



STATIC AND DYNAMIC FACTORS OF COMBAT POWER IN THE LAND MILITARY OPERATIONS

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Over the last decade, land forces have undergone an extensive process of reform and modernization in order to create credible and efficient capabilities, adapted to the new security environment.

The transition from the specific concepts of territorial defence to collective defence and counteracting asymmetric risks does not exclude the responsibility of defending the national territory, and to meet strategic requirements Romania needs a modern and permanently adaptable ground forces structure based on the principle of combat power, a principle by which the forces are configured according to the missions and objectives to be accomplished.

Keywords: combat power; static factors; dynamic factors; transformation; interest; configuration.

The contemporary international environment is characterized by substantial transformations, new challenges are seen on the horizons of international security, and the challenges generated by the overlapping of some events, such as globalization and fragmentation, are added classic events of regional risks and vulnerabilities. In the current context, traditional outbreaks of tension remain, their development being naturally influenced by the emergence of unconventional and cross-border risks, such as terrorism, organized crime, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and last but not least cyber terrorism.

Major changes in the relations between states and groups of states, due to the events that took place in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, highlighted the transition from the "bipolar" system to the "unipolar" system, and the tendency of states to group in blocks with their own political, economic and financial interests, it requires an updating and enrichment of the concept of national interest. The phrase "national interests" is often used in different contexts, and Romania's Defence Strategy emphasizes that "national interests are those needs and aspirations essential for asserting national identity and values, the existence of the state and ensuring its fundamental functions"¹.

Starting from a different definition and understanding, for each state actor, of the phrase *national interest*, as well as taking into account all

the elements of the international environment, we can say that at the beginning of the third millennium, the physiognomy of the modern battlefield acquires new values with deep changes of structure, composition, distribution and employment of forces, as well as in the content of the management of military and civilian structures, which are directly or indirectly engaged in violent confrontations dominated mainly by risk and uncertainty.

In analyzing the impact of the international environment on the modern battlefield, the analysis and evolution of science must be weighed. Given the dynamic nature of science and technology, we can say that technologies do not stand still, they are constantly evolving, marking a pronounced impact on the configuration of the combat power of military structures by the possibility of using their branches to obtain an optimal configuration of forces or force structure.

The information explosion and the new products of science and technology have always had a great impact on the military field both in terms of strategic doctrines and the concepts of preparation and conduct of military actions.

The changes that have taken place domestically and internationally in the political, economic and military fields in recent decades have led to contradictory developments, but the military field is perhaps the one that has undergone the most spectacular developments. All this requires reorientation, re-evaluation and reorganization in the system of organization and conduct of military actions, including in the manner or methods of

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organization, equipment, configuration and use of military structures in military operations.

The complexity of military actions in the modern battlefield, highlighted by current operational-strategic concepts, adopted in NATO and other armies, in which their own means must "see" and "attack" with all available resources, determined the factors of military leadership in modern armies to change their conception of operations by transforming in some situations the elements of combat protection into elements of combat power. A relevant example is the transformation of electronic, computer or electromechanical capabilities into essential elements of combat power.

The local military conflicts of the last decade have shown that, during the war, there is a shift of effort towards the informational and electronic confrontation unfolding in the widening electromagnetic spectrum, the military capacity of states becoming increasingly dependent on the possibilities of collection, processing, transmission, use and protection of information to the opponent. As a result, gaining superiority in the use of information and electromagnetic spectrum for military needs is becoming a priority, and the asymmetry in this area is more than obvious. A new orientation is the establishment and configuration of military structures that can make the most of information and electromagnetic capabilities.

All these changes in the international environment, which in turn have led to changes in the way conflicts are conducted, as well as the development of technology, force us to re-evaluate the organization and configuration of military structures to obtain the minimum combat power needed to achieve victory, as well as an optimum of the land operations they carry out.

No matter what type of land military operation we are talking about, its success is conditioned by the combat power of the military structure engaged in the operation.

For a good analysis of the combat power it is strictly necessary to determine and analyze two categories of factors that contribute to its increase or decrease, respectively *static factors* and *dynamic factors*, which define and give the value of the combat power.

Combat power is a concept that is making more and more room in the usual language, and the preoccupations of specialists are more and

more intense in determining the efficiency of military structures, from the smallest to the largest echelon.

Depending on the affiliation of military specialists, the combat power is represented, according to ADRP 3-0², as the total of destructive, constructive means and information capabilities that a military structure can use at a specific time. In other words, combat power can be understood as the potential of military capability to carry out an effective action at the time and place established with the planned effect or in the vision of other specialists³, combat power defines the possibility of an army to fight and has three interdependent components: conceptual, moral and physical. In 2015, the definition of combat power was changed and was stated as the effect created by combining eight components in combat, namely: leadership, information, mission command, movement and maneuver, research, firepower, logistic support and protection⁴.

Static and dynamic factors are those elements that contribute to the organization and endowment of a military structure of tactical level, and dynamic factors are those elements that contribute essentially to the training and employment in combat of a force or force structures.

"In the situation in which it expresses the static, the combat power is a potentiality that represents the resultant of a set of factors (elements), having the following components: human, technical, managerial and logistic"⁵.

The human component is the most important static factor and the most important source of combat power of a military entity or structure. The elements of the human component that contribute to the generation of combat power are the quality of human resources, the level of theoretical and practical training and instruction, both individual and collective, and the level of its moral state. All these elements must be compared with those of the opponent.

The technical component is represented by the factors or elements that highlight the quantity and quality of military equipment and systems forming the endowment of a military structure. The technical component depends to a large extent on the organization of the military structure and needs to be defined by the missions and objectives that military structure must fulfill at a specific time.



The technical factor influences, through the way it is approached and used, the result of a military action or operation.

The managerial component consists of those factors or elements that can quantify the ability to organize and lead a military structure. The management and organization of a military structure must include, as determining factors, the ability to adapt to new situations that arise in the battlespace of military structures and their resilience. Resilience is generally accepted as "the ability of a community, service, field, or infrastructure to detect, prevent, and, if necessary, resist, cope with, and recover from disruptive challenges"⁶. The resilience of an entity and especially of a military structure is essential for maintaining it in the dynamics of conducting military operations.

The logistic component is a complex process of activities that provides all the material goods and services necessary for the organization and operation of a military structure in optimal conditions, as well as ensuring freedom of action, operational expansion gained and prolonged support in military operations. The logistic factor determines, due to the multitude of processes and activities that are planned and executed for the supply, uninterrupted and especially in due time, the result of a military action or operation. The logistic component must be continuously maintained at high parameters to meet the demands of the military structure during military operations.

When we refer to the dynamics of combat and *dynamic factors*, the combat power of a military structure is determined by the following factors⁷:

- a) the factors (functions) of the fight: mission command, the information advantage, the morale of the fighters, the firepower, the maneuver, the protection, the vulnerability, the surprise;
- b) environmental factors: terrain, weather, season.

The dynamic factors of the combat are those elements that integrated and coordinated under a unitary leadership contribute essentially to the success of the military action or operation. They must be very well defined and understood to achieve the desired results.

The mission command, considered as its function, requires the existence of a rigorous planning of the military action or operation so that it can be applied without syncope and with very good results.

The information advantage facilitates understanding the enemy, the terrain, the weather, civilian considerations and other significant aspects of the operational environment and synchronizes the collection of information with primary tactical tasks of reconnaissance, surveillance and security. The information involves the collection and analysis of data from all possible sources and is used both in the process of planning operations and in their management.

Army morale is an important dynamic factor in obtaining a high combat power of a military structure. One of the parameters that underlies morale is the motivation of both the individual military and the collective militaries. Motivation is the set of states of necessity that determine an individual or group of individuals to satisfy them. Much closer to our subject, the motivation is that state of the military that gives them the will to fight. Motivation can be both moral and material and depending on the influence of the weight of each of them on the military as an individual and especially on the collective or military of the structure; it can be quantified.

Firepower, as a function of combat, consists in the quantity and effectiveness of fire and in the possibilities of executing the firing maneuver by a structure or weapon system in a time interval on an enemy target.

The effectiveness of the fire is obtained by judiciously choosing the fire execution procedure, choosing the moment of opening and the type of fire, increasing the accuracy, speed of firing, concentration and timely execution of the fire in any conditions, its judicious management. The effectiveness of fire in the case of artillery is determined using the parameters of firing effectiveness.

Maneuver is an essential dynamic factor of combat power, a factor that implements the concept of military operation.

Maneuver⁸ is the combination of movement supported by fire, potential fire or other abilities adopted in order to gain an advantageous position in relation to the opponent, the application and concentration of the effects of combat power.

The maneuver consists in moving and deploying tactical level military forces and their military equipment and systems in the battlespace to apply their combat power, spatially and temporally,



against enemy forces, in order to gain a tactical, operational or strategic advantage.

The maneuver represents the procedure or the form of positioning one's own forces in decisive points in order to surprise, gain tactical advantage, focus firepower and strike power on the enemy's vulnerable point, gain battlespace and to force the enemy to submit to the will of own forces. By maneuvering own tactical level military forces it imposes on the enemy where, when and under what conditions the battle will take place.

Protection ensures the integrity of the force throughout the planning and conduct of military operations so that the commander can apply maximum combat power to fulfill the mission received. In order to ensure the protection of the force, all possible physical measures will be taken so that the threats to the forces are mitigated or eliminated.

Vulnerability is a dynamic factor of the fight that, treated superficially, can put own forces at a disadvantage, starting from the existence of gaps in the security and defence system and up to the disorganization of the command and control system of the military structure. Vulnerability is given by one or more weaknesses or areas of a military structure and as such should be ameliorated or eliminated if possible.

Surprising the opponent as a tactical action can lead to a decrease in his combat power, which allows our own forces to achieve success with fewer forces than would be necessary in its absence.

Surprise can be achieved using different methods and techniques, that are often simple, and has major effects on the morale of the opponent's forces leading to large losses of human and material resources.

Another dynamic factor of combat power that must be taken into account is the *factor of degradation or reduction* of the dynamic potential of combat power throughout the planning and execution of the military action or operation by a military structure.

Dynamic environmental factors are elements of major importance on the battlefield and can favor or hinder the conduct of combat actions by both our own forces and the forces of the enemy.

The terrain has effects on mobility, defensive position, infantry armament, aviation effectiveness, armor, etc. The terrain is taken into account by

the degree of engineering preparations and it is considered that its influence is different according to the categories of weapons.

Weather is another factor of the battlefield that can influence the actions of the battle. Temperature, humidity, wind are the climatic elements that inter-condition and influence the mobility of troops and the way of actions.

The season can influence the fighting actions, as in the case of atmospheric conditions. Military analysts believe that the season must be taken into account in the planning, organization and conduct of military actions or operations with a considerable impact on their results.

Conclusion

Combat power as an integrated set of combat functions is influenced by static or dynamic factors that exist or can be generated in the battlespace both during planning and conducting of military actions or operations of land forces.

Static and dynamic factors must be quantified in a realistic way to have a correct picture of the value of the combat power of a tactical level military structure. Also, when they are generated, they must be used, on the whole or in part, to the advantage of our own forces. It is to avoid generating a dynamic factor of combat power without being able to be it subsequently controlled by our own forces.

The most important of the static factors is the human resource, which must be trained, continuously prepared, and on which depends, in most cases, the success of a military action or operation.

The most important dynamic factor is the maneuver that integrates the other factors and that planned and executed at the right time and place ensures the success of the military structure that performs the military action or operation.

NOTES:

- 1 *Strategia de Apărare a României*, Bucharest, 2010, p. 8.
- 2 ADRP 3-0, *Unified Land operations*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2012, 3-1.
- 3 Army Doctrine Publication, *Operations*, Army code 71632, 2010, 2-2.
- 4 The Battle Staff Smartbook, *The fourth revised edition*, (ADRP 5-0/6-0/1-02 SMARTupdate), 2015, pp. 1-22.
- 5 Viorel Buța, Gelu Alexandrescu, Daniel Dumitru, *Elemente dinamice ale câmpului de luptă modern – Puterea de luptă*, "Carol I" National Defence University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 28.



6 Guillaume Lasconjarias, *Descurajare prin reziliență. NATO, națiunile și provocările relative la a fi pregătit*, Gândirea Militară Românească Magazine, no. 3/2018, p. 48.

7 Viorel Buța, Gelu Alexandrescu, Daniel Dumitru, *op.cit.*, p. 28.

8 FT-3, *Manualul de tactică generală a forțelor terestre*, Bucharest, 2013, p. I-15.

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