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**THE INFLUENCE OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA IN THE  
CONDUCT OF MILITARY OPERATIONS ON THE  
TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

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## CONCEPTUAL LANDMARKS OF RESEARCH

**The topicality and importance of the problem addressed.** In the context of security issues and challenges in the eastern European area, the tendencies of states to redefine the geographical area will influence, in an appropriate manner, the geopolitical phenomenon. Therefore, addressing the dimensions of regional security represents a necessity at both theoretical and applied level, in a motivated relationship from the perspective of military geography, as a component part of military science.

Being a component of military science, military geography is generally defined as a branch of general geography and, at the same time, of military science, which studies all geographical phenomena in terms of the requirements and purposes of military actions. Therefore, military geography, as a constituent part of military science, studies the influence of geographical factors on the conduct of military actions. Thus, the military knowledge of the geographical space and its interaction with the laws and principles of armed struggle in the planning and organization of operations lead us to reaffirm that a thorough knowledge of the principles of fair and creative use of geographical elements in military actions is a requirement paramount in achieving success. The geographical conditions, the territory, the orographic and geomorphological system can impose determinations in the adoption of strategic and operational concepts, particularities in the organization of the armed forces structure, their deployment in different geographical areas, the choice of maneuver and defensive or offensive alignments. The analysis of the evolution of military conflicts throughout history and especially in the twentieth century, the beginning of the twenty-first century, shows that military actions have been marked by significant changes, taking place in various environments, having a common character. and an upward dynamic. An eloquent example can serve the Russia's continued sphere of influence in the former soviet states, through the support of separatist areas such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, the eastern districts of the Republic of Moldova, and since 2014 the events in eastern Ukraine (Lugansk, Donetsk), and the annexation of Crimea, as well as recent actions in Syria. In the context of politico-military phenomena and processes, characteristic of the current era, there is a special concern of many researchers and military experts on increasing the scale of the modern military phenomenon, determined by social, political, economic changes and changing the global power report.

We believe that recent phenomena, produced on the international stage, also renovate and implement contemporary military art. Although military art is based on classical theoretical landmarks, it is enriched with new concepts, appropriate to the situation and political-military purposes. Thus, this background determined the appearance of studies and works that expand the theoretical and practical horizon of the military. At the same time, we find that the principles and laws of armed struggle remain valid even in the current conditions, regardless of whether new elements intervene in their content and application.

Based on these considerations, in this paper we propose a multilateral approach to the evolution of armed struggle, depending on the geographical factor. Thus, the evolution over time

of geography as a science, the emergence and development of military geography as a component of military science and, last but not least, the level of research on these topics on a national and international scale were subjected to research.

Therefore, the topicality and importance of the issues addressed in this research are determined by the opportunity to investigate and evaluate the level, nature and extent of military operations, this elaboration being original and conceptualized exclusively for the Republic of Moldova. In the same context, the correlation and interdependencies between the physical-geographical elements and the laws of armed struggle were highlighted, with the identification of new forms and procedures for conducting military operations, based on military experience. Capitalizing on the proposed objectives in a three-dimensional format (scientific, conceptual and applied) is indispensable by developing an academic research in the field of military science.

**Description of the situation in the field of research and identification of the issues under investigation.** In the thesis, the object of research is influenced by the particularities of the geographical area in a possible development of military operations on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. In our opinion, the research is an attempt to establish the main landmarks for the two pillars on which the thesis is based, namely: military geography, which derives from the general, and the impact of geographical space in planning and conducting military operations in the country. In this order of ideas, the literature from the west, the Russian Federation, Romania and the modest elaborations of some local authors were subjected to analysis, which allowed the extension of the issue of the evolution of military art. With reference to the influence of the geographical space in the planning and development of military operations on the national territory, we mention that this subject has been treated limited in the specialized literature. We consider that some phenomena, such as globalization or the processes of remodeling the new world order, in the context of resizing the security architecture, require the revision of old paradigms and the development of new visions, to be substantiated theoretically, validating their applicability, emerging from the peculiarities of the physical-geographic space.

Military geography, being a component of military science, is an autonomous field, this character being sufficiently argued and based on its roots and traditions over the years. With reference to the scientific-analytical elaborations from the Republic of Moldova, the issue of military geography was not deepened, compared to the research carried out internationally. Without resorting to a foray into history, we know a series of geopolitical conjunctures, which placed the current territory of the Republic of Moldova in the composition of other states, which was an impediment in establishing military geography as a discipline in this area.

Because military geography is part of general geography and in this paper we set out to investigate the origin, relationship and degree of interdependence with the latter. As an autonomous science, military geography has its own object of study, its research methods, which analyze the interaction between natural and anthropogenic geographical factors, their impact on military actions. The existence of these factors requires a scientific research with the argumentation of the share of military geography in military science.

We express the conviction that in the complex of activities of the armed struggle, the physical-geographical elements occupy an important place in its estimation, the geographical factor playing a decisive role in the organization of the structure of the armed forces, as well as their questioning.

Thus, the topicality of the proposed research topic, less approached in the local literature on the influence of the geographical area of the Republic of Moldova in order to design and conduct military operations, allows us to establish the degree of influence of these factors on military actions. At the same time, the status of permanent neutrality, enshrined in art. 11 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, considerably influences the security and defense policy of the state, as well as foreign relations [20]. As an argument of the above, the evolution of conflicts in neutral countries has demonstrated their vulnerability to modern challenges. We consider that the topicality of conducting a scientific study, based on the evolution of the armed struggle, highlights the importance of the physical-geographical element in ensuring state security. Respectively, the investigation of some blocks of problems in the field of military geography becomes indispensable and current, under epistemological and dialectical aspect, emphasizing the impact of the geographical space on the development of the armed struggle. Prior to the declaration of the statehood of the Republic of Moldova, in the local literature the approach to the topic in the case is found in general terms and we do not attest to extensive research, as the Republic of Moldova was part of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the subjects were elucidated within the limits allowed by the respective period, which led us to develop a scientific study with practical valence.

As a result, the search is becoming relevant in the context of the emergence of new risks and upheavals, as the country's geographical location is in the eastern European region, located in the areas of interest of both the Russian Federation and the west.

The specialized works elaborated by the authors from abroad do not contain approaches to the topics stated in the blocks of problems, certain research with reference to the development of military actions on the territory of the Republic of Moldova does not exist. In the content of the papers in this category, we note general approaches to the epistemological and dialectical character of modern geography, some consonants and their evolution, represented by some theorists such as: Marconis R. [96], Bailly A. and Ferras R. [14], Claval P. [45]. In Romania, the works signed by Mehedinți S. [99], Donisă I. [59], Neguț S. [108], Nicolae I. [109], Mândruț O. [97], Pârvu I had significant contributions in the field of theoretical geography. [118, p.19]. Talking about the Republic of Moldova, we can state that geography as a science appeared in medieval Moldova. Under the influence and inspiration of renounced European geographers, and the development of geography went in a tight relationship and correlation with the fundamental laws of dialectic, these being an unmediated influence on war as a social phenomenon, inclusive on struggle armed.

**As a result, we propose for research the main blocks of problems:**

- identification of some deficiencies in the analysis of the epistemological and dialectical character of geography, derived from the novelty and complexity of the topics approached for the research environment in the Republic of Moldova;

- the confirmation of military geography as a component of national military science, which studies geographical areas as theaters of military action, theaters of war, including in the states located in these theaters, in order to establish their war potential;

-the influence of the geographical space in the organizing, planning and in the conduct of military operations.

Thus, by conducting the study of the geographical space, from a military point of view, we will determine the influence of natural and artificial physical-geographical factors on military actions and we will evaluate the war potential of the state or group of states in the researched geographical area. Its area includes all components of military art, depending on the levels of armed struggle. Examining the configuration and characteristics of the national territory and taking into account the strategic and operational objectives, we will deduce the areas of operations, strategic and operative-strategic directions, as well as the defense alignments, according to the levels of armed struggle.

**The purpose and objectives of the thesis.** The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the importance of military geography, by elucidating the significance of physical and geographical elements and operationalizing the concept of fragmenting the territory into areas of operations, in order to plan, organize and execute military operations in defense and state security.

Achieving the stated goal requires the achievement of the following **objectives**:

- performing the epistemological analysis and the geographical dialectic, based on the historiographical elaborations, being in an obvious interdependence with military art.

- highlighting the fundamental laws of dialectics (unity and struggle of opposites, the course of quantitative to qualitative changes, denial of negation), which are in an interdependence with military art;

- revealing the interdisciplinary character of geographical science by elucidating the geographical space in which various processes and phenomena occur, also among of the military nature, in the context of the approach from the military geography perspective;

- arguing the need to recognize military geography as a component of domestic military science;

- determining the theoretical directions of military geography in the study of natural or anthropic geographical elements;

- highlighting the correlation between the physical-geographical elements and the laws and principles of armed struggle, depending on the level of military actions;

- the theoretical-conceptual analysis of the laws and principles of armed struggle, as it results from the analysis of some scientific and specialized works of some authors from Romania, the Russian Federation and some countries from the west;

- identification for the Republic of Moldova of areas of operations, directions, alignments and objectives in terms of offensive or defensive military factors, as shown by the analysis of geographical space.

**The research hypothesis.** The lead of military operations, in the context of a war of aggression on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, will have the desired results, if in the preparation and conduct of these will be taken into account the characteristics of the geographical space and their influence over the armed struggle.

**Scientific research methodology.** Considering the three-dimensional character (geography, military geography, military operations), in the paper we used general-scientific and partially-scientific research methods. The peculiarities of the study required the application of specific methods, as with the help of these methods of investigation geography is correlated with other scientific fields. Therefore, the geographical factor provides a wide range of information for the design of military operations. We emphasize that, in order to study the general characteristics of some phenomena, longitudinal observations and studies are needed (for example, the demographic fluctuations of a region), and in order to know the current phenomena it is necessary to investigate the causes which have roots in the past.

During the research, methods were used, such as: analysis and synthesis method, historical method, geographical method, cartographic method, critical analysis, comparative method, statistical method, quantitative method (statistical-mathematical), typology method, analog method, approach systemic events, the method of simulating military actions (modeling) and others. In the process of researching the problem we were guided by the principle of historicism. At the same time, during the investigation, the historiographical principle was widely applied, researching the historical evolution through the prism of the sequence of phenomena.

**The scientific novelty** of this paper lies in the fact that, for the first time in military science in the Republic of Moldova, it addresses the issues and tools of military geography related to national strategic needs and provides a geographical-military analysis of the territory of the Republic of Moldova. The latter was based on the content of historical and factual documents, of the profile literature, on the analysis of the national geographical space and of the principles of armed struggle. The armed actions carried out in this space throughout history and the forecasts of their development in the future have led us to scientific-practical results, which highlight the influence of the national geographical area on the armed struggle. The complexity of approaching the problem is also due to the fact that it was analyzed from several points of view, namely:

- to make an overall synthesis of the main aspects concerning the impact of geographical epistemology and dialectic on war as a social phenomenon, including the armed struggle;



- elaboration of an interdisciplinary study by elucidating the geographical space in which various processes and phenomena take place, based on the geopolitical evolutions in the eastern European space;

- revealing and exposing the historiographical analysis of the mutations of the military operations, materialized in new forms and procedures for their development, within a possible armed conflict or crisis situations.

**The theoretical importance and the applicative value of the paper** are expressed by the elaboration of an interdisciplinary study and of the result of some researches, having in origin the achievements of both the national and the international military science. At the same time, we consider that this paper is a pioneering one in the Republic of Moldova, thanks to the interdisciplinary nature of the research, carried out in the perimeter of military science. During the elaboration of the study, several theoretical approaches were applied, which opened new perspectives in researching different sources in order to clarify the necessary conceptual clarifications and achieve, consequently, the proposed objectives on a theoretical-methodological level, as well as in terms of their implementation.

In general, the theoretical significance of investigations lies in the presentation and representation of the theoretical-methodological framework, justified and argued scientifically, with interdisciplinary character, in the existing methodological and analytical terms:

- military operations are analyzed in order to determine the correlation between the physical-geographical elements, the laws and the principles of the armed struggle;

- approaches and a theoretical-consonantal analysis of the laws and regulations of the armed struggle, depending on the level of military actions, summary and analysis of the algorithm in order to analyze the theater of military actions, having a military element;

- a first generalization of the areas of operations, directions, alignments and objectives for the Republic of Moldova is submitted, in the context of the geopolitical architecture of the current eastern European space.

**Applicative valorization of the work:** the given scientific study, considering the character and its nature, represents a theoretical-consonantal support with a high application value among the students, masters and doctoral students from the Military Academy of the Armed Forces "Alexandru cel Bun":

- the work serves as a bibliographic and methodological-didactic source in the process of professional training in the academic environment, of the experts from the Center for Strategic Studies of Defense and Security and from the Military Centers.

- providing information with a theoretical and aplicative character within the system of planning military operations, which are directly affected by the influence of geographical factors in the planning of military actions and the judicious use of military forces on the national territory, in the geographical-military conditions of the Republic of Moldova.

The applicative character of this study is demonstrated by the author's success in evoking the practical significance of theoretical reasoning, which serve as a basis for the

emergence of new directions and aspects in researching the above-mentioned topics, insufficiently studied in domestic military science. The argumentation of the need to theoretically redefine the topics approached in the specific conditions of the Republic of Moldova under a theoretical-applicative aspect will contribute to solving some vital problems of the state during the onset of an aggression or crisis situation.

**The main scientific results submitted for support are:**

1. In national military science, military geography requires to be considered as a separate branch, with the aim of investigating the influence of geographical space on armed struggle.

2. Delimitation of the national territory in two areas of operations: North and South.

3. Defining the operative and strategic directions of the South-Eastern theater of military actions, within which the territory of the Republic of Moldova is included. Thus, referring to the characteristics of the geographical space of the Republic of Moldova, the operative directions within the theater will acquire an operative-strategic value, and the tactical ones an operative value.

4. Modeling the structure of the armed forces according to the characteristics of the geographical space, namely: the characteristics of the strategic, operative-strategic and operative directions fall within the areas of operations.

5. Establishment of operational commands in peacetime, capable, in case of crisis or war, to take command of the groups of operative level forces, which will be formed during this period.

6. The deployment of Large Units and Units to be within the probable limits of the offensive directions of a potential adversary, in deep districts, according to the operational and strategic destination of the Large Units in relation to the strategic level responsibilities resulted from the classification within the areas of operations.

**Approval of results.** The thesis is elaborated within the Doctoral School of the Military Academy of the Armed Forces, being presented, examined and supported in the meeting of the Scientific Council.

The subjects approached in the respective study are part of the area of scientific interests of the author, the results of the investigations are very well known at the lectures of a special course within the Military Academy of the Armed Forces "Alexandru cel Bun". The results obtained were presented, discussed and approved at national and international conferences: Interuniversity Conference entitled "The evolution of military science in the context of new threats to national and regional security", AMFA, Chişinău, December 17, 2015; Conference with international participation "Development of the national army in the context of deepening democratic reforms", AMFA, Chişinău, April 14, 2016; International Conference: "Republic of Moldova within the context of the new architecture of regional security", AMFA, Chişinău, 19 May 2016; International Scientific Conference "XXI Strategies: The Complexity and Dynamics of the Security Environment", Bucharest, November 24-25, 2016; Interuniversity

Conference entitled “The evolution of military science in the context of new threats to national and regional security”, Chişinău, December 15, 2016; Scientific Conference with international participation, entitled “Development of the national army in the context of deepening democratic reforms”, AMFA, Chişinău, March 1, 2017; Conference: “Security strategic environment: Trends and challenges”, AMFA, Chişinău, 18 May 2017; International Scientific Conference Strategies XXI: “The complexity and dynamism of the security environment”, Bucharest, December 7-8, 2017; Interuniversity conference entitled: "The evolution of military science in the context of new threats to national and regional security", AMFA, Chişinău, December 21, 2017.

**Thesis publications.** The scientific research was materialized in articles published in the specialized scientific literature of the Republic of Moldova, as well as an article published in the collection of materials of the scientific conference in Romania.

**The volume and structure of the thesis** includes: introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, being completed with bibliography and annexes. The paper has a volume of 140 pages of basic text.

**Keywords:** Republic of Moldova, military geography, war, armed struggle, theater of war, theater of military actions, areas of operations, strategic directions, operational directions, tactical directions, strategic, operational and tactical objectives.

## THE CONTENT OF THE THESIS

In the **introduction** it is argued the topicality and importance of the problem, the purpose and objectives, the geographical framework, the methodology of scientific research, the scientific novelty of the results, the solution of the studied problem, the theoretical importance and applicative value of the paper, the approval of the results and the summary of thesis chapters.

The analysis of the evolution of military conflicts throughout history and especially in the twentieth century, the beginning of the twenty-first century, shows us that the evaluation of military actions has undergone profound changes, taking place in several environments, having a multilateral character, assembled, more complex, being in a continuous dynamic. At the same time, we are convinced that, in the complex of activities of the armed struggle, it is determined by numerous factors, among which the physical-geographical ones occupy an important place.

In the first chapter, entitled "**Conceptual determinations regarding military geography**", was achieved the analysis of works and sources on the main theoretical concepts on geography and, in particular, the significance of military geography as an interdisciplinary branch closely connected with military science and geography. Given the lack of special research in the investigation, however, we intend to try to elucidate the most relevant topics on this topic. In the same vein, in order to conduct an interdisciplinary research, we will highlight a series of studies and reflections on the role and importance of geography, identifying the main factors that led to military geography, as well as the place and role of this phenomenon in the current context. In the process of analyzing the peculiarities of the epistemology of geography, we identified that they are based on several researches developed both in the west and in the Russian

Federation, and in the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, the compartment reflects the interdependence between the physical-geographical elements of the space with the laws and principles of armed struggle, depending on the level of military actions.

The historiographical approach is subject to research in the first subchapter, **"Epistemology and dialectics of geography"**, the emphasis being on elucidating the epistemology and dialectics of geography. In the epistemological approach carried out, in order to satisfy the exigency of the research, we focused our attention on studying the evolution of geographical science throughout history and, last but not least, of its evolution in the national space. Scientific research in this field on the issue, on the place and role of geography, we find in western research. In this way, bibliographic sources are used differently, but they highlight the object of study. The reference authors concerned with the origins of geography are Marconis R. [28], Bailly A. and Ferras R. [6], Claval P. [18]. In Romania, significant contributions in the field of theoretical geography had the works signed by Mehedinți S. [30], Mihăilescu V. [31], Donisă I. [24], Neguț S. [33], Nicolae I. [34], Mândruț O. [29]. In this context is the work of researcher O. Mândruț, entitled "Elements of epistemology of geography". Thus, the author concerned with the interest in geography considers that epistemology is a structured reflection on scientific research, based on a certain gnoseological option. From an epistemological point of view, a science has legitimacy if it deals preferentially with a certain object of study (or object field), has a certain methodology, a system of assertions and laws, as well as, if possible, a system of derivation of truths [29, p 10]. The visions of I. Pârvu are in the same order of ideas, which subjects to analysis the object of epistemological research and represents it in the validation of the foundations of empirical science through the possibilities of testing [36, p 19]. We believe that geography has its roots in antiquity, and scientific knowledge begins much later. Initially, in the process of knowing geography, the method of rationalism was applied, which belongs to the first current in the configuration of epistemology. We mention the contribution of Herodotus (484-425 BC), "the father of history", who is considered by many scholars as the "father of geography", thanks to his visions set out in 450-420 BC. Hr. On the pages of the work "Histories", the latter becoming a representative in Antiquity. We mention that the respective work represents a special interest for the Republic of Moldova by the fact that it provides descriptions and geographical information of this territory. We note a series of works written during the Middle Ages, which influenced the evolution of geographical science. A significant scientific weight has the work of I. Kant "Critique of pure reason," in which the author came to the conclusion that nature and universality, proper to reasoning, come from the forms, independent of experience, of sensitivity / intuition (space and time) [ 27]. Therefore, in the eighteenth century, new currents emerged such as: empiricism [35, p. 204] and positivism [37, p. 143]. Epistemological realism is the last current that claims that scientific methods belong to an objective reality and are independent of the subject [23, p. 186].

We notice that some geographical data regarding our land started to appear only after the establishment of the Medieval Moldovan State (14th century). Thus, the ruler of Moldavia,

D. Cantemir wrote the work "Description of Moldavia" (1716), which includes three parts: the geographical part, the political part and the social part [49, p. 17]. In the XVII-XVIII centuries, the chroniclers of Moldova, M. Costin and I. Neculce describe valuable information about the nature, economy and population of the country, in the Chronicles of the Country of Moldova. In the nineteenth century, under the influence of the development of geography in many European countries, geographical research expanded to Bessarabia [21]; [25]

Under the influence of the Russian school, after 1812, there are some monographs in the geographical field such as: "Region of Bessarabia," by A. Zaşciuk and "Geography of the Government of Bessarabia," by P.P. Soroka. The geographer, bessarabian of nationality, Zamfir Arbore wrote the work "Bessarabia in the 15th century-19th century", in which he characterized the natural conditions, the economy, the population, the human settlements, and at the beginning of the 20th century he elaborated the "Geographical Dictionary of Bessarabia" [4].

In the interwar period 1918-1940, various geographical researches were carried out by scientists in Romania, with reference to the territory between the Nistru and Prut. The work "Geology of Bessarabia," with reference to the territory between the Dniester and the Prut, made by T. Porucik, later, N. Moroşanu, N. Florov, C. Brătescu developed studies dedicated to researching geological deposits of Quaternary age. Of an indisputable value remains the work of T. Porucik "The relief of the territory between the Prut and Nistru", written in 1929, in which the researcher amply characterizes the exogenous processes and the forms of relief created by them [19].

In 1946, the branch of the U.R.S.S Academy of Sciences was organized in Chişinău, this being an opportunity to continue research in the geographical field, and in 1960 the Academy of Sciences of RSSM was created. In 1966, the Department of Geography was opened within the Academy, and in 1992 - the Institute of Geography of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, renamed in 2006 - the Institute of Ecology and Geography.

As in the other sciences, the evolution of geography took place in accordance with the laws of dialectics, dialysis representing a theory and a method of knowing the reality and the laws of its becoming and the development of nature. Therefore, dialectic, at the same time, is ontology, gnoseology and logic, these sides of dialectic being in an indestructible unity. The laws of dialectics are the most general laws of the development of nature, society, and human thought.

At the same time, the fundamental laws of dialectics (unity and struggle of opposites, the transition of quantitative to qualitative changes and the denial of negation) are expressed by universal laws of objective reality and its reflection in consciousness, which are interdependent with military art. pp. 216, 413, 417].

In the second subchapter, "**Theoretical aspects regarding the evolution of military geography**", the paradigms regarding the evolution of military geography are elucidated, respectively its definition and object of study. The issue of the role of military geography and the influence of the geographical factor on military actions has been in the attention of many military researchers. Thus, a significant contribution in the promotion of military geography contains the works of Romanian Marshal A. Averescu, who considers that "Military Geography means the

national study of geographical elements of any nature, in terms of their impact on military operations" [ 5, pp. 13]. In the same order of ideas are presented the works of researchers: N. Fălcaianu, J. Popovici, C. Teodorescu [41, p. 15]. Also, a significant scientific weight has the work of General N. Ciobanu, in which the author formulates a new definition of military geography, this being approached as a "frontier science" [9, p.70].

Referring to the russian historiography on the approach of the topic, the research brings us to the eighteenth century in which the russian scientist M. Lomonosov introduced the term of military geography, later, through a significant contribution to the development of military geography, D. Miliutin was noted. Thus military geography in the russian conception is stipulated as follows: defined as both a science and a discipline that studies the military aspects of geography and the possibility of their application in the military field, this being a component of military science. Military geography consists of three compartments: strategic military geography, the study of states in terms of geographical-military, the study of theaters of military action [43, p. 384].

In our opinion, the object of study of military geography encompasses the geographical area with all its natural and artificial elements, the war potential of the states in the studied geographical areas and the influence of natural geographical factors on the organization, control and conduct of the military. We consider that it is an important concern for researchers, neglected to a certain extent, would become the study, and the use of methods specific to military geography, of the influence and vital interest in the Republic of Moldova. In this order of ideas, taking into account the retraction of the borders of some states, military geography is destined to elaborate studies and analyzes regarding not only the configuration of the territories of the new states, their natural conditions and resources, their economic, demographic and military potential, but also their geological orientations of these, being in the sphere of interest or influence of the Republic of Moldova. Thus, the history of conflicts shows that success in war depends on a correct appreciation of the land and its exploitation. The physical and geographical importance of the terrain should not be considered a guarantee, especially since the difference between victory and defeat often results from the choice of the battlefield. In a broad sense, military geography can indicate the duration of military conflicts and all activities carried out at the strategic and operational level.

The third subchapter, entitled "**Space and armed struggle**", highlights and systematizes the factors regarding the analysis of geographical space in the vision of military specialists from both east and west, emphasizing the brief presentation of the place and role of the geographical factor in armed struggle, as it has been accepted by military theorists from antiquity to the present day.

The geographical location of a state (or group of states) greatly influences their geopolitical situation, including the deployment of the armed struggle at all three levels. When investigating this phenomenon, the laws and principles that directly influence the conduct of the armed struggle were investigated. Therefore, the russian and soviet literature, but also the

western one, offers us a conceptualization of the laws and principles of armed struggle, being made a first attempt to define them. After studying the laws and principles of armed struggle, I came to the conclusion that, in most cases, they are treated similarly. In this context, within the national military science we find that the armed struggle will take place in compliance with the following laws: the law of mutual influence between politics and armed struggle; the law of unity of actions; the law of concordance between ends, forces and means; the law of the ratio of forces; the law of the growing scale of armed struggle; the law of dependence on the forms and procedures of military actions on the level of development of weapons and combat equipment.

At the same time, the principles of armed struggle are sometimes seen as fundamental norms that must be respected in military actions and as truths that no longer need to be demonstrated. In our opinion, the acceptance of principles as fundamental “norms”, which must be observed in military actions, is necessary in order to highlight the imperative-normative aspect of the principles.

Summarizing all the principles identified in several sources, we present them as follows: the principle of permanent combat capability of subunits; the principle of freedom of action; the principle of concentrating efforts; the principle of unity of combat actions; the principle of dispersal of forces and means; the principle of economy of forces and means; the principle of cooperation; the principle of surprise; the principle of maneuver; the principle of restoring combat capability over time; the principle of ensuring multilateral combat action; the principle of uninterrupted and safe management of subunits.

In this context, the laws and principles of the armed struggle have a double meaning, from a theoretical point of view, they create the possibility of elaborating the concepts, the doctrine of using the categories of forces, and from a practical point of view, it contributes to the multilateral security of the armed forces. preparation and conduct of military actions.

In the following, we try to present, in a succinct way, a series of terms, notions and concepts that are used in the planning of military actions and that, at the same time, can be said that it takes part from the instrumentation of the strategic or operational design of an operation, framed in the contextual analysis of the physical-geographical factors, thus results from the articulation of the military geography in the military reasoning, at all levels of the military action (strategist, oratorative and tacit). Depending on the political and economic conditions and the mutations of the armed conflicts, there was a tendency to increase the street factor, it showed the need to delimit the states, regions and areas in which the war is taking place. At present, military geography operates with such notions as: the theater of war, the theater of military actions and areas of operations [46, p. 51]

From a geographical-military point of view, the Republic of Moldova is a component part of the theater of military actions in the South-East [26, p. 229].

Noting the need for knowledge and a detailed analysis of a theater of military action, we recommend that in the framework of the staff, the following structure-framework of analysis to be used for the specific purpose:

-general data,frequency,value of the district(strip) of subsequent military actions (operations);

- natural conditions (complex or individual);
- orative reorganization of the territory;
- the political and economic characteristics of the geographical area analyzed;
- general conclusions and recommendations.

Currently, in the context of those mentioned, analyzing the configuration of the national territory and taking into account the objectives of strategic importance, the probable directions that converge towards the territory of the Republic of Moldova, we propose the fragmentation of the national territory by areas of operations.

Thus, the area of operations includes objectives, directions and alignments of strategic, operational and tactical significance, the maintenance of which substantially influences the development of strategic defense and the conduct of the offensive for the liberation of the national territory [1, p. 348].

This way of approaching the national territory, in the context of the regulation and deployment of military actions, is a new element, which will be capitalized in chapters two and three, providing a clear picture of the researched subjects.

The second chapter, entitled "**Geographical space of the Republic of Moldova and its influence on the conduct of military operations**", we referred to the geographical-military description of the territory of the Republic of Moldova, space, environmental and geographical factors, as well as the influence on military actions. Although, in relation to the objective material factors, on which the military potential of the state is based, the geographical factor occupies a less significant place, it is the object of study of the present paper. At the same time, this study was conducted based on the analysis of the national geographical area and its influence on the conduct of military operations, and thus we became familiar with the conditions and natural resources of the country. Therefore, in the Republic of Moldova this subject, being studied by military geography as a component part of the military sciences, for various subjective and objective reasons, remained outside of the research area.

The first subchapter, entitled "**Geographical-military description of the territory of the Republic of Moldova-space, geographical environmental factors and their influence on military actions**", presents, from a physical-geographical point of view, the country's territory as a component of the Eastern European Plain, and politically, the Republic of Moldova is part of the so-called "gray zone," between the EU, on the one hand, and the Russian Federation, on the other, due to which political and economic risks have become perceptible. We consider that the art of studying the field, of appreciating just the influence it has in observation, masking and decision making is an important link in the complex of activities of estimating the situation. Knowledge of the geographical-military characteristics of the terrain is a basic element, as the troops face them from the moment of hostilities, with a wide variety of details and characteristics specific to the terrain. At the same time, the tactical properties will depend, in turn, on the



climatic and atmospheric conditions, the season, an objective necessity, without which the preparation and conduct of military actions cannot be conceived. All this leads us to say that the knowledge of the national territory creates conditions for choosing the most advantageous forms and procedures for conducting military actions, establishing and setting up operational devices. From a military point of view, the geospatial factor was permanently in the sights of military theorists, and based on historical experience and geopolitical mutations that took place in the armed struggle were developed and made available numerous theories on the relationship between phenomena, environment - armed struggle ". Thus, some theories amply, beyond measure, the role of geographical conditions of a territory on the evolution of military actions, while others reduce the relevance of this phenomenon. At the same time, the literature provides us with realistic assessments of the role of this factor and opinions whose viability has been confirmed and tested over time in all wars and armed conflicts. Therefore, geographical conditions impose requirements and particularities in the organization of the armed forces, setting priorities between categories of forces, types of weapons, deployment, endowment with weapons and military equipment, training of personnel and selection of forms and procedures of combat. Turning to several sources in the literature, we can conclude that regardless of the advantages and disadvantages of geographical conditions, their influence is not determined, does not decide the outcome of the war, meaning the operations. The geographical environment cannot determine the end of war or military action as victories or losses can be achieved in this area. In this context, we can conclude that the determining role, however, belongs to the conscious human factor, animated by the cause and purpose for which it fights. At the same time, the influence of the geospatial factor is manifested by the extension in space, as well as with geographical-military features such as: relief, hydrography, coverage, communications, resources, works and military objectives existing in this space. Referring to the territory of the Republic of Moldova, regarding the influence of geographical elements on military actions, we mention that the relief is varied, uneven, fragmented, comprising various forms: plateaus, highlands, hills such as: Moldavian Plateau, Ciuluc Plateau, the Nistru Plateau, the Central Moldavian Plateau, the Tigheciului Plateau, the Northern Moldavian Plain, the Southern Moldavian Plain and the Lower Nistru Plain [40]. From the point of view of military actions, they can cover a variety of forms, although the ground generally does not pose complex problems for both the offensive and the defense. Therefore, the plains favor offensive actions that do not face decisive impediments, the defense is disadvantaged due to factors that hinder the realization of the defense.

We find that the hill and plateau regions, as well as the plains, require the presence and use of mechanized troops, tanks and other weapons. In turn, the climate is an important natural factor that influences the conduct of military actions through its aspects such as: temperature variations, atmospheric precipitation and wind regime.

Another factor that influences the offensive and defense is the hydrographic network, as it forms natural impediments, disadvantages the attacker, and the defender has the ability to slow

down or reduce the intensity of the opponent's offensive or even stop it. So, we can conclude that watercourses can be alignments of operational importance, sometimes strategic, and the Nistru river and the Prut river on the portion that runs through the territory of the Republic of Moldova, are important alignments of strategic importance.

Regarding the vegetation of the Republic of Moldova, it is rich and varied according to the number of species and spread zonally, its diversity being determined by the geographical position of the territory and the variety of natural conditions. The forests are peculiar, so they benefit the defense by providing conditions for masking, shelter and long-term resistance, and the offensive encounters difficulties in organizing military actions.

The demographic factor, population, is another important feature of the geographical description of a geographical area or state.

In a such context, the national communications system is an objective requirement, resulting from the need to ensure connections between different areas of the country, as well as the need to ensure the supply and sale of material goods. The national communications system includes: terrestrial communications, water communications, air communications, telecommunications. From a military point of view, the communications system is an inseparable part of the logistics system, without which we cannot conceive of the organization and conduct of military operations.

In the second subchapter, "**Geographical-military description of the South-East Theater of Military Actions**", is analyzed the geographical space that is one of the determinants of military art with influence on the preparation and conduct of military actions. At the same time, it offers us the possibility to examine the described space, through the prism of the confrontations that have taken place over time.

From a geographical point of view, the Republic of Moldova is located in the Southeast Europe, and from a military point of view, it is mentioned differently in the literature. Thus, F.Gârz, in the work "NATO's Eastern Extension" the term "theater" is called "Southeast Military Action Theater," while in other Romanian works it has another name, namely "Military Action Theater from the southwest". At the same time, in the opinion of soviet and NATO military experts, this area is included in the theater of southern military actions. In this context, reported on the location of the Republic of Moldova in the south-eastern region of the Europe, we consider that the name of the theater of military actions should be more south-eastern.

We emphasize that the territory between the limits of the theater of military actions belongs to several states with different historical traditions, cultures and levels of development, strategic interests and specific orientations in their foreign policy. Thus, the theater includes the following states: France (Corsica Island), Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Albania, Israel, Cyprus, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Republic of Moldova [26].

Regarding the physical-geographical characteristics of TAM-SE, this geographical area is composed of a geographical-spatial complex which, by extent and geographical coverage

related to the European continent and neighboring areas, is defining in the analysis and determination of geographical importance and significance. Military of the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

This geographical area includes the entire range of continental geographical systems: lowlands and plains, plateaus, mountain ranges, river basins, urban agglomerations, etc. [14]

Therefore, the plain regions occupy a relatively small area within the theater of southeastern military actions, the most important being the Bridge Plain, the Middle Dunărea Plain, the Lower Dunărea Plain and the Ukrainian Plain, including those in the Republic of Moldova (Northern Moldavian Plain, Lower Dunărea Plain and Southern Moldavian Plain). They are the main depression regions, with a developed communication system, which includes the most important directions that will allow the conduct of operations with groups of forces of strategic level. We remind you that they have a flat surface, rich in food resources and include agro-industrial districts and developed industries. The plains benefit from conducting offensive operations, offering great maneuverability with forces of all kinds, especially with armor, and favor the use of weapons of mass destruction, with maximum effects. We mention that the watercourses in the plain regions are the only natural obstacles that create difficulties for the offensive, at the same time benefiting the defensive side. In general, however, the offensive can manifest its full superiority over the defense, through which the combat actions acquire a special character from that of the enemy.

The following compartment represents hill and plateau regions such as: the hilly regions of western Hungary from the Drava and Sava rivers, between the Sava river and the Dinaric Alps, the subcarpathian hills of Romania, the hill regions and the North African coastal strip; the Karst plateau in the northwest of the former Yugoslavia, the plateaus in Romania, the plateaus in the Republic of Moldova (Central Moldavian Plateau, Nistru Plateau, Northern Moldavian Plateau and Ciuluc Plateau), Pre-Balkan and Deliorman Plateau in Bulgaria, Volano-Podolic Plateau and Plateau of Anatolia [26].

The third compartment includes the mountainous region, which is most of the theater of military actions in the Southeast and belongs to the Alpine-Carpathian-Himalayan system, the main mountain ranges being the Apennines, Alps, Carpathians, Dinaric Alps, Pindus Mountains, Balkans, Pontic, Taurus and Antitaurus mountains. We mention that the mountainous relief is predominant on the theater of military actions in the southeast, and the mountain ranges have different orientations, which favors or disfavors the offensive or defense, and depending on the orientation of tactical and operational directions will print a specific character of military actions. [2.3].

If we refer to the maritime space of the southeastern theater of military actions, it includes the Black Sea, the Marble Sea, the Aegean Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Adriatic Sea, the Ionian Sea, the Tyrrhenian Sea. Large-scale military actions can take place in the East and Center of the Mediterranean Sea, where the maritime space allows the deployment and maneuvering of important maritime forces.

We mention that the hydrographic network on the theater of southeastern military actions is varied in orientation, flow and value as an obstacle, being influenced by the great diversity of landforms and climate, by the variation of atmospheric precipitation. In general, as it is claimed, the hydrographic network is further developed in the north-eastern part of the southeastern military action theater. In the plain regions, most watercourses have an orientation almost perpendicular to the axis of operational directions and follow each other at relatively short distances, which sometimes requires forcing one or two watercourses in a single day of fighting.

Taking into account these factors, the following strategic and operational ground directions were established within the Southeast Military Action Theater: Western Strategic Direction; Southeast Strategic Direction; North-East Strategic Directorate [26].

The Republic of Moldova being located on the North-East strategic direction, comprising three operative directions, respectively: the Podolica operative direction; the Central Ukrainian Operational Directorate and the South Ukrainian Operational Directorate [26].

In the content of the third subchapter, entitled “**Areas of operations of the Republic of Moldova**”, we aimed to address a less elucidated problem in the local literature, which refers to the areas of operations on the national territory and their characteristics. The Republic of Moldova, being on the strategic north-east direction, includes three operative directions, respectively: the Podolica operative direction; the Central-Ukrainian operational direction and the South-Ukrainian operational direction. Thus, based on the fact that the mentioned operational directions include most of the strategic objectives on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, we consider that the given directions will be of operative-strategic value.

Therefore, the operative-strategic direction Podolică descends from north to south from the Volâno-Podolic Plateau and enters the territory of the Republic of Moldova, comprising the space between the Prut and Nistru rivers, with the axis through Ocnița locality, continuing on the direction Drochia, Bălți, Chișinău, Causeni and another branch in the direction of Chisinau, Cimișlia, Cahul. The actions in this direction aim at the penetration of the attacker's forces on the territory of the country, in order to conquer the main politico-military centers, including the capital Chișinău. Also, the actions in this direction can aim, depending on the proposed objective, to achieve the junction with the forces that would act on the Central-Ukrainian and South-Ukrainian operational directions and to encircle our forces in the districts with the center of Chișinău and Bălți.

In this sense, we specify that the Central Ukrainian operational-strategic direction passes with the axis on the territory of the Republic of Moldova on the directions Soroca, Bălți, Ungheni and another direction - Tiraspol, Hâncești and Ungheni. The actions in the given directions will aim at encircling their own forces in the district with the center of Chișinău.

The next operational-strategic South-Ukrainian direction passes with the axis on the territory of the Republic of Moldova on the direction Belgorod-Dnestrovsk, Basarabasca, Chișinău, with variants to Belgorod-Dnestrovsk, Taraclia and Cahul. The action in this direction will aim at splitting the territory of the country (of the Southern area), simultaneously with the

occupation of the country's capital Chişinău, in cooperation with the opponent's forces, which will act on the Central-Ukrainian direction.

Following the study and geographical-military analysis of TAM-SE and the geographical positioning of the Republic of Moldova within TAM-SE and in relation to the strategic and operational directions that cross this geographical area, we reached the following conclusions:

a) in the current politico-military context and in the situation of neutrality of the Republic of Moldova, it is imperative to have a thorough knowledge, from a geographical-military point of view, of the main social, economic, cultural, spatial and military characteristics of our country;

b) the identification and description of the possible military actions, which can be carried out on the territory of the Republic, must take into account the immovable laws of the armed struggle correlated with the geographical-military characteristics of the natural territory;

c) reconciling the mode of action, specified in the combat doctrines and regulations of the National Army, with the strategic and operational needs and requirements for planning, organizing and executing military operations;

d) establishing and theorizing from a doctrinal point of view the Areas of Operations on the territory of the Republic of Moldova; In the current politico-military context, the description of the Areas of Operations requires a thorough approach, which responds mainly to the military-strategic needs of organization and planning of military operations by the National Army, and on the other hand, to correspond to national interests.

From this perspective, we propose, in order of doctrinal substantiation of use of national forces in defense of the country, as well as from the perspective of strategic and operational planning related to geographical and military realities, arising from the geographical position of Moldova within TAM-SE, as the country territory to correspond to a number of 2 (two) Operating Zones, North and South.

In this way, the conceptual geographical-military framework is created, which will use the tools of military geography in the process of planning military actions at the national level. The delimitation of the territory of the Republic of Moldova in the two Areas of Operations is presented in detail in Annex no. 21 a and b.

When proposing the establishment of two Areas of Operations on the national territory, the following factors were taken into account: the directions, the probable objectives of penetration of a possible aggressor on the national territory; the geographical configuration of the territory; the necessity and possibility of conducting military actions with own forces and means; the possibilities of maneuvering, cooperation and support of the troops for the different categories of armed forces, types of weapons; preparing the territory for defense (fortifications, hydro-improvement system, communications, warehouses, aerodromes, etc.) existing or planned to be carried out; achieving operational and strategic goals in the course of armed struggle.

Thus, *the north area of operations* is delimited to the west by the state border between the Republic of Moldova and Romania on the Prut River, to the northeast and east with Ukraine on the Nistru River and to the south on the alignment of Taxobeni, Vălcineț, Nisporeni, Căinari and Tiraspol. At the same time, the area of operations includes the northern, central and southeastern part of the republic. The 20 districts included in it are as follows: Briceni, Ocnita, Edinet, Dondușeni, Râșcani, Drochia, Soroca, Glodeni, Floresti, Șoldănești, Fălești, Sângerei, Telenești, Rezina, Călărăsi, Orhei, Strășeni, Criuleni, Dubăsari, Anenii Noi and the territorial-administrative units on the left bank of the Nistru, except the Slobozia district.

We note that *the southern area of operations* is bounded on the west by the state border between the Republic of Moldova and Romania on the Prut River, on the southeast by the border with Ukraine on the Nistru River, and on the north-border Tiraspol, Chisinau and further at Ungheni. At the same time, the area of operations includes the western, central and southern part of the Republic of Moldova. It includes the 12 districts (Ungheni, Nisporeni, Hâncești, Ialoveni, Căușeni, Ștefan Vodă, Leova, Cimișlia, Basarabeasca, Cantemir, Taraclia, Cahul) and the Gagauzia Autonomous Territorial Unit, as well as the Slobozia district on the left bank of the Nistru.

We mention that within the areas of operations we identified, described and analyzed the main operational-strategic and operational directions, strategic and operational alignments and probable assumptions of aggression which is a key element of the use of armed forces in these areas of operations. Therefore, the proposed areas of operations are geographical areas in the national territory, divided by the main physical and geographical elements, which give military actions a degree of independence in each of them and also requires coordinating the efforts of all combat and support forces in various situations.

We consider that, as a whole, the areas of operations within the Republic of Moldova offer favorable conditions for the use of all categories of force and types of weapons, regarding the conduct of both defensive and offensive operations. The study carried out on the national territory through the prism of geographical-military analysis must lead to realistic, viable conclusions on the organization of the army, the military system, the deployment of Units and Large Units in peacetime and the operational structuring of national armed forces.

The third chapter, entitled "**Physiognomy of military operations conducted in the northern and southern areas of operations of the Republic of Moldova**", reflects the evolution of the phenomena and processes of military conflicts throughout history, with their emphasis during the twentieth century, the beginning of the 21st century. The politico-military situation of the last decades on the European continent and in the neighboring regions poses numerous threats to the security of the states. As a rule, the states with low economic and military potential are targeted. In this context, local military conflicts have become a reality, which is why we propose a brief analysis of the structural and systemic changes produced in the classical armed struggle. At the same time, we see the need to identify some of their peculiarities and their scientific substantiation.

The wars of this period show us that the area of military action has undergone considerable changes, taking place in several environments, having a multilateral and united character, there is a new branch of military art-operative art, which specializes in studying and leading a new categories of armed struggle such as the *operation*.

The first subchapter, "**Typology and structure of military operations**", is dedicated to research, conceptualization of the notion of operation in the context of the evolution of military art. Thus, during the first conflagration, the first elements of the operative art appear, which will aim at the study, planning and management of the operation, which will be subjected to subsequent testing. Therefore, in some states it has been proposed to divide military art into three levels: strategy, operational art and tactics [15].

Based on the diversity of definitions, *in our opinion, the military operation is a category of armed struggle, coordinated according to a purpose, place, time and simultaneous or successive combat missions (clashes), strikes and maneuvers carried out by groups of forces of strategic level and operative on the basis of a unique plan and conception, in order to carry out strategic, operative or operative-tactical missions in the area (district) of military actions, on operative (operational) directions, in a certain period of time.*

It is recognized by theorists that the military actions carried out by the armed forces are structured in operations corresponding to the three levels of military action: strategic, operational and tactical. Due to the nature of the military actions, they can be: serious operations of the armed struggle; stability and support operations; intermediate operations, with a wide range, in accordance with the missions pursued [45, p.77]. We find that, from the point of view of the scope, the operations are decisive and supportive. At the same time, orations have fundamental characteristics, such as ampleness, density, duration and rhythm [10, p.85]. Also, an element of major importance is the procedures for carrying out operations which, depending on the forms of operations, will be adapted at the appropriate time.

One of the key elements in the conduct of operations is the structure of the operation with its defining elements: the grouping of forces needed to act on the appropriate strategic and operational directions, the device of operations, the impact system and the genetic arrangement.

Things are different at the tactical level, where the structure of the fight is composed of three elements: the fighting device, the hitting system and the genetic arrangement of the field.

In this context, the dynamic of military action will change rapidly, as troops will face a multitude of impediments within and outside the modern battlefield, depending on the forms of operations. Therefore, the physiognomy of military actions determines us to take as a measure of first urgency the establishment of the grouping of forces according to level. At the same time, the establishment of these groups requires a series of measures in order to successfully achieve the goals of the operation and requires increased attention in the distribution of forces between the first and second echelon (reserve). In the case of offensive actions, the grouping of forces must ensure the execution of strong blows to the opponent, and in defense must be designed to focus efforts on the main directions of prohibition and at the same time create favorable situations for

intensifying subsequent combat actions. Therefore, the distribution of forces within the grouping of forces will be achieved depending on the proposed purpose and the value of the directions, missions and at the same time to ensure an appropriate proportion between the armed forces combined with the other types of weapons. So, we can consider that the device of operations is the most important pillar in the structure of defense or offensive, which directly influences the development of elements, such as: the hitting system, the genetic arrangement of the ground and the mode of action of forces and means.

Based on the factors that determine the armed struggle in the establishment of devices, we can appreciate the diversity of forms of devices adopted by the forces during the planning and conduct of military actions, which is a key principle for establishing the grouping of forces and means. In the literature, the subject on the functioning mechanisms of modern armies to the problem of constituting dissociative is treated differently. Thus, in the works elaborated by the romanian authors, the devices are adapted, taking into account the time factor [7, p. 98]. Otherwise, the subject is treated in the military science of the Russian Federation, where the formation of the devices is accompanied by the presence of the irrational factor [47, p. 13]. Another vision was expressed by US military officials, in whose opinion the devices are adapted depending on the importance of the directions of action. In this context, the devices of operations include the forces of directional effort, the forces of another direction of effort, the support forces of the forces and the reserve [44, p. 151].

In the sources of local specialty we find a different and controversial approach, it being influenced both by military science in the Russian Federation and by Romania. At present, in the treatment of this subject, no common denominator has been reached. Thus, we find some manuals of struggle, in which the forces are staggered, having the first and second echelon, to which the irrational resentment is reached, and to other echelons, the temporary resentment is reached, the distribution of forces in device being named FAI and FAU.

In our opinion, according to the requirements of the modern battlefield and according to the characteristics of the contemporary armed struggle, we believe that it would be more right at the staggering of forces to take into account the spatial principle. Therefore, the operations device must include the following elements: echelon one, the management system, the second echelon, the device elements of the support forces, the reserve and the logistics system.

In this order of ideas, another important element of the structure is the hitting system that includes the actions of all categories and systems of weapons, the means of hitting, which is performed in order to destroy (neutralize) the opponent. Thus, we emphasize that the hitting system includes the following subsystems: aviation strikes, ground artillery and anti-armor means fire, missile and anti-aircraft artillery fire, infantry armament fire [1, p. 297].

The genetic arrangement represents a very important element of the preparation of the military actions that are carried out according to the conception and missions received, the geographical-military characteristics of the field in the area of operations through all measures and works in order to create advantageous conditions for forces [47, p. 508]. We believe that the



basic elements of the structure of the operation must ensure: concentrating the effort of the forces on the directions of action depending on the form of combat, hitting the opponent with all subsystems of the hitting system, overtaking the opponent in military action, performing maneuver, maintaining firm leadership cooperation.

Subchapter two, "**The conduct of military operations on the territory of the Republic of Moldova in the areas of North and South operations**", is dedicated to research that highlights issues that have recently caused much controversy at the national and regional levels. Thus, starting from the threats and challenges in the Eastern European space, especially the events of 2014 (annexation of the Crimean peninsula), the actions carried out in the eastern part of Ukraine, but last but not least the issue of the Transnistrian conflict. In our opinion, from a military point of view, given the small territory of the Republic of Moldova, the strategic value is confirmed by the presence of military infrastructure in the eastern part of the state, which can be used in case of conflict between East and West [13].

In this order of ideas, we set out to approach the issue in cause, less elucidated in the literature of the Republic of Moldova. Emerging from the configuration of the country's borders, the spatial characteristics, the probable directions of action of a possible aggressor, we approached the hypothesis of carrying out military actions in the basic forms of armed struggle. In this context, we believe that the opinion in which such situations are excluded for the Republic of Moldova is exaggerated, as it is known that any state can become vulnerable in the conditions of destabilizing the internal or regional situation and triggering a crisis. Due to the limited area of the national territory, military actions must be designed and carried out in a relatively small space, starting from the border. We consider that from the military point of view, in the border areas, the defense will be influenced by the value as an obstacle of the watercourses that favor the organization and development of a firm defense.

Along with the ones stated above, we find that, in the context of a possible aggression, the physiognomy of military operations carried out on the territory of the Republic of Moldova will probably include the following phases: *the first phase*, will begin with the onset of aggression, summed up in the form of information and technological operations, specific to all categories of special operations.

In the *second phase*, the probable actions will be triggered by air attacks aimed at destroying the state and military infrastructure and the morale of the population, the aviation actions for the direct benefit of the land troops have a secondary weight and are limited to what is strictly necessary. Therefore, the air actions will last depending on the effect and the impact generated, especially on the fulfillment of the mission of total isolation of the forces directly on the state border, which have lost their resilience.

In the *third phase*, after the triggering of the air actions, the ground action will follow, which can start immediately after the air action or after a variable period of time. At that stage, the use of land troops is planned in order to conquer the industrial-administrative centers, then the execution of air strikes and cruise missiles will continue on the depth of strategic defense,

going on the offensive by forcing watercourses, conquering and maintaining some heads of bridge with operative-tactical value, breaking the defense on the operative depth, rejecting the possible offensive responses and conquering some alignments of operative importance, putting into operation the echelons 2, with the development of the offensive in the strategic depth and conquering the planned strategic objectives. We appreciate that the aggressor will channel his actions from the favorable directions of penetration in order to establish a total control in the areas of operations in which he entered. Under the current conditions, we can assume that the aggressor forces would act both horizontally and vertically, with large mechanized groups, aircraft and air landing troops, including both research-diversionist groups and terrorist-diversionary groups.

Subchapter three, entitled “**The aspects regarding the physiognomy of hybrid actions in the context of conducting military operations on the territory of the Republic of Moldova**”, addresses some hypotheses regarding the development of hybrid warfare on the national territory. Therefore, in the case of a hybrid war, it will not be declared, but will take place in different concepts. The situations and conditions to which we expect are extremely diverse, they are determined by political, dichotomous, economist, demographic, ethnic, historical, religious and psychological factors. As a result, the dynamic will evaluate and improve, and recent conflicts show us that in a very short time, in about 1-2 months, our functional state will be embroiled in a civil war, equivalent to a real humanitarian catastrophe.

The launch of military actions can take place, either independently and with external support, or in support of internal aggression and will aim at diminishing the economic-military potential, destroying the objectives of civilian and military infrastructure in a short time. According to the literature and based on the recent actions of Russia, regarding the annexation of Crimea, we consider that the actions in the hybrid war will be launched in three phases: *the first phase*, which consists in strategic, political and operational preparation, economic, social and state infrastructure and the establishment of the forces and means necessary for their employment;

The *second phase* consists in taking the actual actions directly to the attack, which aims at the objectives of the state and military infrastructure. As a result of multidimensional pressures, as well as the hesitations of the central government, virtually the entire army and police will be demoralized in the conduct of combat actions;

The *third phase* consists in stabilizing the situation, which represents the establishment of a new government by the eventual aggressor, which ensures the imposition of the new rules of management of the society.

At the same time, another hypothesis is included in this context: the aggression from the east and the south-east, through the so-called “Novorossia”, will include the same aggressions in order to carry out the operations.

Emerging from what we exposed, we consider that one of the problems facing the state is the return and counteracting of possible actions of sabotage and blockade of economic and social objectives, of destabilization of various countries, to the national security. At the same

time, an important task in the political and strategic conduct of the Republic of Moldova would be the early identification of these threats and the development of planning and organizing measures to maintain the constitutional order and integrity.

In this order of ideas, we mention that one of the current problems is causing a lot of controversy among military researchers about the phrase "alignment of defense" and "objective defense" impose us the addressing of these notions in the context of the development of military actions on the national territory. In this context is also included the present research on the methods of carrying out the operations of defense on alignments or objectives. From a theoretical point of view, the aeration of the objective is not the novelty, it being used over time. At the same time, the physiognomy of plowing operations, at a strategic or operative level in the Second World War, proves to us that at the moment the defense was a configuration of a continuous front, then it was organized in alignments. Although the width and depth of the plowing strips of the Large Operating Units were different, the determining factors being the area and the timer, but in the case of the defense on objectives they do not play a determining role.

We consider that in the event of a possible aggression in the conditions of the Republic of Moldova, the structure of the defense will, in general, be determined by its defining elements. In it comes the constitution of the the operative appliance, showing a contradiction in the realization of two principles: the concentration and dispersion of forces and means. From an applied point of view, the use of these reinforcements will be made by concentrating the forces on the fronts and deep depths, at the same time the dispersal of the forces will aim at the disintegration of the forces at distances and intervals that would ensure the destructive cohesion of the disintegration. In this order of ideas, the genetic arrangement, in the case of organizing the defense on the alignments, will be characterized in a system of trenches and continuous communications.

In the conditions of the defense organization on objectives, we consider that it will dominate the defense system, which will include the districts and the defense positions which will be arranged in order to carry out the circular defense and for a long time, disrupted the forbidden directions. It is obvious that within the framework of the defense operations, carried out on the national territory, new aspects of theoretical-applicative order will appear, which will aim at the defense of an important part, of a direction or of some decisive objectives, depending on the area of operations carried out in a unitary conception.

Therefore, another difference is in the classical norms regarding the strip and the defense depth of the gathering of forces, in which the forces and means will be disposed. In the context of current regional and international and political-military phenomena and social processes, in order to maintain state sovereignty, the Republic of Moldova needs to form a defense strategy, following with reverence the sources of resentment of a possible aggression, using in its essence the most suitable forms and methods of struggle.

We consider that, as a whole, the areas of operations within the Republic of Moldova offer favorable conditions for the use of all categories of force and types of weapons, regarding

the development of both defense and offensive operations. The study carried out on the national territory, from the point of view of the geographical-military analysis, must lead to realistic, viable conclusions regarding the organization of the army, the military system, the deployment of Units and Large units within the national forces and the operational structuring of the national armed forces.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The most important scientific issue under study** lies in arguing the necessity of the theoretical definition of the subjects approached in the underlying conditions of the Republic of Moldova under a theoretical-applicative aspect that would contribute to solving vital problems of the state during the onset of an aggression or crisis situation.

Based on the performed research, in the context of new threats and spills, we came to the following **conclusions**:

1. The development of geography has been possible in correlation with the fundamental laws of dialectics, as it represents a theory and method of knowing reality, with its own laws and categories and being in interdependence with the laws and regulations of the armed struggle, which contributes both to the constitution of the armed forces and to the outcome of military actions.

2. The Republic of Moldova, classified under geographical terms, is a poor state, but its significance under military conditions, on the surface and the contour of the borders, related to the overall relationship between the surface and the length of the borders, is a balanced one.

3. The analysis of military conflicts in the first decades of the third millennium has clearly highlighted the changes that have taken place in the development of military actions, which in the future will take place simultaneously in the land, air and sea. At the same time, the armed struggle will spread in all environments, and the control systems will have the ability to strike any objective, immediately after it has been released, regardless of where it is located.

4. Particular attention must be paid to the control and conduct of combat operations in areas of plains, plateaus and hills, which favors the identification and hitting of long-distance targets, also and execution of the maneuver at all levels.

5. In the most part, the state border is drawn between the space of two watercourses, the Nistru River and the Prut River, which involves the identification of favorable sectors and its forcing with troops, concentrating efforts on the acquisition and maintenance of bridge heads on these sectors.

6. Due to the numerous changes, produced in the hydrographic network over time, the geographical area has become a theater of military actions, imposing to study it carefully, and the elaborated studies to be permanently updated. The deployment of command and staff assignments on maps is necessary to be carried out directly on the ground, with the deployment of all the elements, in order for the military personnel to have a rational dexterity.

7. The strategic and operational directions within the Southeast Military Action Theater, in the Republic of Moldova, will have a greater value, they being determined by the

importance of national objectives, and the configuration and geographical-military characteristics of the national territory, the operative directions, which is going on the Republic of Moldova territory, impose its function in the operations areas.

Based on the study and the conclusions drawn, the author makes some **recommendations** on the influence of geographical area in the conduct of military operations on the national territory:

1. The Ministry of Education and Researching common with the Ministry of Defense will introduce a military course of military geography in military education in the Republic of Moldova, and for active military personnel in the training command system will study in more detail the national geographic area, in terms of its efficiently use;

2. The General Staff in order to make the conduct of the armed struggle more efficient, in the context of a war of the country's defense, his mission will be to delimit the national territory into two areas of operations, north and south respectively;

3. The General Staff starting from the importance of the strategic objectives of the Republic of Moldova, which falls within the operational directions within the strategic direction of the Northeast, to redefine their strategic importance in the development of armed struggle on the national territory, in such a way that in the national military art these directions to have a significant value, being considered operative-strategic importance;

4. The Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Moldova, within the process of the reform of the Armed Forces and the establishment of the forces, will take into account the geographical and military characteristics of the territory of the Republic of Moldova, which will lead to the right determination of the forces categories and of the types of weapons within army and the relationships between them;

5. The Government of the Republic of Moldova, together with the Ministry of Defense, will be concerned with equipping and endowing large units with weapons and technology of the latest generation, emphasizing the principle of sufficiency for the defense and witch to correspond the needs and requirements of the modern struggle;

6. The General Staff will constitute the operative headquarters from the time of peace, capable, in case of crisis or war, to take over the command of the groups of forces of operative level, formed in this period;

The National Army must dispose such a military potential, which will be able to comply with today's requirements, and it must be able to ensure the integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova.

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## ADNOTARE

la teza de doctor în științe militare „**Influența spațiului geografic în desfășurarea operațiilor militare pe teritoriul Republicii Moldova**”, autor Iurii CIUBARA, SPECIALITATEA: 581.01- Arta militară, Chișinău, 2019.

**Structura tezei:** introducere, trei capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 204 titluri, 27 anexe, 147 de pagini de text de bază. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 7 de lucrări științifice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Republica Moldova, epistemologie, dialectică, geografie, geografie militară, spațiul geografic, luptă armată, teatrul de acțiuni militare, zone de operații, tipologia și structura operațiilor militare, fizionomia operațiilor militare.

**Domeniul de studiu:** știință militară.

**Scopul și obiectivele tezei** este de a demonstra importanța geografiei militare, prin elucidarea semnificației elementelor fizico-geografice și operaționalizarea conceptului de fragmentare a teritoriului pe zone de operații, în vederea planificării, organizării și executării operațiilor militare în contextul apărării și asigurării securității statului.

Atingerea scopului presupune următoarele **obiective:** analiza epistemologică și dialectică a geografiei, fundamentată pe elaborările istoriografice; evidențierea legilor fundamentale ale dialecticii interdependente cu arta militară; reliefaarea corelației dintre elementele fizico-geografice cu legile și principiile luptei armate în funcție de nivelul desfășurării acțiunilor militare; definirea și analiza teoretico-conceptuală a legilor și principiilor luptei armate; stabilirea pentru Republica Moldova a zonelor de operații, direcții, aliniamente și obiective, prin prisma factorilor militari de ordin ofensiv sau defensiv, reieșind din analiza spațiului geografic.

**Noutatea și originalitatea științifică:** caracterul inovator al rezultatelor obținute rezidă în elaborarea unei lucrări științifice ce abordează problematica și instrumentarul geografiei militare raportat la nevoile strategice ale Republicii Moldova, cu scopul general de analiză geografico-militară a teritoriului Republicii Moldova. Caracterul aplicativ al acestui studiu este demonstrat prin reușita autorului de a evoca semnificația practică a raționamentelor teoretice, fiindcă bază pentru apariția unor direcții și aspecte noi în cercetarea subiectelor insuficient studiate în știința militară autohtonă.

**Problema științifică importantă soluționată** rezidă în delimitarea problemei științifice soluționate, precum și definirea teoretică a subiectelor abordate în condițiile specifice Republicii Moldova, sub aspect teoretico-aplicativ, ce contribuie la soluționarea unor probleme vitale ale statului pe timpul declanșării unei agresiuni sau situații de criză.

**Rezultatele principal noi:** au fost obținute în urma analizei cadrului științei militare naționale, reprezintă geografia militară ca o ramură separată ce se ocupă de cercetarea influenței spațiului geografic asupra luptei armate.

**Semnificația teoretică a tezei:** constă în prin elaborarea unui studiu interdisciplinar și rezultatul unor cercetări, având ca origine realizările atât ale științei militare naționale, cât și cele internaționale. Astfel, considerăm că prezenta lucrare este una cu titlu de pionierat în Republica Moldova. În cadrul elaborării studiului, au fost aplicate mai multe demersuri teoretice ce au deschis noi perspective în cercetarea diferitelor surse, cu scopul elucidării evenimentelor și atingerea, în consecință, a obiectivelor propuse de planul teoretico-aplicativ.

**Valorificarea aplicativă a lucrării:** rezidă în asigurarea cu informații de caracter teoretico-aplicativ a factorilor de decizie din cadrul sistemului de planificare al operațiilor militare și a comandamentelor ce se confruntă cu problemele vizate.

**Implementarea rezultatelor științifice:** teza este elaborată în cadrul Școlii Doctorale a „Științei militare și de Securitate” din cadrul Academiei Militare a Forțelor Armate fiind prezentată, examinată și susținută în ședința Consiliului Școlii doctorale.

Subiectele supuse abordării în studiul respectiv fac parte din aria intereselor științifice ale autorului, rezultatele investigațiilor sunt foarte cunoscute la prelegerile unui curs special din cadrul AMFA „Alexandru cel Bun”, precum și în elaborările științifice publicate.



## АННОТАЦИЯ

к диссертации на соискание ученой степени доктора военных наук „**Влияние географических факторов на проведение военных операций на территории Республики Молдова**”, автор Чубара Юрий. Специальность: 581.01 – Военное искусство.

Кишинёв, 2019.

**Структура диссертации:** введение, три главы, общие выводы и рекомендации, библиография 204 источников, 27 приложений, 147 страниц основного текста. Полученные результаты опубликованы в 7 научных статьях.

**Ключевые слова:** Республика Молдова, эпистемология, диалектика, география, военная география, географическое пространство, вооруженная борьба, театр военных действий, зоны боевых действий, типология и структура военных операций, физиономия военных операций.

**Область исследования:** Военное искусство.

**Цель исследования** заключается в определении влияния географических факторов на ведение боевых действий в условиях современной вооруженной борьбы с прикладным аспектом в Республике Молдова. Цель исследования предполагает реализацию следующих **задач:** эпистемологический и диалектический анализ географии, основанный на историографических разработках; подчеркивая фундаментальные законы диалектической взаимозависимости с военным искусством; подчеркивая взаимосвязь между физико-географическими элементами и законами и принципами вооруженной борьбы в соответствии с уровнем военных действий; определение и теоретико-концептуальный анализ законов и принципов вооруженной борьбы; установление для Республики Молдова зон операций, направлений, направлений и целей с точки зрения наступательных или оборонительных военных факторов, основанных на анализе географического пространства.

**Научная новизна и оригинальность:** инновационный характер достигнутых результатов заключается в разработке научной работы, посвященной проблемам и инструментам военной географии в отношении стратегических потребностей Республики Молдова с общей целью гео-военного анализа территории Республики Молдова. Прикладной характер этого исследования подтверждается выводами автора, обуславливающие практическое значение теоретических рассуждений в качестве основы для появления новых направлений и аспектов в исследовании предметов, недостаточно изученных в отечественной военной науке

**Принципиально новые результаты** в этой области заключаются в углублении решаемой важной научной проблемы, а также в теоретическом определении тем, затронутых в условиях характерных для Республики Молдова, в плане теоретических и прикладных, способствующих решению некоторых жизненно важных проблем государства в период начала агрессии или кризиса.

**Теоретическая значимость** исследования заключается в разработке междисциплинарных теоретико-практических положений, с учетом достижений как национальной, так и международной военной науки. Таким образом, мы считаем, что настоящая работа является новаторской в Республике Молдове.

**Практическое значение исследования** состоит в предоставлении теоретически-прикладной информации лицам, принимающим решения в рамках системы планирования военных операций и командования, занимающихся этими вопросами.

**Реализация научных результатов:** Диссертация разработана в докторантуре Военной академии Вооруженных Сил, представлена, рассмотрена и обсуждена на заседании Совета докторантуры. Предмет исследования является частью научного интереса автора, результаты исследований хорошо известны на лекциях специального курса в АМФА, „Alexandru cel Bun”.

## ANNOTATION

**Ciubara Iurii. The influence of the geographical space in the conduct of the military operations in the national territory. Doctoral dissertation in military science. Chişinău, 2018.**

**The structure of the dissertation:** introduction, three chapters, conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography of 204 titles, 147 pages of basic text, 28 annexes. The outcomes are published in 10 scientific papers.

**Key words:** the Republic of Moldova, epistemology, dialectics, geography, military geography, geographical space, armed struggle, theatre of military actions, areas of operations, typology and structure of military operations, features of military operations.

**Field of study:** military science.

**The purpose and aims of the dissertation:** are to determine the influence of the geographical space on the military actions in the conditions of modern armed struggle with applicative aspect in the Republic of Moldova. Achieving the goal involves the following **objectives:** epistemological and dialectical analysis of geography, based on historiographical elaborations; highlighting the correlation between the physico-geographical elements and the laws and principles of the armed struggle according to the level of the military actions; definition and theoretical-conceptual analysis of the laws and principles of the armed struggle; establishing for the Republic of Moldova the areas of operations, directions, alignments and objectives in terms of offensive or defensive military factors, based on the analysis of geographic space.

**Scientific novelty and originality of thesis:** the innovative character of the obtained results consists in the elaboration of a scientific paper dealing with the problems and instruments of military geography in relation to the strategic needs of the Republic of Moldova with the general purpose of geo-military analysis of the territory of the Republic of Moldova. The applicative character of this study is demonstrated by the author's success in evoking the practical significance of theoretical reasoning, serving as a basis for the emergence of new directions and issues in the research of the subjects insufficiently studied in the native military science.

**The fundamentally new results** of the important scientific problem solved, as well as the theoretical definition of the topics approached in the conditions specific to the Republic of Moldova in the theoretical and applicative aspect, contributing to solving some vital problems of the state during the onset of an aggression or crisis situations.

The new results that have been obtained from the analysis of the national military science framework, we can consider military geography as a separate branch dealing with the investigation of the influence of the geographical space on the armed struggle.

**The theoretical value** of the dissertation is expressed by the elaboration of an interdisciplinary study and the result of some researches, having the origin of the achievements of both national and international military science. Thus, we consider that the present work is pioneering in Moldova. Several theoretical approaches have been applied in the elaboration of the study, which opened new perspectives in the research of different sources in order to elucidate the events and thus to achieve the objectives proposed on the theoretical-methodological plane.

**Applied value of the work:** use of the paper is the provision of theoretical and applied information of the decision-makers within the military operations planning system and the headquarters dealing with the issues concerned.

**The implementation of scientific results:** the thesis is elaborated within the Doctoral School of the Military Academy of the Armed Forces was presented, examined and sustained in the meeting of the Doctoral School Council of The subject matter of the study is part of the scientific interest of the author, the results of the investigations are well known at the lectures of a special course at AMFA "Alexandru cel Bun".

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**THE INFLUENCE OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA IN THE  
CONDUCT OF MILITARY OPERATIONS ON THE  
TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

**SPECIALTY 581.01 - MILITARY ART**

Summary of the doctoral thesis in the field of military sciences

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