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14. ABSTRACT

The emergence of hybrid warfare in the 21st century has its roots in the political warfare used by the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Russia uses a hybrid warfare strategy to undermine Western conventional military superiority, achieve foreign policy goals while avoiding military casualties, and spread its values system abroad as an alternative to liberal Western ideals. Private military and security companies (PMSCs) are used by Moscow to further its hybrid warfare strategy abroad, while a state-sponsored nationalist movement is cultivated to shore up support for the Kremlin at home. Given the economic and military weaknesses Russia suffers from in comparison with the US, this type of strategy gives Moscow a tool to achieve its objectives without expending a great amount of blood and treasure. PMSCs play a significant role in Russia's use of hybrid warfare, extending its influence through patriotic youth camps and sometimes representing Russian interests abroad. The most recent example of this strategy occurred in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, where Russian support to secessionist groups continues to undermine a peaceful resolution. Russian nationalism is linked to hybrid warfare. It is encouraged within Russia to protect the regime and to focus the public's attention away from troubling issues, such as the economy. It is also exported abroad to recruit foreign fighters and is a potential tool for generating political unrest in Moscow's periphery. The spread of Russian nationalism is also facilitated by PMSCs in the patriotic youth camps they run both inside and outside of Russia. However, the Kremlin has a tenuous relationship with nationalist groups inside Russia, appropriating a nationalist message when it suits the regime and at other times cracking down on nationalist groups.

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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

HYBRID WARFARE AND THE RUSSIAN NATIONALIST NEXUS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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Preface

This paper began as an excuse to research Russian policy and the 21st century use of hybrid warfare, topics which interested me but with which I had extraordinarily little background. My interest was personal rather than professional, although these issues have professional applications for anyone working in the US national security apparatus. I also had a notion that the rise of nationalism played a role in Russia's actions, although it took a lot of work to uncover those linkages.

I could not have written this paper without the assistance of many people, first and foremost my mentor at Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Dr. Craig Hayden, who helped me find a straighter road through a discussion that often meandered into the woods. His comments and those of Dr. Jonathan Phillips helped strengthen the arguments in this paper, for which I am grateful. I am also indebted to several classmates and colleagues, especially P., who helped me not only find excellent material to work with but gave shrewd advice as to the validity and objectivity of sources I found on my own. Thank you!

Executive Summary

Title: Hybrid Warfare and the Russian Nationalist Nexus

Author: Tara M. McCarthy, United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College

Thesis: Russia uses a hybrid warfare strategy to undermine Western conventional military superiority, achieve foreign policy goals while avoiding military casualties, and spread its values system abroad as an alternative to liberal Western ideals. Private military and security companies (PMSCs) are used by Moscow to further its hybrid warfare strategy abroad, while a state-sponsored nationalist movement is cultivated to shore up support for the Kremlin at home.

Discussion: The emergence of hybrid warfare in the 21st century has its roots in the political warfare used by the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Given the economic and military weaknesses Russia suffers from in comparison with the US, this type of strategy gives Moscow a tool to achieve its objectives without expending a great amount of blood and treasure. PMSCs play a significant role in Russia's use of hybrid warfare, extending its influence through patriotic youth camps and sometimes representing Russian interests abroad. The most recent example of this strategy occurred in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, where Russian support to secessionist groups continues to undermine a peaceful resolution.

Russian nationalism is linked to hybrid warfare. It is encouraged within Russia to protect the regime and to focus the public's attention away from troubling issues, such as the economy. It is also exported abroad to recruit foreign fighters and is a potential tool for generating political unrest in Moscow's periphery. The spread of Russian nationalism is also facilitated by PMSCs in the patriotic youth camps they run both inside and outside of Russia. However, the Kremlin has a tenuous relationship with nationalist groups inside Russia, appropriating a nationalist message when it suits the regime and at other times cracking down on nationalist groups.

Conclusion: Russia's use of hybrid warfare challenges the West to counter actions that often appear ambiguous and obscure Moscow's hand. While this strategy rarely results in force-on-force military conflict, it still risks undermining the stability and democratic institutions of the nations that Moscow targets, many of which sit between western Europe and Russia. Moscow has many options for pursuing its goals and hybrid warfare is only one of them, however it may be the one strategy for which the US and the West are least prepared.

Introduction

Moscow's successful 2014 annexation of Crimea and instigation of separatist violence in eastern Ukraine demonstrated an evolution in Russian foreign policy concentrated around the use of hybrid warfare to achieve its objectives. Rather than conducting an overt military campaign, Moscow instead used a hybrid warfare strategy executed by Russian private military and security companies (PMSC)s, small numbers of conventional and special operations forces, and pro-Russian separatist groups in eastern Ukraine to gain territory and disrupt Kyiv's sovereignty over a significant portion of Ukraine. The successful use of this strategy offset a faltering economy and waning public trust in the Kremlin, which rose to national prominence during anti-government protests in 2011 and 2012 and that Russian authorities tried hard to crush. Russia uses a hybrid warfare strategy to undermine Western conventional military superiority, achieve foreign policy goals while avoiding military casualties, and spread its values system abroad as an alternative to liberal Western ideals. PMSCs are used by Moscow to further its hybrid warfare strategy abroad, while a state-sponsored nationalist movement is cultivated to shore up support for the Kremlin at home. Russian nationalism links the concepts discussed in this paper as it is used to recruit foreign fighters for conflicts abroad and as a tool to generate political unrest in Russia's periphery. PMSCs also facilitate the spread of Russian nationalism in the patriotic youth camps they organize both inside and outside of Russia. Not only does the spread of Russian nationalism challenge the rule of law and democratic institutions, especially in parts of eastern Europe such as the Balkans, but Moscow's use of hybrid warfare to achieve its foreign policy objectives could be leveraged in other parts of the world where the US has national security interests.

This paper will begin with a definition of hybrid warfare and a discussion of how Russia uses it, followed by an exploration of the role Russian PMSCs play in the strategy and how Moscow uses it as a tool of foreign policy. Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and involvement in the conflict in eastern Ukraine are then presented as case studies to demonstrate the effectiveness of the hybrid warfare strategy under favorable conditions. The paper then turns to domestic issues and chronicles the Kremlin's attitude towards Russian nationalist movements since the 2011-2012 timeframe and how these movements affected actions in Ukraine. It concludes with a discussion of how Russia's expanded use of this strategy challenges Western security and stability.

Russia's Use of Hybrid Warfare

For this paper, ambiguous or "hybrid" warfare involves rapidly generating highly trained and disciplined forces who enter the battlespace out of uniform and in coordination with local supporters, using psychological operations, intimidation, and bribery to undermine nationalist resistance.¹ In the United States, the term also refers to situations in which a state or nonstate belligerent actor deploys troops and proxies in a deceptive and confusing manner with the intent of achieving political and military effects while obscuring the belligerent's direct participation.² Alternative terminology for this style of warfare includes, "gray zone operations", and the more familiar "political warfare", described by diplomat George Kennan as "the logical application of Clausewitz's doctrine in time of peace. In broadest definition, political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its national

1 Connell, Mary Ellen and Evans, Ryan, "Russia's Ambiguous Warfare and Implications for the US Marine Corps," MCU Journal vol. 7, no. 1 (Spring 2016), https://www.cna.org/CNA_Files/PDF/MCU-Journal-Russias-Ambiguous-Warfare.pdf, p. 30.

2 Connell and Evans, p.31-32.

objectives. Such operations are both overt and covert.”³ During the Cold War, this concept was known as “active measures”.⁴

When Russian General Valery Gerasimov used the term “hybrid warfare” in 2013⁵, he was referring to the perception that the West used indirect and asymmetric methods, to include “color revolutions”, the Arab Spring, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), against Russia and its allies. His statements have been misinterpreted to describe Russia’s “new” form of warfare (as exhibited in Ukraine), but both Russia and the West have used this type of warfare for decades. Both the Soviet Union and the United States used hybrid or “political” warfare throughout the Cold War as each side sought to coerce and coopt others into their respective spheres of influence.⁶ According to CSIS’ Seth Jones, “Both countries backed substate groups and states to expand their power and influence. Under the Reagan Doctrine, for example, the United States provided overt and covert assistance to anticommunist governments and resistance movements to roll back communist supporters.”⁷

Russia’s current strategy modernized this technique with the use of social media and online news. Moscow actively propagates conservative “morality politics” as a counter to “degenerative Western liberalism” both at home and abroad,⁸ reaching out to certain groups,

3 George F. Kennan, Policy Planning Staff Memorandum 269, Washington, D.C.: U.S. State Department, May 4, 1948. As of May 20, 2019: <http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/johnson/65ciafounding3.htm>

4 Hicks, Kathleen H. and Samp, Lisa Sawyer, *Recalibrating US Strategy Toward Russia*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2017), <https://www.csis.org/analysis/recalibrating-us-strategy-toward-russia>, p. 84.

5 Bartles, Charles K., “Getting Gerasimov Right,” *Military Review* (January - February 2016), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329933852_Getting_Gerasimov_Right, p.30.

6 Jones, Seth G., *The Return of Political Warfare* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 2018), <https://www.csis.org/analysis/return-political-warfare>, p. 2.

7 Jones, p. 2.

8 Teper, Yuri, “Kremlin’s post-2012 national policies: Encountering the merits and perils of identity-based social contract,” in *Russia Before and After Crimea: Nationalism and Identity, 2010-2017*, eds. Kolsto, Pal and Helge Blakkisrud,(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 73-74.

such as Slavs and ethnic Russian minorities in the Soviet Union’s former sphere of influence, to promote Russian values and Russian Orthodox solidarity. Russia’s economic woes leave it unable to leverage business interests for influence abroad, but the Kremlin uses an information warfare network to meddle in foreign elections^{9,10} by spreading disinformation and leaking alleged sensitive documents,¹¹ undermining democratic institutions. It also has enough economic leverage to bully smaller states, such as Moldova,¹² and uses dependencies on Russian energy to pressure them to align more closely with Moscow, as in Belarus.¹³

This type of “secret warfare” is known as *maskirovka* – operations that deflect attention from and may disguise intention – in Russia and it is an essential part of Moscow’s strategy.^{14,15} It relies heavily on deception, deniability, and special operations troops mixed with volunteer militias who are armed with advanced weapons to bring about political change outside Russia’s borders. Instead of outright confrontation, Moscow has developed and successfully employed a less risky strategy of covertly undermining a target country before sending in a small force. This strategy avoids a clear-cut military confrontation that Russia could very well lose. It relies heavily on the use of propaganda and information warfare to make the defending state appear to be an illegitimate occupier.¹⁶ Military forces are then introduced into target areas, perhaps

9 Adam Taylor, “For Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn, murky allegations of Russian meddling loom over Britain’s election,” Washington Post, December 3, 2019.

10 Adam Taylor, “Did Russia interfere in Brexit?: An unpublished report roils U.K. politics before election,” Washington Post, November 5, 2019.

11 Joseph Marks, “The Cybersecurity 202: Russia’s efforts to target U.K. elections a stark warning for 2020,” Washington Post, December 19, 2019.

12 Eugene Rumer, *Moldova Between Russia and the West: A Delicate Balance*, (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 23, 2017), <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/05/23/moldova-between-russia-and-west-delicate-balance-pub-70056>.

13 Preiherman, Yauheni, *Unsettled union: The future of the Belarus-Russia relationship* (London: European Council on Foreign Relations, January 21, 2020), https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_unsettled_union_the_future_of_the_belarus_russia_relationship.

14 Hicks and Samp, p. 85.

15 Connell and Evans, p. 33.

16 David Axe and Robert Beckhusen, “NATO could have trouble combating Putin’s military strategy,” Reuters, September 15, 2014.

disguised as peacekeepers or members of humanitarian assistance organizations, a method used by Russia in Crimea.¹⁷ This established foreign presence can be used to foment discord or even take over the government institutions in a targeted country or region, potentially achieving Russian foreign policy goals without the use of outright military force.

Guns for Hire: Russian Private Military and Security Companies

The proxy wars of the Cold War also continue today. The conflict in Syria is the best recent example, as Russia (and Iran) propped up the Assad Regime and fought against US-backed militia groups. The Kremlin uses Russian military contractors in this conflict to achieve its objectives. Putin himself in 2012 praised PMSCs as a potential “instrument for realizing national interests without the direct participation of the government.”¹⁸ Today’s Russian private military and security companies (PMSCs) grew from companies that provided security for private citizens in Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union. They have since evolved into organizations that train foreign militias and national militaries, run paramilitary and pro-Russian ideological camps in eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States countries, and even actively participate in military conflicts.¹⁹ Russian PMSCs are primarily composed of veterans and former officers of the military intelligence agency (GRU) and the federal security agency (FSB). They also provide cover for Russian forces to participate in actual warfare, as

17 Galeotti, Mark, “The ‘Gerasimov Doctrine’ and Russian Non-Linear War,” In *Moscow’s Shadows* (July 6, 2014),

http://cs.brown.edu/people/jsavage/VotingProject/2017_03_09_MoscowsShadow_GerasimovDoctrineAndRussianNon-LinearWar.pdf, p. 3.

18 Klein, Margaret, *Private military companies – a growing instrument in Russia’s foreign and security policy toolbox* (Helsinki: Hybrid COE Strategic Analysis, March 2019), <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/publications/strategic-analysis-3-2019-private-military-companies-a-growing-instrument-in-russias-foreign-and-security-policy-toolbox/>, p. 4.

19 Ostensen, Ase Gilje and Bukkvoll, Tor, *Russian Use of Private Military and Security Companies – the implications for European and Norwegian Security* (Bergen, Norway: Chr. Michelsens Institutt, FFI Rapport 18/01300, 2018). <https://www.cmi.no/publications/6637-russian-use-of-private-military-and-security>, p. 9, 12, 14-15, 24.

demonstrated in eastern Ukraine. It is worth noting that PMSCs remain illegal in Russia and most companies are registered abroad.²⁰ Several factors contributed to the multiple failed attempts to legalize these companies, one being ongoing power struggles between the GRU and FSB and another being a lack of political will at the highest levels of Russian government. There are benefits to keeping PMSCs technically illegal, such as the ability to force companies to work for the Kremlin upon threat of legal action. In this way, Moscow leverages its influence to use PMSCs as a foreign policy tool.

One role of Russian PMSCs is the training of foreign armed forces. Russian PMSCs likely provided training to the governments of both Sudan and Central African Republic (CAR), two countries with human rights violations.²¹²² Some training is related to weapons sales – when a country purchases a weapons system from Russia, it arrives with personnel who will train potential operators on the function, use, and maintenance of that system. But Wagner – one of the best known Russian PMSCs – may have trained Sudanese government forces during the country’s civil war on behalf of its president, Omar al-Bashir – who is wanted by the International Criminal Court for atrocities in Darfur.²³²⁴ In CAR, PMSCs operate throughout the country training local soldiers.²⁵ Thus, Russian PMSCs provide military aid to regimes that may be under Western sanctions or that the West disassociates from because of human rights abuses.

20 Adam Taylor, “What we know about the shadowy Russian mercenary firm behind an attack on U.S. troops in Syria,” Washington Post, February 23, 2018.

21 Human Rights Watch, Central African Republic country page, accessed March 7, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/africa/central-african-republic>

22 Dionne Searcey, “Gems, Warlords, and Mercenaries: Russia’s Playbook in Central African Republic,” The New York Times, September 30, 2019.

23 Ostensen and Bukkvoll, p. 25.

24 Human Rights Watch, Sudan country page, accessed on March 7, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/africa/sudan>

25 Searcey.

These foreign contracts also give Moscow a foothold in regions from which it has been absent since the fall of the Soviet Union, especially Africa and the Near East.

Russia also uses PMSCs to further Moscow's goals in Libya.²⁶ Libya is a chessboard of interests for more than six different nations involved in the current conflict between eastern commander Khalifa Hifter and the internationally recognized government in Tripoli. The players contend over oil and gas resources, territory, and ideological and geostrategic ambitions.²⁷ Russia currently backs Hifter's forces and uses PMSCs to provide high-tech weapons, intelligence, and combat training. While the United States largely divested itself from Libya following the 2012 attack on the consulate in Benghazi, Russia's presence in Libya places PMSCs near NATO bases in southern Europe, a potential concern. Russia's involvement may have unintended effects on its other interests, as Turkey – one of Russia's partners in Syria – has also stepped into the fray in support of the internationally recognized government in Tripoli. The support on both sides escalated the conflict and raised fresh fears in Europe of Russian involvement on Mediterranean shores and Turkish influence in the form of support for the Muslim Brotherhood.²⁸ While Moscow may be intervening in Libya as part of its goal to gain influence in the Middle East, it is also interested in a number of oil, weapons, and construction contracts that have been open-ended since the deposition and subsequent death of former leader Moammar Gaddafi.²⁹ Gaining a more permanent foothold in North Africa would expand the Kremlin's reach into a region that continues to struggle with terrorism and political instability, potentially complicating cooperation with the West, especially in counterinsurgency operations.

26 Sudarsan Raghavan, "As Libya's international proxy war deepens, U.S. and Europe jolted back into crisis talks," Washington Post, January 18, 2020.

27 Raghavan.

28 Raghavan.

29 Raghavan.

At least one known Russian PMSC, ENOT Corp., appears to run military type training camps for foreign right-wing activists.³⁰ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty posted a YouTube video in 2018 documenting the existence of a camp run by ENOT Corp. near Moscow. In the video, one of the camp's leaders claimed that children as young as six have been brought to the camp by their parents.³¹ A separate camp inside Serbia was shut down later the same year by Serbian police; ENOT Corp. was a "co-organizer" of that camp, as well.³² From these camps, foreign fighters are sent to eastern Ukraine as foot soldiers to fight alongside PMSCs and pro-Russian separatists.

Russian PMSCs provide a force multiplier to Russian armed forces, pursuing hybrid operations with plausible deniability for Russian leadership as the links between such groups and the Kremlin are often unclear. This uncertainty is leveraged by Russia in its military strategy to stall adversaries' responses and make short-term strategic gains.³³ The use of PMSCs and other groups – most notably pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine and Crimea – was part of Russia's "hybrid" strategy, which involved rapidly generating highly trained and disciplined forces to enter the battlespace out of uniform and in coordination with local supporters and use psychological operations, intimidation, and bribery to undermine pro-Ukrainian resistance.³⁴ But such drastic actions as the annexation of Crimea beg an explanation. Why does Russia pursue its

30 Ostensen and Bukkvoll, p. 24.

31 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, "Serbian Teens Play War Games At Russian Paramilitary Camp," YouTube video, April 6, 2018, 2:31, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsMLUy9HBFA>

32 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, "Serbian Police Close Paramilitary Youth Camp Run By Ultranationalists, Russian Group," August 17, 2018, <https://www.rferl.org/a/serbian-police-close-paramilitary-youth-camp-run-by-ultranationalists-russian-group/29439294.html>

33 Linder, Andrew, *Russian Private Military Companies in Syria and Beyond* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 17, 2018), <https://www.csis.org/nfp/russian-private-military-companies-syria-and-beyond>, p. 17.

34 Connell and Evans, p. 31.

hybrid warfare strategy and what does it hope to gain? We will explore this question in the next section.

Russian Foreign Policy and the Use of Hybrid Warfare

Geopolitics is the main organizing principle of Vladimir Putin’s foreign policy and is evident in Ukraine. The policy promotes traditional values and concepts that appeal directly to nationalist sentiment in many Russian enclaves worldwide. The Kremlin pursues a Russian “national idea” based on conservative political and social values, free of the influence of Western liberalism, that leads the recent global resurgence of nationalism. This “national idea” openly defies US leadership and challenges the legitimacy of existing global norms and institutions.³⁵

Ponarin and Komin refer to Russia’s current foreign policy as “re-imperialization” and reference actions in Ukraine, Moldova (in the early 1990s), and Georgia as examples. “Re-imperialization” exploits the economic weakness of neighboring countries, lending legitimacy to Kremlin-backed regimes because the stability of Russia contrasts favorably with the situation in other former Soviet states.³⁶

Moscow also draws on its history as one of two global superpowers during the Cold War to justify its belief that it is still a great power in the world today and rejects the idea that the West “defeated” communism – from Russia’s point of view, not enough credit is given for its own actions during the early 90s. Insecurity seems to underly Russian approaches to foreign policy today, which is concerned with the loss of sovereignty and territorial integrity.³⁷ Russian

35 Lo, Bobo, *Russia and the New World Disorder*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015), p. xv -xvi.

36 Ponarin, Eduard and Komin, Michael, “Imperial and ethnic nationalism: A dilemma of the Russian elite,” in *Russia Before and After Crimea: Nationalism and Identity, 2010-17*, eds. Kolsto, Pal and Helge Blakkisrud, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 62.

37 Lo, p. 19.

foreign policy projects a belief in the eventual success of both its policies and the country as well as the essential rightness of the Russian position, meaning that Moscow's leaders are sensitive to any suggestion of inferiority. NATO expansion, the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, and Kosovar independence played on Russian fears that the US and the West were actively trying to meddle in Moscow's "near abroad".

The Kremlin argues that the US and the West have used hybrid warfare tactics themselves in fomenting rebellions and social movements.³⁸ It actively blames the US for the so-called "Color Revolutions" of the early 2000s as well as the Arab Spring, alleging that the US uses NGOs and clandestine support for pro-democracy agitators to overthrow regimes. For example, Russian media promotes a consistent narrative painting Ukrainian politics as Western subversive intervention in deliberate opposition to Russian interests.³⁹ We now turn to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine as an example of the use of hybrid warfare to achieve foreign policy objectives.

Crimea and Eastern Ukraine: A Case Study

Also known as "Euromaidan", the 2014 protests overturned a Ukrainian government seen as pro-Russian. The Ukrainian parliament's decision not to sign a significant trade agreement with the EU triggered a protest movement that only grew as the Ukrainian government's attempts to quell it became more violent. Eventually, this led to the ouster of the president, Viktor Yanukovich, who fled to Russia, and ushered in new elections. Following the Euromaidan, Russia took advantage of the ensuing unrest in southern and eastern Ukraine.

³⁸ Galleotti.

³⁹ Ponarin and Komin, p. 63.

Following the overthrow of Yanukovich, Crimea was absorbed while the Kremlin actively encouraged Russian ultra-nationalist paramilitary elements to destabilize eastern Ukraine.⁴⁰

While the protesters in Kiev represented the pro-EU sentiment in Ukraine, other parts of the country preferred the status quo under Yanukovich or actively supported a more pro-Russia policy. The Crimean Peninsula of Ukraine was a prime example, but in the years before annexation separation from Ukraine was viewed as impossible and undesirable, even among the Peninsula's ethnic Russians.⁴¹ Most saw Crimea as a legitimate part of Ukraine and both Russians and Ukrainians in Crimea identified overwhelmingly as "Crimean".⁴² Having changed hands a number of times throughout history, Crimea today possesses a slight ethnic Russian majority and many minority ethnic groups, including Ukrainians, Jews, and Tatars.⁴³

Pro-Russian sentiment was not new to Crimea in 2014. Crimea attempted to separate from Ukraine following the fall of the Soviet Union and appealed to Russia for annexation. But Russian President Boris Yeltsin was fighting an insurgency in Chechnya while simultaneously trying to forge a future for the fledgling Russian Federation, and he turned them down.⁴⁴ When Russian forces – PMSCs and Russian military with no insignia, known as "little green men" – entered Crimea in 2014, they annexed the peninsula in a virtually bloodless operation that was largely supported, or at least not actively opposed, by the ethnic Russian majority. In Ukraine, third-party deniable (covert) agents included pro-Russian loyalists and local paramilitary commanders, as well as local gangsters who spotted an opportunity for profit and power. Russia

40 Lo, p. 33.

41 Knott, Eleanor, "Identity in Crimea before annexation: A bottom-up perspective," in *Russia Before and After Crimea: Nationalism and Identity, 2010-17*, eds. Kolsto, Pal and Helge Blakkisrud, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 298.

42 Knott, p. 287.

43 Pleshakov, p. 5.

44 Pleshakov, p. 120-123.

funded a number of pro-Russian groups in Ukraine going back five or more years before Euromaidan and many became paramilitary volunteers during the battle for eastern Ukraine.⁴⁵

However, Moscow's next step did not go as smoothly. Eastern Ukraine is dotted with pockets of ethnic Russians and pro-Russian Ukrainians, providing natural touchpoints for Russia to connect with and help organize a secessionist movement. Russian PMSCs (and, later, Russian military forces) moved into these areas and provided assistance, including training and arms, to pro-Russian groups. These groups called for the secession of the Donbass and Luhansk regions from Ukraine and threatened Kiev's hold on a large portion of territory. But the eastern Ukraine as a whole is not as consistently pro-Russian as Crimea and both the Ukrainian military and local militias moved to oppose secession. Russia's support for separatists in eastern Ukraine ranged from supplying weapons to providing PMSCs as advisers and mercenaries to the various organizations fighting the Ukrainian government. However, once Russia realized that the conflict in Luhansk and Donbass was not going to be as quick and painless as the annexation of Crimea, Moscow retreated from officially supporting the separatists, leaving eastern Ukraine in a limbo of quasi-civil war. The fighting in eastern Ukraine continues today.^{46,47}

Moscow's use of hybrid warfare in Ukraine was a deniable and effective tool to achieve its ends with less risk to the state than the commitment of Russian troops. While Moscow conducts hybrid warfare to achieve its foreign policy objectives abroad, the Putin government also actively promotes a nationalist message at home to garner support for both its actions and for the regime itself. Statist patriotism is at the center of this message and it emphasizes Russian

45 Kuzio, p. 102.

46 Ann M. Simmons, "With the World Distracted by Coronavirus, Hopes for Peace in Ukraine Are Dimming," Wall Street Journal, April 30, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/with-the-world-distracted-by-coronavirus-hopes-for-peace-in-ukraine-are-dimming-11588243270?mod=searchresults&page=1&pos=1>.

47 Connell and Evans, p. 30.

national identity⁴⁸ over the many diverse ethnic identities encompassed by its borders. Moscow extends this message to Russian communities overseas, including them in the idea of statist patriotism and facilitating an open channel that enhances the effectiveness of the hybrid warfare strategy.

The Kremlin and the Russian Nationalist Movement

Ethnic nationalism was not encouraged in the USSR and Moscow's aversion to it continued for almost twenty years after the fall of the Soviet Union. State patriotism, however, was sanctioned and the main driver of political mobilization during Putin's first decade in power. Ethnic issues were primarily viewed as an obstacle to social cohesion and a threat to public order.⁴⁹ It wasn't until Putin sought re-election in 2012 that nationalism began to be used as a political tool by the Kremlin. By that time, the nationalist movement had been building inside Russia for several years, triggered by a perceived deteriorating security situation caused by Islamic extremist violence and the migration of many non-Slavs to Russia's core regions.⁵⁰ A nationalist riot just outside the Kremlin's walls in 2010 was a pivotal moment for the movement and it could no longer be ignored.⁵¹

Nationalists took active part in the 2011-2012 anti-government protests in Russia, dissatisfied with the country's economic downturn, the resulting hardships for the middle and lower classes, and corruption within the government, exemplified by Putin's attempt to remain in power. According to Teper, "Until 2012 the informal social contract between Putin's regime and

48 Teper, p. 70.

49 Teper, p. 70.

50 Teper, p. 71.

51 Miriam Elder, "Two dead as far-right football fans riot in Moscow," The Guardian, December 13, 2010.

society had been based on an exchange of political compliance for guarantees of relative economic prosperity...when after 2008 the regime started to fail to deliver on its economic promises, it began losing popularity.”⁵² To compensate, the Kremlin used its control of the Russian media and public discourse to refocus the population on Russian identity and to the state’s role in protecting the Russian people from foreign threats.⁵³

It did so by embracing the nationalist cause. Russian authorities began a campaign to consolidate all patriotic and nationalist groups around the regime and offered a narrative emphasizing Russia’s homogeneous nature, while simultaneously presenting anti-government protesters as foreign agents.⁵⁴ The tactic gained momentum and swept Putin back into power, and the Kremlin again shifted its emphasis to a more unifying domestic narrative that presented Russia as the defender of traditional values.⁵⁵ According to Teper, the Kremlin’s emphasis on “...conservative ‘morality politics’ initially was meant to provide a moral response to the public outcry over...corruption..., [but] in the long run it created a societal atmosphere and legal pretext that were used to further curtail the personal and political freedoms of Russian citizens.”⁵⁶

Following the election, some nationalist groups found that their alliance with the Kremlin had only been temporary. The Kremlin actively tries to suppress organizations such as the white supremacist group Slavic Union, which was banned in 2010 but continues to operate on the

52 Teper, p.71-72.

53 Teper, p. 72.

54 Teper, p. 72-73.

55 Teper, p. 73.

56 Teper, p. 74-75.

fringes of society.⁵⁷ Aleksandr Sevastianov, a veteran political ideologue with strong ties to neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups in Russia, initially supported Putin's return to power, even going to far as to excoriate nationalists who participated in anti-government protests, but following the election he was questioned by authorities during an investigation into extremist propaganda.⁵⁸ Sevastianov supported Crimean annexation as well as the separatists in eastern Ukraine; he began describing Ukrainians as "an ethnic enemy that threatened the survival of the Russian people."⁵⁹

A coalition of nationalist organizations, the Party of Nationalists, was formed in 2012, and included the Russian Imperial Movement representing Orthodox nationalists and monarchists.⁶⁰ Activists from the Russian Imperial Movement traveled to Ukraine during the Euromaidan in support of the demonstrators.⁶¹ But the spread of the conflict to eastern Ukraine caused some nationalist organizations to support Russia's actions there, causing a schism in the coalition of nationalist groups. The Russian Imperial Movement left the Party of Nationalists in 2014 when leaders of the other groups in the coalition opposed Moscow's intervention.⁶² While groups representing many different nationalist ideologies are involved in the conflict in eastern Ukraine, those supporting Russian expansion – including the Imperial Legion, a branch of the

57 Tipaldau, Sofia, "The extreme right fringe of Russian nationalism and the Ukraine conflict: The National Socialist Initiative," in *Russia Before and After Crimea: Nationalism and Identity, 2010-17*, eds., Kolsto, Pal and Helge Blakkisrud, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 193.

58 Horvath, Robert, "Ideologue of neo-Nazi terror: Aleksandr Sevastianov and Russia's 'partisan' insurgency," in *Russia Before and After Crimea: Nationalism and Identity, 2010-17*, eds. Kolsto, Pal and Helge Blakkisrud, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 179.

59 Horvath, p. 179.

60 Tipaldau, p. 198.

61 Tipaldau, p. 199.

62 Tipaldau, p. 200-201.

Russian Imperial Movement – have worked closely with Russian PMSCs, such as E.N.O.T. Corporation, to provide combat training to pro-Russian separatists.⁶³

Other nationalist groups were initially supportive of the Euromaidan but some were unenthusiastic about Crimean annexation.⁶⁴ The issue of the Donbass and Luhansk Regions caused a split among nationalist groups. For those opposed, their dislike of the Russian government outweighed their identification with other Slavic nations.⁶⁵

The West and Russia

Following Russia's annexation of Crimea, NATO responded by sending hundreds of troops to Ukraine to train with government forces. Then-NATO Secretary Anders Fogh Rasmussen also pledged to increase the readiness of 4000 troops in the alliance's rapid reaction force. The US brought additional forces and equipment to its bases in Europe and immediately began incorporating them into annual military exercises.⁶⁶ But the alliance stopped short of offering membership to Kyiv, probably due to its reluctance to go to war with Russia. Yet this possibility remains as Russia could use hybrid warfare tactics against the Baltic states, which are NATO members. And with the use of hybrid warfare comes increased uncertainty: a Russian incursion into Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania may not look like a military invasion. It may begin as a far right or ultra-nationalist movement that causes social disruption, or a social media campaign that spreads false reporting on liberal, pro-democracy institutions and lawmakers.⁶⁷ By

63 Verkhovsky, Alexander, "The Russian nationalist movement at low ebb," in *Russia Before and After Crimea: Nationalism and Identity, 2010-17*, eds. Kolsto, Pal and Helge Blakkisrud, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 152-153.

64 Tipaldau, p. 199.

65 Tipaldau, p. 200.

66 Axe and Beckhusen.

67 Axe and Beckhusen.

the time Western governments definitively identify Moscow as the origin of the disruption, democratic governments could have fallen and Russia will have gained another foothold, this time within the territory of a NATO member.

Can NATO deter hybrid threats, almost thirty years after the fall of the Soviet Union and nearly twenty years of war? Even with troop levels and defense budgets lower than recent US presidential administrations would like, Russia knows that in a full-on conflict with the NATO powers, it is outgunned and outclassed at every point on the military power scale.⁶⁸ Instead, Moscow has developed and successfully employed a less risky strategy of covertly undermining a target country before sending in a small force. This strategy avoids a clear-cut military confrontation that Russia could very well lose. Its use of alternative methods, this “hybrid warfare”, gives it an advantage that sometimes precludes actual combat, as demonstrated in Ukraine.

The relationship between Russian operatives – whether special forces or PMSCs – in Crimea and secessionist-held parts of eastern Ukraine with pro-Russian Ukrainians has also provided Moscow with a new pool of paramilitary hopefuls for use in other areas of strategic interest, such as Syria, where the “Carpathians Unit” has been used operationally.⁶⁹ Mercenaries come from many parts of Russia’s “near abroad” to fight on Moscow’s behalf: Chechen warlord Ramzan Kadyrov’s forces contributed to efforts in eastern Ukraine, but recruits also come from the Balkans.⁷⁰ Russia recruits young Serbian men to fight on its behalf, out of sympathy with Russia and a sense of Orthodox Christian brotherhood. Some have described the flow of fighters

68 Axe and Beckhusen.

69 Oksana Grytsenko and Veronika Melkozerova, “Ukrainians fight and die among Russian Wagner mercenaries,” *Kyiv Post*, February 27, 2018.

70 Ostensen and Bukkvoll, p. 14.

71 Maya Zivanovic, “Donbass Brothers: How Serbian Brothers were Deployed in Ukraine,” *Balkan Insight*, December 13, 2018.

from the former Yugoslavia to eastern Ukraine as an “Orthodox jihad” with similarities to the recruitment and training methods of Islamic extremist organizations.⁷²⁷³⁷⁴ Upon their return from Ukraine, these young men are a source of foreign fighters for Russian military actions in other conflicts, such as Syria.

Eastern Ukraine is allegedly used as a training ground for foreign fighters, who can then be sent to other conflict areas, such as Syria and Lybia, to aid Russian efforts.⁷⁵ Recruitment is aided by facilitation organizations that help prospective mercenaries get to Ukraine, mirroring the methods used by Islamic extremist groups. While many of the governments of the former Yugoslavia align themselves politically with Russia and therefore are unlikely to be targeted by Moscow, these young veterans could be used to stymie pro-Western movements at the local level or to destabilize neighboring states. They also provide Russia with a large, experienced mercenary force that can be called on in future scenarios. In the case of Serbia, it is illegal for Serbian citizens to fight in foreign militaries and Serbians returning from action in Ukraine have been convicted, but these convictions have not deterred pro-Russian Serbians from engaging in this “jihad”.⁷⁶ Little is done to stop the flow of young men into youth camps run by Russian PMSCs, who increasingly have taken on ideological and paramilitary training in these camps.

The case of Libya demonstrates Russia’s willingness to step into conflicts from which the US has distanced itself. With the goal of expanding influence in the Middle East and securing

72 Coyer, Paul, “Putin’s Holy War and the Disintegration of the ‘Russian World’,” *Forbes*, June 4, 2015,

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/paulcoyer/2015/06/04/putins-holy-war-and-the-disintegration-of-the-russian-world/#46632961285b>.

73 Jeff Seldin, “White Supremacists Lead New Wave of Foreign Fighters,” *Voice of America*, September 30, 2019,

<https://www.voanews.com/usa/white-supremacists-lead-new-wave-foreign-fighters>.

74 Patrick Jackson, “Ukraine war pulls in foreign fighters,” *BBC News*, September 1, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28951324>.

75 Zivanovic.

76 Marija Ristic, “Facebook Reveals Serbian Fighters’ Role in Ukraine War,” *Balkan Insight*, December 27, 2017,

<https://balkaninsight.com/2017/12/27/facebook-reveals-serbian-fighters-role-in-ukraine-war-12-25-2017/>.

lucrative energy contracts, Moscow could contribute to instability in a region that has long been a top US national security priority. At a time when the US is perceived as withdrawing from involvement in the Middle East, Russia is demonstrating its ability to step into the vacuum with goals incompatible with both US and NATO policies. Moscow may be a more attractive partner to some in the region because assistance does not come with the price tag of human rights concerns and intolerance of damage to civilians and infrastructure, tradeoffs of working with the US and NATO. Russia's weapons sales process also works faster than most Western nations', potentially turning an evenly matched conflict (with more possible opportunities for peaceful negotiation) into a lopsided victory for one side in a matter of weeks. Russian PMSCs are often the vanguard for involvement in these regions, allowing Moscow to exercise one element of its hybrid warfare strategy while keeping Russian soldiers out of potentially hostile situations.⁷⁷⁷⁸ There are also some unintended consequences of Russian involvement, including the complete destabilization of nations in which it intervenes. For example, Russia's involvement in Libya did not bring about a swift conclusion to the conflict between Hifter and Tripoli but instead seems to have extended it.⁷⁹ Libya's ongoing turmoil provides a breeding ground for radicalization and a prime recruitment area for international terrorist organizations, such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State; Russia's actions seem to have prolonged that turmoil.

How should the West confront Russian hybrid warfare? Understanding how Russia uses this strategy is essential to developing an effective counter strategy. It is used to regain territory, secure geopolitical access and influence, convey geopolitical strength domestically and

77 Aleksandr Gostev, "Russia's Paramilitary Mercenaries Emerge From The Shadows," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, December 16, 2016, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-paramilitary-mercenaries-emerge-from-the-shadows-syria-ukraine/28180321.html>.

78 Benoit Faucon and James Marson, "Russia Leans on Mercenary Forces to Regain Global Clout," Wall Street Journal, February 23, 2020.

79 Raghavan

internationally, and to test the political resolve of others.⁸⁰ When these “gray zone” tactics meet resistance, conventional force are sent in using advanced, lethal technology and a more agile force structure. Russia effectively uses massed artillery, layered sensors, electronic warfare, offensive cyber operations, and sniper units to achieve its objectives.⁸¹

Russia also operates from a position of domestic and regional instability. Domestically, Russian governance and security challenges are well documented and stem partly from geography, economics, demographics, and a multiethnic population.⁸² Eleven time zones with harsh climates, diverse terrain, borders without natural barriers, less-developed rural road systems, and twice the US coastline all challenge the Kremlin’s capabilities. Its economy struggles from sanctions and lower oil and gas prices plus financial overstretch, chronic mismanagement, decreased Russian consumer spending, and widespread corruption.⁸³ The ethnic Russian population is dispersed and aging while the country remains ethnically and religiously diverse with increasingly restless minorities (especially in the Northern Caucasus), concerns from a growing Muslim population, and fighters returning from Iraq and Syria.⁸⁴ Outside of its border, current threats require Russia to defend itself on all sides, as NATO’s eastward expansion, Western energy deals in the Caspian region, “color revolutions” (engineered by the West), and unrest along its periphery threaten Moscow’s stability. Russia faces security conflicts along the Black Sea, its Pacific Coast and in the Arctic, across the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, and with China.⁸⁵ Since the Cold War, Russia has engaged its Armed Forces in conflict

80 Ahern, Col. Stephanie R, “The Russian Way of War: Implications for the US Army,” *The Foreign Area Officer Association Journal of International Affairs*, Volume XX, No. 3, Winter 2017, <https://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/3381.pdf>, p. 12.

81 Ahern, p. 12.

82 Ahern, p. 14.

83 Ahern, p. 14.

84 Ahern, p. 14.

85 Ahern, p. 14.

both within Russia (twice in Chechnya) and in five neighboring states (Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Ukraine). Its forces are arrayed across a vast landmass and it has military bases and training facilities in Georgia, Armenia, Tajikistan, Moldova, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan.⁸⁶

It should come as no surprise that Russia and the US have different policy goals. Russia wants a secure regional sphere of influence and global great power status, while the US wants to maintain the existing international order and support all interested countries (including former Soviet republics and satellite nations) in becoming liberal capitalist democracies integrated within the global economy.⁸⁷ Therefore, despite Russia's clear military advantage over most of its neighbors, it views them not as potential allies but as "potential beachheads" for its adversaries.⁸⁸ Indeed, Russia's neighbors may provide the best opportunity for countering Moscow's hybrid warfare strategy. They offer a unique position from which to monitor Russian activity as well as a strong intelligence collection point for gathering information and analyzing the Kremlin's use of hybrid warfare. Additionally, greater Western involvement in some of these countries could give the US and NATO more leverage against the destabilizing actions of Russian PMSCs by pressing for legislation banning such companies while providing assistance that weans nations off of their reliance on Moscow's aid.

Russian leaders desensitize their people to military conflict in order to increase society's willingness to wage future wars. As the economy slowed in 2013, "the Kremlin...sought to make military glory the new centerpiece of Russian pride and identity", according to a 2017 article by

86 Ahern, p. 14.

87 Ahern, p. 14.

88 Ahern, p. 14.

Col. Stephanie Ahern.⁸⁹ Moscow’s domestic information operations are extensive, effective, and well-targeted, all while it tightens media controls and declares dissenters to be foreign operatives. Ahern’s article cites a survey in which a majority of respondents “indicated that ‘small wars’ or military operations such as those in Ukraine and Syria are considered justified, defensive, victorious, and preventive, undertaken to avoid a ‘great war’ and ‘because the besieged fortress must be defended.’”⁹⁰

These factors all influence Russia’s military capabilities, doctrine, agreements, and willingness to initiate conflict. Examples include the existence of an all-mechanized force, which practices regularly to deploy long distances within Russia to counter threats, and continued stockpiling and training with anti-personnel and anti-tank mines with no intention of signing the Ottawa Convention.⁹¹ Recent military successes have raised nationalistic pride even though these interventions were costlier in time, money, and lives than expected. In the future, Russia may leverage the threat or actuality of military aggression to pursue “public relations-wars”, rallying domestic support around the military, strategically surprising the West, and signaling strength to Russia’s neighbors.⁹²

Conclusion

Russia’s use of hybrid warfare furthers its foreign policy goals of expanding influence in the periphery as well as further abroad, such as in the Middle East. This ambiguous strategy is less costly than an all-out military confrontation in terms of lives lost and provides the Kremlin with plausible deniability for its actions. Russian nationalism complements a hybrid warfare

89 Ahern, p. 14.

90 Ahern, p. 14.

91 Ahern, p. 14.

92 Ahern, p. 14.

strategy by deflecting popular attention away from the casualties it incurs and couching foreign intervention in terms intended to appeal to nationalist sentiment. It is used to recruit foreign fighters to serve in these conflicts, especially in the former Yugoslavia, and to cause unrest and disruption in Russia's periphery. PMSCs also facilitate the export of nationalist ideals in patriotic youth camps operating inside and outside of Russia.

PMSCs are one of the most effective tools in Russia's hybrid warfare strategy and they are responsible not only for conducting military operations abroad but also for expanding Moscow's influence through their work with foreign militias and national militaries as well as in the paramilitary and pro-Russian ideological camps they run inside and outside of Russia.⁹³ These companies sometimes work with domestic and foreign nationalist organizations to achieve Moscow's goals, as demonstrated in Ukraine.⁹⁴ The ideological camps they run promote a Russian message based on conservative, traditional values as a foil to Western liberalism, a message that is also used to encourage nationalist movements in Europe and elsewhere through the Kremlin's networks, including its use of social media. This message casts doubt on US leadership in the world and undermines democratic institutions.⁹⁵

But Moscow's attempts to keep PMSCs at arm's length could be used to undermine the legitimacy of their actions in conflict zones. In 2018, Wagner operatives moved against US-supported Kurdish opposition forces near a natural gas plant in eastern Syria near Deir-al Zour, using Russian tanks, artillery, and mortars.⁹⁶ Local US forces called in air strikes, killing hundreds of the attackers. Russia's military leadership in Syria denied that its forces were

93 Ostensen and Bukkvoll, p. 24.

94 Lo, p. 33.

95 Lo, p. xv -xvi.

96 Marten, Kimberly, "The Puzzle of Russian Behavior in Deir-al Zour," War on the Rocks, (July 5, 2018)

<https://warontherocks.com/2018/07/the-puzzle-of-russian-behavior-in-deir-al-zour/>

involved before, during, and after the strikes and may have underreported casualties from the incident.⁹⁷ The attack in Deir-al Zour may have been an attempt to seize control of the natural gas plant for Yevgeny Prigozhin, Wagner’s financial backer, in order to expand his energy holdings.⁹⁸ While the actual reasons for the attack remain unknown, the Deir-al Zour incident could be used to demonstrate the downside of Russian PMSCs to countries considering a contract. A counter narrative could argue that PMSCs may offer a quick fix to governments attempting to quell insurgencies or extend their mandate, but in the long term they are another example of 21st century exploitation by larger powers or even agents of neo-colonialism.

Moscow argues that it does not pursue a hybrid warfare strategy, instead accusing the US and the west of pursuing such a strategy through the instigation of “color revolutions” and social movements, such as the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine and the Arab Spring.⁹⁹ The Kremlin also uses anti-Western arguments to control its domestic situation, courting Russian nationalist movements that have been growing with the rise of Islamic extremism in the North Caucasus and an influx of non-Slavic immigrants.¹⁰⁰ The Russian government’s control of the media gives it a platform to steer public perceptions, leading it away from dissatisfaction with the economy and toward Russia’s military success in Crimea and Syria as well as drawing the (ethnically Russian) population into a Russian identity and emphasizing the state’s ability to protect its citizens.¹⁰¹¹⁰²

It is unlikely that the West can avoid the negative propaganda resulting from any action taken in response to Russia’s expanding influence, but that is not a reason to forego a strong

97 Marten.

98 Marten.

99 Galleotti.

100 Teper, p. 71.

101 Teper, p. 72.

102 Teper, p. 73.

response. Russia has divested itself from direct involvement in eastern Ukraine and now is a good time to increase US engagement. The swift nomination and approval of a US Ambassador to Ukraine would signify the importance Washington places on its relationship with Kyiv, as would a more robust military-to-military engagement effort. Direct military assistance to Ukrainian forces in the east could be a consideration for the future, but a military advisory mission working with the Ministry of Defense in Kyiv would solidify the relationship and create opportunities to study lessons learned from the events in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. US government agencies could also work with Ukrainian business leaders and departments to revitalize the economy, tying economic incentives to anti-corruption measures and paving the way for greater integration into the European economy. Efforts in Ukraine could be used as a template for increased engagement with other nations, especially in eastern Europe, and would demonstrate US resolve to counter Russia in its periphery.

The threat of Russia's hybrid warfare exists on NATO's borders and possibly inside the alliance itself, such as in the Baltics and the former Yugoslavia. These tactics create uncertainty when used and it may be difficult for Western observers to grasp the situation before it is too late.¹⁰³ Russia's advancing interests in other parts of the world also challenge the US and the West, such as Libya, where a Russian foothold would directly threaten NATO and US bases on the Mediterranean Sea. It is important for policymakers in Washington and in the rest of the Western world to understand the threat of Russia's actions in order to craft an effective response, but it is equally important to understand why Russia pursues its hybrid warfare strategy. Moscow has many options for pursuing its goals and hybrid warfare is only one of them, however it may be the one strategy for which the US and the West are least prepared.

103 Axe and Beckhusen.

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