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Adaptation of the French military thought to the Lithuanian Army in the 1920s and the 1930s

Słowa kluczowe: Francja; sztuka wojenna; myśl wojskowa; doktryna; zebrane doświadczenia; statuty; taktyka.

Key words: France; military science; military thought; doctrine; application of experience; statutes; tactics.

Introduction

The experiences of the last military conflict, in this case, World War I, influences the development of military thought and its critical evaluation; these experiences should be reconsidered not only by direct participants of the conflict but also by other foreign countries. Military operations should be evaluated retrospectively, ways to avoid mistakes in the future should be explored, and useful measures should be adopted in a possible new military conflict in the future. In the 1920s and the 1930s, the European countries learned from the experiences of WWI, and the winning countries included successful operational and tactical decisions into their military theories and employed them, while the countries which lost attempted to find new mi-

lilitary ideas for eventual revenge.¹ Meanwhile, the newly reestablished countries, such as Lithuania, had to form military theories suitable for them, which corresponded to state safety expectations and had real possibilities of implementing them. In the case of Lithuania, attempts were made to look for ideas of military thought in foreign countries and to adapt them to the specificity of local conditions. One of reference countries was France and French military practice. French military science ideas had a considerable influence on the evolution of the Lithuanian military thought. This was influenced by a large number of officers who had studied at French military schools and other countries which applied its military thought as well as the favour of leading officers towards this country.² In addition, neighbouring Poland and Czechoslovakia, one of the strongest European states economically, also supported the ideas of French military science. Therefore, the adaptation of foreign military thought in the Lithuanian army and the analysis of doctrine and statute documents is a suitable means to describe the conceptual component of military power. Lithuanian historians have not been interested in this issue; only one historian, Vytautas Jokubauskas, might be mentioned, who has analysed the aspects of the French military thought in the system of Lithuanian armed forces in the context of this document provisions in his publications³ regarding the Lithuanian military doctrine. Nevertheless, a more complex attitude towards the application of this military thought is lacking in Lithuania. It is topical to analyse the research of foreign historians more thoroughly on the French military thought and its doctrinal and statutory attitudes and principles. For instance, in Poland, similar research also has not been conducted. In foreign countries, comprehensive research has been performed; one of them is a monograph *The Seeds of Disaster. The Development of French Army Doctrine, 1919–1939*⁴ by Robert A. Doughty, the USA military historian, who analyses a wide range of the French military doctrine and aspects of tactical-level documents related to the doctrine. Elizabeth Kier, the USA political scientist, discusses the French military doctrine and political circumstances of

¹ V. Jokubauskas, „Mažųjų kariuomenių” galia ir paramilitarizmas, *Tarpukario Lietuvos atvejis*, Klaipėda 2014, p. 223.

² Idem, *Karinė doktrina: tarpukario Lietuvos kariuomenės atvejis (1923–1940 m.)*, „Karo archyvas” 2014, t. 29, p. 141.

³ Idem, „Mažųjų kariuomenių” galia ir paramilitarizmas, p. 229–230, 242–244; idem, *Karinė doktrina*, p. 120–188; idem, *Pirmoji Lietuvos Respublikos kariuomenės karo doktrina ir jos autorius*, „Karo archyvas” 2015, p. 176–190.

⁴ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster. The Development of French Army Doctrine, 1919–1939*, Mechanicsburg 2014, p. 256.

its formation in her article ‘Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars.’⁵ Another American political scientist Barry Posen analysed the military doctrines of three states, France, Great Britain, and Germany, during the period under consideration in his monograph *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars*.⁶ In addition, French military attitudes of strategic level have been discussed by a French historian in his paper *Les Problèmes de l’armée de terre française (1935–1939)*;⁷ while Eugenia C. Kiesling, the USA historian, has provided the aspects of French planning doctrine in her book *Arming against Hitler: France and the Limits of Military Planning*.⁸ Thus the French military thought typical of the interwar period has received sufficient scholars’ attention, and their research is also valuable for Lithuanian historians.

The aim of the present article is to analyse the adaptation of the French military thought in the Lithuanian army in the 1920s and 1930s. The sources of the article are officers’ reports of the period under the present investigation or theoretical considerations recorded in archive documents and published in periodicals as well as Lithuanian army statutes, rules, and methodology books, which were in force during this period. It should be noted that the present research is limited to four main types of weapons: infantry, artillery, cavalry, and tank units; meanwhile, other types of armed forces, i.e. aviation and navy, should be discussed separately because of their specific doctrinal provisions.

Main Provisions of the French Military Doctrine in the 1920s and the 1930s

After the end of WWI, France was oriented towards the acceptance of offensive doctrine; however, it changed its course to a defensive axis at the end of the 1920s.⁹ These changes were influenced by an internal conflict among French politicians, the left and the right wing, and the so-called or-

⁵ E. Kier, *Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars*, ”International Security” 1995, Vol. 19, No. 4, p. 65–93.

⁶ B. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars*, New York 1984, p. 283.

⁷ H. Dutailly, *Les Problèmes de l’armée de terre française (1935–1939)*, Paris 1980, p. 449.

⁸ E. C. Kiesling, *Arming Against Hitler: France and the Limits of Military Planning*, Lawrence 1996, p. 280.

⁹ E. Kier, *Culture and Military Doctrine*, p. 68.

ganization culture in the army (i.e. collective trust in the military organization). Right-wing politicians required to have a professional army, which had to ensure internal order and stability. However, left-wing politicians feared that professional army would provoke negative reactions of the reactionary part of society and at the same time declared their belief in the fact that only armed forces based on police or reservists would be able to guarantee internal and external safety of France.¹⁰ French political government had a dual opinion on the army organization and recruitment as well as doctrine type; nevertheless, everyone understood the essential necessity for a doctrine as a compilation of general tactical conceptions, which could ensure that different army types would operate effectively together.¹¹ Some French officers considered the army of conscripts to be suitable to any doctrine, except the attacking one. The supporters of this opinion viewed a one-year-long service to be a sufficient time to acquire the skills necessary for offensive war. Despite strategic environment and its arguments, French politicians reacted towards internal rather than external factors when determining the organizational structure of the French army. The shortening of conscripts' service time to one year caused anxiety to the left-wing politicians, even though they supported this decision. The army itself reacted skeptically to this political decision. After lengthy discussions, the French army adopted a defensive-oriented doctrine¹² despite functional arguments about the offensive doctrine. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the French doctrine was neither exceptionally defensive nor offensive; the emphasis was placed only at discussion level, and the approved documents contained elements from both conceptions.¹³ However, the left-wing French politicians in power supported the idea of the army based on a short conscripts' service time, which, in their opinion, had to eliminate the isolation between soldiers and society and train a sufficient number of soldiers. The left-wing politicians grounded their choice on the idea that if the conscript was trained for a few years, this may increase obedience and the possibility to use the forces in suppressing unrest. These politicians maintained the opinion that without a professional army the threats to the French democracy would be diminished. Left-wing politicians projected military forces to be composed of militia and conscript service with a small num-

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 70–71.

¹¹ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 7.

¹² E. Kier, *Culture and Military Doctrine*, p. 71–72.

¹³ R. A. Doughty, *Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine between the Wars*, by Elizabeth Kier, "American Political Science Review" 1998, Vol. 92, Iss. 3, p. 750.

ber of professional soldiers. In addition, an integral idea of each political position was a short conscripts' service time and soldiers-professionals.¹⁴ An important role in the formation of the French military policy and military doctrine was played not only by political actors but also by officers who participated in WWI military operations. One of the most influential people was French army Marshal Philippe Pétain, whose opinion was included into strategic, operational and, analogically, tactic documents of the French army.¹⁵ Besides, his ideas were one of the most important in the French military doctrine.¹⁶ All his attitudes were based on his battle experience in WWI fronts; therefore, he emphasized the significance of positional warfare, and the main role was appointed to infantry units supported by artillery forces.¹⁷ His opinion towards the tactic role of military aviation in military operations was also based on the experiences of WWI; i.e. he viewed planes as supplementing infantry. He was also against the autonomy of Military Air Forces, which was planned to be implemented in France at that time. It should be noted that these Marshal's attitudes were not taken into consideration, and in 1933, French military air forces started functioning independently.¹⁸ Therefore, after politicians had agreed on the strategic attitudes of the French army, operational and tactical operation directions were projected.

France was preparing for a military conflict, which was expected to be only with Germany, and adapted the combat experience of WWI. Therefore, all French laws, development of military doctrine, modernization of armed forces, and soldiers' training were oriented towards a future military conflict with Germany.¹⁹ The French military doctrine appeared in 1922, and its ideas were based on the experiences of WWI. The fundamental doctrine guidelines were the following: firepower was emphasized as one of the factors determining the success of an operation, the optimal combat form was considered to be an attack or the initiative of offensive rather than defensive operations, military aviation was adapted to reconnaissance, the use of cavalry forces for distant reconnaissance was eliminated, cavalry was assigned the same combat missions as infantry due to the fact that hors-

¹⁴ E. Kier, *Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine between the Wars*, Princeton 1997, p. 41, 56, 140.

¹⁵ N. Atkin, *Pétain*, New York 2014, p. 41.

¹⁶ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 6.

¹⁷ N. Atkin, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 48.

¹⁹ I. Rajevs, *The French Army in the Interwar Period*, "Baltic Security and Defence Review" 2009, Vol. 11, Issue 2, p. 186.

es were viewed only as a means of fast relocation. Cavalry could fight with horses only in exceptional cases and only in small units. Tanks had to adopt the role of support for infantrymen, i.e. they had to support infantry attacks with fire, eliminate artificial obstacles and suppress the resistance of enemy forces with fire in a positional battle. The doctrine also emphasized the significance of the plan deliberated in advance; keeping to this plan limited the initiative of unit and subunit commanders.²⁰ This was one of the negative features of this state doctrine. In other words, France propagated a methodical or gradual battle, i.e. operations were strictly controlled, all military units, subunits, and armament were carefully divided according to their functions, and their operation was based on planned schedules. In addition, centralized command was one of the main features of this methodical battle dependent only on chief commanders. This way, spontaneous and unplanned decisions by commanders of smaller units had to be eliminated as they could change the direction of military operations into unplanned ones (i.e. not according to the schedule).²¹ In this context, one of more important and essential principles dominated: artillery fire control and its operation had to be coordinated with infantry actions. Infantry units had to operate being supported by artillery fire, which was necessary during offensive operations.²²

In Lithuania, French military doctrine was thoroughly discussed by Gen. Leonas Radus-Zenkavičius, who developed the Lithuanian military doctrine.²³ In 1925, military journal *Mūsų žinynas* published his article on the doctrine features of French and German army infantry. On the basis of these military doctrines, the author claimed that the main aim of military operations in the French army was considered to be enemy's diversion of material resources and moral strength of living force. It was aimed to reach

²⁰ *Kitų valstybių kariuomenės. Prancūzija*, Karo mokslo skyrius, Kaunas 1923, p. 44–45.

²¹ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 4.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 98.

²³ Gen. L. Radus-Zenkavičius started serving at the Lithuanian army on February 14, 1921 and finished on March 1, 1928. During this period, he served as a General for Special Affairs under the Minister of National Defence; he was the Head of Military Science Department, the Head of High Military Officers' Courses, the Chief of the General Staff, the Chief of the Supreme Staff, a permanent member of the Military Council, and a member of the Council of Elders of the Lithuanian Officers' Club. During his service, he was sent on a mission to the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, France, Switzerland, Great Britain, Belgium, and Germany. He was the author of the guidelines of Lithuanian military doctrine; on the basis of his project, a national Lithuanian attitude towards warfare was formed. V. Jokubauskas, *Pirmoji Lietuvos Respublikos kariuomenės karo doktrina ir jos autorius*, p. 178.

this, using two types of battle actions, offensive and defensive. The French doctrine claimed that the main fighting force was infantry units, i.e. they were viewed as the main force which could destroy the enemy by fire and maneuver and fight in any place and any season or time of the day. Infantry functionality determined its exceptional role, while other branches of service served the supportive function. During military operations, infantry had to perform the most important warfare tasks, i.e. to occupy and protect a territory with the support of artillery, tanks, and aviation. The main offensive elements were fire and movement; fire was considered to be the only factor which could affect the enemy's firepower, and the combination of fire and maneuver led to winning.²⁴ In other words, during military operations in the French army, movement covered with fire was used as a dominant element, which helped to reach the aim.²⁵ It could be noted that the author of the Lithuanian guidelines of military doctrine perceived the French firepower and maneuver in a narrow sense,²⁶ which was adapted to the Lithuanian army.

It was indicated in the projects of the Lithuanian military doctrine that the Lithuanian army could adapt the statute provisions of Soviet Russian army field service. The attitudes towards tactical army operations were not suitable for Lithuania because of tactical elements of positional warfare and tactical operations which were not renewed, taking into consideration changed armament at that time. Therefore, the doctrine adapted the tactical principles of military operations to the Lithuanian army based on French, German, and Polish examples.²⁷

The main provisions of the French military doctrine in the 1920s and the 1930s were projected taking into consideration the experiences of positional battles during WWI, where firepower was the major factor, determining the victory of the fighting forces. The French doctrine aimed at weakening the enemy first by firepower and then exterminating it by fire and methodical battle, which was strictly controlled. Another important factor was keeping to the plans, which were prepared in advance and reconsidered in great detail; their implementation required centralized command. In addi-

²⁴ L. Radas-Zenkavičius, *Prancūzų ir vokiečių pėstininkų karo doktrina*, „Mūsų žiny-
nas“ 1925, Nr. 23, p. 265–266.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 266.

²⁶ The concept of a maneuver in the French and the Lithuanian army is discussed in the following chapter.

²⁷ 1921 m. gen. L. Radas-Zenkavičius parengtas Lietuvos karinės doktrinos projektas Nr. 1, LCVA, f. 836, ap. 1, b. 5, l. 19–20.

tion, the French doctrine emphasized the interrelationship between infantry and artillery.

Operation Tactics of the French and the Lithuanian Army Infantry

After WWI, the French army started projecting not only the military doctrine, but also many army statutes based on its provisions, which also adapted the experience acquired in fronts. In 1921, tactical regulations for large-unit operation were published, which also reflected the main guidelines of the French military doctrine and were the main document, indicating the key principles of tactical army operation.²⁸ British military historian and theoretician Basil Henry Liddell Hart explained these tactical regulations. He emphasized that firepower depended on the form of a military operation; first, there should be a specific resistance force during defence, which could establish fortifications and effectively protect small combat units. Because of this continuous front cover, forces could control actions, continuing operation by the use of railways and vehicles.²⁹ Besides, this document emphasized firepower as a dominant factor in all military operations. On the other hand, firepower was directly influenced by the ability to use various armaments and for various units to operate in a coordinated way; therefore, centralized command was emphasized, which led to the above-mentioned application of a methodical battle. In 1936, tactical regulations concerning large-unit operation were reviewed and published in a new edition, where in fact only a few provisions were corrected, while the initial principles remained the same. Some new ideas were introduced related to fortified fronts, which had already been mentioned by Liddell Hart and which had been included in the edition of 1921; nevertheless, they had not been particularly focused on. Other innovations were related to unit motorization, anti-tank armaments, military air forces, and connections.³⁰ The documents also stressed the importance of a maneuver in each phase of a military operation. It should be noted that in the French army a maneuver was understood in a slightly broader sense than in Lithuania.

²⁸ *Kitų valstybių kariuomenės. Prancūzija*, p. 44.

²⁹ B. H. Liddell Hart, *A Study of the French "F. S. R." – Instruction Provisoire Sur L'Emploi Tactique Des Grandes Unités*, "Royal United Services Institution" 1922, Vol. 67, Issue 468, p. 666.

³⁰ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 10–13.

In France, the word maneuver did not necessarily refer to a movement; it could refer to other actions of units without relocation, e.g. fire transfer.³¹ Meanwhile, in the Lithuanian army, a maneuver was perceived as a movement, i.e. unit actions with relocation. Firepower refers to the use of a maneuver, first, relocating arms and changing their positions, without any preference to movement. On the contrary, a maneuver refers to the use of fire only when it is necessary to produce a movement. These are the main differences between positional and maneuver warfare or between firepower and maneuver doctrine.³² France chose the first variant, and its main doctrine features, as has been mentioned, were not related to the initiative of chief decisions and speed of unit operation, as was the case in Germany; on the contrary, thoroughly planned operations and strictly controlled methodical attacks based on the features of positional warfare³³ were typical, which were revealed during the battles of WWI.

Operation tactics of French army infantry was closely related to unit organization. It was discussed by Gen. L. Radus-Zenkavičius, who stressed the importance of this review and its presentation to Lithuanian officers as cognitive rather than suitable for adaptation to the Lithuanian army as such organization was typical not only of France, but also of Great Britain and Poland. The General directed attention to the fact that the Polish army was also organized and trained on the basis of the French army. He noted that French military leaders carefully studied the features of infantry battles during WWI.³⁴ The general discussed such key aspects as the significance of infantry firepower and movement; in order to increase infantry firepower, artillery and armoured battle machinery, fire should be used, while the decisive factor of a successful operation was movement: 'If fire has to develop its power as much as it can, it's only in order to provide a possibility to move. Only movement provides possibilities to occupy land and force the enemy to leave the battlefield, which is an element of success; in order to reach this, everyone's attempts should be made.'³⁵ These were the main guidelines used by the French army in training its soldiers. Meanwhile, considering smaller military training factors of French soldiers, it should be noted that in France the smallest infantry military subunit was a combat

³¹ Ibidem, p. 97.

³² W. S. Lind, *Military Doctrine, Force Structure, and The Defense Decision-Making Process*, "Air University Review" 1979, Vol. 30, p. 21.

³³ Ibidem, p. 116.

³⁴ L. Radus-Zenkavičius, *Prancūzų pėstininkų organizacija ir jos puolimo formos lauko kautynėse*, „Mūsų žinynas" 1921, nr 3, p. 3.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 4.

group³⁶ (called a battle group at that time); it contained 12 soldiers and was divided into two parts: light machine-guns and riflemen. This combat unit had to operate in a squad, which was composed of three battle groups.³⁷ The Lithuanian military doctrine project prepared in 1922 described the structure of a French army combat group and operation specificity; it was also noted that the tactical unit was used in many European states, and the Lithuanian army was suggested to do the same. A suggestion was made to form a squad from four battle groups, following the example of Poland rather than from three ones, following the example of France.³⁸ The commission discussed the project of this doctrine, and a decision was made to leave a former organization of combat units with a company as the main unit: i.e. a company was composed of three platoons, which were composed of three squads rather than groups and, analogically, sections.³⁹ Thus, a platoon structure was adopted according to the French model rather than the Polish one suggested by Radas-Zenkavičius.

In the French army, infantry military training was consistent and consisted of four stages: individual training of a soldier, drill training, combat drill training, and field tactical training. In the stage of individual training of a soldier, basic knowledge was provided necessary for a soldier to be able to operate in a combat group. For drill training, platoon size unit was used, i.e. three combat groups; at the same time, soldiers were taught actions with a gun.⁴⁰ During combat drills, soldiers had to acquire the technique of combat movement. One of the most important stages of combat training was field tactical training, which aimed at preparing units and subunits to operate at combat conditions and observe the validity⁴¹ of military doctrine provisions, specifically, military operations. An analogical order of infantry training was introduced to the Lithuanian army; the only difference

³⁶ A battle group is a military unit to perform a battle task, which was first formed in German and French infantry platoons in 1917. After WWI, it was the smallest tactical unit, which was composed of machine-gun and riflemen squads or teams (10–20 soldiers with a hand machine-gun). In the 1930s, such groups were eliminated from most armies, and the smallest infantrymen unit was a squad. *Enciklopedinis karybos žodynas*, red. Z. Kulys, Vilnius 2008, p. 186.

³⁷ L. Radas-Zenkavičius, *Prancūzų pėstininkų organizacija ir jos puolimo formos lauko kautynėse*, p. 5.

³⁸ V. Jokubauskas, *Dėl karo doktrinos priėmimo Lietuvos kariuomenėje (dokumento publikacija)*, „Karo archyvas“ 2015, t. 30, p. 200–201.

³⁹ *Lietuvos karinė doktrina 1922 m. (projektas)*, sud. A. Navys, Vilnius 2015, p. 55.

⁴⁰ L. Radas-Zenkavičius, *Prancūzų pėstininkų organizacija ir jos puolimo formos lauko kautynėse*, p. 5–6.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

was that, as has already been mentioned, the smallest tactical unit in Lithuania was a squad.⁴² The Lithuanian military doctrine⁴³ provided the training model of the French army infantry as the most suitable one. It should be noted that in the Statute of French Army Infantry a squad was not subdivided into two sections; it was unified and consisted of 12 soldiers. This change appeared because of the increase in number of light machine-guns and artillery cannons, which had to have a direct influence on strengthening firepower.⁴⁴ In addition, squad unity allowed a more flexible operation of a combat unit in a platoon. A squad could not operate independently as formerly; rather, a platoon had to do this, which was appointed the main unit of tactical operation.⁴⁵ Reacting to the changes in the French army, it was suggested to change squad structure in Lithuania analogically, which was recorded in infantry statutes afterwards.⁴⁶

In the *Statute of Infantry Formation* of the Lithuanian army approved in 1923 and republished in 1931, a squad was approved to be the main tactical combat unit; in the reprinted version, the changes in France were not also taken into consideration. In the same documents of the Lithuanian army, three types of combat were described: offensive, defensive, and halt operations. In the case of offensive operations, it was maintained that only this way a victory may be reached; in defensive ones, it was analysed how important positions could be maintained by all means; finally, in the case of halt operations, it was discussed how to lead the battle when both sides start an attack. In the statute, however, especially in its general part, offensive operations were distinguished, and the officers' courses of general staff emphasized that defense had to be effective.⁴⁷ The same statute prioritized offensive operations, this way providing all initiatives to the offensive side and ensuring success: 'Only in an offensive action, it is possible to suppress opponents and to reach favourable outcomes.' Meanwhile, defense was foreseen only in the circumstances unfavourable for attack or in order to win time.⁴⁸ In the *Infantry Statute* prepared in 1936, four types of

⁴² L. Radus-Zenkavičius, *Pėstininkų parengimas*, „Mūsų žinynas“ 1923, nr 12, p. 442–443.

⁴³ V. Jokubauskas, *Dėl karo doktrinos priėmimo Lietuvos kariuomenėje*, p. 208–209.

⁴⁴ Red., *Naujas Prancūzų pėstininkų statutas*, „Mūsų žinynas“ 1929, nr 48, p. 171–172.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 173.

⁴⁶ 1928 04 23 Vyriausiojo štabo viršininko raštas Karo mokslo valdybos viršininkui dėl pėstininkų statuto nuostatų, LCVA, f. 929, ap. 3, b. 633, l. 85.

⁴⁷ V. Jokubauskas, „Mažųjų kariuomenių“ galia ir paramilitarizmas, p. 250.

⁴⁸ *Pėstininkų rikiuotės statutas, II dalis, Pėstininkų veiksmai manevrinėse kautynėse*, Vyr. Štabo Spaudos ir švietimo skyrius, Kaunas 1923, p. 5–6; *Pėstininkų rikiuotės statutas, II dalis, Pėstininkų veiksmai manevrinėse kautynėse*, Vyr. Štabo Spaudos ir švietimo skyrius, Kaunas 1931, p. 5–6.

military operations were discussed: offensive, defensive, withdrawal, and halt operations. In addition, operations under special circumstances were distinguished: in support of armoured personnel carriers, in the forest, in villages, at a river, at night, in fog, in winter, without artillery, partisan activities, and in assault. Such a treatment of military operations corresponds to the theories which dominated in France and which were adapted to the Lithuanian army.⁴⁹ It should be noted that in the Statute of 1936 a slightly different perception of military operations was provided as here offensive actions were not viewed as the only successful factors of a battle. It was stressed that a combination of offensive and defensive actions were the main factors of a battle.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, a closer analysis of the rule collections for Lithuanian army infantry reveals that French military thoughts were not adapted without consideration. For instance, the key factors of successful offensive operations in Lithuania were fire and movement: fire was necessary for weakening enemy's forces and making them withdraw so that the attacking ones could move forward. Movement was referred to as a decisive factor for the success of these operations, and only it could reach success.⁵¹ The same ideas were expressed in another publication on army tactical operation *Battle Squad and its Use in a Battle* prepared by Gen. Radas-Zenkavičius. The main ideas of this publication remained unchanged during the whole period under the present investigation.⁵²

Thus, the importance of fire and movement in both French and Lithuanian army was acceptable; the only difference was priorities. It should be noted that at the beginning of the Lithuanian army establishment, in 1919, rules *Infantry Warfare in a Field* were published, which were a word-for-word translation of analogical rules of the French army. Here, the main tactical provision was expressed the following: fire and movement should be used together as fire had to defeat or weaken the enemy; in the case when this was impossible, the enemy had to be made to withdraw, was encircled, or taken as a prisoner with the help of movement.⁵³ In this case, fire was viewed as the main success factor. However, as has been mentioned, this

⁴⁹ V. Jokubauskas, *Karinė doktrina*, p. 150.

⁵⁰ *Pėstininkų statutas, II dalis, Kautynės*, Kariuomenės štabo Spaudos ir švietimo skyrius, Kaunas 1936, p. 5.

⁵¹ *Pėstininkų rikiuotės statutas, II dalis, Pėstininkų veiksmai manevrinėse kautynėse*, 1923, p. 29–30.

⁵² L. Radas-Zenkavičius, *Kautynių skyrius ir jo vartojimas kautynėse*, Kaunas 1922, p. 5–6.

⁵³ *Pėstininkų kova lauke*, Krašto apsaugos ministerijos Literatūros skyrius, Kaunas 1919, p. 9.

publication was a word-for-word translation from French without a deeper analysis of the ideas. When the fights for independence finished in Lithuania, the internal situation stabilized, and it was possible to consider the creation of army tactical operation rules, the French practice was adapted, taking into consideration local conditions, which suggested the need for a maneuver military tactics rather than a positional one when the *Statute of Infantry Formation* was prepared in 1923. Another clear difference between the French and the Lithuanian military thought is revealed in the choice of command modes. In the above mentioned Statute, in its introduction, it is claimed that it discusses the general operation principles for the most likely situations and does not repeat specific cases dogmatically, leaving the freedom of choice for chiefs. The importance of chiefs' initiatives in determining tactical operation of a unit was emphasized several times, and it was aimed that this initiative would be encouraged by all chiefs and commanders.⁵⁴ The same provision was maintained in the 1930s when modernization processes started in the Lithuanian army. In 1936, in the *Statute of Infantry*, the initiative of chiefs was also emphasized; however, here it was related to chiefs' education and appropriate training.⁵⁵ The encouragement to make independent decisions was expressed in the public sphere as Gen. St. Col. Kostas Boleckis, a lecturer of High Military Officers' Courses, published an article on this initiative.⁵⁶ In addition, the officer expressed the same idea during officers' development courses.⁵⁷ Therefore, as could be seen from these provisions, Lithuania adapted a model of purposive command, which was used by the German army; in this case, centralized command was applied, differently from France.

Meanwhile in other publications, which are of more recommendational nature rather than strategic importance, one can note a suggestion to employ the experience of other countries. For instance, the same lecturer of the High Military Officers' Courses Gen. St. Col. Boleckis prepared a publication *Military Officers' Activities* in 1923 and used the French army provisions about teaching methods of professional soldiers, i.e. the organization of training exercises. He used the examples provided in French rules *Une méthode d'Instruction des cadres*.⁵⁸ In 1936, recommendations for officers, preparing to take exams to the courses of the General Staff, were published,

⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 3, 8, 11.

⁵⁵ *Pėstininkų statutas, II dalis, Kautynės*, 1936, p. 80.

⁵⁶ K. Boleckis, *Apie savarankiškumą ir savo iniciatyvą*, „Mūsų žinynas“ 1923, nr 13, p. 15–20.

⁵⁷ Idem, *Karininkų užsiėmimai*, Kaunas 1923, p. 4.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, p. 8–41.

and the list of sources for reading was provided. Their analysis has shown that several sources from foreign-state practice may be distinguished. For the general tactics preparation, the regulations of war field preparation and field office prepared by the Soviet Union army were suggested as well as the rules of the German command for a battle and movement tactics.⁵⁹ For the analysis of infantry tactics, the Statute of French Army Infantry and the statutes of the Soviet Union, German, and Polish infantry tactical operation were suggested to be read.⁶⁰

In the operation tactics of the Lithuanian army infantry, a decisive factor in military operations was considered to be movement, an element of maneuver warfare; in France, on the contrary, firepower dominated as a feature of positional warfare.

Operation Tactics of the French and the Lithuanian Army Artillery

The importance of the French army artillery, which increased during WWI when attacking enemy's trenches and fortifications, was maintained in the 1920s and the 1930s. Naturally, this type of fire had to form a substantial part of a common firepower of armed forces during military operations. This way, one of the main ideas of the French military doctrine was to concentrate a powerful artillery power, at the same time applying the surprise factor. The application of methodical battle principles and a centralized control had to reach fire accuracy.⁶¹ At the same time, the importance of artillery mobility was understood; therefore, artillery units were motorized. This was a slow process, and before the beginning of WWII most artillery units of the French army had horses rather than trucks or lorries. When developing artillery mobility, not enough attention was devoted to tactical mobility, which was a significant drawback of the French army.⁶² In 1936, a new artillery statute was published in France, where the main provisions were related to the improvement of artillery fire tempo, using pre-planned places. These rules did not change the complicated system of artillery fire observers and its control, which caused most problems. Preplanned schedu-

⁵⁹ *Nurodymai kaip rengtis į Generalinio štabo kursų, Kariuomenės štabo spaudos ir švietimo skyrius, Kaunas 1936, p. 32.*

⁶⁰ *Ibidem, p. 41–42.*

⁶¹ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 83–84.

⁶² *Ibidem, p. 100.*

les of shooting still remained an important part and means of a methodical battle based on the example of France; this way artillery cooperation with other combat units was ensured.⁶³

The Lithuanian army, which was created after WWI, established and formed its artillery combat units and attempted to provide it with artillery cannons. It was perceived that it was difficult to reach victory without these armaments in a battle field. The Lithuanian army used artillery for the first time on March 28, 1919, during fights for Independence, when a battery, having positions in Milašiūnai village, fired the Red Army soldiers fortified in the rectory building in Deltuva town.⁶⁴ During this period of battles, artillery was composed of batteries of separate platoons, and its operation was ascribed to infantry. Only later, artillery regiments were formed, and this type of armament had a clearer organization.⁶⁵

Artillery operation in the Lithuanian army may be characterized using regulated publications. In 1937, the Artillery Statute was published, which was also the first document of tactical operation of this type, as before it tactical artillery operation had been regulated only in the documents of other weapon types. The Statute indicated that artillery operated as a type of support weapons for other forces, especially infantry; therefore, special attention had to be paid to the interaction between artillery and other weapons. A distinctive feature of artillery was its firepower from the perspective of destructive and combative, as well as distance effect.⁶⁶ In 1930, military officers were taught at the High Military Officers' Courses that a concentrated use of cannon fire in military operations had to ensure the effectiveness of firepower. An abrupt and concentrated artillery fire had to ensure the destruction of an enemy, as well as have the surprise factor and at the same time ensure mobility necessary to perform strategic and tactical maneuvers.⁶⁷ Artillery had six tasks: to destroy enemy's living force, at the same time demoralizing hostile forces, to destroy enemy's infantry warfare, to provide support for infantry, to destroy enemy's artillery, to destroy obstacles, and to destroy enemy's armoured machinery.⁶⁸ In offensive operations, artillery had to operate quickly and accurately and to cooperate with

⁶³ Ibidem, p. 106, 109.

⁶⁴ V. Jokubauskas, E. Papečkys, *Lietuvos kariuomenės artilerijos pabūklai 1919–1940 m.*, „Karo archyvas“ 2012, t. 27, p. 165.

⁶⁵ V. Lesčius, *Lietuvos kariuomenė 1918–1920*, Vilnius 1998, p. 360.

⁶⁶ *Artilerijos statutas, II dalis, Kautynės*, Kariuomenės štabo Spaudos ir švietimo skyrius, 1937, p. 5–7.

⁶⁷ P. Bytautas, *Artilerijos išnaudojimo kautynėse pagrindai*, Kaunas 1930, p. 1–2.

⁶⁸ Ibidem, p. 5.

infantry and cavalry, and in defensive operations it had to use fire accurately at the necessary time.⁶⁹ As for artillery command, it was centralized in the case of smaller combat units and decentralized in the case of larger ones. Centralized command was determined for small areas of combat actions, when there was enough time for contact and surveillance, when the area was suitable for surveillance, and topographical features were convenient. On the other hand, decentralized artillery command was used in the case if action speed was more important than concentrated firepower, when the area was inconvenient for surveillance and contact, and in a large territory of combat actions. In addition, mixed command was also possible when both methods were integrated, taking into consideration changing combat conditions.⁷⁰ It might be observed that centralized command typical of the French army, which had to ensure firepower at any condition, and the principles of methodical battle, i.e. a precise use of artillery power, was adapted only partly in Lithuania, as centralized command was used only in the case of a suitable combat moment. In order to reach artillery accuracy and effectiveness, other aspects were used in the Lithuanian army, i.e. a suitable choice of shooting positions, target reconnaissance, ensurance of contact, operation of observation posts, and competence of all artillery staff.⁷¹ The synergy of all these elements had to ensure precision and effectiveness of artillery operation.

Col. Lieut. Vincas Jasulaitis studied at Fontainebleau artillery school in France, acquired artillery operation principles in France, and taught artillery firing, ballistics, and topography at the High Military Officers' Courses after coming back to Lithuania; he demonstrated a one-sided attitude and orientation towards France and attempted to share the experiences that he had acquired there.⁷² In April-June, 1933, Col. Lieut. Jasulaitis had a traineeship in France, where he was studying practical topography application to artillery firing, and reflected the following: the French were using their experience of positional warfare gained during WWI, and viewed fire concentration and precise use to destroy enemies as their priority.⁷³ In his opinion, it was difficult to adapt this practice to Lithuania because of maneuvering warfare specificity and artillery size in Lithuania. In order for his experience to be more meaningful, he attempted to provide suggestions

⁶⁹ *Artillerijos statutas, II dalis, Kautynės*, p. 119, 178,

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 25–27, 199–200.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 40, 93–94.

⁷² V. Jokubauskas, *Karinė doktrina*, p. 145–146.

⁷³ 1933 09 29 Artillerijos inspektoriaus plk. V. Jasulaičio raportas Kariuomenės inspektoriui apie stažuotę Prancūzijos kariuomenėje, LCVA, f. 836, ap. 1, b. 86, l. 29.

how topographical methods could be used in Lithuania's local conditions so that artillery would work more methodically and accurately. Artillery inspector did not doubt that a sufficiently long time period was necessary to acquire this science deeply, which, according to the inspector, was not grounded, taking into consideration local conditions; therefore, he suggested using fundamental topography regulations for Lithuanian officers.⁷⁴

Suitable tactical principles of the French army artillery operation were applied in the Lithuanian army. The centralized command to artillery operation applied in France was adapted only partially in Lithuania; it was used more in the case of smaller units, while larger units applied a decentralized or mixed command. Timetables used in France to reach artillery fire precision were not adapted in Lithuania.

Operation Tactics of the French and the Lithuanian Army Cavalry

Cavalry, as well as infantry, is one of the oldest army types. During the battles of WWI, cavalymen, fighting on horses, started thinking about motorization of these units. Since the end of 1920, the French army made efforts to provide motorized means to this army type, which could replace horses. Until 1930, the motorization of French cavalry was not fast until the new cavalry statute appeared. It emphasized the development of typical cavalry tactics; i.e. the tasks of typical cavalry were protection, reconnaissance, and assurance of mobile fire reserve. A fundamental novelty was introduced that cavalry was especially suitable to sudden military operations in long fronts, unexpected and intensive fire operation, and negotiations. Especially in attacks, cavalry was ascribed the surprise factor.⁷⁵ Even though these rules were mainly for cavalry with horses, small motorized cavalry units were also mentioned; however, the operation of large units was not indicated. Large motorized cavalry units with tanks were indicated only in the new cavalry statute published in 1935, in which former provisions were not changed, only the purpose of easily mechanized cavalry division was defined in great detail. In principle, the tasks of this division were the same as of smaller units of this type as only their operation scope was different.⁷⁶ In 1939, one more cavalry statute appeared in France, which provided combi-

⁷⁴ Ibidem, p. 31–33.

⁷⁵ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 176.

⁷⁶ Ibidem, p. 176–177.

ned provisions of two last statutes. This cavalry statute indicated provisions on mechanized cavalry operation and was the most far-sighted during the whole interwar period. This statute claimed that cavalry could be used in all military operation phases; typical tasks were reconnaissance, protection, and negotiation as well as a sudden intervention in a military operation in the area of any type and any size.⁷⁷ Mobility, sudden use of fire, the surprise factor, and the possibility of direct negotiations were typical of mechanised cavalry units, differently from infantry and artillery restricted by methodical battles.⁷⁸

The situation of cavalry in Lithuania was determined by statutory documents, which revealed the factual purpose of cavalry. Until late 1930s, cavalry in the Lithuanian army had the main and, most probably, the only task: reconnaissance and actions related to it, i.e. patrolling, surveillance, collecting information, etc. Therefore, cavalrymen training was oriented towards these activities.⁷⁹ The situation changed in the second half of the 1930s: the cavalry statute of 1938 claimed that cavalry was the type of army weapon, which had some typical features, i.e. mobility, fire, the ability to conduct military operation in any place and any time. It also emphasized that cavalry could be strengthened by motorized and mechanized parts under necessity. In addition, cavalry could also perform independent situations: to attack, to defend, to reconnoiter, or to conduct raids to enemy's rear.⁸⁰ The firepower of this type depended on the number of automatic weapons, and its typical weapons were the following: a sword, a carbine and a rifle with bayonet, a light and a heavy machine-gun, an automatic gun, a pistol, and a hand and a rifle grenade. In exceptional cases, mortars could also be ascribed to cavalry. Cavalry attacks in flanks had to be supported by intensive heavy armament fire, and horsemen attack was launched only in exceptional cases, under favourable circumstances and in small units (up to squadron). Such attacks could be made during reconnaissance, pursuit, or cover when the enemy was caught unexpectedly marching, having rest, retreating, or exhausted.⁸¹ Reconnaissance performed by cavalry was given special attention: in 1928 a publication appeared which aimed at describ-

⁷⁷ Ibidem, p. 178–179.

⁷⁸ Ibidem, p. 180–181.

⁷⁹ *Kavalerijos lauko tarnybos pagrindai*, Vyriausiojo štabo Spaudos ir švietimo skyrius, Kaunas 1930, p. 1–10.

⁸⁰ *Kavalerijos statutas, II dalis, Kautynės*, Kariuomenės štabo Spaudos ir švietimo skyrius, Kaunas 1938, p. 5.

⁸¹ V. Jokubauskas, *Lietuvos kariuomenės kavalerija tarpukariu: reguliarieji pulkai, šauliai dragūnai ir teritorinių dragūnų tarnyba*, „Karo archyvas“ 2015, t. 30, p. 255.

ing the specificity of horse reconnaissance. Even though here the French army experience from WWI was used extensively, the main cavalry actions were adapted to local conditions and eventual cases and the main actions of effective reconnaissance were defined; reconnaissance was ascribed to cavalry because of its mobility.⁸² In addition, one more cavalry advantage was considered to be its large area of operation, the ability to act unexpectedly, universality (to fight on foot and on horses), the ability to start and terminate military activities suddenly, suitability to fight in large areas, the ability to use the achieved victory quickly, to occupy and maintain a territory, and to increase military actions intensity in a chosen area. Thus, exceptional cavalry features allowed using these weapons in the areas where it was necessary to operate quickly, mobile, and unexpectedly.⁸³ According to Lithuanian cavalry officer, graduate of French Saint-Cyr and Saumur military schools, former Chief of Cavalry Staff and Chief Cavalry Regiment Gen. St. Col. Izidorius Kraunaitis, who prepared a methodical book *Cavalry Tactics* in 1932, cavalry could be used in the following situations: for cover in order to save time while additional forces were arriving; for reconnaissance in order to find out enemy's plans and maneuver direction; for defence in order to stop enemy's movement; for attack when there was a possibility to maneuver; for exploitation of success when the enemy was withdrawing and the withdrawal turned into running.⁸⁴ The same provisions were also recorded in the *Cavalry Statute*, and similar ideas on the use of cavalry, as a mobile and firepower type of army, were expressed by Gen. St. Col. Aloyzas Valušis, who studied in France and Belgium, served in cavalry, and published a publication *Modern Tasks of Cavalry* in 1937. He attached considerable importance to cavalry motorization and noted that according to the traditional cavalry types structuring, mobile and fast hussars were suitable for reconnaissance and ambush; dragoons (motorized riflemen followed by powerful fire means) provided with fire means were used for occupying and maintaining front positions; kirasirs (armour formations and offensive aviation) were suitable for critical blows. It was hoped that in the future aviation and motorized and mechanised divisions would perform the tasks of independent and modern cavalry. The traditional significance of cavalry was not eliminated because in unfavourable areas (large areas of forests, bogs, many rivers, condition of road network, etc.) units

⁸² *Jojų tarnyba. Divizijos eskadronas ir mišri žvalgomoji rinktinė*, Vyriausiojo štabo Karo mokslo valdyba, Kaunas 1928, p. 3.

⁸³ *Kavalerijos statutai, II dalis, Kautynės*, p. 16.

⁸⁴ V. Jokubauskas, *Lietuvos kariuomenės kavalerija tarpukariu*, p. 256.

of horsemen cavalry could operate.⁸⁵ Thus, this military officer expressed modern ideas and based them on the example of the French military where motorization of cavalry was implemented. Meanwhile, in Lithuania, military chiefs started talking about cavalry modernization only when WWII started. Then it was stated that traditional Lithuanian cavalry tactics, organization, and armament did not meet warfare principles of the time. A suggestion was made to reform small cavalry forces with motorized means and, this way, ensure mobility, flexibility, and firepower.⁸⁶ Thus, Lithuania was planning to adapt the modern principles of cavalry operation used in France; however, the Soviet Union occupation, which started in June, 1940, abandoned these plans.

The features of Lithuanian cavalry operation tactics were adopted from the French military practice. Analogical functions of these weapons were ascribed, the basic features of which were related to universal cavalry operation.

Operation Tactics of the French and the Lithuanian Army Tanks

In the formation of the French military doctrine in 1920, attention was drawn to the importance of tanks and possibilities of their usage in future military operations. Then it was clearly emphasized that light tanks, which France had the most, had the role of support for infantry.⁸⁷ The instruction regulating tank service in infantry formation published in the same year indicated that tanks did not perform any battle actions independently, occupying enemy's territories; they were a strong support for infantry units. The documents regulating infantry operation also included similar provisions that tanks had to increase infantrymen's offensive force and were an integral part of infantry units.⁸⁸ These provisions were slowly supplemented, especially considering military theoreticians' (Great Britain Gen. Maj. John Frederick Charles Fuller and Captain Basil Henry Liddell Hart) ideas that in offensive attacks mobile means and tank formations should be used. A similar use of tanks was employed by French Gen. Jean Estienne, the creator of the French army tank forces, also known in France as the f a -

⁸⁵ Ibidem.

⁸⁶ V. Jokubauskas, „Mažųjų kariuomenių” galia ir paramilitarizmas, p. 258.

⁸⁷ N. Atkin, op. cit., p. 46.

⁸⁸ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 142, 147.

ther of tanks. Still, these ideas were not adapted to the French army. Even though France had many various tanks in 1939, they were distributed in different infantry units rather than concentrated in specialized units.⁸⁹ In 1936, the instruction of tactical operation of large units generalized the use of tanks and identified their five main tasks. The first task was to accompany infantrymen and closely interact with them. The second one was to support infantrymen's actions in front attack in a concentrated, the so-called mass tank maneuver. The third purpose of tank operation was to destroy enemy's armoured machinery. The fourth one was deep tank penetration to enemy's positions and as fast as possible, while the enemy's defence was disturbed. The last purpose of tanks was slightly less defined and only foreseen that tank units could be a structural centre of eventual mechanized offices, which could be used in maneuvers of large units headed by the chief of this unit. When anti-tank weapons were developing, the instruction was supplemented by a provision in 1939 that tanks could attack only supported by artillery, which had to protect tanks from anti-tank weapons fire and in interaction with infantry.⁹⁰

It should be noted that the operation of tanks in the French army was determined to be not only with infantry units but also with artillery, or even alternative operation with infantrymen was possible. The results of such combat interaction could be even more precise than operating with one type of weapons. In 1930, after a number of field training, it was observed that the interaction and coordination of actions was not successful for tank and artillery units because of partial communication problems. One of the solutions was to appoint artillery officers to each tank battalion; however, the solution was to introduce precise timetables, this way avoiding decentralization of unit command. These two factors presuppose that in both artillery and tank operation the principles of methodical battle were applied. Generalizing tank operation directions dominant in the French army, one may note that these provisions changed only slightly during the period under the present consideration, and the changes were not essential. The experiences of WWI determined the distinction between light and heavy tanks (medium tanks at some point as well); nevertheless, they had to support infantrymen's actions rather than operate independently.⁹¹

In the *Infantry Statute* approved in 1923 by the Lithuanian army, tanks were viewed as support for infantrymen, which had to be used only in of-

⁸⁹ N. Atkin, op. cit., p. 46–47.

⁹⁰ R. A. Doughty, *The Seeds of Disaster*, p. 158, 162.

⁹¹ Ibidem, p. 151, 160, 164–165.

fensive operation, while they could not perform independent actions themselves. In the *Infantry Statute* approved in 1936, the same tactical provision was repeated that tanks were the support means of infantry, and in the case that they left formation, infantrymen had to be able to perform battle actions without tanks.⁹²

In 1937, when the training programme of Armoured Detachment Officers' Courses was prepared, the Chief of Military Equipment Staff ordered Gen. St. Col. Lieut. Antanas Sidabras, the Chief of Armoured Detachment, to devise this programme on the basis of analogical programmes taught at French Infantry School Ecole d'Application de l'Infanterie et des chars de combat.⁹³ Taking into consideration the order, a six-month tactics training programme was devised, which had three main training stages: experimental tactics, field training, and theoretical lectures. During the first stage, three tasks had to be discussed: operation of the armoured detachment in the composition of a division (march and its protection, occupation and defence of assault starting line, impediment actions, and attack at a division flank), operation of a separate mechanized detachment (occupation and defence of assault starting line; attack), operation of mechanized detachment in the composition of a cavalry brigade (occupation and defence of assault starting line; impediment actions). During the second stage of the field training, military officers had to demonstrate specific decisions and knowledge in reconnaissance. During the last stage of theoretical lectures, the following topics were taught: operation of mechanized units, taking into consideration the conditions in Lithuania, organizational forms of mechanization, tactical operation features of mechanized units, and relocation of these units.⁹⁴

One of the military officers who served in the Armoured Detachment was Sen. Lieut. Juozas Zienius, who studied in France in 1936–1937 and had a two-month practice in Angouleme, tank school, where was introduced to the organization and functioning of a tank unit. Here the military officer had some practical training as well: he commanded tanks with light tanks Renault FT-17 produced in France, the same ones that were used in Lithuania. He also had to do shooting exercises when the tank was in a stationary position. After a short internship, the military officer went to Versailles Tank School, which aimed at preparing senior chiefs of tank units. The pro-

⁹² V. Jokubauskas, „Mažųjų kariuomenių“ galia ir paramilitarizmas, p. 248.

⁹³ 1937 02 17 Karo technikos štabo viršininko raštas dėl karininkų mokymo kursų Šarvuočių rinktinės vadui, LCVA, f. 828, ap. 1, b. 129, l. 71.

⁹⁴ 1937 m. Taktikos programa šarvuočių kursams, ibidem, p. 72–72 ap.

gramme of this school comprised twelve courses: theoretical and practical course of tank tactics, radio equipment, separate theoretical and practical courses of vehicles and tanks command, a theoretical course in electro-technics, courses in chemical materials and metals, the course on the use of lifting and pulling mechanisms, riding practice, the course on air reconnaissance, and tactics and shooting practice in a shooting range. During the latter training, the trainees had shooting practice with heavy machine-guns and cannons when the tanks were in a stationary or mobile position.⁹⁵ After completing the courses and coming back to Lithuania, Sen. Lieut. Zienius was awarded a Captain degree and appointed the Chief of Armoured Detachment Training Subdivision. He applied the knowledge that he had acquired abroad in training non-commissioned officers as drivers of tanks and cars and commanders of tanks.⁹⁶ It should be noted that France was the main state where Lithuanian army military officers of tank unit were sent for training.⁹⁷

The warfare features of Lithuanian army armoured equipment were formed on the basis of two main factors: the knowledge of specialists who acquired it in France and the means used, i.e. technical parameters of tanks, which influenced their tactical use.

Conclusions

The French military doctrine in the 1920s and the 1930s was based on the principles of both offensive and defensive battle. Warfare features of this state were generated, expecting to fight a war with Germany; it was expected to defeat it, using the measures successful in WWI, disregarding the military theories applied in the German army at that time.

In Lithuania, taking into consideration local conditions, the fundamental French warfare provision was adapted, i.e. success in military operations was reached using offensive actions, which combined two elements: firepower and maneuver. Meanwhile, in Lithuania, the French model of a methodical battle and centralized command were not applied; on the contrary, the target command model used in the German army was adapted. It was

⁹⁵ 1991 m. dim. plk. lt. J. Zieniaus atsiminimai apie tarnybą Lietuvos kariuomenėje, VDKM, p. 16, 19, 20–21, 33.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 36.

⁹⁷ *Tankai Lietuvos kariuomenėje 1924–1940*, sud. A. Stolarovas, A. Pociūnas, Vilnius 2015, p. 40.

perceived that it was impossible to fully adapt the practice of other countries; therefore, attempts were made to adapt only valuable and locally suitable military thoughts.

In the artillery operation tactics of the Lithuanian army, the features of French artillery tactics suitable for the Lithuanian military thought were adapted. The provisions related to fire concentration, which directly influenced firepower, the surprise factor, and mobility were adapted.

Cavalry operation tactics and its functions were mainly adapted on the basis of French examples. Especially, universality principles of this type of armed forces were adapted, on the basis of which cavalry could use the factors of surprise, speed, and mobility. Lithuania did not have enough time to adapt the only essential and modern cavalry feature, i.e. motorization. This could have been influenced by a conservative attitude towards one of the oldest army types, more associated with a representational role rather than real combat operation.

The operation tactics of armoured military equipment was mainly taken from France. These people adapted not only the fundamental operation tactics of tanks but also in the training of Armoured Detachment military officers, an analogous order and subjects were adapted to the Lithuanian army from the French army. The tank models produced in France or Great Britain, which was influenced by the French military thought, were used in Lithuania; naturally, the tactical adaptation of tanks operation of these states occurred.

The military officers discussed in the present article studied in French military science institutions and attempted to transfer the good warfare practices. Most military officers attempted to share their experience or insights in Lithuania or to adapt suitable ideas to the Lithuanian army. This was the case with the main warfare principles, which were adapted to the specificity of the Lithuanian state, and army and national principles of maneuver warfare were created.

Streszczenie

Adaptacja francuskiej myśli wojskowej przez wojsko litewskie w latach 20. i 30. XX w.

Artykuł traktuje o podstawowych założeniach francuskiej doktryny wojennej oraz myśli wojskowej i ich wdrażaniu w Wojsku Litewskim w latach 20. i 30. XX w. Wykorzystując światowe badania naukowe oraz przechowywane w Litwie źródła,

podjęto próbę ukazania, jakie elementy francuskiej myśli wojskowej można było zastosować w Wojsku Litewskim i jakie z nich zostały zastosowane.

Podstawowe założenia francuskiej doktryny wojennej w latach 1920–1930 były tworzone z perspektywy doświadczeń wojny pozycyjnej z okresu I wojny światowej, w której czynnikiem decydującym o zwycięstwie była siła ognia. Sama doktryna francuska została oparta na zasadach zarówno walki obronnej, jak i ofensywnej. Wojskowość Francji kształtowała się w obliczu prawdopodobieństwa konfliktu z Niemcami, a zwycięstwo nad nimi spodziewano się osiągnąć środkami, które sprawdziły się w I wojnie. Na Litwie, uwzględniając miejscowe warunki, zostało zaadaptowane podstawowe założenie francuskie – powodzenie w operacjach wojskowych osiąga się przez przeprowadzenie działań zaczepnych, które łączą dwa elementy – siłę ognia oraz manewr. W przypadku litewskim nie został jednak zastosowany francuski model bitwy metodycznej i związane z nim centralizowane dowodzenie. W taktyce działań artylerii litewskiej zostały przejęte cechy taktyki francuskiej, związane z koncentracją ognia, czynnikiem zaskoczenia i mobilnością. Oficerowie litewscy pobierali nauki we Francji i uczyli się zasad bitwy metodycznej, jednak ze względu na specyfikę państwa oraz wojska litewskiego tych zasad nie realizowali, uważając je za nieodpowiednie dla charakteru walki manewrowej.

Taktyka działań kawalerii, a także jej funkcje zostały zastosowane w wojsku litewskim w znacznym stopniu w oparciu o przykłady francuskie. Przede wszystkim przejęto zasady uniwersalności tych sił zbrojnych, na podstawie których kawaleria mogła wykorzystać czynniki zaskoczenia, szybkości oraz mobilności. Taktyka działania sprzętu pancernego również w znacznym stopniu była przejmowana z Francji, gdzie uczyli się litewscy oficerowie tego rodzaju wojsk. Litwa używała czołgów wyprodukowanych we Francji lub w pozostającej pod wpływem francuskiej myśli wojskowej Wielkiej Brytanii, stąd i zastosowanie taktyki działań pancernych tych właśnie państw.

Summary

Adaptation of the French military thought to the Lithuanian Army in the 1920s and the 1930s

The present article discusses the main provisions and military thoughts of the French military doctrine and their application to the Lithuanian army in the 1920s and the 1930s. The research of world scholars and the analysis of Lithuanian sources has revealed which French military ideas were suitable to be adapted to the Lithuanian army and which of them were adapted.

The main provisions of the French military doctrine in the 1920s and the 1930s were created taking into consideration the experiences of WWI positional battles, where firepower was the key factor, influencing victory. The French doctrine itself was based on the principles of both offensive and defensive battles. Military featu-

res in this state were created expecting a war with Germany, and it was expected to win against it, using the same measures as in WWI. Taking into consideration local conditions, the fundamental French provision was adapted to Lithuania, i.e. success in military operations is reached employing offensive actions, which combine two elements, firepower and maneuver. However, the French model of a methodical battle and centralized command related to it were not adapted to Lithuania. In the operation tactics of the Lithuanian artillery, the features of the French artillery tactics were adapted, which were related to fire concentration, the surprise factor, and mobility. Lithuanian military officers studied in French military institutions and learned the principles of a methodical battle; nevertheless, because of the Lithuanian state and army specificity, these principles were not applied as unsuitable for maneuver battle.

Cavalry operation tactics and its functions were mainly adapted to the Lithuanian army on the basis of the French examples. Especially the principles of armed forces universality were used, and by using them, cavalry could use the factors of surprise, speed, and mobility. The operation tactics of armoured military equipment in Lithuania was also adapted from France, where Lithuanian officers of this field had studied. The tank models produced in France or Great Britain, which was influenced by the French military thought, were used in Lithuania; this also influenced the adaptation of tactical tank operation of these states.

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