

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEORY AND DOCTRINE OF OPERATIONAL ART

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Abstract

The theory and doctrine of Operational Art and their relationship is a significant issue for the theoretical development of Operational Art due to its orientation towards the application of the practical activity of people in the operation. The issue of the scientific development of the theory of Operational Art cannot be considered only as a state but as a process, as well. The theory of Operational Art includes objective facts, and other structural elements of the theory of operation, obtained by studying its past and present. On this basis, the theory of Operational Art provides its future form and characteristics. Therefore, the authors in this paper examine in detail definitions of the terms theory and theory of Operational Art, definitions of the term doctrine, military doctrine and doctrine of Operational Art and finally the relationship between theory and the doctrine of Operational Art.

Key words: Operational Art, theory, theory of Operational Art, doctrine, doctrine of Operational Art

Introduction

Operational Art is one of the fundamental Defense Sciences (Military Sciences).¹ In order to accept an area of human knowledge as a science it is necessary to have relevant constituents: an authentic subject of research, a theory with coherent scientific facts, a method for the cognition of its main subject and the language.

These are the essential constituents of every science. Also, the philosophy of science has clearly established that all applied sciences (and thus the Operational Art) have doctrine as their constituent.

Since this fact has been neglected, the doctrine is often equated with science, which causes a major logical mistake. Also, the doctrine is the result of applied science (as Operational Art is), respectively, and of its theory. To eliminate these dilemmas, it is necessary to have further understanding of the terms theory and the theory of Operational Art, and the defining the concept of doctrine, military doctrine, and therefore the relationship between the theory and doctrine of Operational Art.

Defining the Concept of Theory and Theory of Operational Art

The term *theory* has its origins in the Greek language meaning “consideration” and “observation”.² Later, the term has been used in the sense of the acquired, recorded and preserved human knowledge, regardless of whether it is true. In the literature, there is no single accepted definition of the term.

¹ The phrase “Defense Science” in the past forty years, has most often been called a military doctrine or system of Military Sciences, then the Art of War, and in some papers of military theorists, Polemology. After the scientific symposium “Defense Sciences – 2011”, held from 07 to 08 April 2011 in Belgrade and organized by the Military Academy, the Human Resources Sector of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Serbia, the view was taken that instead of the above terms the future papers should use the phrase “Defense Science”, so in accordance with the above, this phrase will be used below in this paper.

² ŠULJAGIĆ, Radosav, *Teorija ratne veštine – naučna izgrađenost teorije jugoslovenske ratne veštine* (PhD thesis), UVJ, Belgrade, 1993, p. 20-21.

Differences in the theories are primarily a consequence of considering different concepts. The term *theory* is used to denote the concept of *theory in general*, but also to highlight the notion of *theory in the strict sense* (theory of science and scientific theory). The theory in general refers to all the knowledge acquired through the mental-cognitive activity of people.³ In this, the knowledge about subjects and processes relates to nature, human society and the human psyche. The theory in general includes the complete and incomplete, scientific and unscientific, true and false knowledge. It is a result of considerations that are characterized by: "... externality, meaningfulness, comprehensiveness, specificity and logical connection"⁴

It does not meet the requirements of science, and, accordingly, is not scientifically based. Theory in general is also a mental-cognitive activity of a large number of people. It primarily relies on the sensory awareness of people (experience) and sometimes loses its logical connection. Theory, in general, is a mental-cognitive activity by which people acquire knowledge about the world, and the very knowledge that is written and otherwise recorded serves as a support for the improvement of human practice.⁵

Theory in the strict sense is based on relatively objective experience and has a scientific character. The rational component of human activity is significantly more prevalent than in the general theory. In addition, theory in the strict sense is much more systematic and proven. Thus, it allows a deeper grip of the knowledge of reality. It multiplies, conditioned by practice. Its mental-cognitive activity begins with the detection of a problem in a particular area of reality – in practice. Theory in the strict sense explains the subjects and processes, real and imagined, based on the previously defined elements of its structure. It includes the knowledge that, completely and for a certain historical time and space, it objectively reflects part of the reality. With this, it contains dialectics as its main quality. This enables its development and the adequate monitoring of changes in the reality to which it refers. Therefore, in the strict sense, the theory includes mental-cognitive activity, in which people, in science, acquire, record and store knowledge about a particular area of reality.

3 Ibid, p. 20-32.

4 Ibid, p. 22.

5 Ibid, p. 23.

For human society and its practices all true theories about the phenomena taking place around man are important. However, it is believed and confirmed in human practice that the *theory of science and scientific theories* are most important for the further development of human practice, direct cognition and changing objective reality, as well as acquiring true knowledge of that reality and work processes. Many authors believe that the theory of science and scientific theories are theory in the strict sense. These two aspects of theory are often used interchangeably and are interpreted differently; therefore it is necessary to point out their substance.

Each particular science has a considerable fund of knowledge about its research subjects, or the parts of reality that are investigated, reported and studied within that science. This knowledge is on different levels of generality. It just shows that some of the sciences are at different stages of scientific development. However, this does not mean that their knowledge skills are isolated parts. On the contrary, they are in a more or less mutually coherent and comprehensively dependent relationship. This relationship directly affects the whole of science and its theories. For the theory of science, defining is the knowledge gained in the mental-cognitive activity of people, recorded, preserved and still being gained and used to meet certain human needs. Thus, the theory of science “includes a special mental-cognitive activity by which the scientific knowledge is acquired, recorded and preserved, as well as all the recorded and preserved theoretical knowledge of the subject of science and the reality of the nature, the human society and the human psyche”⁶

Similarly to science, the theory of science contains a number of theories of specific sciences and their scientific disciplines. They are mostly in relation to each other as general – particular – individual. The theory of science, for example, is – general, the theory of a particular science – particular and a theory of specific scientific discipline – individual.

Based on the above, one can easily conclude that the theory of a particular science involves “special mental-cognitive activity by which the scientific knowledge of the subject of the science is acquired, recorded and preserved, and on the part

6 ŠULJAGIĆ, Radosav, *Prilog razumevanju ratne veštine*, “Vojno delo”, No. 1/1995, Belgrade, p. 13.

of reality that the science explores and learns about”⁷ In addition, this theory also includes the “methodical correctly connected, integrated and systematized general theoretical and experiential attitudes with which this science collates data based on experience, explains empirical phenomena in that part of reality that is the subject of its research and directs future research.”⁸

In the theory of a particular science, scientific theory is a description, classification and scientific explanation of a phenomenon or group of phenomena, based on scientific principles, laws and hypotheses. It is usually expressed as the thoroughly developed and tested hypothetical position of a scientific law or hypothesis applied to the considered phenomenon or group of phenomena in a particular part of the subject matter of this science. Hence, a scientific theory is always a narrow term and usually of a lower level of generality than the theory of science. As a result, the theory of science and scientific theory are in relation – general compared to the particular, and vice versa. Exceptions are only scientific theories whose subject integrally includes parts of the subjects of more sciences, groups of sciences and their scientific disciplines, or possibly one science. Scientific theory is usually the most important part of the theory of science. It is the mainstay of the other elements of the theory of science by providing constant checking of their veracity, relevance and coherence. Also, it provides the most general and systematic scientific knowledge, which is directly reflected in its structure and the structure of the theory of science. Thus, it is continuously developed and improved by knowing individual or group subjects or processes in the part of reality that is explored and learned in a particular science.⁹

Based on the general definition of theory, the initial definition of the term theory of Operational Art can be considered.

Initial determination of an area, and thus the Operational Art, is based on its general characteristics, which are relatively reliable and serve as a broader framework for consideration of a particular term. The definition of the theory of Operational Art is based on the general features of the theory and qualitative

7 ŠULJAGIĆ, Radosav, *Prilog razumevanju ratne veštine*, “Vojno delo”, No. 1/1995, Belgrade, p. 13-14.

8 *Ibid*, p. 14.

9 *Ibid*, p. 16.

progress in the theory of Operational Art through history. In doing so, we bear in mind the different understanding of the theory of Operational Art in different countries and the lack of a universally accepted definition of Operational Art.

The subject of the theory of Operational Art is operation as a social phenomenon. Since the study is focused on combat actions in operations and operations, it is part of the theory of Defense Science. As for the extent of scientific development of the theory of Defense Science and the theory of Operational Art, it aspires to a scientific theory. This is best illustrated by the historical development of Operational Art. There is no doubt that the theory of Operational Art has been developed in the professional sense, and that it allows the practice of Operational Art as a skill. Modern theory of Operational Art is the result of the scientific approach to solving many problems.¹⁰ In this, it appears in the form of recorded stored knowledge about operations, in various professional, scientific and military doctrinal documents. This knowledge supports new knowledge and initiates the expansion of issues in this area. The theory of Operational Art also includes the mental-cognitive activity through which the knowledge has been acquired. This activity allows for the combination of sensory-cognitive and rational-cognitive components of man in the area of operation. It is directed towards the understanding of the clearly defined social phenomena of reality.

It is thus possible to derive the initial determination of the theory of Operational Art. Thus, the term theory of Operational Art comprises all recorded and preserved knowledge of operations which is used to understand a specific operation, as a social phenomenon and a part of reality, and direct the activity of people in it. In a broader sense, the theory also means all the knowledge related to other constituent elements of Operational Art (theory, method, language, etc.). This takes into account the cognitive reality of the scientific understanding of Operational Art and its practices, and therefore science, which in many aspects became interesting for various considerations.¹¹ The above initial determination

¹⁰ See more on solving operational problems in contemporary counterterrorist operations: TALIJAN, Miroslav, *Bezbednosni menadžment u suprotstavljanju i borbi protiv terorizma*, MA, Belgrade, 2010.

¹¹ SLAVKOVIĆ, Rade, *Teorijska izgrađenost operatike* (Ph. D. thesis), MA, Belgrade, 2006, p. 77.

of the theory of Operational Art also enables the consideration of other issues in and about the theory. One of the most important is the issue of the doctrine of Operational Art, as well as their relationship.

Defining the Concept of Doctrine, Military Doctrine and the Doctrine of Operational Art

In military and other literature and lexicography, both ours and foreign, official and unofficial documents, it was very often said and written about doctrine as a quite disconnected and rather vague term. Thanks to the enthusiasm of some military theorists in recent years, significant progress has been made in explaining the essence of the concepts of *doctrine* and *military doctrine*.¹² In the etymological sense, the term *doctrine* means the system of learning, the system of adopted attitudes that are submitted as recommendations to practice, that is, by people for the purpose of practical action in a particular sphere of activity.¹³ Today, the term generally refers to learning, and in order to grow into a doctrine "it should be arranged and presented as a system of stabilized statements in the form of standards and recommendations to practice".¹⁴ A relatively long time ago, the philosophy of science unequivocally established that all applied sciences have

12 Among other things see – VIŠNJIĆ, Dušan, *Kako misliti doktrinu* (article), "Vojno delo", No. 1/1995, NIU "Vojska", Belgrade, p. 34-47; VIŠNJIĆ, Dušan, *Pokušaj identifikacije koncepcije ratne veštine i njenih filozofskih pretpostavki* (article), "Savremeni problemi ratne veštine", No. 24/1992, CVVŠ OS "Maršal Tito", Belgrade, p. 25-38; SAKAN, Momčilo, *Vojne nauke*, Military Academy, Belgrade, 2003, p. 53-57; ŠULJAGIĆ, Radosav, *Teorija ratne veštine – naučna izgrađenost teorije jugoslovenske ratne veštine* (PhD thesis), UVJ, Beograd, 1993, p. 110-117; VIŠNJIĆ, Dušan, KOVAČ, Mitar, MARČEK, Jan, *Naučna ishodišta vojne doktrine*, paper in: *Vojna nauka, Zbornik radova, Tekom Graf*, Belgrade, 1998, p. 525-554.

13 Lat. *doctrina* means: "... learning about something exposed as a system." VUJAKLIJA, Milan, *Leksikon stranih reči i izraza*, Prosveta, Belgrade, 1980, p. 273); "... collection of views of a science..." (*Popularna enciklopedija*, BIGZ, BBelgrade, 1976, p. 256).

14 SAKAN, Momčilo, *Vojne nauke*, Military Academy, Belgrade, 2003, p. 53.

"Doctrine are statements that formulate the norms of practical activities in a particular experiential area" (MARKOVIĆ, Mihailo, *Filozofski osnovi nauke*, SANU, Beograd, 1981, p. 16).

doctrine as their constituent.¹⁵ Due to the neglect of this fact, in practice doctrine is often equated with science, which makes a major logical error.

Doctrine cannot be equated with science. Science and doctrine are various types of human knowledge, and therefore there are important differences in the approach to certain problems of reality, generality and relationships to actual practice. Science is trying to find out the essence of the problem of objective reality, and therefore the reality itself, while the doctrine strives for guidelines and norms of practical activities to address the problems based on the essence of objective reality. Based on this, we can say that science tends to determine the objective truth about the reality of general social significance, and doctrine tends to connect exposure that has direct practical significance. Doctrine answers the question of “how” to solve practical problems in a particular field, and science provides the answer to the question “why” the problem has to be solved in the exact way. The doctrine has the power of authority, as the approved and verified material is binding on all members of the organization, but it does not have a theoretical capacity, because such a characteristic takes away the aspect of the approach to the problems. If, contrary to its real essence, the doctrine were added and artificially imposed theoretical power, that is, it were declared a scientific theory, then everyone would have to admit it as the scientific field. Who would dare to challenge the scientific reliability of such a document when the highest authority is behind it? This would cause such a scientific field to lose one of its most important characteristics, methodical suspicion of the veracity and viability of each statement.¹⁶ In this way, a proclamation of the doctrine as a science would lead to the dogmatization of its views and blocking research efforts. Science does not have the power of authority as doctrine but has a theoretical capacity. Science contributes to learning about the empirical facts, individual knowledge of reality whose authenticity was verified and confirmed by practice. These facts are adopted and incorporated into doctrine after their scientific verification. Thus, doctrine does not criticize the current situation but opens the perspectives of practice and indicates those elements that are known and verified, and what has not been proven is kept in the theory of science and proved. Similarly, the doctrine cannot define all terms perfectly, because in scientific

15 VIŠNJIĆ, Dušan, *Kako misliti doktrinu* (članak), “Vojno delo”, br. 1/1995, NIU “Vojaska”, Beograd, p. 35.

16 RADINOVIĆ, Radovan, *Metoda ratne veštine*, VIZ, Belgrade, 1983, p. 170.

terms, it is the domain of the theory of science. Descriptive definitions are sufficient for doctrine; however, key words must be completely understandable, which will enable the unambiguous understanding of their meaning, content and scope.

The doctrine is the extract¹⁷, result or product of applied science, that is, its theory. It is an instruction aimed at the subjects of a specific area of human activity. It is written in the form of a directive, and its views are brisk, concise and economical to the maximum extent, meaningfully connected and not contradictory. The focus of the doctrine on the subjects in different areas of reality allows its system structure. Based on that, within the doctrine of a particular state, specific doctrines can be extracted, such as diplomatic, political, economic, legal, military, educational, confessional, etc. Each of them is then structured to individual doctrines. In science, there are all kinds of doctrine, and the evidence presented above shows that the state chooses only one of them – the one that best suits the national interest in the circumstances.

Thus, the doctrine is a set of management principles aimed at the subjects of specific areas of human activity, but it is also a guide for practical activity of people in certain conditions. However, the guide must not be a dogma – we have already pointed out where it would lead, but it changes according to the general situation in the country and its environment. The doctrine, if military, should as a guide be subject to change and be constantly updated and adapted to the defense needs of the people.

Based on the above definitions, it can be concluded that the doctrine is “a reliable view based on realistic and scientific knowledge on all issues concerning a certain human activity; the view which has immediate practical significance”¹⁸ This definition of doctrine directly imposes specification of the terms *military doctrine* and *doctrine of Operational Art*.

We have already pointed out that doctrine has a system structure made up of specific doctrines that are its integral parts. Consequently, military doctrine, and all others, constitutes an integral part of the state doctrine. At the same time, it is one of the constituents of the Defense Sciences and is a direct connection between the theory and practice of planning, preparation and execution of combat operations.

17 Ibid, p. 170.

18 LIPTAI, Stevan, *Teorijska izgrađenost taktike* (Master thesis), CVŠ VJ, Belgrade, 1996, p. 176.

Like all others, the military doctrine has its point of origin and subject. In the literature, there are different understandings of the point of origin of military doctrine. This inconsistency about understanding the point of origin¹⁹ of the military doctrine is probably due to the undefined concept of the *point of origin of the military doctrine*, as well as its relationship to other concepts in the science of defense and military activity in general. For this occasion, the most acceptable definition is that the points of origin of the military doctrine are “starting points, footholds and basic ideas underlying supreme rules of the military actions of the state and its military in peace and war”.²⁰ The points of origin of the military doctrine can be divided into scientific and social ones.

Scientific points of origin of the military doctrine are located directly – in the constituents of the Defense Sciences and indirectly – in the scientific achievements of other sciences and scientific disciplines.²¹

The immediate scientific points of origin of the military doctrine are the Defense Sciences and all constituents of Defense Sciences. It is important to see the actual connections of military doctrine with each of them. Defense Sciences as the point of origin of military doctrine have an impact on its content in accordance with the objectives and criteria formulated by the state authorities, or to offer optimal solutions in certain circumstances for problems related to armed struggle and military practice. Therefore, conditionally, it can be said that Defense Sciences affect “technological”²² and not “political” aspects of military doctrine. Setting objectives and criteria is the responsibility of the state, and is often called its “political” aspect and the technological part is called “technical” aspect of

19 “Point of origin is a starting point, the place, the situation where the outcomes starts, beginning, start” (*Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika*, book five, Matica srpska, Novi Sad, 1967, p. 996).

20 VIŠNJIĆ, Dušan, KOVAČ, Mitar, MARČEK, Jan, *Naučna ishodišta vojne doktrine*, paper in: *Vojna nauka*, Zbornik radova, Tekom Graf, Belgrade, 1998, p. 529.

21 Read more about scientific points of origin of military doctrine in: VIŠNJIĆ, Dušan, KOVAČ, Mitar, MARČEK, Jan, *Naučna ishodišta vojne doktrine*, paper in: *Vojna nauka*, Zbornik radova, Tekom Graf, Belgrade, 1998, p. 525-554.

22 According to Soviet sources, “the military doctrine has two aspects: political and technical. Political aspect relates to the political assessment of the character of military tasks of the state, technical answers to the questions that arise in connection with the already drawn or perceived characteristics of an armed conflict in a future war. They determine military-technical tasks of the armed forces, means and methods of armed combat in relation to technical capabilities” (Group of authors, *O sovjetskoj vojnoj nauci*, VIZ, Belgrade, 1966, p. 398).

military doctrine. The importance of Defense Sciences for military doctrine is reflected in the results achieved in this area, as well as the readiness of personnel who participate in the development of military doctrine, to take into account the results of scientific research. If the personnel does not respect the results obtained in the Defense Sciences, it inevitably leads to subjectivism. "Subjective military doctrines" throughout history have proved to be wrong, because they were not adapted to the practice of armed struggle in the future. Therefore, any artificial gap between science (Defense Sciences) and profession (science and art of war) causes a negative impact on military effectiveness in combat. If Defense Sciences in their development lag behind Defense Sciences in the world, military doctrine will inevitably fall behind in the "technological" aspect (organization, management, planning, preparation, engagement, security, etc.). Because of this, small countries, such as ours, must aim to achieve the benefits in the development of Defense Sciences as the points of origin of military doctrine and military skill, as well. The advantage will to a certain extent compensate for inferiority in the domain of other starting points (technology, economics, and the like).

As for the constituents of the Defense Sciences, it is reasonable to start from the premise that there are different effects of certain constituents on the formulation of doctrinal views. In this, it is important to perceive actual connections of military doctrine between each of them. The *language of the military doctrine*, as the first starting point, is based on the standard literary language in general and in the language of Defense Sciences in particular. Unlike the language of Defense Sciences, the language of military doctrine is the language of standard. The language of military doctrine is often identified with the language of Defense Sciences, as a result of insufficient differentiation between scientific and doctrinal language. Language of the military doctrine is based on the language of Defense Sciences, that is, it is derived from the language of Defense Sciences, with the fact that every science insufficiently developed in its linguistic fund has mainly doctrinal language (language practice), as is the case with Defense Sciences. The purpose of the language of military doctrine is not to mark the subject of study, polemic discussion, rethinking, proving, explaining, and the like, but the clear and unequivocal expression of specific practical actions of members of the military and other subjects in armed conflicts. The language of military doctrine is primarily descriptive and pragmatic with clear and unambiguous statements, but it can also use explanatory improved definitions of the basic concepts of Defense

Sciences. Additionally, the language of military doctrine should be flexible enough to include in its lexical fund new scientifically verified concepts engendered by Defense Sciences.

Other points of origin include *empirical facts* in the field of armed conflict. They represent the individual knowledge of reality whose authenticity has been verified and confirmed in practice and they are adopted and incorporated into military doctrine only after their scientific verification. A lack of scientific testing of empirical data can lead to pragmatism, that is, those facts are not a reliable basis for predicting future events, because the projection of the future is based on what has already been experienced. Therefore, they must first become scientific facts and then incorporated into military doctrine.

The third scientific point of origin are *laws, formulas, ideal patterns and ideal types* for now, with no significant differences between Defense Sciences and military doctrine, because the Defense Sciences and their disciplines are still at an unsatisfactory level of scientific development. In Defense Sciences this problem is even more pronounced, given that so far it has not identified and scientifically verified the laws in armed conflict, although attempts have been made.

The fourth scientific point of origin includes *methodological rules*, that is, methodology with all the characteristics of its scientific development discussed. The current methodological knowledge is modest in terms of identifying methods and methodology of development of military doctrine, though there are scholars who believe that the method of military doctrine stems from the method of Defense Sciences, with the only difference being that the general principles and basic elements of the method (methodological approach, logical-epistemological part and scientific-technical part) are specified and concretized according to the subject of military doctrine.²³ Solving this problem would contribute to a more comprehensive examination of the general relation of Defense Science – military doctrine and reliable theoretical and methodological basis for the development of military doctrine would be built, with respect to the starting points determining it.

The fifth point of origin – *statements* establishes the immediate, closest and most important relationship with the military doctrine. They formulate the norms of

23 SAKAN, Momčilo, *Vojne nauke*, Military Academy, Belgrade, 2003, p. 56.

practical activities, design doctrines of potential opponents and allies. Other constituents of Defense Sciences also have a similar role of direct scientific points of origins.

Indirect scientific points of origin of military doctrine are the achievements of all other sciences, which affect the establishment of standards of practical activities. Among them, the achievements of social, political, economic, technological, natural and mathematical, historical, medical, pedagogical and psychological sciences are particularly significant.

The social points of origin of military doctrine are: (1) state and national interests and objectives, (2) state doctrine, (3) geopolitical position of the state, (4) economic power and potential of the state, (5) technical and technological development, (6) demographic factor, (7) the state of the military, (8) educational system, (9) political system, (10) legal system, (11) traditions of the people and the state, (12) military alliance, (13) signed international agreements and treaties, charters, resolutions and other documents of international bodies, organizations and communities, (14) military doctrines of coalitions, great powers, neighboring countries and the like.²⁴ These points of origin are very important, since specificities of the military doctrine directly stems from them. Unlike science, doctrine is not universal. "Military doctrine applies to one side, one country and its military and, as such, must be adapted to the particular social conditions in which the state and its military are"²⁵ regardless of the universal models of various doctrines in the theory of science.

Analyzing the subject of Defense Science, there is a need to explore its relation to the content and scope of military doctrine, which would resolve the methodological problem of the difference between military doctrine and Defense Science and its disciplines. The subject of military doctrine stems from the subject Defense Science. The main difference between them is that the subject of Defense Science is armed conflicts – armed combat and battle, with no particular examples of events and the subject of doctrine is a particular case of armed conflict. These

²⁴ Details about this can be seen in: STIŠOVIĆ, Milinko, *Društvena ishodišta vojne doktrine*, paper in: *Vojna nauka i vojna doktrina*, Zbornik radova, Tekom Graf, Belgrade, 1998, p. 425-447.

²⁵ SAKAN, Momčilo, *Vojne nauke*, Military Academy, Belgrade, 2003, p. 57.

are armed conflicts which may be initiated by a state or may be imposed upon the state. Each country can participate in the potential or actual armed conflicts. Participation in potential armed conflicts is practiced through various forms of applied training of commands, commanders, units and other entities, such as maneuvers, tactical exercises, command and staff war exercises and the like, and also in real conflicts – when they actually occur (either initiated or imposed). This involvement of the state in armed conflicts determines its uniqueness and is different from armed conflicts in general, because it applies to a particular state, its space, its armed forces, weapons, equipment, environment and the like. Therefore, armed conflicts in which the state would participate are not abstract. They are concrete and have their subjects to be considered. Otherwise, a lack of specific subjects leads to a disorientation and degradation of the practice the doctrine is related to.²⁶

Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that military doctrine is an integral part of state doctrine and that it is a “realistic, scientifically based, exposed view of all the fundamental issues of military activity that has immediate practical importance in the field of the special case of the manifestation of armed conflict in which the state (its military) participates”.²⁷ The initial definition of the military doctrine raises the question of its relation to the substance of the term doctrine of Operational Art and the doctrine (doctrinal provisions) of Operational Art itself.

The doctrine of Operational Art is an integral part of military doctrine and therefore contains all previously mentioned characteristics of the term *doctrine* and *military doctrine*. The doctrine of Operational Art is one of the constituents of Operational Art. It is both its product and ultimate goal. The doctrine of Operational Art provides guidance for practicing the (operational) combat actions within an operation. Its doctrinal positions are current for the leaders of (operational) combat actions, but also for other entities of particular military force that exhibit practical activity in the area of operations.

Points of origin of the doctrine of Operational Art and the military doctrine can be grouped under the scientific and social categories. The scientific would

²⁶ Ibid, p. 55-56.

²⁷ LIPTAI, Stevan, *Teorijska izgrađenost taktike* (Master thesis), CVŠ VJ, Belgrade, 1996, p. 177-178.

directly include all scientific constituents of Operational Art and, indirectly, all the achievements of different scientific fields that are applied in the field of Operational Art. Social points of origin of doctrinal provisions of Operational Art, except for the level of impact, are not different from the social points of origin of the military doctrine.

The subject of the doctrine of Operational Art is operation, in which at least one side is known (the subject the doctrine of Operational Art relates to), while the other side is invariably modeled, as a concrete or an abstract entity, including all the problems of man's military professional activity in the operation. In this way, the doctrine of Operational Art becomes the basic orientation for their practical solution. With respect to this, the initial provision of the doctrine of Operational Art can be given.

The doctrine of Operational Art is an integral part of military doctrine and a realistic, scientifically based, exposed view of all the fundamental issues of the practical activity of tactical and operational units in a particular case of an operation in which the specified subjects are involved. Doctrinal provisions of Operational Art are linked in a single system of management principles, meaningfully related and non-contradictory. As part of military doctrine, the doctrine of Operational Art is connected and aligned with the doctrines of Tactics and Strategy.

The doctrines of Defense Sciences are related as general, special and individual. This relationship implies subordination between the provisions of certain doctrines and mutual compatibility. The doctrine of Strategy deals with the problems of the highest military values and, in this sense, programs general guidelines, while the doctrine of Operational Art programs specific guidelines of practical combat (tactical) activities. Doctrinal provisions of Tactics are carried out, in relation to these guidelines, as individual tactical instructions and rules, and they are most concretely connected with the practice of combat operations. Doctrinal provisions of Operational Art, in addition to serving as guidelines for Tactics (for tactical activities) are related and at the same time harmonized with the technological part of military doctrine, that is, the combat systems used, the possibilities of branches in the field of operational units, the training system, combat (order) layout and operating procedures. In other words, the doctrinal system of Operational Art can refer to each of the elements of Operational Art,

having been previously agreed with the system of other doctrinal provisions in the Defense Sciences.

Accordingly, retroactive action of the doctrine of Tactics to the doctrine of Operational Art and Strategy should not be neglected, either. Many of doctrinal provisions of Operational Art are derived by induction from the doctrinal provisions of Tactics. Operational Art as a higher level of generality should take into account the specific features of the individual provisions of the practice. Thus, the determination of the front size and depth of attack (defense zone) of brigades and higher units arose from the front (depth) of attack (defense zone) of basic modular units down to the individual.

Defining the essence of the concept of the doctrine of Operational Art has created conditions for the specific consideration of its relationship with the theory of Operational Art, which is especially important for the significance and pragmatism of the theory of Operational Art.

The Explication of the Relationship Between Theory and Doctrine of Operational Art

The difference between the concepts of *doctrine* and *science* has been emphasized in the previous considerations and it means that it is necessary to notice a difference between scientific theory and doctrine. Numerous military theorists have dealt with this issue from the very beginning of the theory of defense (Military Sciences), although not explicitly enough. One of them is Clausewitz, who claims that "... the theory should be mere consideration, but never a rule".²⁸ In order to notice the difference between scientific theory and the doctrine of Operational Art, we will emphasize several postulate attitudes regarding their relationship, thus enabling the high-quality identification of it, but with no illusion that this paper can notice and identify all their relations.

28 KLAUZEVIC, K., F., *O ratu*, Vuk Karadžić, Belgrade, 1951, p. 105.

- 1) The scientific theory of Operational Art is directed to the understanding of the reality of operation and doctrine of Operational Art is based on understanding or, in other words, on knowledge relating to scientific theory. It means that the scientific theory of Operational Art, in relation to doctrine, is the starting point and re-destination, bearing in mind that the doctrine of Operational Art also becomes theory, though not a scientific one but theory in a wider meaning.
- 2) The scientific theory of Operational Art contributes to the improvement of human practice (combat activities in this case) through the genuine understanding of the reality of combat/armed struggle, in such a way that the already obtained scientific discoveries enable the creation of pragmatic and doctrinal instructions which will regulate the practice of people in the field of Operational Art based on the progress of its scientific theory.
- 3) The scientific theory of Operational Art seeks to understand operations as a subject in general, without the concrete event which takes place, while doctrine deals with concrete cases of operations that really happen.
- 4) The scientific theory of Operational Art is a universal one, meaning that it has – or at least should have an international character, with the contents composed of scientifically verified and experienced facts (scientific facts) about an operation, i.e., individual facts about reality, the truthfulness of which has already been checked and confirmed in practice. Unlike scientific theory, a doctrine of Operational Art does not have an international character but it has a national, state character and its contents includes the instructions and regulations for acting in the field of operations in which the state and its army are going to take part. The Doctrine of Operational Art must not be “subjective” because that necessarily causes negative consequences in the efficiency and effectiveness of the units (therefore the army itself) in the operations. “Subjective doctrines” have proved to be wrong thorough history, because they have not been adjusted to the practice of armed struggle (therefore the operation itself) which take place in future.
- 5) The scientific theory of Operational Art is science-based, but less than necessary. It studies the experiences in the field of (military) operations, describes and classifies them, explains and foresees the essence of the subject and process in the reality of the operation. It provides regulations for the practice of people involved in the field of operation, formulating itself as a program for some future practice.

- 6) The scientific theory of Operational Art is critical and methodologically obtained knowledge, while a doctrine of Operational Art is a group of binding attitudes backed by the authorities (army, state...)²⁹
- 7) The scientific theory of Operational Art is more stable than a doctrine of Operational Art due to more intensive changes in the social outcomes. A doctrine of Operational Art must not be a dogma but, in accordance with the intensity and volume of the changes in the social and scientific outcomes, it should be gradually redefined or, if necessary, completely changed.

A doctrine of Operational Art is an extract, product and result of the knowledge about the theory of Operational Art. It connects theory and practice, meaning that through the doctrine, theory applies its achievements in practice; in that way the doctrine directs the future practice. However, the relation between them is not with one meaning only, because practice in the reverse direction establishes truthfulness of the theory by either confirming or rejecting the correctness of the doctrinaire attitudes derived from theory (Figure 1). In that way the doctrine of Operational Art brings the theory of Operational Art and its own contents into the position of “development”. Unconfirmed doctrinaire attitudes of Operational Art require the changing of the elements of the theory of Operational Art that they are based on. It is the trinity of theory, doctrine and practice in which Operational Art is being developed as a unique entity.

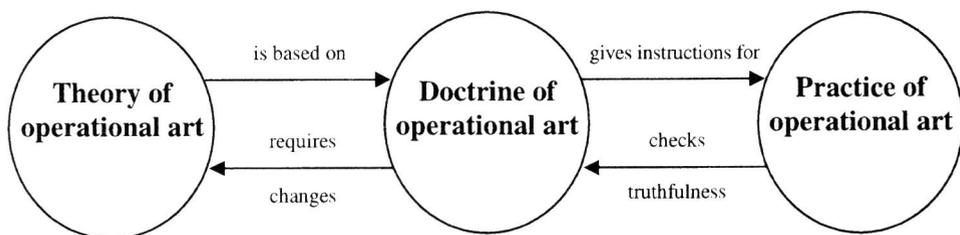


Figure 1. Relationship among theory, doctrine and Operational Art practice

²⁹ According to Russian sources, “military doctrine, after being adopted and introduced in practice, acquires character of a state law” (Grupa autora, *O sovjetskoj vojnoj nauci*, VIZ, Beograd, 1966, p. 399).

The scientific building of the theory of Operational Art provides conditions for the subjects participating in the operation to consider and understand their place and role in the operation in a more adequate way, as well as the actual essence of the phenomenon. Based on that, they can foresee future activities in the phenomenon and prospectively shape its reality. In such a relationship the theory of Operational Art reflexively acts on the doctrine of Operational Art and its practice.³⁰ It establishes the pragmatic activities of the subjects involved in the practice of Operational Art in a scientific and cognitive way. At the same time, the theory of Operational Art prevents the direct application of empirical experience in the building of the doctrinaire attitudes. Prior to having direct influence upon new doctrinaire attitudes, the empirical facts must pass scientific verification through methodological apparatus of Operational Art and the art of war.

Contemporary theory of Operational Art, fragmented within the national frameworks, is often characterized by doctrinaire features. This situation is the result of a strong material and financial component as well as of the positivist and pragmatic influence of financially powerful countries. Due to their material and financial component and without specific theoretical foundation, the great powers make experiments with certain doctrinal solutions. In that way and for pragmatic reasons, Operational Art is directly guided by national doctrine. Results of scientific work (scientific theory) are not taken into consideration, thus degenerating the theory of Operational Art and equating it with doctrine. Doctrinal attitudes, often subjectively based on the will of few people in the military (who, in most cases, are not directly involved in science and who do not respect the results of research in Defense Sciences), are used as a starting point for the orientation of the elements of organization, combat disposition and acts in Operational Art (operation).

Unlike the great powers, smaller countries which are characterized by the doctrinal features of the theory of Operational Art, do not have strong material support for experiments in the field of Operational Art, and this is primarily seen in the actual reality of an operation. Instead of trying to get advantages in the development of the scientific theory of Operational Art as the origin and outcome

30 ŠULJAGIĆ, Radosav, *Teorija ratne veštine – naučna izgrađenost teorije jugoslovenske ratne veštine* (PhD thesis), UVJ, Belgrade, 1993, p. 110-117.

of the Operational Art doctrine, it often happens that the authoritativeness of their doctrine of Operational Art dominates and does not respect the changed reality of the operation. Such a doctrine is an impediment to the development of any theoretical thinking on Operational Art. It is proclaimed to be dogma and any kind of discussion on that issue is understood as speculation and untruth. While “in power”, such a doctrine eliminates the possibility of any theoretical and cognitive activity. Testing it in practice results in negative consequences upon the efficiency of an army in armed combat (operation), as well as in enormous human and material losses. The above mentioned attitudes impose the question of the views of the Operational Art theorists concerning their doctrine.

Operational Art theorists have an obligation to follow the doctrinal rules and regulations of Operational Art in its expert realization, with the possibility to find valid solutions to the problems which the practice of Operational Art faces nowadays and will face in the future. In this way they show flexibility, thus affirming a critical approach to the doctrinal rules and regulations. In such a relationship and in accordance with the intensity and extent of the applications in social and scientific origins and outcomes, the doctrine of Operational Art is either gradually redefined or completely changed.

The theory and doctrine of Operational Art are in a constant relationship of two-way interaction – doctrine is closer to practice and it has a transfer role of the influence of theory upon practice and vice versa. The relationship between theory and doctrine of Operational Art is actualized in that respect.

Conclusion

Based on the general considerations it can be concluded that theory at the same time represents reflective cognitive activity by means of which it is possible to gain certain knowledge about a respective field of reality as well as the very knowledge about the objects or processes in that reality which are the final result of the activity. The term *theory* can be understood on different levels of generality. One of the possibilities is to understand it like a so-called theory in a wider sense (generally) and theory in a more precise sense. Theory in a wider sense refers to any reflective cognitive activity and any knowledge through which a respective

realm of reality is to be understood. It incorporates both unscientific and scientific knowledge. Unlike this, theory in a more precise sense has a scientific character and can be considered in the form of the theory of science and scientific theory. It is much better systematized, more objective and it has a critical approach. Basically, it is being built with respect to a strictly defined and exact principle of methodology of science.

Doctrine is the consequence or product of an applied science, that is, of its theory. It represents an instruction directed towards subjects of certain field of human activity, but it is in the same time an instruction for the practical activity of people in certain conditions. Its being directed to the subjects in various fields of reality provides it with a systematic structure. Based on that and within the doctrine of the very country, special doctrines can be distinguished, such as: diplomatic, political, economic, legal, military, educational, confessional etc. Each of them is separately structured into individual doctrines. Accordingly, military doctrine is an integral part of the state doctrine and it represents realistic, science based, logically connected attitude concerning all basic issues of directly and practically important military activities in the field of a specific case of combat struggle in which the country (its army) takes part. At the same time, it is one of the constituents of Defense Sciences (Military Sciences) and it represents the direct connection between the theory and practice of preparation and the conducting of combat activities. It stems from the initial definition of military doctrine and an instruction for its practicing in combat activities within an operation. The doctrine of Operational Art is, or it should at least be, a logical consequence – a product of the knowledge concerning the theory of Operational Art. As such it directly guides the future practical activity of people in the domain of operation and thus the very practice. Confirming of the inadequacy of the doctrinal attitudes also initiates a changing of the elements of the scientific theory of Operational Art structure due to the new conditions in which the operation is conducted. Change to the Operational Art theory retroactively influences upon the creation of new doctrinal regulations. Today the doctrine of Operational Art is to a small extent a scientifically based constituent of Operational Art with the tendency to be more scientifically based in the future and, in a mutual relationship with theory and practice, it will provide for the development of Operational Art.

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