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THE ROLE AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF TACTICS IN THE GLOBAL GEOPOLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

This article analyzes the role of tactics in the system of military art, its tasks and development trends in modern conditions. The interrelationship between strategy, operational art and tactics is highlighted, and the features of modern joint combat are considered. Also, the impact of technological progress, the expansion of the information field, unmanned systems and high-precision weapons on tactics is scientifically substantiated. The article reveals the modern interpretation of defense and attack and the importance of the combat support system in the tactical process.

Keywords: Tactics, military art, strategy, operational art, joint combat, attack, defense, combat support, maneuver, military technologies.

Introduction

In the current global geopolitical environment, the transformation of the security system, fundamental changes occurring within the international security framework, new forms of armed conflict, and the rapid development of military technologies necessitate a comprehensive revision of the theory of **military art**. Modern warfare has become multi-domain in character, conducted not only on land, in the air, and at sea but also within cyberspace and the information sphere. In such complex and dynamic conditions, all components of the military art

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system – **strategy, operational art, and tactics** – are evolving in close interconnection.

Historically, military art has been inextricably linked to societal progress, economic potential, and scientific-technical achievements. Every historical era has shaped its own unique methods of warfare. While the Industrial Revolution ushered in the era of artillery and mass armies, and mechanization and aviation propelled operational art to a new stage in the mid-20th century, the 21st century is defined by digital technologies, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, high-precision weaponry, and unmanned systems, which are fundamentally transforming actions at the tactical level.

Within this framework, tactics hold a position of particular importance. It is precisely at the tactical level where strategic objectives and operational plans are translated into actual combat actions. In other words, the success of military art depends largely on the accuracy of tactical-level decisions and their rapid, flexible execution. If tactics do not advance in accordance with modern requirements and threats, even the most sophisticated high-level planning may fail to produce the desired results.

Modern armed conflicts demonstrate that the ability of small units to operate independently, rapid maneuverability, precision strikes based on real-time intelligence, and **network-centric command systems** are becoming the primary factors of tactical superiority. Simultaneously, information dominance, psychological operations, and hybrid threats have become integral components of the tactical process.

Today, studying the development trends of tactics is of both theoretical and practical significance. Training military personnel, ensuring the combat readiness of troops, and the effective use of modern weaponry depend precisely on the correct formation of tactical thinking. Therefore, scientifically justifying the role of tactics within the system of military art and its future development directions is a pressing issue.

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Military art is the complex of theoretical and practical foundations for the state's preparation and conduct of armed struggle. It has formed throughout the process of historical development and includes three main components: **strategy, operational art, and tactics**. Within this system, tactics is the link most directly connected to combat activity.

The changing nature of modern warfare, technological progress, digital command systems, and the wide-scale use of high-precision weapons are significantly updating the content of tactics. Consequently, studying the role and development trends of tactics within the military art system is a relevant scientific problem.

Tactics is the theory and practice of preparing for and conducting battle by various branches of the Armed Forces, arms of service (forces), subunits, units (ships), and formations. Tactics covers the study, development, preparation, and conduct of all types of combat actions: offensive, defensive, meeting engagement, tactical regroupings, and more.

Tactics is inextricably linked with the other components of military art: its theory and practice are subordinate to the interests of strategy and operational art and are based on their requirements. At the same time, under the influence of the rapid development of weapons and military equipment, tactics exerts a significant influence on operational art, and through it, on strategy.

Tactics is divided into:

- **Tactics of Armed Forces branches and arms of service:** This deals with the specific issues of the combat employment of subunits, units, and formations of arms of service and special forces, both in combined arms battle and independently.
- **General tactics:** This researches the laws (stable, frequently recurring cause-and-effect relationships) of combined arms battle and develops recommendations for the preparation and conduct of battle through the coordinated efforts of subunits, units, and formations. The foundation of general tactics is the **tactics of land forces**.

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The most important tasks of tactics include:

- Developing and implementing measures that ensure the constant combat readiness of subunits, units, and formations;
- Maintaining readiness to perform combat tasks in situations where ground, air, and electronic environments are complex;
- Developing and improving methods of conducting battle in the initial period of war.

The main tasks of tactics are as follows:

- Studying the enemy's forces and assets, their employment in battle, and their views on methods of conducting various types of combat;

Beyond the basic organization of units, tactics involves several critical analytical and developmental functions:

- **Intelligence and Adversary Analysis:** Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy's weaponry, equipment, organizational structure, and tactical maneuvers to exploit vulnerabilities.
- **Moral-Psychological Support (MPT):** Developing forms and methods to maintain the high morale and psychological resilience of troops, ensuring the successful execution of missions under extreme stress.
- **Organizational-Staff Optimization:** Formulating requirements for the **Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E)** and setting standards for combat training levels based on emerging threats.
- **Optimizing the Combined Arms Triad:** Determining the ideal synergy between the core elements of battle—**Fire, Strike, and Maneuver**—and coordinating the participation of various service branches and types of Armed Forces.
- **Weapon Employment and Defense:** Developing methods for the employment of modern weapons (including CBRN– Chemical, Biological,

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Radiological, and Nuclear) and implementing measures to protect friendly forces from similar threats.

The Hierarchy of Military Art. Military art is structured into three distinct but interdependent levels:

1. **Strategy:** Defines the overall political and military objectives of the war and develops the concept for the use of the Armed Forces at the national and international levels.
2. **Operational Art:** Acts as the bridge between strategy and tactics. It focuses on the planning and execution of major operations and campaigns by groupings of forces.
3. **Tactics:** The most direct level of engagement. It involves the immediate organization and execution of combat actions by subunits, units, and formations.

While **Strategy** sets the direction and **Operational Art** designs the campaign, **Tactics** accomplishes the mission on the physical battlefield. Therefore, tactics is considered the primary "practical link" in the chain of military victory.

The Theory and Practice of Modern Tactics. In modern doctrine, tactics encompasses the following practical domains:

- Organizing and executing **Offense** and **Defense**.
- Executing **Maneuver** (the movement of forces to gain a position of advantage).
- Coordinating **Fire** (the application of kinetic energy) and **Strike** (the impact of that energy).
- Ensuring **Interoperability/Cooperation** between different units and branches.
- Organizing **Combat Support** (Logistics, Reconnaissance, Signal, and Engineering).

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Characteristics of Modern Combined Arms Combat. Modern combat has evolved beyond traditional frontline clashes. Today, it is characterized by:

- **High Tempo and Maneuverability:** Battles are no longer static; they involve rapid movement and the "fluidity" of the battlefield.
- **Dynamic Situational Changes:** Information changes by the second, requiring real-time updates to tactical plans.
- **Precision and Range:** The ability to deliver lethal strikes from long distances with high accuracy (Long-Range Precision Fires), often before the enemy is even visible.
- **Information Dominance:** The struggle to control the narrative and the data flow. Whoever sees the battlefield first and understands it fastest (Information Superiority) wins.
- **Multi-Domain Operations (MDO):** Combat now occurs simultaneously across **Land, Air, Sea, Cyber, Space, and the Electromagnetic Spectrum**.
- **Decentralized Command:** Due to the speed of modern war, small units often operate independently. This has led to the concept of the **"Strategic Corporal",** where the actions of a low-level commander can have strategic-level consequences.

1. **Network-Centric Warfare (NCW):** Modern tactics rely on a "sensor-to-shooter" link. This means that a drone (sensor) identifies a target, and the data is instantly sent to an artillery unit (shooter) via a digital network, bypassing traditional slow hierarchies.
2. **Asymmetric and Hybrid Tactics:** Modern tactics must account for non-traditional threats, such as urban insurgents, private military companies (PMCs), and the use of "gray zone" tactics that blur the line between peace and war.
3. **Algorithmic Decisiveness:** With the introduction of AI, the **OODA Loop** (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) is being compressed. Tactical commanders now use AI to filter thousands of data points to find the "optimal tactical solution" in milliseconds.

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4. The Rise of the Drone (UAS/UAV): Tactical maneuvers now include "Drone Swarms" that can overwhelm traditional defenses through mass and coordination.

The success of modern tactics no longer depends solely on the courage of the soldier or the caliber of the gun, but on the **speed of the decision cycle** and the **integration of technology** into the smallest combat unit. Tactics remains the ultimate test of military art – where theory meets the reality of the battlefield.

The Impact of Technological Progress – Modern tactics are undergoing a radical evolution driven by several disruptive technologies:

- **Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS):** The integration of reconnaissance and FPV (First-Person View) drones has made the battlefield "transparent," virtually eliminating the possibility of large-scale surprise.
- **High-Precision Fires:** The ability to strike specific coordinates with sub-meter accuracy has shifted the focus from "area bombardment" to "surgical strikes".
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Elements:** AI is used for target recognition, trajectory calculation, and predictive analysis of enemy behavior.
- **Network-Centric Command Systems:** These systems link every soldier, vehicle, and sensor into a single digital architecture, ensuring that the "sensor-to-shooter" cycle is reduced to seconds.

The Principle of Maneuver and Dispersion. In the era of high-precision weapons, "massing" troops (concentrating them in one place) is a liability that leads to catastrophic losses.

- **Dispersion:** Troops now operate in smaller, spread-out units to minimize the radar and thermal signature.

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- **Dynamic Maneuver:** Victory is achieved not by staying in a trench, but by moving faster than the enemy can target you. This is the concept of **"Pulse Tactics"** – concentrating briefly to strike and immediately dispersing to survive.

The Information Factor. Information dominance is now the "high ground" of modern combat. Tactics rely on real-time intelligence (ISR) to ensure that tactical decisions are proactive rather than reactive.

Modern interpretations of defense and offense

Defense: Active and Resilient. Modern defense is no longer a passive "wait-and-see" approach. It is characterized by:

- **Maneuver Defense:** Trading space for time and inflicting maximum damage while moving.
- **Counter-Strike Capability:** Using defensive positions as a springboard for immediate localized counter-attacks to seize the initiative.

Offense: Multi-Vector and High-Speed. The modern assault is defined by:

- **Speed and Continuity:** Maintaining pressure 24/7 using night-vision and thermal optics.
- **Simultaneous Multi-Directional Impact:** Attacking the enemy's front, flanks, rear, and digital networks at the same time.
- **Integration of Kinetic and Non-Kinetic Strikes:** Combining physical artillery with electronic warfare (jamming) and psychological operations.

The role of combat support in the tactical process. Tactical success is impossible without a robust support system. This includes:

- **Intelligence:** Real-time situational awareness.
- **Engineering:** Counter-mobility (mines) and mobility (bridge-laying).
- **Camouflage and Deception (Maskirovka):** Misleading enemy sensors.
- **CBRN Defense:** Protection against non-conventional threats.
- **Logistics:** Ensuring "just-in-time" supply chains to mobile units.

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The conducted analysis demonstrates that within the system of military art, **Tactics serves as the central and decisive practical link.** While **Strategy** defines political-military goals at the state level and **Operational Art** designs the mechanisms for campaigns, the actual realization of these goals into tangible results depends entirely on correctly organized combat actions at the **Tactical level**.

Tactics acts as the primary mechanism that bridges the gap between theoretical military layers and the physical reality of the battlefield. Experience from recent global conflicts confirms that the character of combat is changing fundamentally. Based on the research, the following key trends define the future of tactics:

1. **Digitization and Automation:** The integration of command processes with information systems is exponentially increasing the speed and accuracy of tactical decisions.
2. **Autonomy of Small Units:** Centralized intent combined with decentralized execution is becoming the standard. Small unit commanders now possess the firepower and data access previously reserved for generals.
3. **Multi-Domain Synchronization:** Tactical success now requires the harmonious coordination of land, air, cyber, and information assets within a single engagement.
4. **Information Superiority as a Priority:** The "battle of the sensors" has become as important as the "battle of the tanks".
5. **Maneuver-Dispersion Paradigm:** Shifting away from troop density toward high-mobility, low-visibility operations to survive in a high-precision environment.

actical thinking is shifting from **"Attrition Warfare"** (winning by having more men and bullets) to **"Cognitive Warfare"** (winning by making faster, better decisions). The modern commander must be as proficient with a digital tablet and a drone controller as they are with a rifle. Tactics remains the ultimate proving

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ground of military art – where the strength of a nation's strategy is tested against the friction of reality.

At the same time, technological progress does not diminish the importance of the **human factor**. On the contrary, in modern environments, the commander's analytical thinking, ability to assess situations rapidly, stress resilience, and skill in independent decision-making are becoming more vital than ever. Therefore, the process of developing tactics is inextricably linked not only to technical means but also to personnel training, the military education system, and the formation of tactical thinking.

Scientifically speaking, tactics manifests as the most dynamic and flexible component of the military art system. It continuously updates in accordance with changes at the strategic and operational levels and provides the mechanism for integrating technological innovations into practical combat activities. The future development of tactics is expected to be defined by the widespread application of digital technologies, Artificial Intelligence, robotic systems, and integrated management platforms.

The refinement of tactics is one of the primary factors determining the overall effectiveness of military art. Achieving strategic superiority, ensuring operational success, and seizing the initiative on the battlefield depend directly on correct tactical decisions and their effective execution. Therefore, deepening the theoretical foundations and perfecting the practical aspects of tactics remains a priority for military science and practice.

To ensure your article meets the highest academic and professional standards, I have integrated the following enriched points into your final section:

1. The Paradox of the Human Factor. While algorithms can process data faster than the human brain, the **moral and ethical burden of lethal decision-making** remains human. Modern military education must shift from “procedural training” (following steps) to **“cognitive training”** (understanding patterns). This is often

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referred to as **Cognitive Overmatch**—the ability to out-think the adversary in a high-stress, information-saturated environment.

2. Mission Command. In the future, the reliance on small-unit independence will be the norm. This requires a transition to **Mission Command**: a leadership style where superior commanders provide the "intent" (the what and why), but subordinates are given the absolute freedom to determine the "tactics" (the how). In an era of Electronic Warfare (EW) where communications may be jammed, the ability of a junior officer to act without orders is a strategic asset.

3. Human-Machine Teaming (HMT). The future of tactics is not "man vs. machine", but **Human-Machine Teaming**. Tactics will involve a hybrid structure where AI manages the "fog of war" (filtering data, managing logistics), allowing the human commander to focus on the creative and psychological aspects of the battle.

Final Summary of Future Tactical Evolution:

Hyper-Digitalization – every combat element acts as a node in a massive data network.

Agility and Resilience – the shift from rigid formations to fluid, modular units.

Information Dominance – using the "Information High Ground" to blind the enemy before the first shot is fired.

Autonomous Lethality – the integration of robotic "wingmen" to protect and assist human soldiers.

Tactics remains the ultimate proving ground for military theory. A nation may possess the grandest strategy and the most sophisticated operational plans, but without a **flexible, innovative, and technologically advanced tactical foundation**, these remain mere abstractions. As we move further into the 21st century, the perfection of tactical maneuvers – supported by AI but guided by human intuition – will be the deciding factor in national defense and global security.

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