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## RUSSIAN HYBRID WARFARE IN THE UKRAINE

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**JCSP 43 DL**

***Exercise Solo Flight***

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## RUSSIAN HYBRID WARFARE IN THE UKRAINE

### Introduction

The demise of the Soviet Union and the break up of the Soviet Socialist Republics led to the formation of many independent states. The polarization of the world into western and eastern spheres, Warsaw Pact and NATO dissolved. The globe entered an era of unipolar power with the United States as lead. The new Russian Federation, which had formed from the Russian dominated USSR, struggled for years with internal issues. Eventually it emerged not as a global superpower but as a global power nonetheless. The Russian Federation did not and could not hope to attain the economic, technological and military superiority of the United States.<sup>1</sup> Russia did, on the other hand, possess substantial energy resources in gas and oil as well as maintain its nuclear weapons capability.

Russia has been a world power for hundreds of years and has gained substantial experience in power politics. Russia has struggled historically from what it perceives as an encroachment from the West to subjugate Russia and impose a Western system of values.<sup>2</sup> This perception is not without merit, as witnessed by the French invasion of Russia in 1812, and France's spread eastwards of the new ideas of the revolution across Europe; German invasions in 1914 and 1941 with Imperialist and fascist overtones; and the Cold War struggles with its American capitalist ideal versus the Russian Socialist ideal. The threat has always come from the West.

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<sup>1</sup>Diego A. Palmer, *Back to the future? Russia's hybrid warfare, revolutions in military affairs, and Cold War comparisons*. Rome: Research Divison. NATO Defense College, 2015, 4.

<sup>2</sup>Tad A. Schnauffer, "Redefining Hybrid Warfare: Russia's Non-linear War against the West." *Journal of Strategic Security* 10, no. 1, 2016, 21.

The Russian Federation has created the need to form a buffer from the West's influence.<sup>3</sup> It could not hope to achieve this by traditional force of arms, as it does not possess the means.<sup>4</sup> The Euromaidan crisis in early 2014 in the Ukraine and the encroachment of the EU and NATO into the Ukraine presented an opportunity for Russia to reassert its influence westwards and to create the potential buffer that they wanted.<sup>5</sup> The security environment required a non-traditional approach. Developments in technology, in particular, information systems, offered the Russians an opening to use a hybrid warfare, characterized by a more asymmetric method by manipulating mass media and cyber systems to achieve their objectives. This hybrid method, in combination with other means, was used to destabilize the Ukrainian state and create the desired buffer. This paper will argue that the ongoing Ukrainian Conflict of 2014 was a masterful stroke by the Russian's in adopting a form of warfare that was ideal for the circumstances, and furthermore, one that exposed the West's total failure in identifying the threat and to support an ally that was attempting to defend itself. This essay will be broken into four main sections to prove the argument. The first will define hybrid warfare and examine the Russian hybrid warfare model. The second section will examine its implementation in the Ukraine. The third section will demonstrate how the Russian form of hybrid warfare was the perfect fit for the circumstances that existed in the Ukraine in the winter/spring of 2014. The final section will investigate the failure of the West to predict and subsequently to act in support of the Ukraine in its time of crisis. Consequently, it will conclude that the Russians were effectual in adapting to this form of warfare, hybrid warfare, in achieving their objectives in the Ukraine.

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<sup>3</sup>Julian Lindley-French, *NATO and new ways of warfare: defeating hybrid threats*. Rome: Research Division, NATO Defense College, 2015, 4.

<sup>4</sup>Tad A. Schnauffer, "Redefining Hybrid Warfare: Russia's Non-linear War against the West." *Journal of Strategic Security* 10, no. 1, 2016, 21.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 23.

## Hybrid Warfare and the Russian Hybrid Warfare Model

To begin, a definition of hybrid warfare is necessary and in particular Russian hybrid warfare. NATO generally defines hybrid warfare as the denial of and defection from standard norms and principles of international relations in the pursuit of narrow interests.<sup>6</sup> Hybrid warfare is strategic and uses an array of misinformation, destabilizing schemes and intimidation to force compliance on an opponent. Hybrid warfare aims to keep an adversary off balance politically, economically, and military.<sup>7</sup> The term has been used to describe non-state actors in conflict against militarily superior state adversaries but also has been used to describe Russian activities in the eastern Ukraine.<sup>8</sup> Russel W. Glenn defined hybrid warfare as:

“an adversary that simultaneously and adaptively employs some combination of (1) political, military, economic, social and information means, and (2) conventional, irregular, catastrophic, terrorism, and disruptive/criminal warfare methods. It may include a combination of state and non-state actors.”<sup>9</sup>

Lindley-French, in his article for the NATO Defence College, posits that: “hybrid warfare must not be only a strategy for weaker, illiberal powers to offset the military superiority of NATO members, but must be a generic form of warfare that aims to destabilize liberal states by attacking democratic societies.”<sup>10</sup> In this context, hybrid warfare can be seen operating across seven domains: air, land, sea, space, cyber, information and knowledge.<sup>11</sup> In 2015, NATO

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<sup>6</sup>Julian Lindley-French, *NATO and new ways of warfare: defeating hybrid threats*. Rome: Research Division, NATO Defense College, 2015, 1.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>8</sup>Laura M. Herta, "Russia's Hybrid Warfare. Why Narratives and Ideational Factors Play a Role in International Politics." *On-line Journal Modelling the New Europe, Issue 21*, 2016, 53.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>10</sup>Lindley-French, *NATO and new ways of warfare* . . . , 3.

<sup>11</sup> Julian Lindley-French, *NATO and new ways of warfare: defeating hybrid threats*. Rome: Research Division, NATO Defense College, 2015, 10.

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg clarified that “Hybrid is the dark reflection of our comprehensive approach. We use a combination of military and non-military means to stabilize countries. Others use it to destabilize them.”<sup>12</sup>

Hybrid warfare is not a Russian innovation, but Russia has developed a specific brand of hybrid warfare. Russian hybrid warfare gives it the strategic capacity to use hard and soft power to destabilize weaker neighbours, while using intimidation and deterrence, to immobilize distant but potentially more capable opponents.<sup>13</sup> In an article originally published on 27 February, 2013, General of the Army Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation Armed Forces postulates that the rules of war have changed, and that role of non-military means in achieving strategic goals has grown and in some case exceeds that of purely military means.<sup>14</sup> He also professes that the use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian and other non-military measures, used in concert with the protest potential of a population, has gained force in methods of conflict.<sup>15</sup> The inclination is distorting the lines between war and peace, including the abandonment of the old constraints, such as declarations of war, formal uniforms, diplomatic integrity, and military hierarchies. The use of conventional force is resorted to only in the final stages to achieve success. Political action decides the issue; military operations merely consummates the transaction. Frontal engagements are a thing of the past. Attack the enemy in depth, the principal means being contactless operations.<sup>16</sup> Gerasimov goes on to speak of asymmetrical actions such as the use of special forces, internal opposition

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<sup>12</sup>Vira Ratsiborynska, *When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology: Russia Today*. Rome: Research Division. NATO Defense College, 2016, 16.

<sup>13</sup>Diego A. Palmer, *Back to the future? Russia's hybrid warfare, revolutions in military affairs, and Cold War comparisons*. Rome: Research Division. NATO Defense College, 2015, 1.

<sup>14</sup>Valery Gerasimov, "The value of science is in the foresight: New challenges demand rethinking the forms and methods of carrying out combat operations." *Military Review* 96, no. 1, 2016, 24.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup>Valery Gerasimov, "The value of science is in the foresight: New challenges demand rethinking the forms and methods of carrying out combat operations." *Military Review* 96, no. 1, 2016, 24.

and informational operations throughout the enemy state.<sup>17</sup> Remarkably, he later speaks about an amendment to Russian Federal Law in 2009 that permits the operational use of Russian Forces outside of Russia and that the forms and means of their usage are not defined.<sup>18</sup> The approach to conflict that General Gerasimov publicly advocated was implemented less than a year following publication of his article. Given the clandestine nature of hybrid warfare, the actual start date for the Ukraine operation is unclear, however, by the winter of 2014 the situation in the Ukraine was rapidly deteriorating.

### **Hybrid Warfare in the Ukraine**

Events in the Ukraine in early 2014 unfolded slowly over months, as one would expect in a hybrid conflict. Generally, consisting of four phases varying in intensity, and from hidden to overt. The operations did not proceed in a linearly and would jump between phases based on requirement. The four phases are: Political Subversion, Proxy Sanctum, Intervention and Coercive Deterrence.<sup>19</sup> The chart below outlines details of each phase.

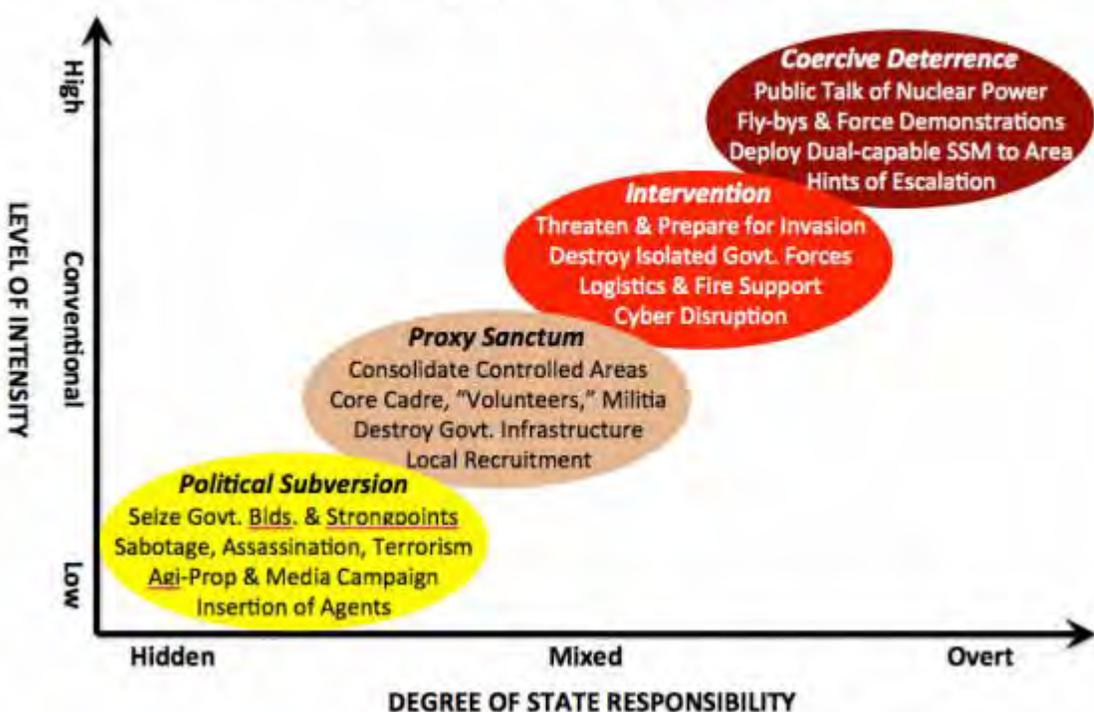
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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>19</sup> Bret Perry, "Non-Linear Warfare in Ukraine: The Critical Role of Information Operations and Special Operations." *Small Wars Journal*. 2015. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/non-linear-warfare-in-ukraine-the-critical-role-of-information-operations-and-special-opera> (accessed 05 01, 2018).

## Russian Style Hybrid Warfare in Ukraine



### *Karber Hybrid Warfare Framework*<sup>20</sup>

Political subversion via public protests in the Eastern Ukraine began in March 2014. These protests were ostensibly by Ukrainian citizens demonstrating their disfavor with the Ukrainian government but more in reality the protests were not legitimate and part of a Russian *Agit Prop* (agitation and propaganda) campaign sponsored by Moscow.<sup>21</sup> These protests were reinforced by Russian misinformation campaigns, *Maskirovka (deception)*, that promoted the perception that violence and oppression were being targeted at ethnic Russians in the region. The deception further reinforced the belief that the Ukrainian national movement activists were extremists,

<sup>20</sup> Phillip A. Karber, "Russian Style Hybrid Warfare," (Report prepared for Multi-polarity & Stability Workshop #5; McLean, VA: The Potomac Foundation, January 2015), 8.

<sup>21</sup> Diego A. Palmer, *Back to the future? Russia's hybrid warfare, revolutions in military affairs, and Cold War comparisons*. Rome: Research Division. NATO Defense College, 2015, 9.

terrorists, and fascists.<sup>22</sup> This misinformation, when combined with cyber-attacks that targeted Ukrainian government administration and communications, compromised the Ukrainian command and control network and made it difficult for the government to respond.<sup>23</sup> Insertion of special agents, Spetsnaz, trained and equipped to conduct special operations also occurred.<sup>24</sup> Further agitation and destabilization were caused by the firebombings of political offices, assassinations, abductions, and torture of government officials and police officers. Without any protection or action from the central government, these officials no longer did their jobs in fear for their safety.<sup>25</sup> Occupation of government administration buildings followed, in which the occupiers could act without any intervention by security forces. There was no push back by the government, and therefore resulted in more seizures. This penetration of the local security and government apparatus, and command structures paralyzed government at the local level further destabilizing the area.<sup>26</sup>

The next phase in operation, Proxy Sanctum could now begin. Local overtly armed militias formed from the disenfranchised population of the Ukraine's rust belt.<sup>27</sup> Those who occupied the government buildings could now form their own government in concert with the proxy forces and *volunteers* from Russia. Chechen *volunteers* loyal to Moscow were known to be present and could assist in upholding the loyalty of the local militias to Russia by direct means.<sup>28</sup> There was no direct action by the Ukrainian central government until May. By that time, the occupiers

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<sup>22</sup>Woo Pyung-Kyun, "The Russian Hybrid War in the Ukraine Crisis: Some Characteristics and Implications." *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. 27 no. 3, 2015, 387.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup>Diego A. Palmer, *Back to the future? Russia's hybrid warfare, revolutions in military affairs, and Cold War comparisons*. Rome: Research Divison. NATO Defense College, 2015, 9.

<sup>25</sup>Phillip A. Karber, *Russia's Hybrid War Campaign. Implications for the Ukraine and Beyond*. Leesburg, Virginia: The Potomac Foundation, 2015, 13.

<sup>26</sup>Vira Ratsiborynska, *When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology: Russia Today*. Rome: Research Division. NATO Defense College, 2016, 13.

<sup>27</sup>Karber, *Russia's Hybrid War Campaign. Implications for the Ukraine . . .*, 22.

<sup>28</sup>Phillip A. Karber, *Russia's Hybrid War Campaign. Implications for the Ukraine and Beyond*. Leesburg, Virginia: The Potomac Foundation, 2015, 19.

proclaimed the State of the Donetsk People's Republic and the State of the Luhansk People's Republic and had time to reorganize and receive the benefits of Russian support via finances, training, and equipment they needed to survive.<sup>29</sup> Purported humanitarian aid convoys from Russia entered the sovereign territory of the Ukraine without permission from the Ukrainian Government or the Red Cross suspected of carrying supplies, equipment, arms, and troops.<sup>30</sup> The Donetsk and Luhansk Republics are land locked and do not have the means to produce multiple types of ammunition yet appeared to have an abundance of all.<sup>31</sup> The Ukrainian army mobilized by May and after some initial success against the insurgents, was pushed back due to the direct action of covert Russian forces deployed to the Ukraine.<sup>32</sup> The conflict's front lines were fairly stabilized generally along the borders of the one-time Ukrainian provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk by September 2014 when the Minsk ceasefire agreement took place. There have been many ceasefires, and the conflict is by no means over. It continues in varying degrees to this day; however details of the continued conflict are beyond the scope of this paper. The application of Hybrid Warfare in this instance in the Eastern Ukraine was successful. The next section will examine why.

### **Hybrid Warfare: The Perfect Fit for the Eastern Ukraine**

Hybrid warfare attacks an opponent asymmetrically. For hybrid warfare to be effective, as General Gerasimov indicated, it must use political, economic, informational, humanitarian and other non-military measures (PMESII) in concert with the protest potential of a population to

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<sup>29</sup>Siim Nurk, *Russian Hybrid Warfare in the Ukraine*. Tallinn: Tallinn University of Technology, 2016, 37.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.* 37.

<sup>31</sup> Conversation with retired Canadian Major, Allan Woolley on 2018-May-12. Currently an OSCE Observer.

<sup>32</sup>Karber, *Russia's Hybrid War Campaign. Implications for the Ukraine . . .*, 44.

gain momentum. There is a need for enabling factors to assist the destabilizing effect. Hybrid warfare is not a strategy unto itself, merely an end to a means; an approach. An approach can only be successful if it matches the circumstances to each specific conflict.<sup>33</sup> Hybrid warfare cannot work everywhere, but in the Ukraine, it did. Russia was able to exploit weaknesses and to take advantage of the opportunity presented to them.

Politically, the Ukraine was undergoing turmoil in early 2014. There was schism in the country concerning whether obtaining gain closer ties with the West (EU, NATO) or to turning to the east and maintain historical ties with the east (Russia).<sup>34</sup> The Ukrainian leader, Yanukovich, had promised a union with the EU but then backed out, sparking the Euromaidan protests in Kiev that resulted in chaos and disorder in the capitol and ultimately, Yanukovich's removal from power early 2014.<sup>35</sup> A vast majority of the population in the Eastern Ukraine were ethnically Russian or pro-Russian.<sup>36</sup> Most Ukrainians spoke Ukrainian and Russian or both which made them readily susceptible to a multitude of different media and misinformation campaigns. Ethnically, the differences between Russians and Ukrainians are minimal. It is very effortless for a Russian to assimilate within the Ukrainian population. A protester can be a legitimate protester or very easily a Russian proxy, thereby adding to the confusion and instability.<sup>37</sup> The Eastern Ukraine shares a land border with Russia and is very isolated and distant from any potential support or observation from international organizations.<sup>38</sup> Verification of Russian involvement by the use or supply of weapons, communication equipment or other

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<sup>33</sup>Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, *Russia and Hybrid Warfare. Going beyond the Label*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2016, 3.

<sup>34</sup>Tad A. Schnauffer, "Redefining Hybrid Warfare: Russia's Non-linear War against the West." *Journal of Strategic Security* 10, no. 1, 2016, 23.

<sup>35</sup>Siim Nurk, *Russian Hybrid Warfare in the Ukraine*. Tallinn: Tallinn University of Technology, 2016, 19.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>37</sup>Tad A. Schnauffer, "Redefining Hybrid Warfare: Russia's Non-linear War against the West." *Journal of Strategic Security* 10, no. 1, 2016, 20.

<sup>38</sup>Diego A. Palmer, *Back to the future? Russia's hybrid warfare, revolutions in military affairs, and Cold War comparisons*. Rome: Research Divison. NATO Defense College, 2015, 1.

military supplies is very difficult as Russian and Ukrainian military equipment is mainly the same. In some instances, it is entirely possible that a Russian and Ukrainian soldier standing side by side without national insignia would be impossible to identify. The addition of multitudes of uniform types used by independent volunteers from both sides adds to misperceptions. The economies of both countries are tied together with a historical dependency of the Ukrainian economy on the Russian for raw materials and energy.<sup>39</sup> The Russians also used energy supply as a means to divide and weaken the EU.<sup>40</sup> An unusual set of circumstances existed in the Ukraine in 2014 for which the application of hybrid warfare was the perfect fit. Furthermore, the actions and inactions of the West complimented any enablers already present in the Ukraine.

### **The Failure of the West**

The Russian actions that resulted in the conflict in the Ukraine should have come as no surprise to the West, but they did. There were several events that the Russian's interpreted as provocation into their sphere of influence over many years. The Russians also sent out indications that they interpreted these actions as interference. These provocations and warnings went unheeded in the West. The result was the West's being taken entirely by surprise by the events in early 2014<sup>41</sup> and as a consequence the delayed reaction by the West made it look vulnerable and indecisive.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Siim Nurk, *Russian Hybrid Warfare in the Ukraine*. Tallinn: Tallinn University of Technology, 2016, 23.

<sup>40</sup>Vira Ratsiborynska, *When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology: Russia Today*. Rome: Research Division. NATO Defense College, 2016, 15.

<sup>41</sup>Bettina Renz, "Russia and 'hybrid warfare'." *Contemporary Politics*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 2016, 283.

<sup>42</sup>Vira Ratsiborynska, *When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology: Russia Today*. Rome: Research Division. NATO Defense College, 2016, 14.

The Russian's perceived NATO and EU enlargements as further examples westernization and thereby an existential threat that challenged their socio-political-economic systems<sup>43</sup> and as westernization and as an existential threat.<sup>44</sup> As early as 1995, Russian President Boris Yeltsin concerned with NATO bombings against Bosnian Serbs declared "This is the first sign of what could happen when NATO comes right up to the Russian Federation's borders.... The flame of war could burst out across the whole of Europe."<sup>45</sup> Russia interpreted the 2004-2005 Orange Revolution in the Ukraine as a form of American *democracy engineering* intended to overthrow pro-Russian politicians in the Ukraine.<sup>46</sup> The Russians denounced the 2010 Stuxnet virus as an act of war.<sup>47</sup> At the NATO-Russia Council in Bucharest in 2008 Putin made it clear in stating that "the presence of a powerful military bloc on our borders, whose members are guided, in particular, by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, will be seen by Russia as a direct threat to our country's security."<sup>48</sup> Putin went on to declare: "if Ukraine entered NATO, Russia would detach eastern Ukraine and graft them into Russia and, thus, Ukraine would cease to exist."<sup>49</sup> Is it fair to say that the West had fair warning? Furthermore, General Gerasimov essentially spelled out Russia's approach in any future conflict in a public document. Although he did not mention the Ukraine specifically, the warning signs were there, and there was an apparent failure in NATO and EU intelligence analysis. Putin's response should not have come as a shock.<sup>50</sup> The threat of

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<sup>43</sup>Hall Gardner, *Hybrid Warfare: Iranian and Russian Versions of "Little Green Men" and Contemporary Conflict*. Rome: Research Division, NATO Defense College, 2015, 4.

<sup>44</sup>Ratsiborynska, *When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology* . . . , 13.

<sup>45</sup>John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West Fault." *Foreign Affairs*. 08 18, 2014. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault> (accessed 05 01, 2018), 1.

<sup>46</sup>Gardner, *Hybrid Warfare: Iranian and Russian Versions* . . . , 9.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>48</sup>Ratsiborynska, *When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology* . . . , 13.

<sup>49</sup>Vira Ratsiborynska, *When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology: Russia Today*. Rome: Research Division. NATO Defense College, 2016, 14.

<sup>50</sup>John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West Fault." *Foreign Affairs*. 08 18, 2014. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault> (accessed 05 01, 2018), 1.

coercion and limited aggression had long been a factor for NATO having been addressed as early as NATO's Strategic concept of 1957.<sup>51</sup> It is interesting to note, the NATO's response to the Ukrainian Crisis was announced at the September 2014 Wales Summit,<sup>52</sup> by which time the crisis had already reached a stalemate, and the Russians had consolidated their limited objectives in the Ukraine, reestablished their sphere of influence and, created a buffer between Russia and the West.<sup>53</sup> Russia was forcing their will on a weaker nation-state because no credible force is intervening to stop their aggression.<sup>54</sup> American Army LTG Michael Williamson has stated that: "Russia's purported annexation the Crimea and invasion of the Ukraine demonstrated a sophisticated combination of diplomatic, informational, military, and economic means to achieve objectives below a threshold that the Russian leadership believe would elicit a concerted NATO response."<sup>55</sup>

The EU's reaction has also been almost non-existent. Germany, arguably the EU's hegemon, at first supported the pro-EU Maidan Protests, but when the crisis turned to direct conflict, Germany backed off in its support and urged Kiev to embrace compromise and to not re-occupy seized government buildings for fear of antagonizing anyone.<sup>56</sup> The mild Russian threats at cutting off energy supplies to Europe and the Russian nuclear posturing had the desired result. Principally, at a key juncture, under mild pressure, Germany succumbed to viewing the crisis as a civil war.<sup>57</sup> U.S. and European leaders failed in thinking that the Ukraine could move into the

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<sup>51</sup>Diego A. Palmer, *Back to the future? Russia's hybrid warfare, revolutions in military affairs, and Cold War comparisons*. Rome: Research Divison. NATO Defense College, 2015, 10.

<sup>52</sup>Julian Lindley-French, *NATO and new ways of warfare: defeating hybrid threats*. Rome: Research Division, NATO Defense College, 2015, 10.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>54</sup>Amos C. Fox and Andrew J. Rossow, "Assessing Russian Hybrid Warfare: A Successful Tool for Limited War." *Small Wars Journal*. August 9, 2016. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/assessing-russian-hybrid-warfare-a-successful-tool-for-limited-war> (accessed April 1, 2018), 1.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>56</sup>Klaus Bachman, "Why Germany Won't Lead the West." *New Eastern Europe*, No. 1, XV, 2015, 82.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 83.

Western sphere without a reaction by Russia.<sup>58</sup> The Europeans and the Americans were mistaken in the idea that geopolitics no longer mattered and that an all-inclusive liberal order could maintain peace in Europe.<sup>59</sup> As an example, the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, signed in 1994 by the Ukraine, Russia, United States, and the United Kingdom, made promises in regards to the denuclearization of former Soviet republics. The Ukraine promised to remove all Soviet-era nuclear weapons from its territory. The Ukraine kept its word. In return, Russia and the Western signatory countries broadly ensured the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine as an independent state.<sup>60</sup> Mainly, the West and Russia operated as opposites, Russia thought and acted according to realist dictates, while the West adhered to liberal ideas about international politics. The outcome is that the EU and NATO unknowingly provoked a major crisis over Ukraine.<sup>61</sup>

## Conclusion

In the Ukraine in early 2014, the Russians successfully adapted to using a new form of warfare, hybrid warfare, as previously prescribed by Russian General of the Army Valery Gerasimov. A form of warfare that parted ways with the old constraints of the rules of war and diplomatic integrity. Hybrid warfare used an asymmetric approach to warfare by employing disinformation, agitation, cyber, intimidation and other destabilizing ploys across the PMESII

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<sup>58</sup>John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West Fault." *Foreign Affairs*. 08 18, 2014. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault> (accessed 05 01, 2018), 1.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>60</sup>United Nations Security Council. "Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances." *Security Council Report*. December 19, 1994. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_1994\\_1399.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_1994_1399.pdf) (accessed 05 18, 2018).

<sup>61</sup>John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West Fault." *Foreign Affairs*. 08 18, 2014. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault> (accessed 05 01, 2018), 3.

spectrum to weaken and keep the Ukrainians and the West off-balance. Principally, the Russians used non-military means to weaken an opponent and achieve an advantage before engaging military forces.

Hybrid warfare was the perfect fit for Russian ambitions in the Eastern Ukraine. Many similarities between the two nations made the Ukraine easy pickings for the asymmetric hybrid approach. Shared language, religion, history, beliefs, and culture made it simpler to institute a campaign of misinformation via several media forms brought on by the computer age. A shared border made it easier for the entry of Special Forces, agitators, and supply. Similar equipment between the two nations simplified the Russian campaign of deception and denial.

The events of early 2014 in the Ukraine took Western scholars and diplomats by surprise. The West did not react to these security challenges and challenges to international law in a timely fashion.<sup>62</sup> The mixture of the EU and NATO forays into Ukrainian affairs and then timidity, when confronted by Russian realpolitik, would appear to have encouraged challenges and aggression on the part of Russia.<sup>63</sup>

The West did not want to get involved in what they perceived as an insurgency. So, the Russians made it look like one. It is in Russia's interests to keep the Ukraine dysfunctional and for Russia to maintain its aim of a buffer zone from the West. Hybrid warfare satisfied that interest and was a strategic weapon used by the Russians under favorable circumstances in the Ukraine to achieve limited goals whose attainment was facilitated by the failure of the West to prevent and react.

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<sup>62</sup>Hiski Haukkala, "A Perfect Storm; Or What Went Wrong and What Went Right for the EU in Ukraine." *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 68, No.4, June 2016, 653.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 662.

Russia's adoption and adaptation of hybrid warfare is an approach to modern conflict that has shaken off the previous pursuit of total war and unlimited objectives in favour of limited conflict and objectives to achieve national interests.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Amos C. Fox and Andrew J. Rossow, "Assessing Russian Hybrid Warfare: A Successful Tool for Limited War." *Small Wars Journal*. August 9, 2016. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/assessing-russian-hybrid-warfare-a-successful-tool-for-limited-war> (accessed April 1, 2018), 1.

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