



**NAVAL  
POSTGRADUATE  
SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE LED BY SPECIAL  
OPERATIONS FORCES IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT  
OF SMALL STATE DEFENSE STRATEGY**

by

Raiver Pitkve

June 2023

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Kalev I. Sepp  
Ian C. Rice

**Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.**

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>   |   |  | <i>Form Approved OMB<br/>No. 0704-0188</i>              |
| Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington, DC, 20503.  |   |  |   |
| <b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY<br/>(Leave blank)</b>  | <b>2. REPORT DATE</b><br>June 2023                              | <b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b><br>Master's thesis     |   |
| <b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b><br>UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE LED BY SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF SMALL STATE DEFENSE STRATEGY  |   |  | <b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>                               |
| <b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Raiver Pitkve  |   |  |   |
| <b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b><br>Naval Postgraduate School<br>Monterey, CA 93943-5000  |   |  | <b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>         |
| <b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b><br>N/A  |   |  | <b>10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b> |
| <b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.  |   |  |   |
| <b>12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b><br>Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.   |   |  | <b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b><br>A                      |
| <b>13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)</b><br><p>This thesis investigates the feasibility of employing unconventional warfare (UW) to safeguard Estonia's sovereignty and territorial integrity from the Russian Federation. Considering Estonia's proximity to Russia and the latter's aggressive foreign policy, this research focuses on the geographical factors in northeastern Europe and their impact on Estonia's Comprehensive Defense strategy, specifically with the utilization of unconventional warfare.</p> <p>The central question addressed is: How the Estonian Special Operations Forces (ESTSOF) can effectively employ the Estonian Defense League (EDL) units, a voluntary national defense organization, to carry out successful unconventional warfare against the Russian Armed Forces in the event of an invasion. This study adopts a qualitative approach, examining theories on asymmetric conflicts, doctrines of unconventional warfare, and historical case studies from the Second World War featuring comparable geographical and conflict scenarios.</p> <p>The findings indicate that despite their numerical inferiority, the EDL fighting groups could disrupt the communication systems of the Russian Federation Armed Forces by capitalizing on the forests, wetlands, and climate of Estonia and Western Russia. This disruption would enhance Estonia's strategic depth, facilitating maneuverability for the Estonian Defense Forces and NATO Allies in case of a Russian invasion.</p> |   |  |   |
| <b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b><br>unconventional warfare, UW, EDL, Estonian Defense League, Estonian Special Operations Forces, ESTSOF   |   |  | <b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b><br>91                        |
|  |   |  | <b>16. PRICE CODE</b>                                   |
| <b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b><br>Unclassified   | <b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b><br>Unclassified | <b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b><br>Unclassified | <b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b><br>UU                 |

NSN 7540-01-280-5500

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-89)  
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39-18

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

**Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.**

**UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE LED BY SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES  
IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF SMALL STATE DEFENSE STRATEGY**

Raiver Pitkve  
Kapten, Estonian Land Forces  
Diploma of Professional Higher Education, TTK University of Applied Sciences, 2011

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS  
(IRREGULAR WARFARE)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
June 2023**

Approved by: Kalev I. Sepp  
Advisor

Ian C. Rice  
Second Reader

Carter Malkasian  
Chair, Department of Defense Analysis

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the feasibility of employing unconventional warfare (UW) to safeguard Estonia's sovereignty and territorial integrity from the Russian Federation. Considering Estonia's proximity to Russia and the latter's aggressive foreign policy, this research focuses on the geographical factors in northeastern Europe and their impact on Estonia's Comprehensive Defense strategy, specifically with the utilization of unconventional warfare.

The central question addressed is: How the Estonian Special Operations Forces (ESTSOF) can effectively employ the Estonian Defense League (EDL) units, a voluntary national defense organization, to carry out successful unconventional warfare against the Russian Armed Forces in the event of an invasion. This study adopts a qualitative approach, examining theories on asymmetric conflicts, doctrines of unconventional warfare, and historical case studies from the Second World War featuring comparable geographical and conflict scenarios.

The findings indicate that despite their numerical inferiority, the EDL fighting groups could disrupt the communication systems of the Russian Federation Armed Forces by capitalizing on the forests, wetlands, and climate of Estonia and Western Russia. This disruption would enhance Estonia's strategic depth, facilitating maneuverability for the Estonian Defense Forces and NATO Allies in case of a Russian invasion.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|             |  |           |
|-------------|--|-----------|
| <b>I.</b>   | <b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>A.</b>   | <b>THE INFORMATION GAP.....</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>B.</b>   | <b>RESEARCH QUESTION .....</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>C.</b>   | <b>RESEARCH OUTLINE.....</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>II.</b>  | <b>LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>   | <b>11</b> |
| <b>A.</b>   | <b>ASYMMETRIC WARFARE THEORIES FROM THE COLD<br/>WAR ERA .....</b>                 | <b>12</b> |
| <b>B.</b>   | <b>ASYMMETRIC WARFARE THEORIES FROM THE 2000S.....</b>                             | <b>13</b> |
| <b>1.</b>   | <b>Conclusion .....</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| <b>C.</b>   | <b>THEORIES OF SMALL WARS.....</b>   | <b>17</b> |
| <b>1.</b>   | <b>Thomas Edward Lawrence .....</b>  | <b>18</b> |
| <b>2.</b>   | <b>Mao Tse-tung.....</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| <b>3.</b>   | <b>Abu Bakr Naji .....</b>   | <b>22</b> |
| <b>4.</b>   | <b>Conclusion .....</b>  | <b>26</b> |
| <b>D.</b>   | <b>GUERRILLA ACTIONS.....</b>  | <b>26</b> |
| <b>1.</b>   | <b>Urbano and Guerrilla Warfare .....</b>  | <b>26</b> |
| <b>2.</b>   | <b>Robert Taber and Guerrilla Warfare.....</b>                                     | <b>28</b> |
| <b>3.</b>   | <b>Intelligence and Guerrilla Warfare.....</b>                                     | <b>30</b> |
| <b>4.</b>   | <b>Geographical Environment and Guerrilla Warfare.....</b>                         | <b>31</b> |
| <b>5.</b>   | <b>Strategic Communication and Guerrilla Warfare.....</b>                          | <b>33</b> |
| <b>6.</b>   | <b>Conclusion .....</b>  | <b>34</b> |
| <b>III.</b> | <b>UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE IN ESTONIA.....</b>                                      | <b>37</b> |
| <b>A.</b>   | <b>UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE PLANNING GUIDANCE.....</b>                               | <b>37</b> |
| <b>B.</b>   | <b>ESTONIAN DEFENSE LEAGUE OVERVIEW.....</b>                                       | <b>39</b> |
| <b>C.</b>   | <b>UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE AGAINST RUSSIAN<br/>ARMED FORCES: KEY VARIABLES.....</b> | <b>41</b> |
| <b>1.</b>   | <b>Terrain .....</b>   | <b>44</b> |
| <b>2.</b>   | <b>Forests .....</b>   | <b>44</b> |
| <b>3.</b>   | <b>Swamps .....</b>  | <b>46</b> |
| <b>4.</b>   | <b>Climate.....</b>  | <b>49</b> |
| <b>IV.</b>  | <b>CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH.....</b>  | <b>53</b> |
| <b>A.</b>   | <b>THE EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE RESEARCH.....</b>                                   | <b>53</b> |

**B. SUPPORTIVE GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT FOR UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE ..... 56**

**1. Terrain Sketch Modeling of Operation Area ..... 57**

**2. Forests ..... 60**

**3. Swamps ..... 62**

**4. Climate ..... 63**

**C. CONCLUSION ..... 65**

**D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH ..... 65**

**LIST OF REFERENCES ..... 67**

**INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST ..... 73**

## LIST OF FIGURES

|           |   |    |
|-----------|---|----|
| Figure 1. | Deterrence and Denial Strategies to Maintain the Estonian Geopolitical Situation .....      | 54 |
| Figure 2. | Integrating Unconventional Warfare into Estonian Comprehensive Defense Strategy .....       | 55 |
| Figure 3. | Advantages and Disadvantages of Battlefield Geographical Variables to Opposing Actors. .... | 57 |
| Figure 4. | Estonian and Western Russia Geographical Features of Interest .....                         | 59 |
| Figure 5. | Estonian and Western Russia Boarder Area Geographical Features of Interest.....             | 60 |
| Figure 6. | Densely Forested Areas’ Advantages and Disadvantages to Opposing Actors. ....               | 61 |
| Figure 7. | Swamps’ Advantages and Disadvantages to Opposing Actors. ....                               | 63 |
| Figure 8. | Climate Advantages and Disadvantages to Opposing Actors.....                                | 64 |

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis explores the viability of utilizing unconventional warfare (UW) as a strategic approach to safeguard Estonia's sovereignty and territorial integrity in response to the threat emanating from the Russian Federation. Given Estonia's close proximity to Russia and the latter's assertive foreign policy, this study presents an empirical examination that specifically delves into the geographical aspects of northeastern Europe and their impact on the implementation of unconventional warfare within Estonia's Comprehensive Defense strategy. The primary objectives of this research are twofold: first, to address the existing gaps in knowledge concerning the strategic principles applicable to small nations employing unconventional warfare for defensive purposes; and second, to identify and elucidate the variables that exert influence on the utilization of unconventional warfare in Estonia, thereby contributing to the development of a comprehensive defensive strategy.

The primary focus of this research is to explore how the Estonian Special Operations Forces (ESTSOF) can effectively utilize the units of the Estonian Defense League (EDL), a voluntary national defense organization, for the purpose of conducting successful unconventional warfare in the event of a Russian Armed Forces invasion. To address this question, a qualitative research methodology was employed, which encompassed a comprehensive review of existing theories pertaining to asymmetric conflicts and unconventional warfare doctrines. Furthermore, this study conducted an in-depth analysis of historical case studies from the Second World War, specifically examining scenarios with comparable geographical and conflict characteristics.

The results indicate that leveraging the geographical attributes of Estonia and Western Russia, such as the forests, wetlands, and climate, can enable the EDL fighting groups, despite their numerical disadvantage, to impede the Russian Federation Armed Forces' communication lines. As a consequence, Estonia's strategic depth would be enhanced, offering increased maneuverability for the Estonian Defense Forces and NATO Allies in the event of a Russian invasion.

The selected geographical factors that were analyzed present significant challenges and limitations for conventional armed forces that heavily rely on concentrated mass and heavy armored vehicles of various types and functions. Conversely, the extensive forested areas with limited infrastructure, expansive wetlands that are difficult to navigate or penetrate, and the harsh climate conditions characterized by reduced daylight from late fall to mid-spring, create advantageous circumstances that are likely to increase the operational effectiveness of small unconventional warfare units.

The geographical variables incorporated in this research offer increased opportunities for unconventional warfare units to undertake deep incursions into the enemy's front line and defense positions, aiming to disrupt or sabotage their crucial communication lines. For instance, targeting railway communication lines, which the Russian Federation Armed Forces heavily depend on for transportation and resupply purposes, highly likely could severely impede their assault operations and tempo. Consequently, these factors contribute to shaping favorable battlefield conditions for the defending side by providing additional time for decision-makers to formulate strategic responses.

Another advantage that can be derived from deep penetration operations carried out by unconventional warfare units is the compelling of the Russian Armed Forces to redeploy a portion of their troops to protect rear area communication lines. This, in turn, diminishes the number of troops available for offensive purposes, which can prove advantageous for the defending side. For the Russian Federation Armed Forces, reduced freedom of maneuver and a lower concentration of troops allocated for assault operations translate into greater freedom of maneuver for Estonian defenders in the event of an armed invasion, thereby expanding Estonia's strategic depth. Historical instances such as the battles of the Russo-Finnish War and the Second World War demonstrate the successful implementation of similar tactics by small units to disrupt the adversary's operational tempo.

The extent of disruption caused by sabotage acts carried out deep within enemy territory against vital communication lines is challenging to predict due to numerous variables that come into play. Factors such as the resilience of the communication infrastructure and the availability of alternative options for the enemy can significantly

influence the outcomes. However, it is reasonable to assume that deep penetration operations provide support for defenders while degrading the capabilities of the assaulting forces.

To ascertain the potential level of disruption, research conducted by Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart, a renowned British military strategist and historian, offers valuable insights. Liddell Hart's concept of the "horns of dilemma" highlights the difficult choices faced in military strategy and decision-making situations.<sup>1</sup> Based on my research, operations conducted behind enemy lines by unconventional warfare units, supported by conventional forces, thrust Russian Armed Forces decision-makers onto these metaphorical horns of dilemma. The resulting disruption compels the enemy to disperse their forces to protect multiple communication lines, preventing them from amassing a concentrated assault force. Overall, the disruption caused by deep operations impedes the enemy's ability to effectively consolidate their troops and adds to the challenges they face, ultimately favoring the defensive side.

In order to facilitate the integration of unconventional warfare as a crucial element of a small state's comprehensive defense strategy, it is advisable to focus on training and equipping Estonian Defense League units to effectively operate within the unique geographical conditions of Estonia and Western Russia. The training and operational utilization of these units should primarily aim to enhance their survivability. By adopting this approach, the EDL units can effectively serve as ambassadors, confronting the decision-makers of the Russian Federation Armed Forces with the challenging "horns of dilemma." This strategic maneuver can be regarded as a means to expand Estonia's strategic depth in the event of an armed invasion by the Russian Federation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd rev. ed (New York: Meridian, 1991).

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who have contributed to the completion of this thesis.

First and foremost, I am indebted to my thesis advisor, Kalev I. Sepp, and second reader, Ian C. Rice, for their unwavering support, invaluable guidance, and continuous encouragement throughout this research journey. Their expertise, patience, and insightful feedback have been instrumental in shaping and refining this work. I am truly grateful for their mentorship and dedication.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the faculty members of The Naval Postgraduate School Department of Defense Analysis for their commitment to fostering a stimulating academic environment. Their passion for knowledge and their commitment to excellence have been an inspiration to me throughout my studies.

I would like to extend my genuine gratitude to Ivo Peets for actively participating in this research. Ivo's openness in sharing his experiences and insights has significantly enhanced the conclusions drawn in this thesis. His contribution holds immeasurable value and is deeply cherished and acknowledged.

To my family, I am eternally grateful for their unwavering support, understanding, and love. Their encouragement and belief in me have been my constant motivation. I am blessed to have them by my side.

Additionally, I want to acknowledge my friends and colleagues who have provided me with support and encouragement along the way. Their presence, discussions, and shared experiences have been vital in keeping me motivated and focused.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the authors, researchers, and scholars whose work and ideas have influenced and shaped this thesis. Their contributions to the field of study have paved the way for new insights and understanding.

While it is impossible to name everyone who has played a role in this thesis, I am truly grateful for the collective support I have received. This thesis would not have been possible without the contributions of each and every one of you.

Thank you all for being part of this remarkable journey and for making this thesis a reality.

## I. INTRODUCTION

On February 24, 2022, as Estonia prepared to commemorate its 104th anniversary, Russia launched an unprovoked attack against Ukraine in an attempt to end its existence. A hundred and six years ago, in the aftermath of World War I, the Estonian War of Independence was fought to establish a new democratic nation. After a devastating two-year war against the Bolshevik westward offensive of 1918–1919 and the Baltische Landeswehr’s aggression in 1919, the signing of the Treaty of Tartu concluded the Estonian War of Independence. It brought victory to Estonia and granted its independence. However, 1939 witnessed the unfortunate signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, which prohibited mutual aggression.<sup>1</sup> On September 28, 1939, following the signature of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, the Soviet Union government imposed on Estonia a treaty of mutual assistance that granted the Soviet Union occupation of several Estonian military bases.<sup>2</sup> Due to the Soviet Union–enforced mutual assistance treaty and the outcome of World War II, Estonia once again lost its independence.

After the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, World War II, and the Soviet occupation, Estonia lost nearly a quarter of its native population. During the era of Soviet occupation, to repress the Estonian nationality’s will to survive and regain independence, the tyrannical Soviet Union government establishment led by despot Joseph Stalin carried out mass deportations of the native Estonian population to Siberia and economically exploited Estonian national and privately held resources. After the mass deportation of 1949, whose victims appeared to be chosen randomly, numerous people dreaded that they would become the next adversary of the regime.<sup>3</sup> The mass deportations of 1949 were intended to suppress

---

<sup>1</sup> Maciej Smogorzewski et al., “Estonia,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed April 21, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Estonia>.

<sup>2</sup> Smogorzewski et al.

<sup>3</sup> Olaf Mertelsmann and Aigi Rahi-Tamm, “Soviet Mass Violence in Estonia Revisited,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 11, no. 2–3 (2009): 317, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520903119001>.

post-World War II national resistance movements.<sup>4</sup> No one could feel protected or secure during the Soviet occupation that followed World War II.

Even the mass deportations could not break the civilian will to resist the authoritarian Soviet Union, which was the leading factor in restoring Estonia's independence in 1991.<sup>5</sup> Despite the fact that, after World War II, the heroic but ultimately unsuccessful attempts by the Baltic region to regain independence from the Soviet Union by means of unconventional warfare diminished freedom optimism somewhat, it also provided a valuable lesson. Employing armed resistance in isolation is a failure criterion, which in this context means without external Western support and alliance and also without coordinated effort among the Baltic States themselves. In the aftermath of World War II and the agreements built upon the Yalta Conference, the Western nations chose not to take action to maintain or restore Baltic independence.<sup>6</sup> Although all three Baltic States had internal anti-Soviet resistance groups known as the Forest Brothers, who displayed the courage to stand against Soviet oppression, without external Western support, it was not sufficient means to regain national independence.<sup>7</sup> Due to a lack of external aid, the Soviet Union was eventually able to eliminate the Forest Brothers morally and physically. To simplify, the Soviet Union eliminated Forest Brothers due to attrition. Notably, the Soviet Union had to allocate disproportionately large resources to defeat the Forest Brothers. Despite being numerically inferior, the Forest Brothers could effectively exploit environmental conditions using their superior local knowledge. On the other hand, these courageous men and women who chose to risk and sacrifice their lives to oppose the tyrannical Soviet Union displayed the most remarkable fighting spirit. Through their

---

<sup>4</sup> Heinrihs Strods and Matthew Kott, "The File on Operation 'Priboi': A Re-Assessment of the Mass Deportations of 1949," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 33, no. 1 (2002): 1–36.

<sup>5</sup> Anika Binnendijk and Marta Kepe, *Civilian-Based Resistance in the Baltic States: Historical Precedents and Current Capabilities* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021), 74.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Shtromas, "Prospects for Restoring the Baltic States' Independence: A View on the Prerequisites and Possibilities of Their Realization," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 17, no. 3 (1986): chap. V, Taylor & Francis.

<sup>7</sup> Otto Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept* (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: JSOU Press, 2020), chap. Case Study 4. The Forest Brothers: World War II And Post-World War II Baltic Resistance To Soviet Occupation.

actions, the resistance spirit spread to the remainder of the population of the Baltic States. Never was the will to resist and hope to achieve independence extinguished. Resistance movements awaited the appropriate time and favorable conditions to rise from the ashes like the Phoenix. At the end of the 1980s, conditions had drastically altered. The Soviet Union was losing its regional hegemony primarily due to the United States' unwavering policy and resolute actions against communism's global expansion. The citizens of the Baltic States viewed this as an opportunity to regain their independence. Over a half-century of the traumatic historical experience of the Soviet Union occupation and geographical proximity to its principal de facto internationally recognized successor state, the Russian Federation has imbued Estonia's strategic culture with two overwhelming imperatives: never again and never alone.<sup>8</sup>

These imperatives drove Estonia to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union.<sup>9</sup> The fundamental objective of Estonia's national defense is to deter any prospective military attack and, if necessary, to guarantee a successful defense.<sup>10</sup> The foundation of Estonia's national defense is the population's strong desire to defend their country, which rests on national self-awareness, self-confidence, and pride. Estonia will defend itself regardless of the opponent's strength and under all circumstances. If Estonia momentarily loses control of a portion of its sovereign territory, the citizens of that territory will continue to resist the adversary.<sup>11</sup>

Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's collective security guarantees represents one cornerstone of Estonia's national security.<sup>12</sup> The other cornerstone is Estonia's independent defense capability.<sup>13</sup> According to Estonia's comprehensive

---

<sup>8</sup> Kristīne Atmante, Riina Kaljurand, and Tomas Jermalavičius, "Strategic Cultures of the Baltic States," in *Strategic Culture in Russia's Neighborhood: Change and Continuity in an in-Between Space* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2019), 53.

<sup>9</sup> Atmante, Kaljurand, and Jermalavičius, 53.

<sup>10</sup> Vabariigi Valitsus, "National Defence Strategy Estonia" (Riigi Teataja, January 1, 2011), 8–9, [https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/elfinder/article\\_files/national\\_defence\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/elfinder/article_files/national_defence_strategy.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Vabariigi Valitsus, 8–9.

<sup>12</sup> Riigikogu, "National Security Concept of Estonia" (Riigi Teataja, February 22, 2023), 4, [https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/eesti\\_julgeolekupoliitika\\_alused\\_eng\\_22.02.2023.pdf](https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/eesti_julgeolekupoliitika_alused_eng_22.02.2023.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Riigikogu, 4.

national defense concept, the nation’s defense and preparations involve all available military and non-military capabilities and resources of the state.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, every effort will be made to prepare and avert any possible military attack against Estonia.

The four major strategic shocks—the so-called Bronze Soldier Monument Coup d’état in Estonia in April 2007, the five-day Russo-Georgian War in 2008, Russia’s “hybrid war” campaign against Ukraine in early 2014, and Russia’s full-scale unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022—are just a few examples that have once again confirmed the Russian Federation’s aggressive foreign policy strategy and determination to employ multifaceted means including full scale unprovoked military invasion to achieve its goals. Furthermore, the perverse and antisocial means by which the Russian Federation achieves its foreign policy objectives have significantly impacted Estonia’s National Security Strategy and increased the population’s desire to participate. Notably, Russia’s aggression against Ukraine since 2014 has resulted in a genuinely tectonic shift, as most Estonians now view national defense as their top priority.<sup>15</sup>

Due to its geographical proximity to Russia, whose political leadership has made clear its aggressive foreign policy toward its neighbors, Estonia, with its political and military allies, has to remain in constant readiness using a combination of military and non-military means to deter and defend its independence and territorial integrity against Russian power projection.<sup>16</sup> There are no indications that the political leadership of the Russian Federation will change its aggressive foreign policy soon.<sup>17</sup>

Under optimal conditions, robust and ceaseless preparations with allies to defend Estonia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity should be sufficient to prevent the Russian Federation from even contemplating an attack.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, if, for unforeseeable

---

<sup>14</sup> Riigikogu, 4.

<sup>15</sup> Atmante, Kaljurand, and Jermalavičius, “Strategic Cultures of the Baltic States,” 71.

<sup>16</sup> Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, *International Security and Estonia 2023* (Tallinn, Estonia: Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, 2023), chap. Executive Summary, <https://raport.valisluureamet.ee/2023/en/>.

<sup>17</sup> Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, chap. Foreword and Executive Summary.

<sup>18</sup> Riigikogu, “National Security Concept of Estonia,” 4.

reasons, the Russian political leadership decides to invade Estonia, the top priority for every Estonian is to make the invasion as expensive as possible for the Russians.<sup>19</sup> In this circumstance, I think we can learn a great deal from the heroic Forest Brothers and the history of asymmetric conflicts as a whole. What if there was a means to cultivate the next generation of Forest Brothers with formidable allies? What if there are underlying premises that would be the key to success against the Soviet Union of the next generation and its dictator? Fifty-two years of annexation have taught a valuable lesson: if you want peace, prepare for war.

#### **A. THE INFORMATION GAP**

I believe that the Estonian Special Operations Forces could benefit from an empirical study focusing on geographical factors in northeastern Europe and how these conditions influence the use of unconventional warfare as part of Estonia's Comprehensive Defense strategy.<sup>20</sup>

The Estonian Defense Forces have allocated resources for unconventional warfare as part of the Estonian comprehensive defense strategy.<sup>21</sup> The Estonian Defense League and the Estonian Special Operations Forces are responsible for preparing and conducting unconventional warfare in the event of an armed invasion by the Russian Federation.<sup>22</sup> This research considers the Estonian Defense League Fighting Groups as the primary human resource for conducting large-scale unconventional warfare.

This study addresses two voids in the current understanding of unconventional warfare. First, there are few attempts to integrate strategic theory and tactical concepts for small states employing unconventional warfare for defense and deterrence, even though

---

<sup>19</sup> Riigikogu, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Riigikogu, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Estonian Defence Forces, "About Estonian Special Operations Forces," Estonian Defence Forces, accessed April 23, 2023, <https://mil.ee/en/landforces/special-operations/>; Estonian Defence Forces, "Eriväelased Harjutasid Koos Kaitseliitlastega Tavatu Sõja Põdamist," Estonian Defence Forces, May 26, 2015, <https://mil.ee/uudised/erivaelased-harjutasid-koos-kaitseliitlastega-tavatu-soja-pidamist/>.

<sup>22</sup> Vabariigi Valitsus, "National Defence Strategy Estonia," 13; Estonian Defence Forces, "About Estonian Special Operations Forces."

research on irregular approaches to fighting a militarily superior adversary has yielded a number of important insights.<sup>23</sup> Due to their absence of strategic depth, small states are uniquely vulnerable. Limited strategic depth could significantly reduce the defending side's freedom of maneuver, concentrating forces in unfavorable locations and giving the offensive side relative battlefield advantages and additional means to seize the initiative. For this research, the characteristics of a small state have at least two geographical criteria: a population of fewer than 1.5 million people and a land area of less than 40,000 square kilometers.<sup>24</sup> Estonia roughly fits in the previously mentioned small state criteria.<sup>25</sup>

Second, the variables that influence unconventional warfare in Estonia should receive more attention and be explicitly articulated to make unconventional warfare a significant component of an effective and robust comprehensive defensive strategy.<sup>26</sup> In-depth empirical research describing the environmental factors that provide the greatest marginal return to Estonian defense strategy in the case of employing Estonian Defense League units for unconventional warfare to repel the Russian Federation invasion is especially relevant in the context of the Ukraine-Russia conflict, which escalated significantly on February 24, 2022. The Ukraine-Russia conflict may shed new light on how the Russian Federation may conduct future counterinsurgency operations. However, due to the limited focus of this study, a comprehensive examination of the ongoing

---

<sup>23</sup> Charles T. Cleveland et al., "Developing a Mastery of Irregular Warfare," *The Hill*, 2022, <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3774711-developing-a-mastery-of-irregular-warfare/>; The United States Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review Report* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 20–21; Minberger S. Mikael and Svendsen O. Geir, "Irregular Warfare as a National Military Strategy Approach for Small States" (master's thesis, Monterey, CA, Naval Postgraduate School, 2013), 25, <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/38985>.

<sup>24</sup> Tom Crowards, "Defining the Category of 'Small' States," *Journal of International Development* 14, no. 2 (2002): 143–79, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.860>.

<sup>25</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "Estonia," *The World Factbook*, accessed April 23, 2023, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/estonia/>.

<sup>26</sup> Veiko Dieves, "The Xgw Theory and the 6th Gradient of Warfare," *Sõjateadlane*, no. 9 (2018): 7, <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=837033>; Vladimir Sazonov et al., *Sisejulgeoleku Hübriidohtude Tutvustamine* (Tallinn, Estonia: Sisekaitseakadeemia, 2020), digiriul.sisekaitse.ee.

Russian-Ukrainian conflict is not possible, and the study relies on previous research on Russian counterinsurgency operations.<sup>27</sup>

In order to partially cover the current knowledge gap, Major General Greg Lengyel initiated the United States Special Operations Command Europe-sponsored Resistance Seminar Series during the late 1950s and early 1960s to counter Russian aggression in Eastern Europe.<sup>28</sup> This study intends to contribute to previous research by focusing on the environmental factors of northeastern Europe and how they may influence the employment of unconventional warfare.

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTION**

How can the Estonian Special Operations Forces employ the Estonian Defense League units to perform successful unconventional warfare against the Russian Armed Forces in the case of an invasion?

## **C. RESEARCH OUTLINE**

To answer the research question, I employ a qualitative methodology. I collected data from existing theories of asymmetric conflicts and unconventional warfare doctrines from World War I to the present. This thesis aims to determine whether historically significant factors in an asymmetric conflict are continuously dependent or appear randomly, such that relatively weaker sides can seize the initiative and force the relatively stronger opponent to meet the opposition's demands. Suppose the qualitative analysis reveals persistent factors that have favored a relatively weaker side in asymmetric conflicts. This study will compare those findings' applicability to Estonian environmental conditions. If applicable conditions exist, this research outcome knowledge provides

---

<sup>27</sup> Benjamin A. Arbitter and Kurt A. Carlson, "How the Bear Hunts Guerillas: The Evolution of Russian Counter-Irregular Warfare from 1994 to Present" (master's thesis, Monterey, CA., Naval Postgraduate School, 2021), <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/68694>; Christopher Paul et al., *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013), [www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt5hhsjk](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt5hhsjk); Martijn Kitzen and Marnix Provoost, "Don't Underestimate the Bear—Russia Is One of the World's Most Effective Modern Counterinsurgents," *Modern War Institute*, 2022, <https://mwi.usma.edu/dont-underestimate-the-bear-russia-is-one-of-the-worlds-most-effective-modern-counterinsurgents/>.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas K. Adams, U.S. *Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 64.

additional means to enhance Estonia's defense strategy against the existential threat posed by the Russian Federation's armed invasion.

My research also considered theories and practitioner inputs to trace the evolution of asymmetric conflict studies and determine how best to apply the lessons learned. This research considers asymmetric conflict theorists and practitioners from a variety of worldviews. It aims to distill the best practices for how an underdog can turn defeat into victory, regardless of how one defines victory.

Furthermore, this research seeks to identify methods for expanding Estonia's limited strategic depth, which is crucial to defend Estonian sovereignty in the event of an armed invasion by the Russian Federation through employing unconventional warfare. Due to its small size and proximity to the Baltic Sea, Estonia has little strategic depth. Therefore, the only viable way to expand strategic depth after a Russian-initiated armed conflict is by employing unconventional warfare into sovereign Russian western territory. In addition, Estonian military operations conducted behind enemy lines that target Russian communication lines could disrupt Russian military logistics and battle preparations, thereby extending Estonia's strategic depth.

I intend to shed light on the less scrutinized offensive guerrilla warfare options and how to improve the Estonian Defense Force's overall capabilities to degrade the numerical superiority of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and impede their maneuverability under conditions of limited Estonian strategic depth.

I organized this study into four chapters. Chapter I includes the introduction, information gap, research question, and research outline.

In Chapter II, I review selected asymmetric conflict theoretical studies and guerrilla warfare doctrines and manuals. Specifically, I examine the literature on unconventional warfare for arguments regarding asymmetric conflict theories, small wars and limited-scale armed conflict doctrine, and specific on-the-ground conditions.

Chapter III applies the unconventional warfare theories to the resources in Estonia with an emphasis on the key geographical variables in Estonia, namely terrain, forest, swamps, and climate, for employing guerrilla warfare against numerically more robust

opponent areas in Estonia and Western Russia to expand Estonia's limited strategic depth in the event of a Russian Federation armed invasion. When applying continuous dependent variables of the comprehensive analysis of asymmetric conflicts to the Estonian environment, the seven joint functions outlined in the United States Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, are used to maintain a concentration on militarily significant aspects. Drawing on my experience as an army officer, I selected four geographical conditions for comparison. The selection criteria are two-fold: what types of terrain and when synchronized and coordinated military maneuvers are most challenging to conduct in Estonia.<sup>29</sup> Second World War battles fought in the northeastern region of Europe are the focus of historical case studies. The focus is on Russian, German, and Finnish maneuvers and how guerrilla warfare employed or affected them. The objective is to explain how guerrilla warfare diminished the numerical military superiority of the opposing side.

Chapter IV summarizes the research findings and makes recommendations for future research. The findings of this study provide the Estonian Special Operations Forces and the Estonian Defense League with insight into how the geographical conditions of northeastern Europe impact the employment of unconventional warfare when Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is activated. Using unconventional warfare against the Russian Armed Forces should create favorable battlefield conditions. Expanding Estonia's strategic depth is essential for the maneuverability of the Estonian Defense Force and North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies in the event of a Russian-armed invasion of Estonia. To better characterize battlespaces for defending Estonian sovereignty and territorial integrity, Chapter IV provides visual depictions of the geographical settings of Estonia and Western Russia.

---

<sup>29</sup> Despite my agreement with the common belief that urban warfare presents the most challenging environment for land combat, I omit an analysis of the urban environment for two primary reasons. First, the regions of Estonia and Western Russia are not densely populated, so urban guerrilla warfare is highly unlikely. Second, the urban environment is unfavorable for guerrilla warfare, mainly because most urban territory is covered with sophisticated surveillance equipment, severely diminishing the guerrillas' ability to remain hidden against a numerically stronger opponent.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The fundamental perspective of classical realist theory perceives international relations from the standpoint of comparative power, as exemplified by Thucydides' portrayal of the rivalry between Athens and Sparta.<sup>30</sup> The quote, "The strong do what they can, and the weak suffer what they must,"<sup>31</sup> encapsulates this idea. This quote addresses that powerful countries will take action to secure their interests, while weaker countries will have to endure the consequences of those actions. In other words, power dynamics play a crucial role in shaping the behavior of nations in their interactions with each other. Small nation-states have four general options for maintaining effective deterrence and defense capabilities based on their geographical location, available natural resources, and foreign policy goals.<sup>32</sup> First, they may replicate more powerful nations by maintaining a regular army.<sup>33</sup> Second, smaller nations may join the alliance and use collective defense security.<sup>34</sup> Thirdly, neutrality may protect small states.<sup>35</sup> Finally, small nations may strive to obtain weapons of mass destruction.<sup>36</sup>

The above ideas rely solely on traditional thinking about war and national defense. On the other hand, in many cases, irregular strategies have been successful when a small force faces a stronger enemy. For example, over a decade of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations in Iraq showed that even a coalition of the world's most powerful militaries led by a global superpower experience harsh times when confronted by

---

<sup>30</sup> Ivan Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict* (New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 2.

<sup>31</sup> Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler and Richard Crawley (New York: Free Press, 1996), 352.

<sup>32</sup> Sandor Fabian, "Professional Irregular Defense Forces: The Other Side of COIN" (master's thesis, Monterey, CA., Naval Postgraduate School, 2012), 2, <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/7338>.

<sup>33</sup> Fabian, 19.

<sup>34</sup> Fabian, 21.

<sup>35</sup> Fabian, 23.

<sup>36</sup> Fabian, 24.

an enemy skilled in irregular warfare.<sup>37</sup> What are the prerequisites for effectively incorporating an unconventional warfare strategy into the defense strategy of a small democratic state?

#### A. ASYMMETRIC WARFARE THEORIES FROM THE COLD WAR ERA

Following World War II, two strategists closely examined the concept of asymmetric warfare strategy and the indirect approach: B.H. Liddell Hart and Andrew Mack. Liddell Hart in *Strategy*<sup>38</sup> asserted that the most efficient path to victory in warfare lies in employing indirect methods instead of relying solely on direct force. Liddell Hart highlighted the significance of maneuver, surprise, and deception as key elements in attaining strategic goals, contrasting them with the conventional approach of relying on overwhelming firepower and frontal assaults. Moreover, he emphasized the criticality of adaptability and flexibility in effectively responding to evolving circumstances on the battlefield.<sup>39</sup>

In his work “Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict,” Andrew Mack argues that the triumph of weaker actors over stronger ones can be attributed to a fundamental disparity in their respective interests.<sup>40</sup> The weaker party engages in the conflict to ensure its survival, while the stronger party, not facing the imminent threat of invasion, possesses comparatively less at stake.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, for the weaker party, success entails evading defeat rather than outright victory.<sup>42</sup>

Mack outlines four essential components for the weaker party to succeed in a conflict. Firstly, weaker parties need to adopt unorthodox strategies like guerrilla warfare,

---

<sup>37</sup> Dusan Gregor, “David’s Sling: Irregular Warfare as a Small State’s Strategy Option” (master’s thesis, Monterey, CA., Naval Postgraduate School, 2020), 21, <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/65533>.

<sup>38</sup> Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd rev. ed (New York: Meridian, 1991).

<sup>39</sup> Liddell Hart, 5–6.

<sup>40</sup> Andrew Mack, “Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict,” *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (1975): 181, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009880>.

<sup>41</sup> Mack, 181.

<sup>42</sup> Mack, 194–95.

thereby protracting the duration of the conflict.<sup>43</sup> Secondly, they could benefit from consistently imposing costs upon the stronger party, steadily depleting their resources.<sup>44</sup> Thirdly, there is a requirement for unwavering political determination to sustain the conflict despite rising casualties and escalating economic burdens.<sup>45</sup> Finally, as the war persists, the stronger party will inevitably grow weary, losing motivation to continue the fight.<sup>46</sup>

In summary, while Mack's theory highlights the weaknesses of stronger parties in asymmetric conflicts, it does not explain how weaker parties can win.<sup>47</sup>

## **B. ASYMMETRIC WARFARE THEORIES FROM THE 2000s**

In a similar vein to Mack, Merom highlights that political structures are crucial in asymmetric conflicts.<sup>48</sup> However, Merom focuses specifically on the domestic political structure of the stronger party and its ability to wage a successful limited war.<sup>49</sup> Merom argues that the mere presence of power imbalance cannot fully explain the triumph of the more dominant side in minor conflicts. Rather, achieving victory in counterinsurgency operations necessitates a cultural capability to fully utilize the military advantage and accept the associated costs. These costs encompass the willingness to engage in extreme acts of personal brutality and occasionally endure substantial losses.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, Merom acknowledges that the cultural capacity described earlier was weakened due to social and political changes occurring in Western nations throughout the 19th century.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> Mack, 195.

<sup>44</sup> Mack, 195.

<sup>45</sup> Mack, 195.

<sup>46</sup> Mack, 196.

<sup>47</sup> Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict*, 14–15.

<sup>48</sup> Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 227.

<sup>49</sup> Merom, 227.

<sup>50</sup> Merom, 227.

<sup>51</sup> Merom, 227.

In *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict*, Ivan Arreguín-Toft builds upon Mack and Merom's research on asymmetric warfare strategy.<sup>52</sup> Arreguín-Toft provides a concise summary of the key arguments put forth by Mack and Merom. According to Arreguín-Toft, in asymmetric conflicts, strong actors are often more prone to losing when conflicts are prolonged.<sup>53</sup> Mack's analysis explores the process through which a strong actor eventually withdraws from the fight.<sup>54</sup> Merom further expands on this idea by emphasizing the critical relationship between political will and costs.<sup>55</sup> Mack and others noted that a stronger actor could bear unexpected costs in asymmetric confrontations but is paradoxically susceptible to suddenly rising costs. Elites and, in the case of strong democratic players, the general public initially expected a rapid and definitive victory at a minimal cost, which explains this sensitivity. Consequently, a protracted war represents an unexpected and costly endeavor.<sup>56</sup> Despite these insights, Arreguín-Toft points out that the theories proposed by Mack and Merom do not fully address the question of why not all asymmetric wars reach a swift resolution.<sup>57</sup>

Arreguín-Toft introduces a comprehensive framework of strategic interaction theory, classifying it into four distinct scenarios.<sup>58</sup> The fundamental concept underlying this theory is the recognition of two patterns of strategic interaction: the same approach and the opposite approach. These patterns serve as determinants of the strong actor's likelihood of success or failure.<sup>59</sup> Arreguín-Toft introduces a typology that outlines the strategic options available to both strong and weak actors. The strong party has the choice between a direct or indirect offensive approach, whereas the weak party can employ a direct or indirect defensive strategy. Building upon this framework, Arreguín-Toft provides

---

<sup>52</sup> Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict*, 28–29.

<sup>53</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 28.

<sup>54</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 28.

<sup>55</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 29.

<sup>56</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 29.

<sup>57</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 29.

<sup>58</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 29.

<sup>59</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 29.

precise definitions for each type of strategy. Strong actors opt for a conventional attack in a direct-on-direct confrontation, while weak actors utilize a conventional defense. In an indirect-indirect conflict, the strong actor resorts to a barbaric strategy, while the weak actor employs guerrilla warfare tactics.<sup>60</sup>

The research conducted by Arreguín-Toft reveals a substantial connection between strategic interaction and the outcomes of asymmetric conflicts.<sup>61</sup> Firstly, it indicates that strong actors are more prone to losing when engaged in opposite-approach strategic interactions. Secondly, conflicts involving opposite-approach interactions tend to be longer than those involving same-approach interactions. Thirdly, there has been a noticeable increase in the frequency of opposite-approach interactions. This increase aligns with a corresponding rise in the failure rate of strong actors over time.<sup>62</sup>

Jeffery Records, in his work *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win*, presents a critical evaluation of the explanatory effectiveness of the theses put forth by Mack, Arreguín-Toft, and Merom concerning the factors contributing to defeats suffered by the stronger side.<sup>63</sup> Although the theories presented by Mack, Arreguin-Toft, and Merom offer valuable perspectives, Jeffery Records considers them inadequate in fully elucidating why the majority of insurgencies ultimately end in failure or identifying the shared characteristics of successful insurgencies beyond possessing superior motivation and strategy.<sup>64</sup> According to Records, a crucial element that is lacking in these theories is the substantial impact of external assistance. In fact, the presence or absence of such external support might be the most decisive factor in shaping the outcomes of insurgent wars.<sup>65</sup>

In his analysis, Jeffrey Record concludes that in the context of asymmetric warfare, the strong, particularly democratic nations, are often defeated by the weaker party when

---

<sup>60</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 30–43.

<sup>61</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 46.

<sup>62</sup> Arreguín-Toft, 46–47.

<sup>63</sup> Jeffrey Record, *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win*, 1st ed. (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2007), 23.

<sup>64</sup> Record, 23.

<sup>65</sup> Record, 23.

the latter possesses a stronger determination and a superior strategy, further bolstered by external support.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, Record acknowledges that while external assistance frequently aids successful insurgent wars, it is not a definitive assurance of victory.<sup>67</sup>

Jeffrey Record's contribution is essential because it adds a new variable to other leading theories of asymmetric conflicts: interest asymmetry, strategic interaction, and strong actor regime type.<sup>68</sup>

However, a notable critique of Record's work is that it fails to adequately consider the importance of internal assistance or popular support as a factor that can influence the outcome of asymmetric conflicts, instead placing excessive focus on external assistance. The ability of a weaker actor to mobilize local population support against their oppressors could often be more critical to achieving success than relying solely on foreign aid. *The Resistance Operating Concept* places a significant focus on governments' efforts to enhance the resilience of their nations through the implementation of a comprehensive defense strategy.<sup>69</sup> This approach adopts a whole-of-government and whole-of-society perspective, aiming to foster cooperation and interoperability among the population and government forces. Under the framework of comprehensive defense, the government and military, supported by the population, take proactive measures against adversaries. The concept recognizes the importance of empowering the population to be the primary actor in defending the nation in the face of external threats.<sup>70</sup> While the assistance of allies and partners is acknowledged as playing a substantial role in supporting defense efforts, as mentioned by Jeffrey Record, it is not the sole determinant of success. However, similar to previous theories, the inclusion of external assistance does not fully address the underlying question of how weaker actors can overcome adversaries with superior military capabilities.

---

<sup>66</sup> Record, 130.

<sup>67</sup> Record, 133.

<sup>68</sup> Record, 23.

<sup>69</sup> Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*, 1.

<sup>70</sup> Fiala, 1.

## 1. Conclusion

Collectively, the abovementioned works lead to a set of abstract concepts that are beneficial for fighting irregular warfare in an asymmetric conflict. On the other hand, the disparities between various asymmetric conflict theories raise the following question: what are the essential elements that enable weak actors to discourage or defend against powerful actors in an asymmetric conflict? It seems appropriate, therefore, to add another layer of well-developed concepts to this research. The rationale for including a literature review of selected small wars doctrines is to merge abstract ideas of asymmetric warfare and actual approaches from the history of small wars conflicts into a single entity.

### C. THEORIES OF SMALL WARS

Guerrilla warfare is commonly employed by the less powerful against, the more powerful, by those equipped with limited weaponry facing adversaries with vast military capabilities. Conversely, it is a tactic embraced by those who resist invasion or individuals driven to instigate civil unrest to overthrow an undesirable regime.<sup>71</sup> Guerrillas take advantage of their soldiers' flexibility, the local topography, and surprise to deploy their firepower efficiently.<sup>72</sup> Guerrilla tactics for undermining the enemy's communications and transport infrastructure are becoming more critical as regular military forces become more synchronized and logistical.<sup>73</sup> In the development of future campaign strategies, it is crucial to integrate the principles of guerrilla warfare, ensuring a strong emphasis on cooperation and coordination between conventional forces leading the main offensive and guerrilla forces conducting operations in enemy-controlled territories.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, guerrillas will recruit and integrate civilians rather than regular soldiers into military

---

<sup>71</sup> Leonard Beaton et al., "Book Reviews," *Survival* 4, no. 6 (1962): 288, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396336208440361>.

<sup>72</sup> Beaton et al., 288.

<sup>73</sup> Beaton et al., 290.

<sup>74</sup> Beaton et al., 290.

operations.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, guerilla actions could increase the population's will to resist the oppressor.

### 1. Thomas Edward Lawrence

T.E. Lawrence believed mobility, security, time, and ideology would grant success in guerilla wars.<sup>76</sup> To quote T.E. Lawrence:

Armies were like plants, immobile as a whole, firm rooted through long stems to the head. We might be a vapor, blowing where we listed. Our kingdoms lay in each man's mind, and as we wanted nothing material to live on, so perhaps we offered nothing to the killing. It seemed a regular soldier might be helpless without a target, owning only what he sat on and subjugating only what, by order, he could poke his rifle at.<sup>77</sup>

According to T.E. Lawrence, the attainment of a successful insurrection could be realized with a mere 2% active support if the remaining 98% expressed sympathy towards or passively accepted guerrilla activities. In other words, Lawrence argues that widespread popular sentiment and tacit approval, even without direct involvement, can significantly contribute to the success of an insurrectionary movement.<sup>78</sup> Lawrence believed that the printing press held tremendous power as the most potent weapon available to contemporary commanders, and he placed significant importance on the use of propaganda.<sup>79</sup> Lawrence recognized the influential role of disseminating information through printed materials, understanding that it could shape public opinion, rally support, and profoundly impact conflict outcomes. T.E. Lawrence underscored the significance of establishing secure base areas and utilizing them for territorial exploitation.<sup>80</sup> He highlighted the effectiveness of small, agile units equipped with accurate intelligence in maximizing the potential of such areas. In addition, Lawrence emphasized the advantages of mobility and flexibility,

---

<sup>75</sup> Beaton et al., 291.

<sup>76</sup> T. E. Lawrence, *The Evolution of a Revolt* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1990), 13.

<sup>77</sup> Lawrence, 8.

<sup>78</sup> Lawrence, 22.

<sup>79</sup> Lawrence, 11.

<sup>80</sup> Lawrence, 22.

allowing these units to operate efficiently, gather valuable information, and exploit territorial opportunities to achieve their objectives. By prioritizing the establishment of safe bases and leveraging the capabilities of mobile units with reliable intelligence, Lawrence recognized the potential for strategic success in asymmetrical conflicts.<sup>81</sup>

T.E. Lawrence offers valuable insights into asymmetric conflicts and unconventional warfare, with relevance to Estonia's defense strategy. Lawrence emphasizes the potential effectiveness of guerrilla warfare and irregular tactics, highlighting mobility, surprise, and local terrain knowledge as advantageous factors while facing numerically larger opponents. Estonia can apply these insights to develop strategies that counter potential threats and maintain a strong defense posture. Furthermore, by understanding the dynamics of insurgency, leveraging local support, and adapting to evolving situations, Estonia can enhance its preparedness and resilience in asymmetric conflicts.

## **2. Mao Tse-tung**

Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese Communist,<sup>82</sup> outlined a revolutionary framework consisting of several interconnected phases.<sup>83</sup> These phases were designed to guide the progression of a revolutionary movement and ultimately achieve the overthrow of the existing socio-political order.<sup>84</sup>

Mao envisioned revolutionary war as consisting of three overlapping phases.<sup>85</sup> Mao's revolutionary phases can be summarized as follows: Phase I: "(Organization, Consolidation, and Preservation)",<sup>86</sup> focuses on establishing and strengthening regional base areas in isolated and challenging terrain. The goal is to organize, consolidate, and

---

<sup>81</sup> Lawrence, 22.

<sup>82</sup> Zedong Mao, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (Washington, DC: U.S. Marine Corps, 1989), 13.

<sup>83</sup> Mao, 20.

<sup>84</sup> Mao, 41.

<sup>85</sup> Mao, 21.

<sup>86</sup> Mao, 21.

preserve these areas, which serve as the foundation for the revolutionary movement. Volunteers are recruited, trained, and indoctrinated with revolutionary ideology during this phase. Agitators and propagandists are deployed to persuade and win the local population's support surrounding the base areas. The emphasis is on secrecy, meticulous planning, and gradual growth.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, actions undertaken in the initial phase of the struggle should not illuminate the guerrilla network and attract the opponents' utmost attention, as the invisibility of the guerrillas is one of their relative advantages compared to the numerical superiority of the opponents.

Phase II “(progressive expansion)”<sup>88</sup> involves the expansion of the revolutionary movement beyond the initial base areas. With a solid foundation established in Phase I, the movement seeks to extend its influence and control into new territories. This expansion may involve military and political strategies, aiming to gain support from a wider population and weaken the existing power structures. The movement gradually increases its reach and strength, expanding its presence and undermining the authority of the ruling regime.<sup>89</sup>

Phase III “(decision or enemy destruction)”<sup>90</sup> phase focuses on decisive actions to achieve victory. It involves intensifying military operations and escalating the revolutionary struggle. The goal is to confront the enemy directly, aiming for their defeat or destruction. This phase may include large-scale battles, strategic offensives, and the mobilization of a broad popular uprising. The revolutionary forces seek to seize power and establish a new socio-political order, overthrowing the existing regime.<sup>91</sup>

Mao's philosophy of guerrilla warfare, whether fighting against domestic or foreign adversaries, he asserted that guerrillas face significant vulnerability during the early stages of conflict. This vulnerability arises before insurgents have had the opportunity to establish

---

<sup>87</sup> Mao, 20.

<sup>88</sup> Mao, 21.

<sup>89</sup> Mao, 21.

<sup>90</sup> Mao, 21.

<sup>91</sup> Mao, 22.

strong and enduring support among the population. The extent of this support can vary, but a critical threshold may be between 15 to 25 percent.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, Mao's revolutionary phases emphasize the importance of carefully building a solid organizational structure, gaining population support, and progressively expanding the revolutionary movement's reach. The ultimate objective is to challenge and overcome the existing power structures, leading to a successful revolution and the establishment of a new social order.

Mao's philosophy of guerrilla warfare can be succinctly summarized by two fundamental principles: distraction and concentration. The first principle involves diverting the attention of the opponent, creating confusion and uncertainty, and then launching unexpected attacks where and when the enemy is least prepared. Mao emphasized the importance of surprise and exploiting the element of surprise to gain an advantage.<sup>93</sup> Mao also emphasized that capturing or losing territory or cities is not the primary concern. Instead, the focus should be on devising effective strategies to destroy the enemy. Mao's quote, "To gain territory is no cause for joy, and to lose territory is no cause for sorrow. To lose territory or cities is of no importance. The important thing is to think up ways of destroying the enemy."<sup>94</sup> encapsulates this idea. Deception plays a vital role in guerrilla warfare. Guerrillas should skillfully create illusions and conceal their true intentions and identity. They must be adept at constructing false appearances while disguising their real objectives.<sup>95</sup> The tactical strategy of guerrillas should be dynamic and changeable, not fixed. One specific tactic employed by guerrillas is to create an impression of attacking from one direction while actually launching their assaults from another direction. This strategy aims to confuse and mislead the enemy, exploiting their assumptions and vulnerabilities.<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> Mao, 27.

<sup>93</sup> Mao, 26.

<sup>94</sup> I. F. W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents Since 1750* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 73.

<sup>95</sup> Mao, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 26.

<sup>96</sup> Mao, 26.

In guerrilla warfare, avoiding prolonged and decisive engagements with a superior adversary is crucial. Instead, the aim should be to conclude any direct encounters with the stronger enemy quickly. When facing a more powerful opponent, guerrillas should adopt a strategy of retreating when the enemy advances, harassing them when they halt, launching attacks when they are fatigued, and pursuing them when they retreat.<sup>97</sup> The main focus of guerrilla warfare should be on targeting the enemy's vulnerable areas, such as their rear, flanks, and other weak points. These areas should be constantly harassed, attacked, dispersed, exhausted, and ultimately destroyed. In summary, Mao's fundamental principle in guerilla warfare is to prioritize self-preservation while simultaneously seeking to dismantle the enemy's capabilities.<sup>98</sup>

Estonia can bolster its defense strategy by embracing the teachings of Mao's philosophy, integrating the core principles of distraction, surprise, deception, flexibility, and adaptability. These principles can contribute to Estonia's preparedness and resilience in asymmetric conflicts. By applying these principles, Estonia can seek to create confusion and uncertainty among potential adversaries, diverting their attention and gaining an advantage through unexpected actions. The element of surprise becomes a key component in gaining the upper hand in asymmetric conflicts.

### **3. Abu Bakr Naji**

Abu Bakr Naji has divided Islam insurgency warfare into three phases. He describes it as a way to establish an Islamic state through three stages: "the stage of power of vexation and exhaustion,"<sup>99</sup> "the stage of the administration of savagery,"<sup>100</sup> and "the power of establishment – establishing the state."<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup> Mao, 46.

<sup>98</sup> Mao, 26.

<sup>99</sup> Abu Bakr Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass*, trans. William Faizi McCants (Cambridge, MA: John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Harvard University, 2006), 15.

<sup>100</sup> Naji, 15.

<sup>101</sup> Naji, 15.

The primary objectives of the “power of vexation and exhaustion” phase are multifaceted.<sup>102</sup> Initially, it aims to wear down the adversary’s troops and their collaborating regimes, draining their resources and energy. This phase disrupts operational effectiveness by compelling the enemy to disperse its efforts and disrupt its ability to regroup.<sup>103</sup> Another objective is to recruit new members into the insurgency by executing impactful operations that capture the attention of the population, thereby inspiring support and participation.<sup>104</sup> Additionally, the chosen region’s existing power structure is targeted for displacement, weakening their hold and creating space for insurgent influence.<sup>105</sup> Lastly, this phase encompasses both psychological and practical preparations of group members, ensuring they are ready for the subsequent phase of the conflict.<sup>106</sup>

In summary, the primary objectives of the “power of vexation and exhaustion” phase include wearing down the adversary, recruiting new members, displacing the existing power structure, and preparing the group members for the next phase of the conflict. These objectives collectively contribute to the overall success and advancement of the insurgency.

During the “administration of the savagery” phase, the insurgents have specific objectives to achieve.<sup>107</sup> Firstly, they prioritize the welfare of the local population by providing essential resources like food and medical care. This not only helps protect the region from enemy invasions but also strengthens internal security and boosts the morale and combat effectiveness of the insurgents.<sup>108</sup> Additionally, the phase involves focused training of new recruits to improve their fighting skills and enhance the overall capabilities of the insurgency.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> Najj, 16.

<sup>103</sup> Najj, 16.

<sup>104</sup> Najj, 16.

<sup>105</sup> Najj, 17.

<sup>106</sup> Najj, 17.

<sup>107</sup> Najj, 17.

<sup>108</sup> Najj, 17.

<sup>109</sup> Najj, 18.

Secondly, establishing effective spy networks and intelligence agencies is crucial for the insurgents.<sup>110</sup> These efforts enable them to gather crucial information about the enemy’s activities, positions, and vulnerabilities, which is essential for effective planning and decision-making.

Lastly, the formation of alliances plays a significant role in the “administration of the savagery” phase.<sup>111</sup> Insurgents seek strategic partnerships and alliances with groups or entities with common objectives. These alliances provide additional resources, support, and mutual benefits, ultimately strengthening the insurgency’s overall resilience and power.

In summary, the “administration of the savagery” phase focuses on ensuring the local population’s well-being, strengthening internal security, gathering intelligence, training new recruits, and forming alliances. These objectives contribute to the advancement of the insurgency and its ability to achieve its goals.

“The power of establishment – establishing the state” phase reinforces the core principle advocated by Mao in his III phase of revolutionary warfare.<sup>112</sup> Naji emphasizes that religious allegiance is a means to acquire greater power.<sup>113</sup> Additionally, Naji underscores the crucial role of political awareness, emphasizing that a solitary political blunder can have more severe repercussions than a multitude of military mistakes.<sup>114</sup> Above mentioned notes from Naji underscore the criticality of understanding the political landscape and the implications of strategic decisions to ensure the success of the insurgency and achieve success in establishing an Islamic state.

According to Naji, insurgents must prioritize specific objectives and understand the rationale behind them.<sup>115</sup> While it is important for insurgents to launch attacks on various

---

<sup>110</sup> Naji, 18.

<sup>111</sup> Naji, 18.

<sup>112</sup> Mao, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 22.

<sup>113</sup> Naji, *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass*, 50.

<sup>114</sup> Naji, 37.

<sup>115</sup> Naji, 19.

targets, their primary focus should be on the economic targets of the adversary.<sup>116</sup> These targets are the ones that generate the most profits for the enemy and hold significant importance. By targeting these economic objectives, the insurgents can strike at the core essence of the enemy or, at the very least, hinder its primary driving force. Through these economic targets, the enemy's political leaders can be effectively neutralized. Furthermore, attacking these economic objectives will compel the enemy to divert its attention and resources toward protecting them.<sup>117</sup> This will put additional strain on the already depleted governments responsible for safeguarding both economic and non-economic targets. As a result, the enemy forces will be forced to commit more troops for defense, ultimately exposing their vulnerabilities and weakening their overall strength. Moreover, by strategically focusing on economic targets, insurgents can undermine the enemy's stability and exploit their weaknesses.

Naji places considerable importance on incorporating media strategies alongside military actions.<sup>118</sup> Firstly, military strikes should persuade a substantial portion of the population to join the insurgency.<sup>119</sup> These attacks should generate positive support for the insurgents' actions and foster a negative perception toward those who choose not to join their cause. First, the aim is to sway public opinion and garner widespread support for the insurgency. Secondly, the media strategies also target the enemy's troops.<sup>120</sup> The objective is to undermine their morale and create a sense of demoralization that leads them to abandon their service to the enemy. In addition, by highlighting the insurgents' military prowess and achievements through media channels, the intention is to weaken the resolve of the enemy forces and encourage them to defect or flee.

To summarize, according to Naji, the strategy of depleting the enemy's economic resources is a key method to defeat a formidable foe.<sup>121</sup> This approach involves

---

<sup>116</sup> Naji, 19.

<sup>117</sup> Naji, 19.

<sup>118</sup> Naji, 21.

<sup>119</sup> Naji, 21.

<sup>120</sup> Naji, 21.

<sup>121</sup> Naji, 30.

simultaneous military operations and other measures, leading to the exhaustion of the enemy's economy. Through this economic exhaustion, the enemy administration may collapse, either due to a realization of outweighed costs or the culmination of waning patience. The enemy aims to prevent weariness by minimizing the duration of the conflict and maintaining secrecy from their domestic audience.<sup>122</sup>

#### **4. Conclusion**

The insights provided by Thomas Edward Lawrence, Mao Tse-tung, and Abu Bakr Naji shed light on the dynamics and strategies of guerrilla warfare. Lawrence emphasizes the importance of mobility, surprise, and the power of public sentiment in achieving success. Mao's philosophy highlights the principles of distraction, surprise, and targeting vulnerabilities to overcome a stronger opponent. Finally, Naji's approach emphasizes wearing down the enemy, strengthening internal support, and targeting economic objectives to achieve victory. These perspectives offer valuable lessons for Estonia's defense strategy, emphasizing the need for flexibility, adaptability, and integration of unconventional tactics. By incorporating these principles, Estonia can enhance its preparedness and resilience in asymmetric conflicts and ensure the establishment of a strong defense posture.

### **D. GUERRILLA ACTIONS**

#### **1. Urbano and Guerrilla Warfare**

In his book *Fighting in the Streets: A Manual of Urban Guerilla Warfare*, Urbano captures the essence of modern guerilla warfare. He stipulates that for the resistance network to succeed, it must begin its activities with a well-defined plan and a technique for implementing that strategy.<sup>123</sup> It must be understood from the outset that a guerrilla army cannot oust a dictator or a foreign invader on its own. Small gangs of warriors, no matter how well-organized or well-trained, cannot compete with the trained professional armed

---

<sup>122</sup> Naji, 81–82.

<sup>123</sup> Urbano, *Fighting in the Streets: A Manual of Urban Guerrilla Warfare* (Miami, FL: J. Flores Publications, 1991), 128.

forces of the dictator or the occupying power.<sup>124</sup> As a result, the guerrilla forces weaken and annoy the opponent while simultaneously strengthening their organization's military might and firepower.<sup>125</sup>

The objective of the guerrilla movement is to demonstrate to the populace that the regime is not invulnerable and that, with concentrated effort, the populace may overthrow the system and expel the invader.<sup>126</sup> Thus, the strategic objective of all guerrilla acts must be to establish, organize, and arm a mass movement of resistance, an armed and organized population capable of fighting for its independence.<sup>127</sup>

The fundamental and first objective of the guerrilla is to weaken and demoralize the opponent and capture the opponent's guns, ammo, and supplies necessary for the populace to fight back.<sup>128</sup> As more weapons are captured through raids and ambushes, the guerrilla forces become more powerful, numerous, and well-armed. As their power increases, they can create zones or regions where the authority of the opposing government barely reaches, where enemy troops can only travel during the day, and in massive, well-armed groups. The resistance network serves as the de facto government in these uncontrolled zones.<sup>129</sup>

In the early phases of a war, a liberated area may only be held for a few days or weeks before the enemy can muster sufficient forces to retake it. At this time, the guerrillas should not squander resources defending these lands in a pitched conflict. They should instead utilize their greater mobility to dodge these strikes and return when the government troops have departed.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup> Urbano, 128.

<sup>125</sup> Urbano, 128.

<sup>126</sup> Urbano, 128.

<sup>127</sup> Urbano, 128.

<sup>128</sup> Urbano, 128.

<sup>129</sup> Urbano, 128–29.

<sup>130</sup> Urbano, 129.

## 2. Robert Taber and Guerrilla Warfare

With an analogy, Robert Taber likens guerrilla warfare to a flea and dog battle.<sup>131</sup> In this comparison, the insurgent, symbolized by the flea, possesses certain advantages over the military forces they are fighting against, represented by the dog. The dog has a multitude of vulnerabilities, while the flea is elusive, pervasive, and nimble, making it difficult for the dog to subdue the flea.<sup>132</sup> In essence, Taber's analogy portrays the guerrilla insurgency as a relentless and agile force that gradually weakens its more powerful adversary through a continuous succession of small victories. Eventually, the insurgency reaches a critical stage where it can unleash a series of significant and destructive attacks.

Robert Taber highlights that guerrillas face considerable challenges when confronted by adversaries prepared for coordinated resistance, making it difficult for them to achieve victory through open warfare in the early stages of the conflict.<sup>133</sup> However, Taber suggests that careful selection of the operational terrain can significantly impact guerrilla success.<sup>134</sup> Drawing from Taber's analysis, the ideal terrain for guerrilla operations is characterized by certain features. First, it should lean more towards a rural rather than an urban one, emphasizing mountainous terrain rather than flat landscapes. Moreover, densely forested areas are preferable over barren regions. Additionally, the presence of extensive railway lines and underdeveloped roadways can provide advantages for guerrilla movements. Lastly, an agricultural-based economy is deemed more conducive to guerrilla warfare compared to an industrialized one.<sup>135</sup> Taber also emphasizes the importance of considering the dispersion or concentration of the local population. For instance, areas characterized by a widely dispersed rural population living in small hamlets and isolated farmsteads are more susceptible to guerrilla tactics in comparison to regions

---

<sup>131</sup> Robert Taber, *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2002), 20.

<sup>132</sup> Taber, 20.

<sup>133</sup> Taber, 27.

<sup>134</sup> Taber, 155.

<sup>135</sup> Taber, 156.

with densely connected, populous cities that are separated by extensive stretches of open farmland.<sup>136</sup>

Robert Taber argues that the choice of terrain holds immense importance in the context of guerrilla warfare, as it offers natural cover and obstacles that hinder the mobility of military forces.<sup>137</sup> Taber proposes that terrains like mountains and swamps, which are inaccessible to tanks and trucks, along with wooded areas and dense vegetation that provide cover from aerial surveillance and assaults, offer significant advantages for guerrilla operations. Forested regions additionally create opportunities to disrupt enemy rail and highway communications and launch surprise attacks on small military units.<sup>138</sup> Taber further explains that the chosen terrain should allow sufficient room for maneuvering without the risk of being encircled. The larger the operational area, the more challenging it becomes for the enemy army to locate the guerrilla fighters.<sup>139</sup> Consequently, the government forces are forced to disperse their resources, extending supply and communication lines. However, Taber notes that guerrillas cannot select the most remote and rugged locations for their bases as it is necessary to maintain constant communication with the rural population.<sup>140</sup> This communication is essential for recruitment, obtaining supplies, and establishing reliable courier networks to transmit messages between the rural areas and the revolutionary underground in cities. This requirement necessitates the selection of a pastoral territory with a dispersed rather than concentrated population. Therefore, the selection of a pastoral territory with a dispersed population becomes crucial. Such a region provides similar natural concealment and obstacles to desolate areas but offers the added advantage of being economically unfeasible for the government to garrison extensively.<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> Taber, 156.

<sup>137</sup> Taber, 156.

<sup>138</sup> Taber, 156.

<sup>139</sup> Taber, 156.

<sup>140</sup> Taber, 156.

<sup>141</sup> Taber, 156.

Taber's final analysis of conventional warfare versus guerrilla warfare emphasizes that the army's objective is to secure and occupy physical territory, including strategic locations, roads, and important areas. In contrast, the guerrilla's primary focus is to gain control over the population.<sup>142</sup> Taber highlights that the cooperation and support of the population are essential for the success of the guerrilla movement. Without the backing of the people, the possession of land and physical resources becomes meaningless to the guerrilla force.<sup>143</sup>

### **3. Intelligence and Guerrilla Warfare**

Intelligence plays a pivotal role in guerrilla warfare, serving as the decisive factor.<sup>144</sup> It revolves around gathering crucial information about the adversary: their whereabouts, roles, intentions, and overall state. This includes understanding the condition of their equipment, supplies, and morale and assessing the qualities of their leaders and soldiers. Intelligence service members are instrumental for guerrillas as they address numerous specific inquiries to gain comprehensive insights into the enemy's capabilities and vulnerabilities.

The intelligence operations within guerrilla networks are highly organized and extensive.<sup>145</sup> Within guerrilla-controlled territories, every person is considered a possible informant or agent. Consequently, guerrillas keep their information concealed from their adversaries, who are enveloped in a thick veil of uncertainty. This dense and impenetrable fog defines the nature of guerrilla warfare. The adversary may appear on a brightly lit stage but is under constant surveillance by countless hidden eyes from the shadows surrounding them.

Shortly, guerrilla fighters maintain a constant effort to participate in battles on their preferred terms, utilizing their access to superior information. Their extensive knowledge

---

<sup>142</sup> Taber, 61.

<sup>143</sup> Taber, 61.

<sup>144</sup> Mao, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 22–24; Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies*, 20.

<sup>145</sup> Mao, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 22.

of the terrain empowers them to exploit it for their benefit while simultaneously placing their opponents in a disadvantaged position. Guerrillas exercise discretion when deciding to engage in combat, opting for situations where the likelihood of success heavily favors their side. Instead of concentrating solely on eliminating enemy forces physically, guerrillas understand the importance of targeting the mindset and determination of their adversaries as more critical objectives. Accomplishing this involves leveraging their enhanced intelligence capabilities, which provide valuable insights and facilitate strategic decision-making.

#### **4. Geographical Environment and Guerrilla Warfare**

The geographic landscape plays a crucial role in the maneuverability and tactics of guerrilla movements.<sup>146</sup> It is imperative for guerrillas to carefully choose when to engage in combat, selecting moments when the terrain provides them with a distinct advantage.<sup>147</sup> Their aim is to lure the enemy into situations where their numerical superiority becomes inconsequential. When the battle begins, guerrillas prefer to fight on terrain of their own choosing, ideally from elevated positions that offer ample cover and limited visibility. In such locations, even a small group of dedicated fighters can effectively withstand the advance of a much larger army.<sup>148</sup> The ideal setting for guerrilla operations is predominantly rural rather than urban, characterized by mountains rather than flat plains, dense forests instead of barren landscapes, and featuring extensive railway networks, underdeveloped highways, and an economy primarily reliant on agriculture rather than industry.<sup>149</sup>

Therefore, it is advisable for guerrillas to prioritize inaccessible locations that are difficult to detect and where the enemy cannot fully deploy their forces. These regions play a crucial role in the initial stages of guerrilla warfare, particularly during the strategic

---

<sup>146</sup> Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical & Critical Study* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 393–94.

<sup>147</sup> Taber, *War of the Flea*, 160.

<sup>148</sup> Taber, 160.

<sup>149</sup> Taber, 155.

offensive phase, and they continue to serve as safe havens in later stages. However, it is important to note that confining guerrilla operations solely to these zones would be secure but not necessarily practical or efficient.

Relying solely on remote regions may result in a loss of connection with sympathetic domestic audiences, effectively isolating guerrilla fighters from their supporters.<sup>150</sup> The degree of dispersion or concentration among the population holds significant importance. For example, a territory with a rural population widely scattered across small hamlets and isolated farm residences is considerably more susceptible than an area with well-connected, larger urban centers separated by extensive open farmland.<sup>151</sup> Therefore, an ideal setting for guerrilla operations should strike a balance by being close to towns and cities while maintaining a level of inaccessibility for counterinsurgency forces.

Due to the rapid growth of urbanization, rural areas have lost their capacity to support extensive guerrilla activities.<sup>152</sup> Isolated and distant rural areas no longer provide adequate support for guerrilla movements. Guerrilla movements cannot function without a consistent supply of resources, guns, money, and people. Although constant movement is necessary for guerrilla warfare, the guerrilla itself is not a constantly moving organism. A successful guerrilla campaign requires rest, recuperation, and regrouping.<sup>153</sup>

In summary, the geographic landscape heavily influences guerrilla movements' strategies and operations. Guerrillas carefully select opportune moments and favorable terrain to gain the upper hand, aiming to counterbalance the enemy's numerical advantage. They prefer engaging from elevated positions with sufficient cover and limited visibility, enabling even a small group to withstand a larger opposing force. However, relying too heavily on remote regions can isolate guerrillas from their sympathetic domestic supporters. The expansion of urbanization has diminished the ability of rural areas to

---

<sup>150</sup> Laqueur, *Guerrilla Warfare*, 393–94.

<sup>151</sup> Taber, *War of the Flea*, 156.

<sup>152</sup> Laqueur, *Guerrilla Warfare*, 393.

<sup>153</sup> Laqueur, 394.

sustain extensive guerrilla activities, affecting the availability of resources and support. While movement remains crucial, successful guerrilla campaigns recognize the importance of rest, recuperation, and regrouping as essential elements for long-term effectiveness.

## 5. Strategic Communication and Guerrilla Warfare

The guerrilla movement is not an isolated occurrence; it satisfies the requirements of its followers. Therefore, Mao argues, in isolation, guerrilla warfare could only produce tactical achievements; to be successful, it must be integrated into a larger revolutionary plan. Guerrilla warfare requires a defined political purpose. Mao's strategy was goal-oriented, with the essential components not solely military factors but rather the political and psychological results occasionally generated from military acts.<sup>154</sup> If the target audience is unaware of the guerrillas' movement and its goals, they will be unable to gain public support and fail.<sup>155</sup> Therefore, it seems beneficial to incorporate strategic communication into the development of modern guerrilla warfare doctrine.

Since its origin, propaganda, and terror have contributed to guerrilla warfare.<sup>156</sup> The prevalence of mass media has elevated the significance of these issues. In an era of rapid and extensive information exchange, guerrilla warfare propaganda is more important than military actions. A military action with a well-crafted story disseminated to the intended audience has greater power than a simple act of violence. No guerrilla movement has achieved its objectives purely through propaganda, and none have done so through violence alone.<sup>157</sup>

Terror is employed as a deliberate strategy to demoralize the enemy by contesting its control through violent activities against secondary targets.<sup>158</sup> The primary objective was to convey that participation with the enemy is dangerous and that the enemy cannot safeguard its proxies or collaborators. Terror as a tactic is like a double-edged sword; its

---

<sup>154</sup> Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies*, 73.

<sup>155</sup> Mao, *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*, 8.

<sup>156</sup> Laqueur, *Guerrilla Warfare*, 400.

<sup>157</sup> Laqueur, 400–401.

<sup>158</sup> Laqueur, 401.

effectiveness is impossible to anticipate. It could increase or decrease public support for the guerrilla movement. Thus, it must be handled with the utmost caution, as no guerrilla movement can survive and expand among a hostile population.<sup>159</sup>

Violence and intimidation have been pervasive aspects of guerrilla warfare and their effects on conducting the war. The use of violence is intended to garner attention and exposure for a cause and educate, inform, and ultimately rally the masses in support of the revolt. The purpose of guerrilla warfare is to provide hope for the oppressed population that a tyrannical enemy can be overthrown. Guerrilla warfare cannot work as a single function to overthrow the numerical enemy. Instead, guerrilla warfare serves as one factor in achieving political gains, polarizing public support, demoralizing opposition forces, and draining the enemy's resources. The anticipated outcome of guerrilla warfare is not the fast submission or anticipated surrender of enemy troops but rather a protracted struggle.<sup>160</sup>

Effective propaganda can enhance the guerrillas' and the population's determination and will to fight. In the view of the indigenous population and international audience, propaganda could bolster solidarity and undercut the legitimacy of oppressors' security forces. As a result, propaganda might make the insurgents appear significantly more powerful than they actually are. Occasionally, propaganda could even legitimize violence.<sup>161</sup>

## **6. Conclusion**

Guerrilla warfare is a prolonged and challenging endeavor that necessitates a clear political objective, meticulous planning, and effective execution. Key factors for success include the strategic selection of terrain, gathering intelligence, and garnering support from the local population. Through these tactics, guerrilla movements strive to undermine their adversaries, gain the public's backing, and ultimately accomplish their political aspirations.

---

<sup>159</sup> Laqueur, 400.

<sup>160</sup> Aaron M. Young and David H. Gray, "Insurgency, Guerilla Warfare and Terrorism: Conflict and Its Application for the Future.," *Global Security Studies* 2, no. 4 (2011), ResearchGate.

<sup>161</sup> Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies*, 89.

In the contemporary landscape of guerrilla warfare, strategic communication and propaganda have become increasingly vital due to the widespread influence of mass media.

Applying the principles and strategies of guerrilla warfare to Estonia's historical context reveals its relevance to the country's resistance against foreign occupation and its quest for independence. Estonia has endured periods of foreign dominion and occupation throughout its past, notably during World War II under Soviet control and later as a constituent of the Soviet Union. These experiences align with the fundamental tenets of guerrilla warfare.

Even today, the principles of guerrilla warfare retain their significance within Estonia's national defense strategy. Given its geopolitical positioning and historical background, Estonia places considerable emphasis on deterrence and defense. This includes the development of unconventional capabilities and maintaining a well-prepared population. In addition, insights derived from past resistance movements serve as the basis for Estonia's approach to safeguarding its sovereignty and ensuring border security.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

### III. UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE IN ESTONIA

#### A. UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE PLANNING GUIDANCE

According to Sandor Fabian’s research on “Professional Irregular Defense Forces: The Other Side of COIN,” he puts forward three hypotheses that serve as the cornerstone for achieving success in asymmetric conflict.<sup>162</sup> Fabian’s first hypothesis suggests that in the event of an invasion on its soil, a smaller nation can triumph over a stronger adversary in terms of numbers and technology by employing irregular warfare strategies instead of conventional military approaches.<sup>163</sup> Building on this, the second hypothesis asserts that the effectiveness of the irregular warfare strategy is significantly bolstered when the irregular defense force comprises professional military personnel.<sup>164</sup> Finally, Fabian’s third hypothesis proposes that the irregular warfare strategy achieves its highest level of success when the irregular defense force is established, trained, and equipped for irregular warfare in advance rather than improvising in response to conventional defeat.<sup>165</sup>

In a similar vein, Otto Fiala, in his publication *The Resistance Operating Concept*, delves deeper into the actions that a sovereign nation can take to enhance its national defense strategy and adequately prepare for protecting itself in the event of a potential loss of national sovereignty, be it partial or complete.<sup>166</sup> Fiala’s main emphasis lies in the establishment of a pre-existing, authorized, and organized resistance capability on a national level prior to any invasion and the subsequent occupation that could result in territorial and sovereign loss. When considering resistance as a unique type of warfare, it can be understood as an essential element within a comprehensive and multi-faceted national defense system that operates across various layers. This perspective acknowledges that resistance is not merely an isolated strategy, but rather an intrinsic part of a robust

---

<sup>162</sup> Fabian, “Professional Irregular Defense Forces: The Other Side of COIN,” 3.

<sup>163</sup> Fabian, 3.

<sup>164</sup> Fabian, 4.

<sup>165</sup> Fabian, 4.

<sup>166</sup> Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*, XV.

defense system that operates extensively and covers multiple aspects of national security.<sup>167</sup>

In June 2022, U.S. Special Operations Command Europe published the draft version of the “Resistance Operational Guidance” as a continuation of the work on *The Resistance Operating Concept*.<sup>168</sup> The “Resistance Operating Concept” serves as a resource for European nations, offering various options to prevent encroachment, confront occupation, and ultimately compel the withdrawal of foreign aggressors.<sup>169</sup> The “Resistance Operational Guidance” is a practical implementation of *The Resistance Operating Concept*, specifically focusing on resistance. It recognizes that resistance is an integral part of a nation’s comprehensive defense strategy, directly enhancing national resilience and strengthening deterrence against foreign aggressors.<sup>170</sup> Resistance operations come into play when a sovereign nation’s territory is occupied either directly or indirectly, serving as a natural response from a threatened or occupied government in the face of partial or complete occupation.<sup>171</sup> “Resistance Operational Guidance” aims to foster a better understanding of the requirements for national resistance and can potentially aid allies and partner nations in developing their own operational concepts for resistance as part of their national defense planning.<sup>172</sup>

The primary objective of this research is to improve the Estonian Defense Forces’ use of unconventional warfare as a vital component of Estonia’s overall defense strategy and to meet the requirements outlined in the “Resistance Operational Guidance” provided by the U.S. Special Operations Command Europe. The study aims to identify the critical factors that can affect the Estonian Defense Force’s ability to successfully conduct guerrilla warfare against the Russian Armed Forces. By considering various environmental factors

---

<sup>167</sup> Fiala, 1.

<sup>168</sup> Special Operations Command Europe, “Resistance Operational Guidance (DRAFT)” (Special Operations Command Europe, June 10, 2022).

<sup>169</sup> Special Operations Command Europe.

<sup>170</sup> Special Operations Command Europe.

<sup>171</sup> Special Operations Command Europe.

<sup>172</sup> Special Operations Command Europe.

and using planning guidance, the research will establish a set of unique characteristics that can enhance the Estonian Defense Force’s unconventional warfare capabilities, ultimately contributing to Estonia’s comprehensive defense strategy. The Estonian Defense Forces have already allocated resources for unconventional warfare as part of this strategy. In case of an armed invasion by the Russian Federation, the Estonian Defense League and the Estonian Special Operation Forces will be responsible for preparing and executing unconventional warfare. This research identifies the Estonian Defense League Fighting Groups as the primary source of human resources for conducting unconventional warfare against the Russian Armed Forces to expand Estonia’s limited strategic depth.

## **B. ESTONIAN DEFENSE LEAGUE OVERVIEW**

The Estonian Defense League is a voluntary organization dedicated to national defense, operating under the supervision of the Estonian Ministry of Defense.<sup>173</sup> Established on November 11 1918, it originated as a self-defense organization.<sup>174</sup> Presently, the Estonian Defense League and its affiliated entities comprise approximately 28,000 active volunteers.<sup>175</sup>

The Estonian Defense League is organized according to military principles, possesses weapons, and conducts military-style exercises.<sup>176</sup> The primary goal of the Defense League is to enhance Estonia’s preparedness to protect its sovereignty and uphold its constitutional order through the utilization of volunteerism and individual initiative. The Defense League aims to strengthen the nation’s capacity for defense by fostering a sense of collective responsibility and empowering individuals to actively contribute to the safeguarding of Estonia’s sovereignty and constitutional principles.<sup>177</sup>

---

<sup>173</sup> Riigikogu, “The Estonian Defence League Act” (Riigi Teataja, April 1, 2023), <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/523032023006/consolide>.

<sup>174</sup> Riigikogu.

<sup>175</sup> Estonian Defence League, “About Estonian Defence League,” Estonian Defence League, accessed February 3, 2023, <https://www.kaitseliit.ee/en/edl>.

<sup>176</sup> Riigikogu, “The Estonian Defence League Act.”

<sup>177</sup> Riigikogu.

Fighting groups of the Defense League collaborate closely with the Estonian Special Operations Command. The training of those units mainly concentrates on small-unit tactics, marksmanship, and combat engineering. In addition, the training focuses on unconventional warfare tactics.<sup>178</sup> For instance, the fighting groups are equipped and trained to capture or eliminate high-ranking enemy military personnel, destroy or sabotage various communication nodes, ambush an enemy military convoy, or collect and relay information regarding enemy activities on both sides of the enemy front lines.

The equipment and training of a fighting group allow it to function independently without the direct support of friendly forces. Training for fighting groups emphasizes small unit tactics and extensive shooting and explosives practice.<sup>179</sup> Gun safety and gun drills are crucial components of shooting instruction. Fighting groups are trained to operate with individual weapons and weapon systems that are standard for the Estonian Defense Forces. In addition, the organization possesses at least a rudimentary understanding of handling certain weapons not currently listed in the Estonian Defense Force's armament chart.

The fighting group also possesses the requisite communication, medical, and demolition expertise to undertake tactical missions behind enemy lines.<sup>180</sup> The fighting group members can collect the specified battlefield data and safely transmit it to the higher command. In addition, members of the fighting group have received instruction in the enemy's doctrine, tactics, and techniques.<sup>181</sup> Members of the fighting group know the military decision-making procedure. Members of the fighting group must be in good physical condition since, if necessary, the equipment required to complete the mission and survive must be carried in a backpack to the operation area. Survival skills are crucial in the event of a mission compromise; consequently, a member of the fighting group knows

---

<sup>178</sup> Romeo Sierra, "Võitlusgrupid Vaenlase Tagalas," *Kaitse Kodu!*, no. 7 (2019): 15–19, [issuu.com](#); Sander Silm, "Võitlusgrupp – Vastasmeeskonna Vastik Vastane," *Kaitse Kodu!*, no. Special edition (March 2023), [issuu.com](#).

<sup>179</sup> Sierra, "Võitlusgrupid Vaenlase Tagalas."

<sup>180</sup> Sierra.

<sup>181</sup> Sierra.

how to survive, evade, and re-join friendly units in the climate and terrain of the probable operational area.

This study identifies the Estonian Defense League Fighting Groups as the primary human resource for conducting unconventional warfare to impede the Russian Federation Armed Force's logistical and battle preparations by conducting military operations against the Russian rear area communication lines. Accomplishing all the abovementioned activities require extensive, varied, and rigorous individual and group training that cannot be done later in a wholly changed security environment during a crisis. However, the abovementioned equipment and preparations allow fighting groups' deployment to military operations behind enemy lines in Estonia territory and broader operations theater when geographical and other battlespace conditions favor them.

### **C. UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE AGAINST RUSSIAN ARMED FORCES: KEY VARIABLES.**

Earlier sections of this study highlighted two crucial factors of guerilla warfare: extraordinary intelligence and appropriate topographical circumstances. If this conclusion is accurate, then the numerically weaker EDL guerilla force should be able to conduct effective military operations against the Russian Federation Armed Forces. However, to evaluate the validity of this premise, intelligence and terrain considerations must be applied to the Estonian setting and compared to past examples with comparable circumstances.

David Galula has articulated the significance of geography and guerilla warfare in the following manner. In a revolutionary war, the function of geography, which is significant in an ordinary war, may be predominating. If the insurgent's initial weakness is not mitigated by terrain, he may be doomed to fail before he even begins.<sup>182</sup> David Galula, in his analysis of counterinsurgency operations, emphasizes the significance of geographical factors. According to Galula, the location of a country, including natural barriers such as seas, deserts, or mountain ranges, can offer advantages for the

---

<sup>182</sup> David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 23.

counterinsurgent.<sup>183</sup> He further suggests that the size of a nation plays a crucial role, as larger countries pose greater challenges in terms of governance.<sup>184</sup> Galula also highlights the impact of a country's configuration, whether it can be easily compartmentalized or is an archipelago, as it can hinder or restrict the spread of insurgency.<sup>185</sup> He observes that the length of international borders holds significant influence, especially when neighboring countries exhibit sympathy towards the insurgents, as it works in favor of their cause.<sup>186</sup> In terms of terrain, Galula explains that features like rugged mountains or dense vegetation provide advantages to the insurgents. In contrast, harsh climates tend to benefit the counterinsurgent due to logistical and operational advantages.<sup>187</sup> Regarding population dynamics, Galula suggests that factors such as size, density, and distribution can impact control, with scattered populations and a higher rural-to-urban ratio favoring the insurgent.<sup>188</sup> Finally, Galula acknowledges that the state of the economy has a dual impact, as highly developed countries may be vulnerable to short bursts of terrorism. However, prolonged disruptions can turn the population against the insurgent.<sup>189</sup>

In explaining why certain nations have more successfully waged guerrilla campaigns than others, it is necessary to comprehend the conditions that favor guerrillas and limit enemy counter-guerrilla operations. Therefore, this study focuses on three geographical elements: forests, swamps, and climate. I concentrate on these variables because these three elements could be the significant limiting factors for Russian Armed Forces to apply their numerical force size and fire superiority. However, simultaneously, the same geographical elements enhance small guerrilla units' freedom of maneuver and survivability.

---

<sup>183</sup> Galula, 23.

<sup>184</sup> Galula, 23.

<sup>185</sup> Galula, 23.

<sup>186</sup> Galula, 23.

<sup>187</sup> Galula, 24.

<sup>188</sup> Galula, 24.

<sup>189</sup> Galula, 24.

A key principle of guerrilla warfare is that the guerrillas are initially less powerful than the governments they oppose.<sup>190</sup> If the government forces possessed knowledge of the guerrillas' identities and their whereabouts, they would be able to eliminate or capture them swiftly.<sup>191</sup> For guerrillas to survive, it is crucial that they maintain concealment from government forces, leveraging demographic and geographical advantages despite being outnumbered.<sup>192</sup> In suitable environmental circumstances, guerrillas can flourish with a small fighting force, even without extensive local support.<sup>193</sup> In fact, a campaign of lasting impact can be waged by as few as 500 to 2,000 active guerrillas under the right environmental conditions.<sup>194</sup> Consequently, it is imperative for guerrillas to possess superior knowledge of the local terrain to avoid engaging with enemy forces in unfavorable situations.

Guerrillas tend to succeed when they face a weak government and military that are financially challenged, corrupt, organizationally inept, politically divided and lack awareness of local situations.<sup>195</sup> In the context of the Russian Federation Armed Forces' overall force posture in the Baltic Region,<sup>196</sup> if Estonia were to engage in guerrilla warfare against Russia, it would need favorable environmental conditions that would enhance the previously mentioned conditions and offset Russia's numerical advantage in troop numbers.

---

<sup>190</sup> James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055403000534>.

<sup>191</sup> Fearon and Laitin.

<sup>192</sup> Fearon and Laitin.

<sup>193</sup> Fearon and Laitin.

<sup>194</sup> Aaron M. Young and David H. Gray, "Insurgency, Guerilla Warfare, and Terrorism: Conflict and Its Application for the Future.," *Global Security Studies* 2, no. 4 (2011).

<sup>195</sup> Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War."

<sup>196</sup> Lester W. Grau and Charles K. Bartles, *The Russian Way of War: Force Structure, Tactics and Modernization of the Russian Ground Forces* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, 2016); Patrick Savage, "The Russian National Guard: An Asset for Putin at Home and Abroad," *American Security Project*, 2017, 15, [www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19806](http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19806); Arbitter and Carlson, "How the Bear Hunts Guerillas: The Evolution of Russian Counter-Irregular Warfare from 1994 to Present"; Philip Wasielewski, "Russian Rear Area Operations and the Resistance Operating Concept," *Small Wars Journal*, 2021, [smallwarsjournal.com](http://smallwarsjournal.com).

## 1. Terrain

According to Che Guevara, guerrilla warfare may not always take place in the most favorable geographical conditions.<sup>197</sup> Nevertheless, when the opportunity arises, such as in remote regions distinguished by thick forests, rugged mountains, impassable deserts, or marshy lands, the fundamental tactics rooted in the principles of guerrilla warfare must remain steadfast and unchanged.<sup>198</sup> Since guerrillas are inherently less powerful than government forces, they need to develop strategies that shift the balance of power in their favor.<sup>199</sup> Furthermore, the challenging terrain provides shelter and sanctuary for guerrillas, hindering the government from effectively utilizing its superior forces.<sup>200</sup>

Following is a brief overview of three geographical factors, namely forest, swamps, and climate in Estonia and Western Russian districts, and how they affect military operations. The scope extends beyond Estonian national borders because to disrupt Russian military logistics and the effectiveness of indirect firepower, the guerillas must expand their operations beyond the currently stated Estonian border and create strategic depth that Estonia lacks.

## 2. Forests

Estonia and Western Russia do not have mountain ranges or jungles. Nevertheless, there are forests and swamps present, which guerrillas can effectively utilize to their advantage. According to Mao Tse-tung's rules for guerilla warfare, Estonia's physical setting is not conducive for trading space for time.<sup>201</sup> The terrain of Estonia lacks strategic depth. For example, there are only 210 kilometers between the Estonian-Russian border and Estonia's capital, Tallinn. Therefore, the Russian motorized forces can traverse this

---

<sup>197</sup> Che Guevara, "Guerrilla Warfare," 1961, <https://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/slatta/hi216/documents/che.htm>.

<sup>198</sup> Guevara.

<sup>199</sup> David Siroky and Valery Dzutsati, "The Empire Strikes Back: Ethnicity, Terrain, and Indiscriminate Violence in Counterinsurgencies\*," *Social Science Quarterly* 96, no. 3 (2015): 807–29, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12192>.

<sup>200</sup> Siroky and Dzutsati.

<sup>201</sup> Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies*, 72.

distance reasonably quickly, a fact that the Estonian Defense Forces are fully aware of and took measures to counter.<sup>202</sup> However, specific environmental characteristics can give the guerillas an advantage against the Russian invasion. Estonia is one of the world's most forested nations. Forests encompass about half of the mainland of Estonia.<sup>203</sup> According to Global Forest Watch, an online portal that provides data and monitoring tools for forests, districts in western Russia near the Estonian border are densely forested.<sup>204</sup>

Historical examples suggest that skilled usage of forested areas benefited irregular soldiers when engaged in combat.<sup>205</sup> Forested areas allow guerillas cover and concealment, which ultimately expands their room for maneuver and survivability. Therefore, battles in woodland locations face similar obstacles as confrontations in urban areas. Due to the concealment of vegetation, it is challenging to determine fighting positions and troop movements. Today, forested region concealment's advantages are lessened due to the technical advancement of monitoring and reconnaissance equipment. However, forested terrain inhibits the enemy's ability to observe and acquire intelligence. Satellites and other forms of digital intelligence are more complex to deploy in forested locations. Therefore, forested terrain influences surveillance costs and diminishes the utility of intelligence gathering by nonhuman sources.<sup>206</sup> On the other hand, the dense forest layout has maintained its value as a cover against the principal tactical engagement operations of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, notably intensive artillery or indirect fire before advancing.

To summarize the benefits that densely forested areas offer guerillas. Firstly, forested terrain inhibits the government's ability to collect dependable and precise

---

<sup>202</sup> Molly K. Mckew, "‘They Will Die in Tallinn’: Estonia Girds for War With Russia," *Politico Magazine*, 2018, [www.politico.com](http://www.politico.com).

<sup>203</sup> Statistics Estonia, "About Estonian Forests," Statistics Estonia, accessed February 5, 2023, <https://www.stat.ee/en/find-statistics/statistics-theme/environment/forest>.

<sup>204</sup> Global Forest Watch, "About Russian Forest," Global Forest Watch, accessed February 5, 2023, <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/>.

<sup>205</sup> Anthony Clayton, *Warfare in Woods and Forests* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2012), 29–51.

<sup>206</sup> Siroky and Dzutsati, "The Empire Strikes Back: Ethnicity, Terrain, and Indiscriminate Violence in Counterinsurgencies\*."

intelligence at a reasonable price. Second, a well-known military concept is that one cannot destroy what one cannot see. Third, forested areas make it more difficult for Russian counter-guerrilla operations to neutralize guerrilla activity, not only because of the lack of information about guerrillas' locations but also because forest regions typically lack the infrastructure, such as roads with high weight tolerance and a clear long line of sight, required for Russian Armed Forces to imply their superior firepower and armor; thus, the skillful use of a forested environment favors guerrilla tactics.

### 3. Swamps

The importance of geography to national security extends back millennia. Seas, lakes, deserts, deep forests, and swamps have traditionally been used as natural state boundaries because they hamper the movement of armies. In addition, the size of a state's territory could be a valuable criterion for measuring its strength and self-defense capacity.<sup>207</sup> The Estonian area is only 45 thousand square kilometers compared to Russia's 17 million square kilometers and eleven time zones. Therefore, the mere territorial size of Estonia significantly limits strategic defense depth. One reasonable approach is leveraging rugged terrain to expand Estonia's strategic depth. Guerilla warfare greatly benefits from areas like swamps. Swamps can provide freedom of maneuver for guerillas and avenues of approaches to Russian rear lines of communications. Guerrillas could expand Estonian strategic depth toward the East by exploiting the forest and swampy areas of Estonia and Western Russia swampy regions between Velikiye Luki and Lake Peypus.

Estonia has extensive swamps. Due to the flat terrain of Estonia, the marsh stretches everywhere. There are almost 165,000 marshes in Estonia that are larger than one hectare. One hundred thirty-two are peatlands with more extensive than one thousand hectares.

---

<sup>207</sup> Arnon Sofer, "Topographical and Territorial Considerations in International Relations in the 21st Century," *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture*. 9, no. 4 (2002): 67, ProQuest.

About 7,000 bogs cover approximately 22.3% of the Estonian mainland.<sup>208</sup> The closest marsh is only 10 kilometers from any site on Estonia’s mainland.<sup>209</sup>

Clausewitz’s writings on small wars and the troops who fought in them concentrated mainly on topography and precautions imposed by its characteristics, such as the crossing of hills or mountain ranges, rivers, swamps, or moors, which presented both risks and opportunities.<sup>210</sup> For units engaged in small wars, choosing terrain that allows for easy concealment and is difficult to access is essential.<sup>211</sup> As a result, This would make it challenging for adversaries to bring large armored equipment and logistical support. As a result, soldiers frequently have to dismount to fight or can move on foot.<sup>212</sup>

Leveraging formidable terrain restricting the maneuverability of numerically superior adversary troops is a viable approach for lightly equipped and mobile guerillas to compensate for their relative technological and organizational deficiencies. Insurgents have frequently employed rugged terrain to their advantage. Afghan Mujahidin insurgents, for instance, exploited rugged terrain to ambush largely road-bound Soviet forces, just as their ancestors had done against the British.<sup>213</sup>

The impact of swamps on the German Army’s operations in Russia during World War II was vital, especially in partisan warfare.<sup>214</sup> In the fall of 1941, the German Army’s maneuver warfare stalled in the Eastern offensive campaign due to swamps and a mud ocean caused by heavy rainfall. Russians refer to these muddy conditions as rasputitsa, also

---

<sup>208</sup> Estonian Wildlife Tours, “Information Concerning Estonia’s Swamps,” Estonian Wildlife Tours, accessed February 13, 2023, <https://www.estonianwildlifetours.com/about-estonia/>.

<sup>209</sup> Enterprise Estonia, “Estonia Overview,” Enterprise Estonia, accessed February 13, 2023, <https://estonia.ee/overview/>.

<sup>210</sup> Beatrice Heuser, “Small Wars in the Age of Clausewitz: The Watershed Between Partisan War and People’s War,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 1 (2010): 139–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402391003603623>.

<sup>211</sup> Heuser.

<sup>212</sup> Heuser.

<sup>213</sup> James D. Kiras, “Irregular Warfare: Terrorism and Insurgency,” in *Understanding Modern Warfare*, Second revised edition (Cambridge: University Press, 2007), 186–207, [https://www.indianstrategicknowledgeonline.com/web/baylis3e\\_ch09.pdf](https://www.indianstrategicknowledgeonline.com/web/baylis3e_ch09.pdf).

<sup>214</sup> The United States Dept of the Army, *Terrain Factors in the Russian Campaign*. (Washington, DC: Dept. of the Army, 1951), 42.

known as the season of poor roads in Russia, which makes transportation and logistics challenging. In addition, the roads got so saturated with mud that even walking was impossible. Those conditions severely restricted German army troop movement and freedom of maneuver.<sup>215</sup>

During World War II, European Russia's vast forests and swamp regions served as natural havens for partisans, offering ideal conditions for their operations.<sup>216</sup> These well-versed partisans conducted relentless guerrilla warfare against German forces on the front lines and rear areas. The threat posed by partisan warfare significantly increased when the pace of the invasion slowed, when the occupying forces faced setbacks, or when the invader failed to respond effectively in the early stages of conflict.<sup>217</sup> Russian partisan raids on German rear installations reached a critical level during the war, compelling the occupation troops to adopt stringent protective measures and engage in policing actions. Consequently, German regular troops required extensive preparation to confront these fierce and ruthless partisans who operated invisibly, proved elusive to capture, and struck without warning.<sup>218</sup>

The partisans mounted full-scale attacks behind the German front in the wooded and swampy terrain between Velikiye Luki and Lake Peypus.<sup>219</sup> Partisans were pushed through gaps in the German front during the night. Therefore, antipartisan efforts necessitated a sizeable amount of forces that would have otherwise fought at the front. In addition, hundreds of thousands of men protected rear communication networks, including railroad lines and military facilities, airfields, ammunition, and logistic depots.<sup>220</sup> Despite the tense guard details, the rail lines were detonated by partisans consistently. During

---

<sup>215</sup> Mangesh Sawant, "Weather: The Only Constant in Warfare," *Expeditions with MCUP*, no. 1 (2023): 1–29, muse.jhu.edu.

<sup>216</sup> The United States Army European Command Historical Division, *Combat in Russian Forests and Swamps: Historical Study*. (Washington, DC: Dept. of the Army, 1951), 33.

<sup>217</sup> The United States Army European Command Historical Division, 33.

<sup>218</sup> The United States Army European Command Historical Division, 34.

<sup>219</sup> The United States Dept of the Army, *Terrain Factors in the Russian Campaign.*, 42.

<sup>220</sup> The United States Dept of the Army, 42.

World War II, Russian partisan warfare was crucial in delaying the German Army's efforts to advance toward the East.<sup>221</sup>

To conclude, the findings about swampy conditions related to guerrilla warfare. Fighting in swamps is a nightmare of heavily armored mechanized units. Mud enters everything and ruins valuable equipment, and the wet ground dictates a plodding advancement pace. The lack of suitable infrastructure makes mechanized assault formations and logistics challenging. Soldiers frequently must dismount to fight or could only move on foot, considerably degrading a force's ability to employ weapons with superior firepower and armored vehicle advantages. Large forces have difficulty coordinating their maneuvers in the swamp, degrading their numerical advantages. Isolated adversary units are more vulnerable to guerrillas' attacks. Therefore, in a country characterized by swamplands, a relatively small military force can effectively withstand a significantly larger enemy for an extended period. This is due to the resource-intensive nature of controlling extensive swampy territories. Russian Armed Forces leadership faces two options: to allocate a significant number of troops to secure the swampy areas that could otherwise be deployed on the front line or leave the swampy areas uncontrolled and provide the guerrillas means to expand strategic depth towards the East.

#### **4. Climate**

The climate has a substantial impact on warfare. Some disadvantages for one side typically accompany a climatic advantage for the opposing side in a conflict. Each geographical region has its weather patterns, accompanied by unique difficulties. For example, rain has posed a substantial challenge to warfare in Western Europe, while snow has posed a more significant problem in Eastern Europe campaigns.<sup>222</sup> The relatively warm but persistently wet climate along the coast of northwest Europe rendered the World War I battleground in Flanders a dismal, four-year mud pit. On the other hand, in their attacks on Russia, the climatically unprepared troops led by Charles XII, Napoleon

---

<sup>221</sup> The United States Dept of the Army, 42.

<sup>222</sup> Sawant, "Weather: The Only Constant in Warfare."

Bonaparte, and Adolf Hitler endured tremendous hardships and ultimately perished due to the long and severe winters of Eastern Europe.<sup>223</sup>

In addition to temperature, the most significant meteorological component influencing warfare is moisture in its different forms. Rain, snow, and ice can severely restrict the mobility and maneuverability of the armed forces. In addition, dirt and humidity negatively impact the maintenance and functionality of weapons and equipment.<sup>224</sup>

Clouds and fog hinder aviation operations. For example, clouds affect aerial surveillance, air strikes' precision, and airstrike damage assessment. In addition, the weather impacts aircraft deployment, airlifts, and airborne operations. Even though modern aircraft are more resistant to weather conditions due to radar and infrared equipment that compensate for poor sight, aviation operations remain susceptible to weather conditions.<sup>225</sup> During the 1939–1940 Winter War between the Soviet Union and Finland, poor flying conditions hampered the Red Army's air superiority and caused the grounding of its aircraft for extended periods.<sup>226</sup>

The majority of the conflict during the Winter War took place in extremely cold temperatures and heavy snowfall. The Finnish forces were well acquainted with the terrain and accustomed to the harsh winter conditions, having received training and equipment tailored explicitly for winter warfare. In contrast, the Soviet Red Army lacked comparable knowledge of fieldcraft and survival skills.<sup>227</sup> The Soviet troops could not exploit their personnel, technical, and heavy weaponry superiority due to the adverse effects of the weather and terrain.<sup>228</sup> The Winter War took place during the period of the year with the least amount of daylight, which proved advantageous for the Finns. They were able to

---

<sup>223</sup> Harold A. Winters, *Battling the Elements: Weather and Terrain in the Conduct of War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 1–2.

<sup>224</sup> Winters, 79.

<sup>225</sup> Daniel L. Haulman, "Weather in Air Campaigns, 1990–2003" (Maxwell AFB, Alabama: Air Force Historical Research Agency, 2003), <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA521389.pdf>.

<sup>226</sup> Pasi Tuunainen, *Finnish Military Effectiveness in the Winter War 1939–1940* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 6.

<sup>227</sup> Tuunainen, 3.

<sup>228</sup> Tuunainen, 1.

capitalize on the limited daylight hours (merely three to four hours) to effectively conceal their movements.<sup>229</sup> By strategically selecting which terrain to defend or attack, the Finns effectively deprived the Soviets of the initiative.<sup>230</sup> The Finns capitalized on winter as an ally, leveraging the topography, weather, and climatic factors to compensate for their relative military inferiority.<sup>231</sup> Finland's qualitative advantage stemmed from its ability to exploit its unique geography and climate. As a result, the Finns maintained surprise and momentum throughout the Winter War by harnessing the weather conditions.<sup>232</sup> In the 1939–1940 Battle of Suomussalmi, Finnish soldiers skilled in skiing employed guerrilla tactics to launch successful attacks on Russian convoys immobilized by the snow. The Soviet Union suffered heavy losses, with 140,000 soldiers compared to Finland's 26,000 casualties.<sup>233</sup>

In 1941–1942, inclement weather in Russia severely impeded Operation Barbarossa. Snow and muck on the Eastern Front prevented the Nazi attack on Moscow, the capital of the Soviet Union. Temperatures of -40 degrees Celsius froze weapon systems, rendered motors inoperable, and rendered soldiers unfit for a winter campaign. The campaign of 1941–1942 resulted in significant material loss. Deep snow impeded the mobility of tracked vehicles due to their limited ground clearance. Machine guns' recoil liquid froze. The snow was capable of absorbing the impact of mortars. Snow accumulation on detonators and fuses frequently rendered mines inoperative. The German logistics network failed because of a high rate of mechanical failure. Panzer divisions could not repair damaged tanks and other vehicles due to logistical problems. As the Germans advanced, the lines of troops became perilously dispersed, making them vulnerable to attack by the Soviets. Using lessons from the Winter War in Finland, highly mobile and

---

<sup>229</sup> Tuunainen, 101.

<sup>230</sup> Tuunainen, 108.

<sup>231</sup> Tuunainen, 206.

<sup>232</sup> Tuunainen, 206.

<sup>233</sup> Tuunainen, 6.

experienced Soviet ski troops from elite Siberian divisions maneuvered and attacked German positions on the eastern front.<sup>234</sup>

In conclusion, climatic conditions significantly impact the operational capability of Soviet and German military forces in the Eastern Europe region. A group comprised of former German generals and staff officers who served on the Eastern Front during World War II concluded that climate is a dynamic force and the key to a successful military operation in the Russian expanse. Whoever acknowledges and respects this energy can overcome it; whoever disregards or undervalues it risks failure or annihilation.<sup>235</sup>

In regions with cold climates, armies encounter two formidable opponents: the enemy forces and the harsh cold weather. As a result, the northern environment can significantly impact personnel, equipment, organization, and overall military operations.<sup>236</sup> The extreme cold diminishes the efficiency and effectiveness of both human soldiers and machinery.<sup>237</sup> Consequently, the severe climate conditions have the potential to level the playing field, allowing a numerically inferior adversary to stand a better chance of defeating a numerically superior opponent.

---

<sup>234</sup> Sawant, “Weather: The Only Constant in Warfare.”

<sup>235</sup> Winters, *Battling the Elements*, 94.

<sup>236</sup> Tuunainen, *Finnish Military Effectiveness in the Winter War 1939–1940*, 103.

<sup>237</sup> Tuunainen, 103.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH

### A. THE EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE RESEARCH

Estonia is currently facing its most challenging security situation since regaining independence.<sup>238</sup> It is crucial to strengthen the resilience of the entire state and its population, especially considering the increased military threat from the Russian Federation. In response, Estonia has raised its defense spending to 3% of GDP and allocated additional resources for host nation support.<sup>239</sup> Regardless of any threat's source, timing, or scale, Estonia remains unwavering in its commitment to self-defense and will never surrender. The objective is to render any aggression against Estonia impracticable.<sup>240</sup>

Within the framework of Estonia's comprehensive national defense concept, there is a need to bolster the unconventional warfare capabilities of the Estonian Defense Forces, which will enhance the overall defense readiness of the country. Additionally, conducting research on the geographical factors that influence the deployment of guerrilla warfare against the Russian Federation's armed forces in the event of an invasion can provide additional means to increase Estonia's strategic depth and reshape the battlefield conditions in favor of Estonia.

The security of Estonia is supported by its membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union.<sup>241</sup> Estonia recognizes that its security and the security of its allies are interconnected and interdependent (Figure 1).

---

<sup>238</sup> Riigikogu, "National Security Concept of Estonia."

<sup>239</sup> Riigikogu.

<sup>240</sup> Riigikogu.

<sup>241</sup> Riigikogu.

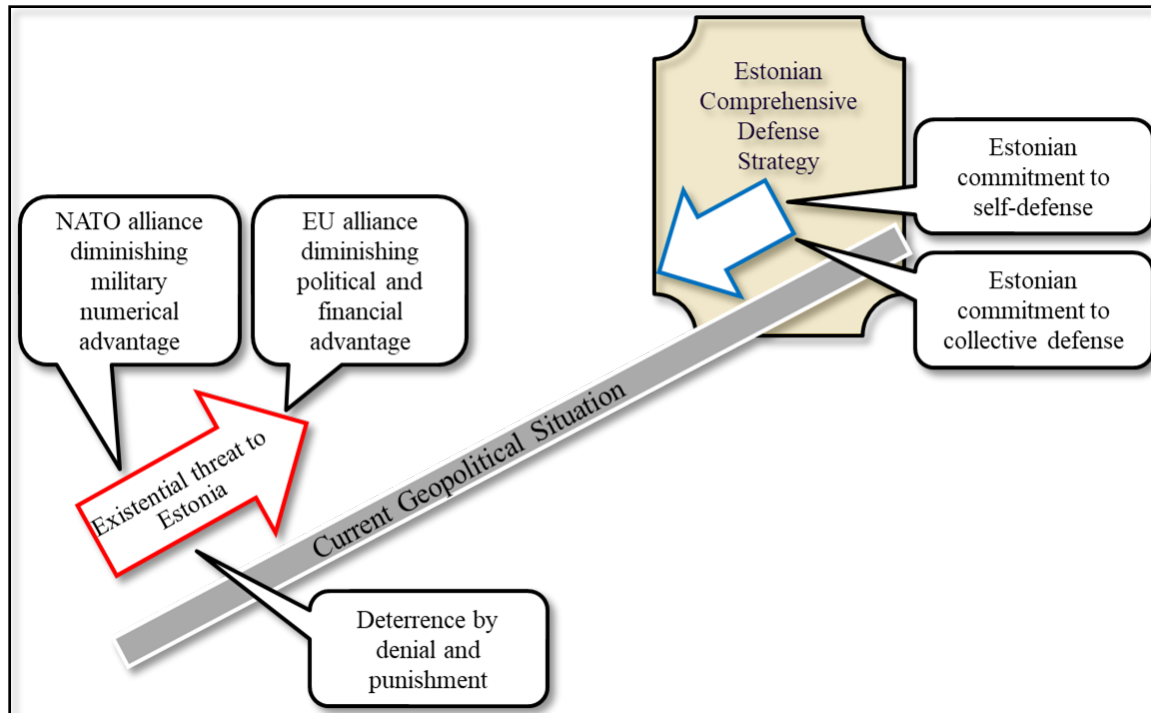


Figure 1. Deterrence and Denial Strategies to Maintain the Estonian Geopolitical Situation

As part of the EDF’s rapid response readiness, the current comprehensive defense strategy includes more than 4,000 armed and military-trained personnel in permanent readiness.<sup>242</sup> A further 37,000 individuals, including reservists and Estonian Defense League units, are in high to moderate readiness to respond to any armed external existential threat to Estonia.<sup>243</sup> The Estonian Defense Forces consist of approximately 230,000 persons enrolled in the mobilization registry, nearly 20% of Estonia’s population..<sup>244</sup> NATO has increased its military presence in Estonia and the eastern portion of the Alliance in response to Russia’s aggressive actions against its neighbors and the broader transatlantic community. In response to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Allies have deployed additional ships, aircraft, and personnel to NATO territory in eastern Europe, strengthening the Alliance’s deterrent and

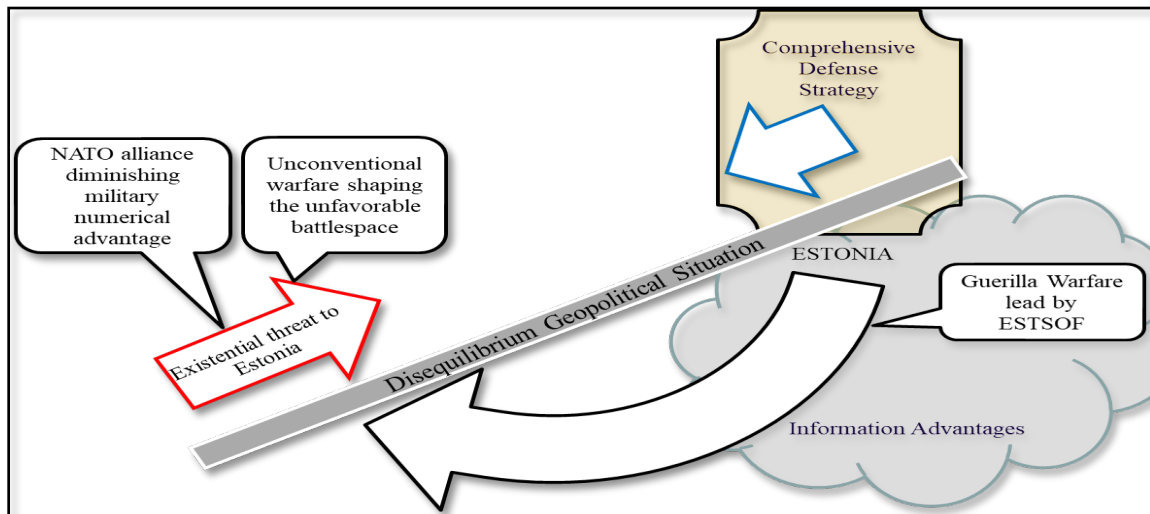
<sup>242</sup> Estonian Defence Forces, “About Estonian Defence Forces,” Estonian Defence Forces, accessed April 7, 2023, <https://mil.ee/en/defence-forces/>.

<sup>243</sup> Estonian Defence Forces.

<sup>244</sup> Estonian Defence Forces.

defensive posture. Russia poses the greatest and most direct threat to the peace and stability of the Euro-Atlantic region and the security of its allies.<sup>245</sup>

In the context of current research, unconventional warfare is viewed as a means of fortifying Estonia’s defense and deterrence strategies against the Russian Federation in the event of a full-scale invasion (Figure 2). Therefore, this study contends that unconventional warfare could be a valuable component of Estonia’s defense strategies, with a distinct mission and objective. In light of this research, I view unconventional warfare as a valuable means to expand Estonia’s strategic depth, which is essential for the maneuverability of Estonian Defence Forces and NATO allies in the event of a Russian Federation invasion. Furthermore, I believe that the current research would help the Estonian Special Operations Force ensure that the allocated resources for unconventional warfare are operational and adequately prepared for upcoming assignments.



Unconventional warfare provides additional means to mitigate the existential threat to Estonia in cooperation with NATO allies.

Figure 2. Integrating Unconventional Warfare into Estonian Comprehensive Defense Strategy

<sup>245</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Nato’s Military Presence in the East of the Alliance,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed April 7, 2023, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_136388.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm).

This study's prior research highlighted two crucial elements of guerilla warfare: exceptional intelligence and favorable topographical conditions. Exceptional intelligence is primarily viewed as a numerically inferior opponent's relative information advantage over a numerically superior opponent, which enables the smaller side to operate and develop in a denied or restricted environment. Favorable topographical conditions are natural or artificial geographical elements in the battlespace that restrict the numerically superior opponent's ability to employ its full military potential and allow the numerically inferior side to gain the initiative by exploiting these conditions. If this conclusion is correct, the numerically inferior EDL guerilla force should be able to conduct effective military operations against the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. To determine the veracity of this premise, intelligence and terrain considerations were applied to the Estonian setting and contrasted to similar instances in the past. This research restricts the variables to terrain, forests, swamps, and climate. These four elements could be significant limiting factors for the Russian Armed Forces' application of their numerical superiority and fire superiority. However, the same geographical elements also increase the maneuverability and survivability of smaller guerilla units.

## **B. SUPPORTIVE GEOGRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT FOR UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE**

Geographical conditions are essential for guerrilla movements. The guerrillas engage in combat once the terrain is opportune. This research demonstrates conclusively that the geographical conditions in Estonia and Western Russia are more conducive to unconventional warfare than restrictive. The selected case studies from World War II battles conducted in the northeastern region of Europe support this claim. Guerrillas should favor inaccessible locations that hinder the enemy's ability to conduct large-scale, multi-branch, coordinated maneuvers that rely on their numerical superiority. Also, guerrillas should favor operational areas where opposing forces cannot effectively collect intelligence on their activities. Possessing informational advantages over the adversary is considered the first and most crucial condition for guerrillas to seize the initiative on the battlefield against a numerically superior foe.

Information advantages are a cornerstone upon which the remainder of unconventional warfare’s thriving conditions depends (Figure 3). The relative information advantages that EDL fighting groups held over the Russian Federation Armed Forces are reflected in four geographical conditions, according to recent research. In the context of this study, information advantages are not under scrutiny and are therefore not explicitly elucidated. The more the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation are required to distribute their forces and extend their supply and communication lines, the costlier and riskier it will become. Concurrently, it provides EDL fighting groups with the means to enhance Estonia’s strategic depth.

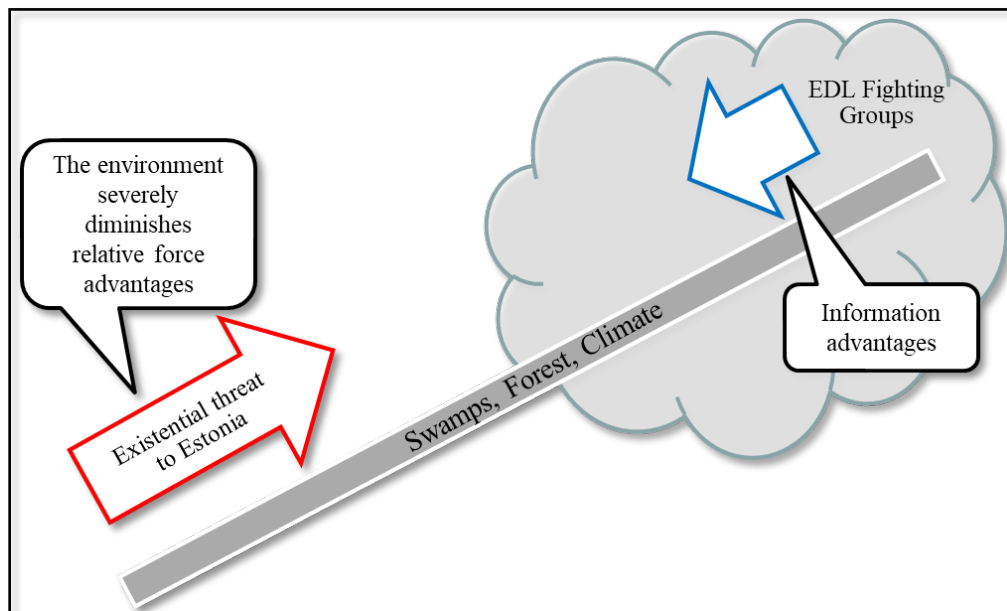


Figure 3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Battlefield Geographical Variables to Opposing Actors.

### 1. Terrain Sketch Modeling of Operation Area

Following is a brief overview of the natural and artificial geographical factors in Estonia and Western Russian districts that affect military operations.<sup>246</sup> The scope extends

<sup>246</sup> Ryan Gauntt and Raiver Pitkve, “Expansion of Estonia’s Strategic Depth” (DA3610 Visual Analytics Course Project, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA., 2023).

beyond Estonian national borders because to disrupt Russian military logistics and the effectiveness of indirect firepower, the guerillas should seek ways to expand their operations beyond the currently stated Estonian border and create strategic depth that Estonia lacks. The three primary data categories, pro-guerrilla environmental features, arterial transit corridors, and known military assets, are required to address the previously identified data gaps in current research.

First, pro-guerrilla environment characteristics include a virtually endless list of conditions, depending on the geographic location where the movement emerges and thrives. The scope of this study is restricted to terrain features such as forests, marshes, rivers, and inland water sources, as these are pertinent to the area of study. According to previous research, the terrain mentioned above features diminishes the numerical superiority of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Even though additional terrain features could be advantageous, combining these four primary obstacles and the additional information gathered helps guerilla forces pinpoint specific areas of concern. Although climate conditions support guerilla warfare in the region, they are nearly impossible to predict accurately for long-term operational planning due to their volatility, so the author excludes climate conditions from mapping out.

Second, the arterial transit corridors of the Russian Federation Armed Forces are primary land-based transportation routes, and the western region of Russia has an extensive rail network. Since a motorized journey covers 250 kilometers per day and rail transport covers 600 kilometers per day, rail transport is preferred even though air transport has been considered the fastest way to deploy troops.<sup>247</sup> Insufficient aviation platforms are available within the western military district to transport many troops and materiel by air. In addition, the region's infrastructure only supports a limited amount of transport by air. As a result, it contributes to the necessity of railroad transportation as the primary mode of transport.

Thirdly, the location of known military assets is based on data from open sources. Although military assets could be divided based on available information into specific asset

---

<sup>247</sup> Kaitsejõudude Peastaap, *Vene Föderatsiooni Maavägede Lahingumäärustik. I Osa: Diviis, Brigaad, Polk* (Tallinn, Estonia: Kaitsejõudude Peastaap, 2001).

types, this analysis only requires the general location of military assets, not their type or capabilities. Given the location of the units in the Russian Western Military District, this research holds that Russian Federation Armed Forces will use trains to transport and resupply the troops before their deployment to the vicinity of the Estonian border. This research assumes that the principal Russian army assembly areas for the invasion of Estonia will be in St. Petersburg or Pihkva, where the units will be echeloned by train from their permanent station locations.

Once defined, code written using Python and the OSMNx package passed the features of interest to the OpenStreetMaps Overpass API. The API then scoured the OSM database for matching features in the area of interest. For this project, the area of interest bounded an area bracketed by 61.34° N, 22.50° E by 55° N, 39.8° E. Combining this area with the borders of Estonia and Russia produces the region shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5.

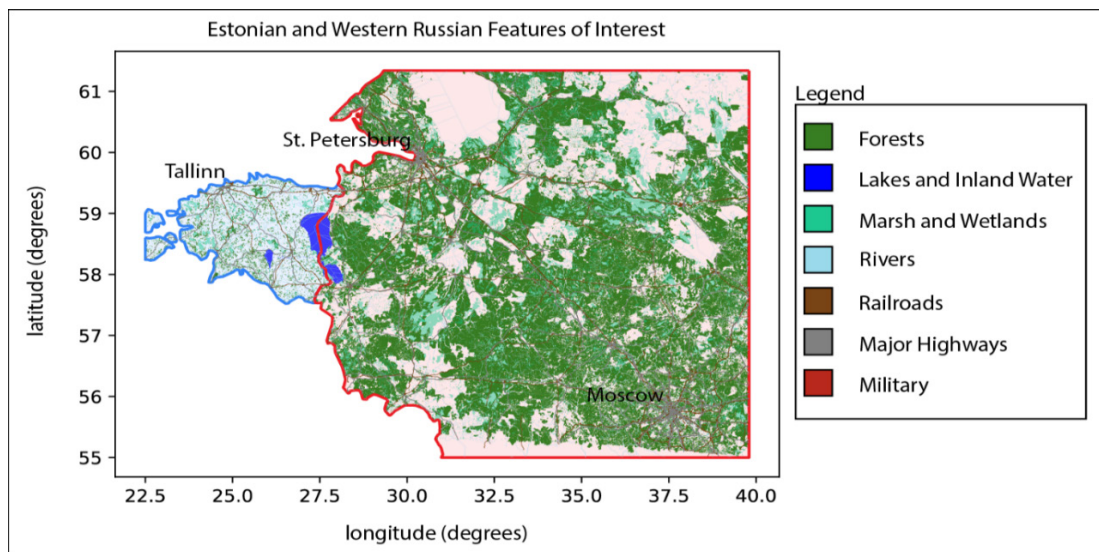


Figure 4. Estonian and Western Russia Geographical Features of Interest<sup>248</sup>

<sup>248</sup> Source: Gauntt and Pitkve, "Expansion of Estonia's Strategic Depth."

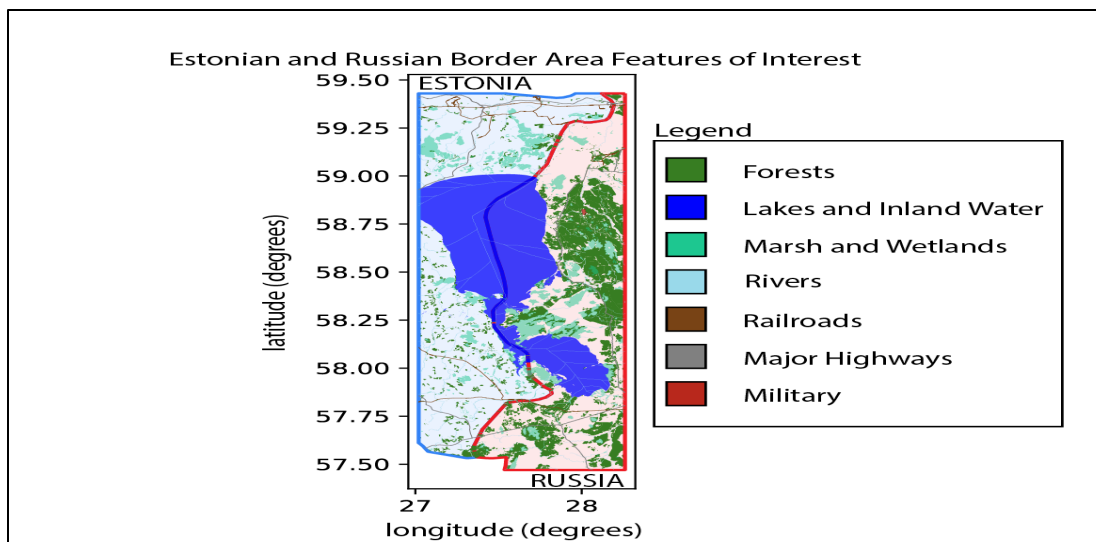


Figure 5. Estonian and Western Russia Boarder Area Geographical Features of Interest<sup>249</sup>

Maps provide the information necessary to analyze guerilla warfare tactics, albeit omitting specific details. The information displayed on the maps serves as a starting point for additional analysis. It provides a concept of the value of open-source data availability rather than a genuine intelligence-level product for mission planning in precise detail. The section below describes how the map’s characteristics impact planning.

## 2. Forests

To recapitulate the advantages, densely forested regions in northeastern Europe offer guerrillas (Figure 6). First, forest terrain hinders the Russian Federation military intelligence establishment’s ability to acquire accurate and reliable intelligence at a reasonable price. Second, it is a well-established military principle that the Russian Armed Forces cannot eliminate what they cannot see. Although Russia’s current tactics in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine do not distinguish between combatants and civilians, Russian tactics resemble genocide more than the art of war. Thirdly, forest regions make it more difficult for Russian counter-guerrilla operations to neutralize guerrilla activity, not only because of the lack of information about the guerrillas’ locations but also because forest

<sup>249</sup> Gauntt and Pitkve.

regions typically lack the infrastructure, such as roads with high weight tolerance and a clear long line of sight, required for the Russian Armed Forces to demonstrate their superior firepower and armor.

To summarize the third and fourth points, densely forested areas make it more difficult for the Russian Armed Forces to overtly degrade Estonian capabilities for unconventional warfare. In addition, controlling densely forested regions requires additional resources from the Russian government. Lastly, dense forests provide the EDL guerillas with a relative information advantage, translating to a psychological advantage over the Russian Federation Armed Forces. The densely forested environment is intimidating and disorienting for Russian forces, which may be unfamiliar with the terrain and therefore perceive themselves as vulnerable to ambush attacks. In contrast, EDL guerrilla combatants familiar with their environment are more confident and in control; thus, the judicious use of a forested environment should favor unconventional warfare in Estonian and Western Russian districts.

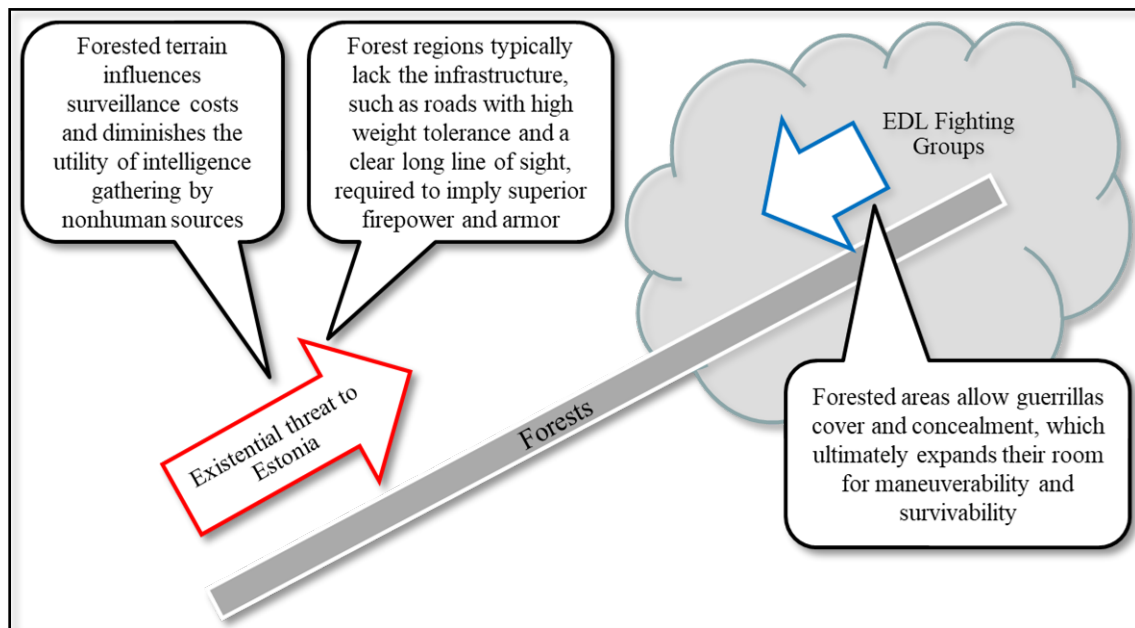


Figure 6. Densely Forested Areas' Advantages and Disadvantages to Opposing Actors.

It is noteworthy that in the event of a lack of information or slow progress on the battlefield, the Russian Armed Forces likely will turn their focus to committing atrocities against the general Estonian populace to destroy Estonia's will to defend itself, regardless of the conventional or unconventional tactics employed by Estonian legal defenders.

### **3. Swamps**

Densely swampy regions are conducive to unconventional warfare due to the natural cover and concealment provided by wetlands and marshes, the natural obstacles they create, the natural resources they provide, and the psychological advantage they provide (Figure 7). Combat in marshland should reduce the numerical superiority of heavily-armored mechanized units of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. The lack of suitable infrastructure makes it difficult for Logistical and Support elements of the Russian Federation Armed Forces to provide logistical support for large-scale assault forces. In addition, effective large-scale armored mechanized assault formations that are coordinated and synchronized with indirect fire support are difficult to achieve due to a lack of supportive infrastructure and geographical conditions that diminish the effectiveness of indirect fire guidance and control measures.

Russia's numerical advantage in large-caliber mechanized armament and armor could be diminished because its soldiers frequently dismount and fight on foot. Moreover, due to dismounted combat without the protection of mechanized armor, constant exposure to danger could negatively affect Russian soldiers, reducing their will to fight. As a result, guerrillas are more likely to target isolated and disoriented Russian units effectively. Additionally, the lack of high-level coordination in the Russian Federation Armed Forces as a result of the swampy conditions creates voids in their offensive and defensive lines, allowing EDL fighting groups to circumvent strongholds unopposed.

Controlling the vast wetlands requires significant resources. This could force the Russian Armed Forces' leadership to choose between allocating significant soldiers to secure the swampy areas, which could otherwise be deployed to the front line, or leaving the swampy areas uncontrolled and allowing EDL fighting groups to expand Estonia's strategic depth to the east.

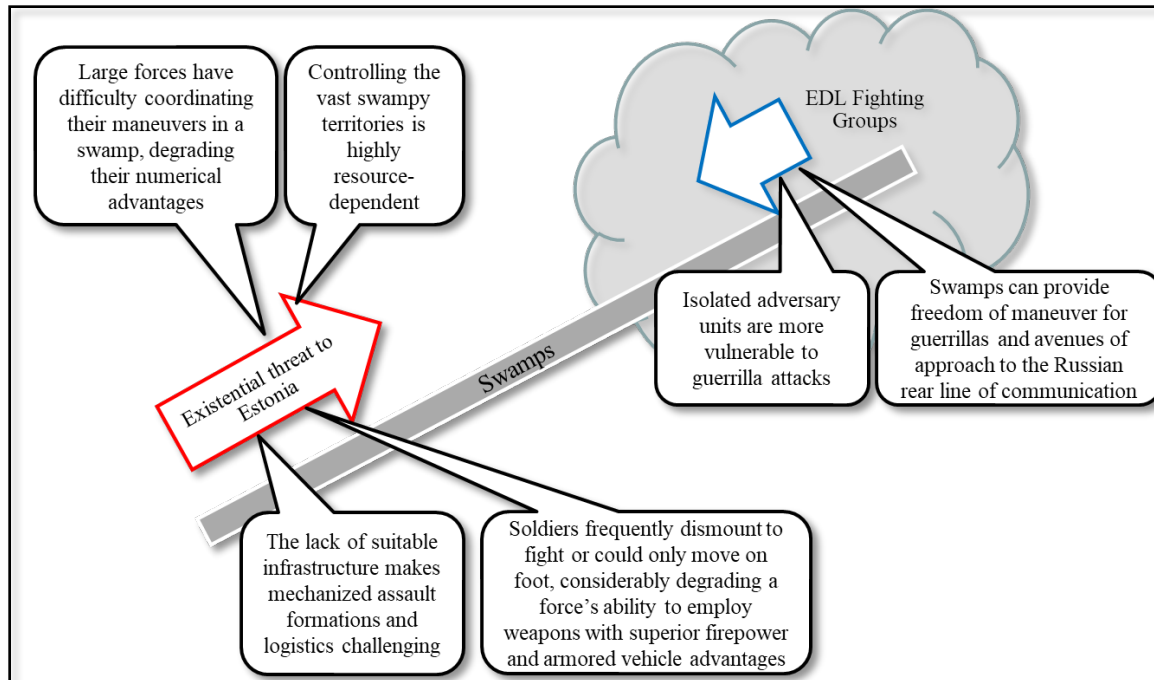


Figure 7. Swamps’ Advantages and Disadvantages to Opposing Actors.

#### 4. Climate

To summarize the climatic advantages of northeastern Europe for EDL fighting groups (Figure 8). When the temperature lowers, both humans and machines could become less efficient. However, on the other hand, the cold weather enhances the fighting character. Thus, the faction fighting for the right to exist takes precedence over those with less ambitious evolutionary goals. Therefore, EDL fighting groups should have a psychological advantage over Russian forces when defending Estonia against the existential threat posed by the Kremlin’s tyrannical and criminal foreign policy.

Extremely frigid weather conditions may cause disorientation and isolation among Russian forces, which EDL combatants could exploit. Rain, snow, and ice can severely restrict the maneuverability and mobility of the heavily armored Russian Armed Forces. Additionally, dirt and humidity harm the maintenance and functionality of the armaments and equipment of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, which are technically antiquated relative to their respective NATO counterparts but superior in quantity.

Winter daylight hours in northeastern Europe are relatively brief. The winter sun rises very late and sets very early, with illumination lasting from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The absence of daylight aids in concealing the movement of EDL fighting groups but could severely obscure the large-scale and synchronized military maneuvers of the Russian Federation Armed Forces. The snow and ice provide additional infiltration routes for fighting groups behind the Russian defense lines. Fighting groups can move swiftly and silently through snow-covered terrain on foot, skis, or snowmobiles. The Finnish Winter War during World War II demonstrated that the frigid climate presented natural obstacles to the Russian mechanized military, including icy rivers and lakes. In addition, fog and clouds could impede Russia's aviation operations. EDL fighting groups could exploit those natural environmental obstacles to impede the movement of Russian soldiers and set up ambushes.

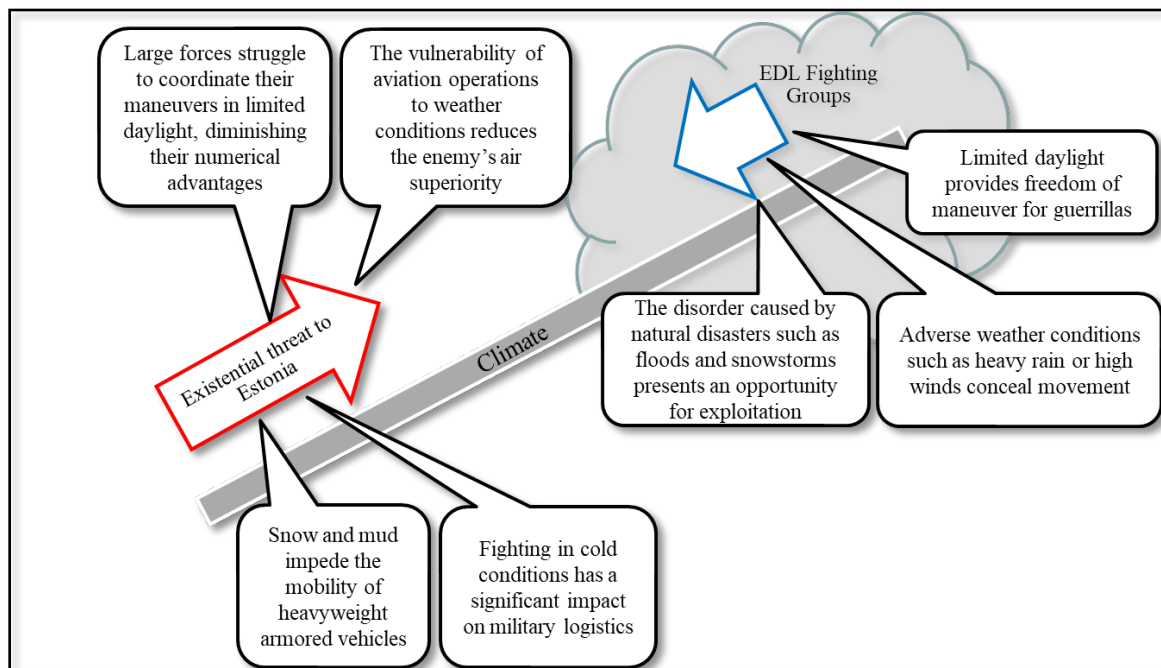


Figure 8. Climate Advantages and Disadvantages to Opposing Actors.

## **C. CONCLUSION**

To succeed in unconventional warfare and complete the mission designated by the Estonian Defense Forces, EDL fighting groups should consider initiating contact with the Russian Federation Armed Forces under favorable environmental conditions whenever operational tempo and mission requirements permit. Due to their superior knowledge of the terrain, fighting groups should exploit the terrain to their advantage and the disfavor of the Russian Armed Forces. Geographical conditions in Estonia and the western region of Russia are conducive to unconventional warfare.

The forests, wetlands, and climate of Estonia and Western Russia contribute to unconventional warfare and diminish the numerical advantage of the Russian Armed Forces. This research holds that if northeastern Europe's geographical conditions are exploited to their utmost potential. In such a scenario, the numerically inferior EDL fighting groups could conduct effective military operations against the rear-line communications of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, thereby increasing Estonia's strategic depth, which is crucial for providing maneuverability for the Estonian Defense Forces and NATO Allies in the event of a Russian invasion.

## **D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Due to Estonia's geographical proximity to Russia, whose political leadership has made clear its genocidal geopolitical expansionist aspirations toward its neighbors, preparations for defending Estonia's sovereignty and territorial integrity are a continuous and never-ending process. There are no clear indications that the political leadership of the Russian Federation will alter its criminal and perverse foreign policy soon. Therefore, Estonian strategic defense planners would find it beneficial to evaluate constantly new and improved countermeasures against Russia's aggressive foreign policy. However, countermeasures against the threat cannot transform the likely victim into the perpetrator. Furthermore, preparations for enhancing Estonia's defense strategy should not include methods rejected by Estonia's military and political allies. As a result, future research on employing unconventional warfare as part of Estonia's comprehensive defense strategy may find it advantageous to focus on establishing a robust legal framework governed by

national laws and regulations. In democratic nations of the twenty-first century, laws must govern and regulate the use of force by the military and paramilitary organizations in both times of peace and war. The exception to this rule is not unconventional warfare. These laws should establish rules for, among other things, the conduct of operations, the treatment of prisoners, and the protection of civilians.

Therefore, a robust legal structure should provide ethical and legal means of conducting unconventional warfare. In addition, humanity and respect for human rights remain fundamental to applying the principles to all forms of warfare, including unconventional warfare. Despite these obstacles, this study is optimistic that Estonia will be able to integrate more nuanced unconventional warfare into its contemporary comprehensive defense strategy.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Adams, Thomas K. *U.S. Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare*. London: Frank Cass, 1998.
- Arbitter, Benjamin A., and Kurt A. Carlson. “How the Bear Hunts Guerillas: The Evolution of Russian Counter-Irregular Warfare from 1994 to Present.” Master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2021. <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/68694>.
- Arreguín-Toft, Ivan. *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict*. New York.: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Atmante, Kristīne, Riina Kaljurand, and Tomas Jermalavičius. “Strategic Cultures of the Baltic States.” In *Strategic Culture in Russia’s Neighborhood: Change and Continuity in an in-Between Space*, 53–82. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019.
- Beaton, Leonard, H. G. Nicholas, Yigal Allon, and P. M. S. Blackett. “Book Reviews.” *Survival* 4, no. 6 (1962): 286–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396336208440361>.
- Beckett, I. F. W. *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents Since 1750*. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Binnendijk, Anika, and Marta Kepe. *Civilian-Based Resistance in the Baltic States: Historical Precedents and Current Capabilities*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021.
- Central Intelligence Agency. “Estonia.” *The World Factbook*. Accessed April 23, 2023. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/estonia/>.
- Clayton, Anthony. *Warfare in Woods and Forests*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2012.
- Cleveland, Charles T., Daniel Egel, David Maxwell, and Hy Rothstein. “Developing a Mastery of Irregular Warfare.” *The Hill*, 2022. <https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3774711-developing-a-mastery-of-irregular-warfare/>.
- Crowards, Tom. “Defining the Category of ‘Small’ States.” *Journal of International Development* 14, no. 2 (2002): 143–79. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.860>.
- Dieves, Veiko. “The Xgw Theory and the 6th Gradient of Warfare.” *Sõjateadlane*, no. 9 (2018): 37–62. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=837033>.
- Enterprise Estonia. “Estonia Overview.” Accessed February 13, 2023. <https://estonia.ee/overview/>.

- Estonian Defence Forces. “About Estonian Defence Forces.” Accessed April 7, 2023. <https://mil.ee/en/defence-forces/>.
- . “About Estonian Special Operations Forces.” Accessed April 23, 2023. <https://mil.ee/en/landforces/special-operations/>.
- . “Eriväelased Harjutasid Koos Kaitseliitlastega Tavatu Sõja Pidamist.” May 26, 2015. <https://mil.ee/uudised/erivaelased-harjutasid-koos-kaitseliitlastega-tavatu-soja-pidamist/>.
- Estonian Defence League. “About Estonian Defence League.” Accessed February 3, 2023. <https://www.kaitseliit.ee/en/edl>.
- Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service. *International Security and Estonia 2023*. Tallinn, Estonia: Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service, 2023. <https://raport.valisluureamet.ee/2023/en/>.
- Estonian Wildlife Tours. “Information Concerning Estonia’s Swamps.” Estonian Wildlife Tours. Accessed February 13, 2023. <https://www.estonianwildlifetours.com/about-estonia/>.
- Fabian, Sandor. “Professional Irregular Defense Forces: The Other Side of COIN.” Master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2012. <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/7338>.
- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War.” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055403000534>.
- Fiala, Otto. *Resistance Operating Concept*. MacDill Air Force Base, FL: JSOU Press, 2020.
- Galula, David. *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006.
- Gauntt, Ryan, and Raiver Pitkve. “Expansion of Estonia’s Strategic Depth.” DA3610 Visual Analytics Course Project, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA., 2023.
- Global Forest Watch. “About Russian Forest.” Accessed February 5, 2023. <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/>.
- Grau, Lester W., and Charles K. Bartles. *The Russian Way of War: Force Structure, Tactics and Modernization of the Russian Ground Forces*. Fort Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, 2016.

- Gregor, Dusan. "David's Sling: Irregular Warfare as a Small State's Strategy Option." Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2020. <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/65533>.
- Guevara, Che. "Guerrilla Warfare," 1961. <https://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/slatta/hi216/documents/che.htm>.
- Haulman, Daniel L. "Weather in Air Campaigns, 1990–2003." Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Force Historical Research Agency, 2003. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA521389.pdf>.
- Heuser, Beatrice. "Small Wars in the Age of Clausewitz: The Watershed Between Partisan War and People's War." *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 1 (2010): 139–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402391003603623>.
- Kaitsejõudude Peastaap. *Vene Föderatsiooni Maavägede Lahingumäärustik. I Osa: Diviis, Brigaad, Polk*. Tallinn, Estonia: Kaitsejõudude Peastaap, 2001.
- Kiras, James D. "Irregular Warfare: Terrorism and Insurgency." In *Understanding Modern Warfare, Second revised edition.*, 186–207. Cambridge: University Press, 2007. [https://www.indianstrategicknowledgeonline.com/web/baylis3e\\_ch09.pdf](https://www.indianstrategicknowledgeonline.com/web/baylis3e_ch09.pdf).
- Kitzen, Martijn, and Marnix Provoost. "Don't Underestimate the Bear—Russia Is One of the World's Most Effective Modern Counterinsurgents." Modern War Institute, 2022. <https://mwi.usma.edu/dont-underestimate-the-bear-russia-is-one-of-the-worlds-most-effective-modern-counterinsurgents/>.
- Laqueur, Walter. *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical & Critical Study*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998.
- Lawrence, T. E. *The Evolution of a Revolt*. Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1990.
- Liddell Hart, Basil Henry. *Strategy. 2nd rev. ed.* New York: Meridian, 1991.
- Mack, Andrew. "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict." *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (1975): 175–200. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009880>.
- Mao, Zedong. *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare*. Translated by Samuel B. Griffith. Washington, DC: U.S. Marine Corps, 1989.
- Mckew, Molly K. "'They Will Die in Tallinn': Estonia Girds for War With Russia." *Politico Magazine*, 2018. [www.politico.com](http://www.politico.com).

- Merom, Gil. *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Mertelsmann, Olaf, and Aigi Rahi-Tamm. “Soviet Mass Violence in Estonia Revisited.” *Journal of Genocide Research* 11, no. 2–3 (2009): 307–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520903119001>.
- Mikael, Minberger S., and Svendsen O. Geir. “Irregular Warfare as a National Military Strategy Approach for Small States.” Master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2013. <https://hdl.handle.net/10945/38985>.
- Naji, Abu Bakr. *The Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass*. Translated by William Faizi McCants. Cambridge, MA: John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Harvard University, 2006.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. “Nato’s Military Presence in the East of the Alliance.” Accessed April 7, 2023. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_136388.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm).
- Paul, Christopher, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill, and Molly Dunigan. *Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013. [www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt5hhsjk](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt5hhsjk).
- Record, Jeffrey. *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win*. 1st ed. Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2007.
- Riigikogu. “National Security Concept of Estonia.” Riigi Teataja, February 22, 2023. [https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/eesti\\_julgeolekupoliitika\\_alused\\_eng\\_22.02.2023.pdf](https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/eesti_julgeolekupoliitika_alused_eng_22.02.2023.pdf).
- . “The Estonian Defence League Act.” Riigi Teataja, April 1, 2023. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/523032023006/consolide>.
- Savage, Patrick. “The Russian National Guard: An Asset for Putin at Home and Abroad.” *American Security Project*, 2017, 15. [www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19806](http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19806).
- Sawant, Mangesh. “Weather: The Only Constant in Warfare.” *Expeditions with MCUP*, no. 1 (2023): 1–29. [muse.jhu.edu](http://muse.jhu.edu).
- Sazonov, Vladimir, Erkki Koort, Priit Heinsoo, and Kadri Paas. *Sisejulgeoleku Hübriidohtude Tutvustamine*. Tallinn, Estonia: Sisekaitseakadeemia, 2020. [digiriil.sisekaitse.ee](http://digiriil.sisekaitse.ee).
- Shtromas, Alexander. “Prospects for Restoring the Baltic States’ Independence: A View on the Prerequisites and Possibilities of Their Realization.” *Journal of Baltic Studies* 17, no. 3 (1986): 256–79. Taylor & Francis.

- Sierra, Romeo. “Võitlusgrupid Vaenlase Tagalas.” *Kaitse Kodu!*, no. 7 (2019): 15–19. [issuu.com](#).
- Silm, Sander. “Võitlusgrupp – Vastasmeeskonna Vastik Vastane.” *Kaitse Kodu!*, no. Special edition (March 2023). [issuu.com](#).
- Siroky, David, and Valery Dzutsati. “The Empire Strikes Back: Ethnicity, Terrain, and Indiscriminate Violence in Counterinsurgencies\*.” *Social Science Quarterly* 96, no. 3 (2015): 807–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12192>.
- Smogorzewski, Maciej, Romuald Misiunas, Endel Aruja, James Bater, Arno Artur Kõörna, Aivars Stranga, and Vello Julius Tarmisto. “Estonia.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed April 21, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Estonia>.
- Sofer, Arnon. “Topographical and Territorial Considerations in International Relations in the 21st Century.” *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture*. 9, no. 4 (2002): 67. ProQuest.
- Special Operations Command Europe. “Resistance Operational Guidance (DRAFT).” Special Operations Command Europe, June 10, 2022.
- Statistics Estonia. “About Estonian Forests.” Statistics Estonia. Accessed February 5, 2023. <https://www.stat.ee/en/find-statistics/statistics-theme/environment/forest>.
- Strods, Heinrihs, and Matthew Kott. “The File on Operation ‘Priboi’: A Re-Assessment of the Mass Deportations of 1949.” *Journal of Baltic Studies* 33, no. 1 (2002): 1–36.
- Taber, Robert. *War of the Flea: The Classic Study of Guerrilla Warfare*. Washington, DC: Brassey’s, 2002.
- Thucydides. *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*. Edited by Robert B. Strassler and Richard Crawley. New York: Free Press, 1996.
- Tuunainen, Pasi. *Finnish Military Effectiveness in the Winter War 1939–1940*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- United States Army European Command Historical Division. *Combat in Russian Forests and Swamps: Historical Study*. Washington, DC: Dept. of the Army, 1951.
- United States Department of Defense. *Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review Report*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009.
- United States Dept. of the Army. *Terrain Factors in the Russian Campaign*. Washington, DC: Dept. of the Army, 1951.

- Urbano. *Fighting in the Streets: A Manual of Urban Guerrilla Warfare*. Miami, FL: J. Flores Publications, 1991.
- Vabariigi Valitsus. “National Defence Strategy Estonia.” Riigi Teataja, January 1, 2011. [https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/elfinder/article\\_files/national\\_defence\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/elfinder/article_files/national_defence_strategy.pdf).
- Wasielewski, Philip. “Russian Rear Area Operations and the Resistance Operating Concept.” *Small Wars Journal*, 2021. [smallwarsjournal.com](http://smallwarsjournal.com).
- Winters, Harold A. *Battling the Elements: Weather and Terrain in the Conduct of War*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- Young, Aaron M., and David H. Gray. “Insurgency, Guerilla Warfare and Terrorism: Conflict and Its Application for the Future.” *Global Security Studies* 2, no. 4 (2011). ResearchGate.net

## INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST

1. Defense Technical Information Center  
Ft. Belvoir, Virginia
2. Dudley Knox Library  
Naval Postgraduate School  
Monterey, California



## DUDLEY KNOX LIBRARY

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

[WWW.NPS.EDU](http://WWW.NPS.EDU)

---

WHERE SCIENCE MEETS THE ART OF WARFARE