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THEORETICAL DEFINITION OF TACTICS AS A MILITARY SCIENCE***

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

The development of civilization has led to the emergence and evolution of states and armies, whose fundamental purpose was to defend a country. This resulted in the development of knowledge regarding the methods of conducting an armed fight. Such knowledge has been systematized over time, and thus emerges knowledge related to this field, known as the art of war. Since the 19th century, there has been an increasing talk of military sciences (tactics, operations, and strategy), replacing the term the art of war. However, both directions, the Eastern and the Western, recognize tactics as the fundamental military science. Even today, the theoretical definition of tactics has not been fully completed. The first chapter of this paper provides a conceptual definition of tactics as a military science. The second chapter of the paper describes the fundamental constituents of tactics. The third chapter refers to the classification of tactics according to several criteria. The understanding of key terms and

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the description of the research results were carried out using the following methods: content analysis, definition and classification method, historical-comparative method, analytical-synthetic method, and deduction method. The definition, description of constituents, and classification of tactics as a military science are the result of this research.

Keywords: tactics, military science, constituents, armed conflict levels, operations.

INTRODUCTION

All that surrounds us represents an objective reality. Since the beginning of consciousness of human beings, researching objective reality or concrete forms of objective reality has always been based on reflection, which contains an abstract logical character. Namely, understanding reality is always based on understanding the method, i.e., the path of arriving at new knowledge. Abstract thinking gained its exponential significance with the emergence of the first science—philosophy, and the path of arrival at new knowledge in this science, formed as the “love of knowledge”, was based on the first paths of cognition, reflected in philosophical methods. Moreover, indeed, when we look at the first philosophical directions and the abstraction of their essence, we can conclude that without the development of philosophy and the philosophical methodological concept, there would be no development of either other sciences or other groups of scientific methods used for researching the fields of objective reality. The essence of philosophical thought can be abstracted into dialectics and metaphysics. While the former, dialectics, promotes motion as the essence of the existence of objective reality, the latter, metaphysics, offers us stillness and balance as the essence of objective reality. If we examine civilization’s development and social currents’ evolution, we can conclude that civilization is constantly evolving. Its basic principle is the dialectic unity and the struggle of opposites, where the development of one civilizational pole directly influences the development of its opposite. Moreover, stillness represents only balance between motion of two civilizational antagonisms (this can be explained on the example of development of military aviation technology, which always results in development of an anti-aircraft component as a tendency that the development of one equipment conditions the development of another,

that will have the ability to counter the contemporary air forces). On the other hand, the development of natural sciences is founded on metaphysics, i.e., on stillness as the essential abstraction. As proof of the previously mentioned, we can list Newton's laws, the law of energy conservation, and the like, which essentially represent mathematical formulations of the basic principles of metaphysics. The methodological concept developed for their research is based on both philosophical principles, considering that armed conflicts and their specific forms of occurrence represent socially technological phenomena in which both social and natural law are interwoven. Simeunović states, "one should not forget that, parallel with the process of differentiation of science and scientific disciplines, occurred the process of their integration and creation of new scientific fields as well. There is more than the urgent need to bridge the ever-deepening gap between the natural and social sciences, which has been particularly accelerated by the invasiveness of information technologies" (Simeunović 2023, 36).

With the development of civilization, qualitatively and quantitatively armed formations of opposed sides evolved, as well as the concrete forms of armed struggle and armed conflict. Moreover, theoretical experience related to conducting armed combat is also being developed, including the tactical level. With the development of scripture, these experiences are slowly systematized and included in the unique fund of knowledge, slowly shaped by examination of improvement. Namely, with previous experience, new technological solutions used in combat are also developed. The new technological solutions condition the development of technological armed solutions of the other, opposed side, and the consequence of all this is the invention of new tactical procedures that ensure the implementation of combat missions while minimizing one's losses and maximizing the losses of the other side in the conflict. Military formations and their combat use develop in such conditions, along with the development of state communities. All this could not be possible without the development of the military science (even today, there are disagreements regarding the syntagm that should be used for the set of sciences about the military activity), including tactics, as an autochthone military science (see Blagojević, Starčević, and Zogović 2019, 181–183). Numerous disagreements regarding the subject of research of autochthone military science existing among the Western and the Eastern military thinkers (in the period following the World War Two, our military thought accepted the Eastern division

of autochthone military sciences into tactics, operations and strategy, compared to the dual classification of Western thinkers, implying strategy and tactics) have left a significant influence on conceptual definition of military sciences in this region (Marček and Kovač 2011, 15–22; Compare Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 65–75). In such circumstances, tactics is theoretically constructed, representing the fundament of development of armed forces and their units, and the actions and other combat and non-combat activities conducted by tactical units, as the lowest units in terms of their personnel and material composition, represent clear material indicators of planning and implementation of tasks even at the highest level of armed forces. In such conditions, tactics develop as a fundamental military science, which is nowadays exposed to even the most significant changes in its development, thanks to the changes in the use of units at the lowest organizational levels, as a consequence of the application of exponentially advanced technological solutions.

THE NOTION OF TACTICS AS A MILITARY SCIENCE

As previously mentioned, the development of civilization also conditioned the development of armed conflicts. In such conditions, military sciences develop as well. In practice, the phrase “art of war” is often used, while tactics, operations, and strategy are represented as branches of the art of war. However, strategy, operations, and tactics cannot be defined only as skills. The term skill refers only to the practical dimension of an activity, i.e., the ability to conduct one activity based on practical competence and a particular gift. Moreover, we should mention that, according to Sakan, “the phrase ‘the art of war’ cannot denote military science for three reasons. The first reason is that this phrase is associated with skill, and not science. The second reason is logical, because the art of war is associated with war having some skill, which is impossible. After all, the war is not a subject. The third reason is that war is associated with war as a broader social phenomenon, not armed combat as the subject of interest of military sciences. If that term implies military science, this would mean that we are speaking of the science of war, not the armed combat” (Sakan 2011, 31–44). As such, tactics and other autochthone sciences were studied as skills until the 19th century. However, the expansion of the technological component, i.e., the material factor and creation of complex organizational military

systems, conditioned tactics to be studied more and more as a science since the end of the 19th century.

Upon conceptual definition of the term, we should also reflect on the origin of the word tactics. The word tactics is of Greek origin. This term, translated from Greek, means to set, to line up, the art of lining up in battle formation, the science of conducting battle, and refers to the development of tactics in the era of cold weapons during the existence of the phalanx from the ancient period (Klaić 1979, 1321). Thus, we can conclude that the starting point for defining tactics is logically correctly defined and relates to military organization use. Upon conceptual definition and defining the term tactics, special attention is given to respecting the rules of defining (defining is non-negative, content-proportional with a logically correct determination of deficient, that is, the content used for defining the form-determination of the *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*). Today, various terms and phrases representing the *genus proximum* are used in conceptualizing tactics. The terms used are the following: skill (which we have already reviewed in brief), the process of waging a battle, method of conducting combat operations, etc. (See Sakan 2003, 276–278). However, it should be stressed that tactics is not a process, because process implies a set of activities happening from the emergence to the disappearance of occurrences as concrete forms of objective reality. That is why tactics is not a process; it does not tie to a specific occurrence but represents a broader social consciousness of people who research and deal with tactics. Moreover, tactics is not a method; it does not represent an epistemological description of the procedures of researching an occurrence, because tactics is not a scientific method. Its meaning is relatively broader, and in its scope, it also contains scientific methods as its constituents. That is why it is best to speak of tactics as a science (in this case, a military science, since the activity of using a unit essentially refers to military units).

Bearing that the “higher concept” is specified when defining tactics and that we are speaking of a science, more will be said here about what science is. According to the Dictionary of Serbo-Croatian literary language (*Rečnik srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika* 1969, 651), “science is defined as a system of knowledge and laws of the development of nature, society and thinking.” According to another understanding, science represents a knowledge system from a specific subject field. According to Šušnjić (Šušnjić 1999, 127), “science is a specific method a man uses to describe and understand the world around him and himself in the

world.” According to Sakan (Sakan 2003, 34), “science is systematized and argued knowledge on the objective world acquired through conscious application of specific research methods.” The definition according to which science represents a set of systematized methodologically verified knowledge on a specific field of objective reality is also acceptable. Bearing in mind all the previously mentioned, one of the methods of defining tactics can be derived by a deductive-analytical approach from the definition of military sciences. Namely, according to Sakan, military sciences can be defined as (45) “systematized and argued knowledge on the armed combat acquired through conscious application of specific research methods.” The phrase “military sciences” does not bear the same significance as the art of war had as a science. This significance is transmitted onto exceptional levels of generality, i.e., to the fundamental military sciences: military strategy, operations, and tactics (93). With the use of a deductive-analytical approach, tactics can be defined as an “autochthone military science that encompasses systematized and argued knowledge on the lowest levels of armed combat (engagements and individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions)” (Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 74). Suppose we accept the definition stating that military sciences represent a set of systematized, methodologically verified knowledge on armed combat as the main content of an armed conflict. In that case, we can also define tactics using a deductive-analytical approach. Tactics represents an autochthone military science that includes a systematized methodologically verified knowledge on the lowest levels of armed combat (“engagements and individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions”).

Although the previously presented conceptual definition of tactics is correct, to precisely define tactics, we should completely define all contents of the deficient, that is, the *differentia specifica*, as a second content of the deficient. Through this approach, upon defining tactics as a science, a difference in content is made, defining what tactics study that other sciences do not, including the military sciences.

In literature, different deficient refer to the content of the tactics study. The syntagm “theory and practice” is often used as part of a deficient. Considering that military units are based on a juncture between systematized theory and experiential practice, this syntagm makes sense, even though its use was criticized in the previous period (See Sakan 2003, 277). Moreover, with the syntagm “theory and practice”, the syntagm “preparation and execution” is also used. Bearing in mind that on concrete

levels of armed combat (“on tactical, operational and strategic levels”), operations of the opposed sides are being prepared and executed, this syntagm has its professional justification. Besides these syntagms, to finally define tactics, it is necessary to determine its research subject, as an integral constituent of every science. At the same time, this poses the most significant problem when defining tactics and other autochthone military sciences. Namely, when defining the area of objective reality researched by tactics and other military sciences, a part of military theoreticians refer to the size of the military unit participating in combat and non-combat activities. Moreover, some military theoreticians believed that the goal to be achieved with the concrete form is to define the research subject of military sciences. Keeping in mind the fact that nowadays, “drone swarm” – “loitering ammunition” or a “couple” of planes could destroy the center of gravity of the enemy, it is pretty challenging to make a clear correlation between the level of the used force and the achieved goal. Namely, a group, team, or company could, today, take such action to achieve a strategic influence through direct or indirect effects. Moreover, operational groups are also incapable of destroying targets of tactical character while conducting their combat actions, which is visible in the armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine. This is why the research subject should be perceived through the prism of the armed combat level, in which the opposing sides conduct their operations. According to this understanding, we can define tactics as an autochthone military science, including a set of systematized and methodologically verified knowledge on the actions of military formations in engagement and combat as the basic level of armed conflict. By including a broader context of defining all content of deficient, we can define tactics also as an autochthone military science that deals with researching theory and practice of preparation and execution of operations in engagement and combat of the opposed sides (in individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions), as the fundamental levels of an armed conflict. In this case, the syntagm “individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions” is used as a substitute for combat because it is logically correct. Namely, armed combat is a narrower concept than the term combat, which is why combat cannot be used as a concrete form the armed combat level. In the next chapter of this paper, more will be said on the conceptual meaning of the terms themselves that refer to the armed combat levels: “engagement and individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions”, bearing in mind that they

are the research subjects of tactics as an autochthone military science (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225).

CONSTITUENTS OF TACTICS AS MILITARY SCIENCE

Every science is defined by its constituents as verified knowledge on a specific field of objective reality. Constituents of autochthone military sciences, including tactics as well, are as follows: subject, theory, method, and language. Numerous authors dealt with constituents of military sciences (Blagojević, Starčević and Zogović 2019, 183–186; Compare Sakan 2011, 31–44; compare Krsmanović and Liptai 2011, 152–159; Compare Devetak 2023, 136–138). Conditionally, in this chapter, as an individual constituent, we can also examine the research object of tactics, which, in this case, refers to the domain of the military organization on a tactical level.

Tactics research subject

Suppose we accept the definition of research subject of autochthone military sciences as armed combat and its concrete forms – forms of manifestation in an armed conflict. In that case, it is entirely acceptable that the research subject of tactics is engagement and combat, as lower levels of armed combat, while two-way processes take place on a tactical level. Due to lack of logic referring to the term combat, when it is seen as a content at a lower level of generality than armed conflict in some literature, it is acceptable that this lowest form of armed conflict, i.e., its concrete forms, are defined as “individual operations and counter-operations, actions and reactions” (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225). In any case, we are speaking of two-way processes in which the opposed sides participate through the conduct of their operations. “In engagements, usually higher tactical units and specialized teams of the same level as the ones of the opposed side are engaged” (Ministarstvo odbrane Republike Srbije [MORS] 2012; Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225).

“An engagement is a lower level of armed conflict than battle in terms of significance” (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225). “It represents a concrete form of an armed conflict and it can be conducted between two opposed sides independently or as part of a higher form, that is, within one battle” (225; Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 70).

“An engagement unifies more individual operations, counter-operations, actions, and reactions, and has a decisive influence on the outcome of an armed conflict in tactical proportions. Individual operations, counter-operations, actions, and reactions are the fundamental level of armed combat, in which smaller forces are directly and in mass coming into conflict during the assigned missions and tasks. At the same time, this form represents the lowest form of manifestation of an armed conflict that can be conducted between two conflicted sides in a specific space and time, individually or as part of higher forms of manifestation of the armed conflict” (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2015, 225). Based on the previously stated, we can conclude that “engagement and individual operations, counter-operations, actions and reactions” are the research subject of tactics as military science, where in a two-way process, tactical actions, combat organization and the use of the opposed sides through preparation and execution of operations in a specific space and at specific time, at the lowest level of organization.

Theory of researching tactics

A theory of a science, in essence, represents systematized knowledge on the research subject of science. “The theory of a science is consisted of specifically linked general experiential attitudes through which it classifies experiential data and explains experiential occurrences in the field of reality which is the subject of its research” (Milić 1978, 302). According to Vujević (Vujević 1983, 26), “theory is the higher law used for explaining lower laws.”

From the previously stated, we conclude that we can speak of the theory of science in a broader and narrower sense. “Theory in a general sense can be understood as everything that is known in a certain area of reality through the intellectual and cognitive activity of people and written down or expressed and recorded in some other way, which serves as a basis for improving human practice” (Sakan 2003, 81). “In a narrow sense, theory only implies that type of theory that has an objective, scientific character (scientific theory), i.e., that explains phenomena, objects, and processes, and as such, enables a deeper approach to the knowledge of reality” (33).

The theory of tactics has developed since the beginning of civilization, i.e., since using the first cold weapon in combat. It developed through four epochs:

Cold weapons epoch; Use of classical conventional weapons epoch; Epoch of the use and threat of use of nuclear-chemical and biological weapons; Epoch of contemporary dissymmetric and asymmetric armed conflict and security threats, risks, and challenges from the airspace (See Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017).

Each epoch is determined by technological solutions used in armed forces, within the civilizational development and dialectical unity, and the struggle of the opposites and the shift from quantity to quality. Today, we are witnessing the emergence of concrete forms of armed conflict and thus the development of tactics. This epoch is distinguished by a mass use of weapons and military equipment of the fourth industrial revolution, and artificial intelligence and mass use of roboticized unmanned platforms of aerial, land, and water types are slowly taking up the primacy in the preparation and execution of combat operations.

The basic language used in theoretical systematization of knowledge is a combination of the applied technical-technological solutions in the systems of weapons, equipment and tactical actions defined by tactical-technical characteristics of the systems of weapons and equipment, to maximize the manifestation of the combat capabilities of the forms, formed from tactical units, at the same time minimizing the expenditure of resources. There are general opinions about the current tactics structure, which are exponentially being developed and changed with organizational and technological changes in the physiognomy of contemporary armed conflicts. Along with the historical development of tactics, its theory has also formed corresponding hypotheses about the essence of the activities of forces organized at the tactical level and the problems of preparing and conducting combat operations and other activities at the tactical level in combat and non-combat operations (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017, 19). With the development of scientific thought, besides the concepts and principles of its organization and use, theorems and the lawfulness of the development of models of use of specific forces on a tactical level appear as well, bearing in mind the application of contemporary methods in researching combat actions of tactical units. "The theory of tactics has its practical role as well" (20). "Theory is used for examining the achieved knowledge (for example, based on historical-comparative and case-study methods, it is possible to examine the method of implementation of unmanned platforms in different armed conflicts and comprehend the application of new tactical procedures in different phases of operation conduct)" (20). "Cognition, in this sense, is directed

towards discovering the truth within the combat actions. It is directed towards perceiving the truth in other activities as well, at a tactical level of engagement of forces. In this sense, and bearing in mind the significant social character, occurrence, process, and events during engagement of tactical units, scientific knowledge is usually possible at the level of scientific description, classification, and explanation, and significantly scarcer at the level of scientific prediction” (20–21).

The applied role of the theory of tactics is directed towards resolving concrete, practical problems in the military at the tactical level of engagement. For example, the applied role is depicted in the needs for implementation of the process of modernization of weapons and equipment systems and seeking for new tactical procedures and models of the use of units, based on cognition on a specific level of scientific knowledge on the method of engagement of army forces in armed conflicts at a tactical level.

Tactics research method

The method has always been the most disputed constituent of every science. “It is disputed even today because scientists have not succeeded in completely harmonizing their positions on its conceptual definition, structure, and perception of method in general” (Sakan 2011, 40). “In can be said that method, as a constituent of science, represents a “complex of mutually linked, coherent, systematized procedures which together approach the science subject and proving scientific truth” (41). It is also acceptable to perceive science method as a “set of scientifically verified knowledge, scientifically-theoretically and practically examined rules and norms, thoughts and practical activities, instruments and procedures that enable approach to the subject of science, show the way of its research from different aspects and direct towards the method of acquiring new scientific knowledge and their integration into a unique theory of science” (41). The method of science represents a set of procedures for research, examination, or justification of scientific truth.

The analysis of combat actions and other activities conducted by the units at the tactical level of organization in contemporary armed conflicts has shown that these are quite dynamic actions distinguished by fast changes in combat situations and electromagnetic spectrum warfare. In such conditions, predicting the outcome of conducting combat operations is extremely difficult.

Bearing in mind all the previously stated, it is necessary to stress that besides philosophical, general (above all the method of modelling – every tactical practice also represents a simplified image of the real conflict situation; statistic and historical-comparative method (“analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction, definition-classification” etc.) and empirical methods (“method of observation, examination, content analysis, experiment method”), the methods of resolution of operation problems are increasingly used for researching phenomena, processes and events at tactical level of activities of the armed forces (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017, 21). These methods are based on contemporary information technology and significantly improve the process of making operational decisions while conducting combat actions based on available information in real time.

The most often implemented methods for this purpose are mathematical methods of prognosis and management of organizational systems, methods (methods of operational research. The case study method has significant application value in examining the concrete forms of armed conflicts and the methods of engagement of army forces in specific phases of conducting operations.

The language of tactics

As a constituent of military sciences, the language implies a “specific system of conventionally adopted signs that have a defined meaning and that are used as a means of communication in autochthone and other military sciences and scientific disciplines” (Sakan 2011, 36). Tactics uses literary language with some specifics emerging from the language of military sciences, as well as the applied technological solutions and tactical procedures of the army forces (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017, 22). The tradition of the language of tactics is based on the tradition of the language of military sciences, concerning the specifics of the technological advances and organization of armed forces throughout warfare.

It is necessary to stress that the language (scientific, artificial, as well as the object-language and target-language) of tactics is developing fast with the emergence of new terms, syntagms, sentences, and paragraphs, by the accelerated development of technological solutions applied in armed conflicts at a tactical level. Therefore, today some terms are in use which, several years ago, were not even taken into consideration upon analysis of the use of force (Petrović, Cvetković and Stojiljković 2017,

23). We are speaking of the following terms: “suicide drones”, “loitering ammunition”, “micro-unmanned aircraft”, etc. Nowadays, weapons and military equipment defined by these terms often have a decisive role in executing tasks in combat actions.

Bearing in mind that often, upon formulation of classification of autochthone military sciences, the criterion of organizational level of forces executing or participating in an operation is being used, here we are presenting a brief reflection on the object of research of tactics. “In science, object often refers to the comprehensive reality, i.e., a set of phenomena, and if we are speaking of a social science, a set of social phenomena. Moreover, the object itself can be presented as a part of a whole, or as a separate unit consisting of special parts” (Pečujlić and Milić 1991, 178; Compare Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 73).

“In comparison to the object perceived in such way, the subject is manifested as the side that is prone to examination” (Marček and Kovač 2011, 23; Compare to Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 73). When speaking of the “object of research of military sciences, historically speaking, first it was war, and then armed conflict or armed forces” (Petrović, Kankaraš and Cvetković 2016, 73). From the standpoint of classification of military sciences by the criteria of level of organization of forces, it is acceptable that the research object of autochthone military sciences should be a military activity in its narrower sense, that is, a defense activity in its broader sense. Based on this criterion, the research object of strategy is military activity as a whole (the army’s activity as a whole), and the object of operations is the military activity of operational units. In contrast, the research object of tactics would be the military activity of units of tactical significance (the activity of units and temporary joint forces up to the level of a brigade) (74). According to this criterion, it is possible to conduct another determination of tactics as a military science. In this case, tactics would be conceptually defined as an autochthone military science (*genus proximum*) representing a set of systematized and methodologically verified theoretical and practical knowledge on the armed forces’ activities at a tactical organizational level (*differentia specifica*).

CLASSIFICATION OF TACTICS AS MILITARY SCIENCE

The dialectical unity and the battle of opposites permeate the science as well. Such is the case with the methodological framework, which also deals with researching the cognition of a suitable level of scientific knowledge. For example, we have analysis on one side, and on the other, synthesis, as general scientific methods. When speaking of special scientific methods, we have deduction and induction. The scientific methods, which, among others, represent a symbiosis of unity and oppositeness, are the methods of defining and classification. While the conceptual definition of tactics defines this concept as an abstractly formulated human thought of a concrete form of objective reality, classification divides the concept at a lower level of generality (specific and individual concepts are separated from the general concept according to a specific classification criterion). In essence, classification represents the division of the general term by a specific criterion (which, upon definition, represents a “higher term”, i.e., *genus proximum*), based on the “specific difference” (*differentia specifica*) that content-wise separates lower terms consist in a logically higher term. Therefore, to conduct classification, it is necessary to define the criterion used for it.

Bearing in mind all the complexity of autochthone military sciences, including tactics, there are numerous criteria based on which it is possible to classify tactics (See Blagojević, Starčević and Zogović 2019). According to research, tactics can be classified as engagement and combat tactics (“individual operations, counter-operations, actions and reactions”). “About the space of conduct of combat actions used as a classification criterion, tactics can be classified as follows: land tactics, water tactics (sea, internal waterways, etc.), and airspace tactics” (Sakan 2003, 312). “However, the cosmic and cyberspace also raise the question of the development of tactics in these spaces. Moreover, it should be mentioned that combat activities are increasingly being conducted in a set of several spatial segments at once. Thus, the classification of tactics might be supplemented with the tactics in semi-ambiental space as well” (Devetak 2023, 139). According to the criterion referring to the front line, tactics can be classified as follows: the front-line tactics, the rear area tactics and the occupied territory tactics” (Sakan 2003, 312). According to the criterion of symmetry of armed conflict, tactics can be classified as follows: the tactics of symmetric conflicts, tactics of dissymmetric

conflicts, and tactics of asymmetric conflicts (this classification is especially significant, bearing in mind the physiognomy of armed conflicts after the breakdown of the bipolar division of the world). Regarding the emergence of asymmetric warfare, Barišić points out: "Therefore, it was quite logical that the concept of asymmetric war, as a new-old idea of conflict management, emerged during the first decade of the new century, in an attempt by American military theorists to provide an adequate conceptual response to terrorism and other threats of a non-military and non-state nature" (Barišić 2024, 84).

Maybe the most popular classification of tactics is conducted by the criterion of structural organization of the army. According to this criterion, tactics are classified as follows: general tactics and branch tactics (in our army, we are speaking of the land forces tactics, air force tactics, and air defense tactics).¹ Here we should mention that this classification is conditional and depends on the organization of the forces. For example, when speaking of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, "air force" and "aerospace defense" are separate branches, and thus, conditionally speaking, additional classification can be made. According to this criterion, branch tactics are classified into combat arms and services. Further classification of combat arms (services) can be conducted into subdivisions by the army's organizational structure. "Through the analysis of classification of tactics, we can conclude that some classification criteria are not completely justified, and on the other hand, there are no divisions of tactics by the type of units or special combat systems" (Devetak 2023, 140).

At this point, it is worth mentioning that classification is an integral characteristic of tactics as a science, and it will further develop by the determinants that define the development of tactics itself.

CONCLUSION

The human mind has created and destroyed since the beginning of civilization until today. Like Kant's philosophical contemplation, which refers to the difference between mind and reason, or the human ability to create and develop civilization on the one hand, there is also this phylogenetic pathology that leads to civilizational destruction. In such conditions, armed forces and their military formations that materially shape the application of military force in armed conflicts have been

¹ Since the Republic of Serbia does not have a sea, it does not have a navy.

developed throughout history. As a consequence of the previously mentioned, tactics develop as well, implying the most extensive and frequent set of combat and non-combat activities conducted in the battlefield at the level of the lowest tactical units. The organization of military units (both human and material) is constantly changing and aligning with the demands of warfare. Until about ten years ago, no one would have thought of developing special departments in tactical units whose purpose was to create false positions and set up mock-ups and false sources of electromagnetic radiation, as well as departments for conducting electronic operations. Today, this is a reality, based on the experiences from Ukraine and Nagorno-Karabakh. These changes are quantitatively and qualitatively comprehensive; they are changing the physiognomy of the contemporary armed conflict and creating a new epoch of development of military sciences, especially tactics and an autochthone military science. Namely, these changes are most visible at tactical levels and result from vast technological and organizational changes. All this represents a significant challenge for tactics and the use of tactical units, with which tactics essentially deal. Bearing in mind all the previously stated, there is no doubt that tactics as a science will undergo significant changes soon. This will all result in the need for constant updates of scientific and professional information on tactics, including constant research and systematization of new knowledge referring to all constituents of tactics as a science. The following tasks are set before military theoreticians: constant systematization of tactical knowledge, promotion of theory, method, language, and even research subject. Only in this way is it possible to constantly improve one's military forces, material and human organization, tactical procedures, and other combat and non-combat activities, to make the army always ready to respond to any future security threat, challenge, and risk.

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ТЕОРИЈСКО ОДРЕЂЕЊЕ ТАКТИКЕ КАО ВОЈНЕ НАУКЕ***

Резиме

Развој цивилизације довео је до настанка и развоја држава и војски, чија је основна намена била одбрана државе. Ово је за последицу имало развој сазнања која се односе на начине вођења оружане борбе. Ова сазнања су се временом систематизовала и тако настају знања која се односе на ову област названу ратна вештина. Од 19. века све се више говори о војним наукама (тактици, оператици и стратегији), које замењују синтагму ратна вештина. Међутим, оба правца, источни и западни, препознају тактику као базичну војну науку. Ни до данашњих дана није у потпуности извршено теоријско одређење тактике. Због тога је циљ овога рада опис теоријског одређења тактике као војне науке. У првој глави рада је извршено појмовно одређење тактике као војне науке. У другој глави рада извршена је дескрипција основних конституената тактике. Трећа глава рада се односи на класификацију тактике према више критеријума. Сагледавање поимања кључних термина и опис резултата рада извршено је применом следећих метода: анализе садржаја, методе дефиниције и класификације, историјско-компаративне методе, аналитичко-синтетичке методе и дедуктивне методе. Појмовно

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одређење, опис конституената и класификација тактике као војне науке представља резултат овог рада.

Кључне речи: тактика, војне науке, конституенти, нивои оружане борбе, операције.

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