

Military Theory

Wars in the First Quarter of the 21st Century and a Novel Configuration of Interrelationship between Military Strategy, Operation Art, and Tactics

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ABSTRACT. The paper reviews one of the major issues in Military theory – the concept and configuration of interrelationship between Military strategy, tactics and operation art. In this respect, a novel approach is suggested that allows to meet all possible alternatives of compatibility between Military strategy, operation art and tactics under modern conditions, including indirect actions and information warfare. © 2009 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

Key words: *armed conflict, asymmetric wars, indirect actions, information warfare, theory of catastrophes, strategy, operation art, tactics, combat activity.*

The major subject of research in Military theory is armed conflict. There exist many versions of its definition, embracing both simple ones and fairly complex interpretations. However, based on the common assessments, it can be said that armed conflict is a result of the human civilization - armed confrontation, pressure, and resistance between formal and informal groups of society.

The present definition directly points to the fact that the nature, essence, scale and results of an armed conflict is in functional relationship with economic, technological, ideological, social and political, diplomatic, state, political, national and other issues. Its intensity and duration is also determined by real conditions and dynamic processes of arming, Military hardware, scientific basis and art of waging armed struggle, and other multiple components as well.

There exist many variants of armed conflict due to the variety of its manifestations. They are called wars, Military conflicts, armed insurrection, resistance, guerilla movement, campaign, operation, strike, or struggle. The real formula thereof remains unchanged - system-

atized manifestation of the armed struggle is a dynamic process of armed interactions between the confronting parties, that is integrated by forces and means and conditioned by forces, motions, appropriate space and relevant time parameters.

In addition, Military science is developing based on the process of research and results obtained therefrom, and, naturally, it is subject to changes in view of negation, adoption of novelty, additions and amendments. Moreover, there are contradictory approaches to a number of topical questions, and, in the circumstances, researchers have to adopt or prioritize one of them, and, furthermore, support their new positions with a special approach.

On the other hand, “canonical tenets” of modern Military theory, being in force in Georgia and in states having a similar type of security infrastructure, are not applicable and appropriate to the current reality of armed conflict in many specific cases.

Such approaches are mostly manifested in asymmetric wars, in Military strategy of indirect approach or

action, and, generally, as contemporary armed conflicts of various scale.

In the last quarter of the 20th century, classic approaches in the Military art were revised, mainly as a result of studies of “indirect actions”.

In this respect, the author’s monograph [1] published in 2006 should be mentioned, in which a separate chapter is devoted to the classification and systematization of fighting capacity, damage and direct and indirect actions in a battle by an analogy with dynamic systems.

As to asymmetric threats, it became current as a term in official documents in 1997. The University of National Defense devoted a whole chapter to asymmetric threats in the annual publication in 1998. In the latest version of US National Security, a document has entered into force which envisages three categories: regional - armed conflicts, transnational - narcotic business, arms trade etc, and asymmetric.

“Asymmetric warfare” is conducted between strong and relatively weak enemies. A tactical novelty properly used in asymmetric warfare causes change in the solution of strategic tasks of the latter.

Review of basic proposition and solution of problems in a new fashion

In view of the foregoing, building up of the armed forces, which is effected in the area of the state Military building, and Military confrontation between opposed forces, give priority to non-traditional solutions as well.

The non-traditional approaches in the worldwide area of Military responsibility are actively discussed by experts of Military theory from a number of countries.

In this respect, if a state chooses a position not being in compliance with the Military science or being wrong, the effect of achieving the goal may appear non-optimal even if large resources are involved or special responsibilities and exactingness are fulfilled.

So far, we cannot say the Military science has elaborated and approved universal and multidirectional methodology of the optimal model of a state defense system due to the prevalence and scale of terrorist actions, and occurrence of a new phenomenon which means that winning a Military engagement campaign does not mean the gaining of a victory in the war, and, importantly, achieving the major political goal of the war via Military action any more.

At the present stage, under the conditions of mobility, maneuver, control, ordnance systems and high technological complex, the following four cardinal leads of the warfare theory still need to be studied:

1. Contemporary nature of warfare;
2. Contemporary essence and importance of information war; and
3. Fundamental structure of the contemporary model of Military art;
4. Implementation of the contemporary model of Military art in armed forces.

When discussing the assessment of the contemporary nature of wars, an absolute majority of theorists in this area use the principle of differentiated assessment in their works. The principle does not mean the entire assessment of the war nature itself, as an integral complex, but the well-known particular trends, such as confrontation between civilizations, substantial differences between social-economic levels, separatism, as well as national, religious, and private political and territorial issues are brought to the forefront.

This assessment logic is beyond any doubt, but the subject of its study is not the entire theoretical basis of the nature of modern war, but the reasons of its origin, goals and methods of conducting thereof.

Moreover, the authors are trying to represent the concrete motivation of modern wars and conflicts, and the forms of Military confrontation as a phenomenon of the last decade of the 20th and 21st century.

This approach needs to be corrected to a certain extent. Its starting-point should be the following systematizations of wars when regarding them as a phenomenon:

1. Wars between states;
2. War between a state and social or Military -political groups, realized nationwide or with respect to another state.
3. War between Military-political groups or between Military-political group and society, also conducted nationwide or in another state or territory.

Such systematization, primarily, negates the theories which assert that Military art in its traditional, classic scheme lost its significance and became history.

Everything is subject to transformation in time, and this is true of the Military art as well. However, the classic of Military art has not lost its topicality and it will immediately activate when combats start between the states or coalitions having more or less equal Military power.

As to the nature of combat conducted in the contemporary world, they are not new phenomena in view of Military history, because a lot of examples of their analogs are known. However, modern ordnance systems, new means of mobility and maneuver, increase in the combat area and limited time factor make them qualita-

tively much larger in scale and intensive.

Just the fact that a Military engagement involves confrontation between a state and society or a social-political grouping entails significant increase of the topicality of information war (media war).

The exceptionally great efficiency of information war imparts to the latter the status of an exclusively effective "weapon", conditioning not only the high frequency of its use, but extension of the scope of its applicability.

Furthermore, the types of information war are not uniform and have a range of different mechanisms and spectrum of impacts.

Hence, in a number of cases, by use of certain approaches, it may appear more effective to use the third generation information war, recognized as the so-called "newest form", over relatively traditional information wars of the first and second generations.

The first and second generation information wars generally involve obtaining information about the enemy, deliberately shaping of sentiments of the confronting states and society, and brainwashing thereof. This process of cognition is time consuming. The third generation information war allows much faster obtaining of a result and has an appropriate scientific basis [2].

This has its own explanation. The third generation information war is conducted not by ideological, virtual and cognitive information, but by real means of information provision - "Military operation", demonstration of "strikes" or "Military forces".

Even in this case one should not hurry in making conclusion in that the third generation information war is the newest phenomenon not having an analog in the past. Information wars of this nature are the accompanying process of the Military art history. One example of that is "cannons of King Erekle" used in the Krtsanisi battle. An unprecedented event in a third generation information war in world history was the explosion of nuclear bombs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima at the final stage of the Second World War. Otherwise, the Military-political picture of the world would probably be different.

The art of the third generation information war was successfully used to the full extent in the Iraqi-Kuwait war and in the last war in Iraq. Precision aiming weapon, satellite system assisted control thereof, march of troops towards Bagdad, occupation of the Iraqi capital, the toppling of Hussein's statue and live provision of all these events is the most powerful tool, which conditioned successful ending of the planned Military campaign and Military operations.

However, the thoroughly political goal of the war: cessation of hostilities was not reached completely. This reality is sometimes intrinsic to the third generation information wars, often yielding results distinct from the first and second generation wars.

The first and second generation information wars entail deliberate transformation of the public awareness through ideological influence on the enemy. In these circumstances, parameters of the armed forces and Military industrial complex of the enemy are enhanced to a certain extent. The society's sentiment, which eventually is the major potential of fighting strength and resources, is weakened and in some cases is displaced to the opposite position.

As to the third generation information war, it depresses the enemy with the aid of the fear factor. However, this method hardly brings about the intended transformation of the world outlook of an enemy, and, which is most important, its fighting resource is not damaged, so that the resource activates again after the fear factor has passed. In the defeated state, various movements and rebellions begin to rise, opposition to which requires a sufficiently versatile and complex spectrum of actions, at least from the point of view of Military art [3-6].

In this respect, information war is much more effective and the political goal naturally becomes achievable when it is conducted on the basis of ideological training on the one hand, and, on the other, its realization occurs in time defined by the "theory of catastrophes" and under a definite state of public [7].

This is the case when the motive of public protest coincides with the arguments of ideological influence and, importantly, the public is in the extreme condition when further overcoming of "critical points" causes release of energy. There are many analogous situations. One of them is developments in November 2003 in Georgia.

This methodology should become the principal instrument when discussing the spectrum of Military art of restoring the territorial integrity.

Extensive use of Military art non-classical models is first of all conditioned by the fact that armed confrontation between states of unequal Military strength and Military-political groupings that have much less Military potential has become characteristic of our times. Furthermore, realization of non-classical models in the Military art becomes possible by creating a weapon of a novel physical nature, by maneuverability of movement and means of delivery, by speed, distance and considerable capacity of reaching the target, by globalization of the information network and high quality of communi-

cation among states.

However, if the Military-political effect achieved by the non-classical art were proportionate by the levels, which was the case for a long time in history, it would not gain such an importance. Proportionate in this context means that the tactical effect can be achieved by a tactical ploy, while strategic Military operation needs to be conducted to achieve a strategic goal.

The reality of the last decade of the 20th century, especially of the beginning of the 21st century, is distinguished for the fact that a strategic Military, Military-political and the state political effect itself become achievable by tactical operation and tactical weapons system.

The further improvement of weapons, the transfer of its deployment area to the outer space, further development of information, control and systems of targeting will increase the chance of achieving the Military or political goals with the above mentioned effect.

In this respect, many publications indicate that the component operative art, which is an intermediate position between tactics and Military strategy, is forced out of the Military art by stages. This is a wrong approach which the author deals with elsewhere. In general, positions about the operative art vanishing always appeared when a weapon of new physical nature entered the scene and when only one side possessed it. Moreover, as soon as the other side armed itself with the same type of weapon and the arms balance was restored, the urgency of the operative art as a reality was put on the agenda again.

In the present paper, the purpose of discussing the question is to study the configurational and content interrelationship and interdependence between the components of Military art for building up the armed forces. Otherwise it is difficult to define the structure of the armed forces itself [8].

In relation to the cited question Military theory specialists of the United States [9] use the following scheme (Fig. 1) of interdependence between strategy, operative art, and tactics:

It is difficult to agree with such a scheme in prin-

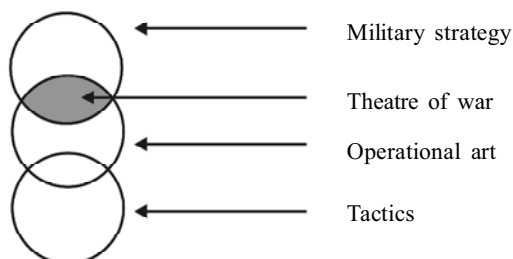


Fig. 1. Widespread scheme of interdependence between military strategy, operative art, and tactics. Version I.

ciple, especially when recognizing that strategic tasks are solved by tactics, i.e. emphasizing their relationship.

In a number of articles, relationship between strategy and tactics is represented in the following scheme (Fig. 2) for the purpose of certain adaptation to the mentioned requirements:

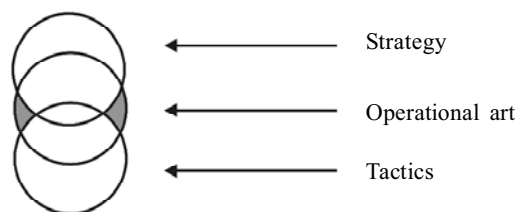


Fig. 2. Widespread scheme of interrelationship between military strategy, operational art, and tactics. Version II.

However, the given scheme reduces to minimum the existence of the operative art by further bringing closer functional areas of tactics and strategy which is unreal.

The scheme shown below in Fig. 3, which represents the strategy, operative art and tactics in the Military art structure, also seems to be of artificial origin.

The real representation of the question can be provided by another configuration of the above shown scheme.

Thus, the scheme shown below would correspond to the logic of assessment of Military art and the nature and essence of contemporary wars (Fig. 4).

Also, reality is better reflected by the structural scheme of Military art components (Fig. 5).

The system configuration and content of the schemes shown herein justifies the concept [10] which becomes more convincing and according to which the question of creation of new model armed forces arises before a powerful state. The principle of this novelty is that the armed forces should not be divided into land, airborne, marine and airspace troops and forces, which perform attacking and defensive fighting, battlefield engagements, operations, and Military actions in appropriate

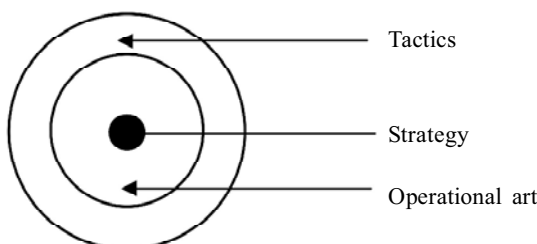


Fig. 3. Widespread scheme of mutual disposition of strategy, operative art, and tactics.

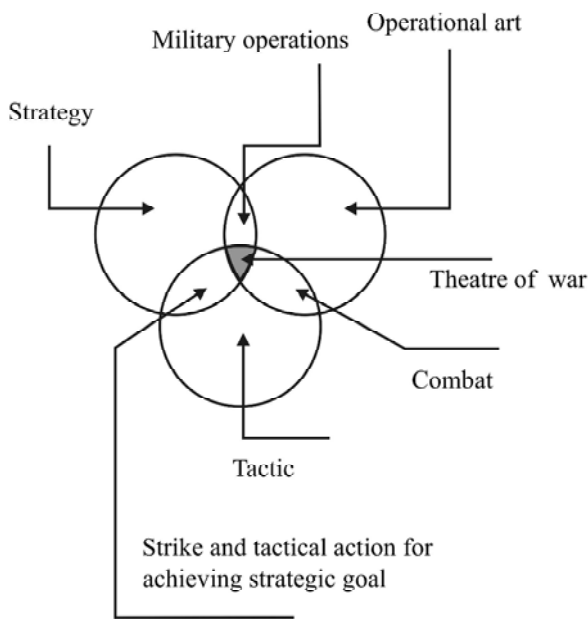


Fig. 4. Novel configuration of strategy, operational art, and tactics proposed by the author.

circumstances, when novel qualitative development of techniques and informatics will occur in perspective. Instead, the armed forces should be specialized and be of two types:

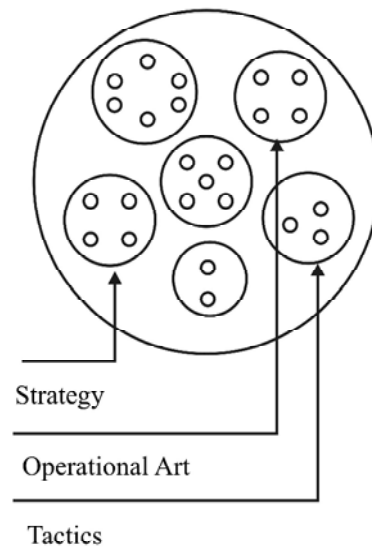


Fig. 5. Disposition scheme of strategy, operational art and tactics reviewed by the author.

- defensive strategic and integrated;
- offensive strategic and integrated.

In future, every type of armed forces, in the combined model form, will have functional complexes appropriate to battles, engagements, operations and Military actions area.

სამხედრო თეორია

ომები 21-ე საუკუნის პირველ მეოთხედში და სამხედრო სტრატეგიის, ოპერატიული ხელოვნებისა და ტაქტიკის ურთიერთდამოკიდებულების ახალი კონფიგურაცია

ე. მეძმარიაშვილი

აკადემიის წევრი, გენერალ-მაიორი, საქართველოს ტექნიკური უნივერსიტეტი, თბილისი

ნაშრომში განხილულია სამხედრო თეორიის ერთ-ერთი უმთავრესი საკითხი — სამხედრო სტრატეგიის, ტაქტიკისა და ოპერატიული ხელოვნების ურთიერთდამოკიდებულების კონცეფცია და მისი კონფიგურაცია. ამ მხრივ, შემოთავაზებულია ახალი მიდგომა, რაც, თანამედროვე პირობებში სამხედრო სტრატეგიის,

ოპერატიული ხელოვნებისა და ტაქტიკის ურთიერთშეთავსებადობის ყველა შესაძლო ვარიანტის დაკმაყოფილების საშუალებას იძლევა, მათ შორის, არაპირდაპირი მოქმედების და ინფორმაციული ომების ჩათვლით.

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