
* **Military-force centred approach:** . Military theory now is not only dealing with the use of armed forces in war. Theory is constructed around military foce as a state institution, engaged in a wide variety of activities. ‘Use of’ military force as an instrument in the everyday functioning of the state in international relations. **Use of military force in everyday politics** (intimidation, coercion, etc**) become part of military theory.** Military theory become theory of politics.
* Deviation from military force centred approach: 5-6
  + **Power centred approach:** military strategy is part of grand (or national) strategy. State power s executor of grand strategy. Function of strategy is to organize the means of national power to achieve political ends. State power is seen as means of pursuing state interests. Use of “grand strategy” as the basic concept in the pursuit of state interest, basic idea of Andre Beaufre. He defines strategy as “art of the dialectic of two opposing wills using force to resolve dispute”.
  + **National security centred approach:** Strategy all embracing in power centred. Here, military theory focuses on national security, part of overall policy. National security is defined as capacity to survive as a political entity. Treatment of security from internal aspect[[2]](#footnote-2) to international dimension with providing security with coalitions like NATO.
* Scope of military theory extends from winning wars to use of military force in internal wars, prevention of wars, interaction with society, and instrument of state in international relations as part of political theory.
* In all approaches to military theory, role of a military force in peacetime is **deterrence**.
* Replacing study of military affairs with peace research? 7 As long as wars occur, inclusion of this study.
* Western approach regard *military force* as the focus of the study of military affairs. Marxist-Leninist approach continues war-centred. 8

**Structure of military science & study of military affairs** 9-10

* Relation between war and politics, strategy and policy, place of military theory among the social sciences. Views on the elements of military theory inferred from studies like;
  + On War-Clausewitz: 3 main groups of problem discussed:
    - nature of war,
    - the impact on war of the human factors, with focus of moral and psychological,
    - military art (which way war should be conducted)
  + Foundations of the science of war-Fuller:Extention to nature of war,
    - Causes of war
    - Impact of pol-eco on war
    - Armed forces as a seperate subject of theory
* Theory structured on various new themes in study of military affairs:
  + causes of war. *Criteria* for such division:
    - *social activity fields*: policy, economy, ideology
    - *social level* as root of war: nature of man, society, international system
    - *fundemental* (structural) *and immmediate* (ex:fault in decision making)(in peace research & study of conflict resolution)
  + deterrence: Types of deterrence that corresponds to different types of possible wars.
  + functions of military force:
    - change in their utility- shifted from open uses to covert (indirect)
    - prevention of war
    - covert form of pressure and intimidation
    - military force as external policy instrument or internal function in social revolutions.
  + Military art-strategy:
    - Studies arranged according to particular kinds of war -total, limited, revolutionary war
    - Kinds of weapon to be used strategic nuclear etc
    - Historical kinds of strategy (attritioni annihilation, indirect strategy)
  + Strategy as theory of war:
    - Search for systems of principles for the conduct of war, which would express common to all wars, would serve theoretical foundation for successful fighting.
    - Studies on strategy deal with methods of fighting, these are thus, exercises in appliedscience, rec for action, rather than contribution to theory of miltary affairs.

**Literature groupings** 10-11

* Main group-constitute primary structure
* Nature of war as basic subject: causes of war, instrumentality to policy, its consequences
* Problems concerning conduct of war, strategy
* Deterrence
* Military force
* Main division according to 2 main dimensions of military affairs:
* Socio-political:
  + include all probs connected with nature of war as a political instrument, and
  + probs concerning military force as a socail institution operative both in peace and war
* military: preparing and winning war
* Divide literature on military affairs into 2 categories: orientation whether to *theoretical* or *practical.*
* *Military theory of Soviets includes 3*
* Teaching on war and army (phil and social aspects of war)
* Military science (nature of warfare, regularities, methods of conduct of warfare, prep of armed forces)
* Military doctrine (system of views on the aims and character of war, prep of armed forces, methods of waging war)

1. Strategy means theory and practice of the conduct of war and the management of armed forces in military operations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Defined as the capacity to withstand challenges not only to territorial integrity but also to the pol and socio-economic order, or the capacity to act in order to preserve the existing social system. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)