

Canadian  
Forces  
College

Collège  
des  
Forces  
Canadiennes



## **RUSSIA IN UKRAINE AND SYRIA: PROVING GROUND FOR A REVITALIZED MILITARY**

**Major Gregory L. McCullough**

**JCSP 45**

**Solo Flight**

**Disclaimer**

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of National Defence, 2022

**PCEMI 45**

**Solo Flight**

**Avertissement**

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada, représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale, 2022

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 45 – PCEMI 45  
2018 – 2020

SOLO FLIGHT

**Russia in Ukraine and Syria: Proving Ground for a Revitalized Military**

**Major Gregory L. McCullough**

*“This paper was written by a student attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions, which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”*

*“La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale.”*

## **Russia in Ukraine and Syria: Proving Ground for a Revitalized Military**

Russia in the 1990s was a country in search of its identity. After the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 their economy unraveled, and along with it the military. The size of their armed forces shrank from five to one million personnel, and the budget went from \$246 billion in 1988 to \$14 billion in 1994<sup>1</sup>. Poor wages, decaying equipment, and the lack of a sense of purpose all degraded their ability to function effectively. Fighting in Chechnya and Georgia exposed the lack of combat readiness of the once vaunted Red Army, and was the catalyst for Vladimir Putin to massively increase military spending and reform the armed forces, beginning in 2008<sup>2</sup>. The result of this was that by 2014 Russia was once again capable of deterring others from attacking, defending itself, and projecting power throughout the world<sup>3</sup>.

In both Syria and Ukraine the Russian Federation has intervened in order to protect what it perceives as its own interests; in doing so they have been able to test not only conventional military tactics but as well have used information operations on a war footing in a way that few other countries have been able to. Much like the Germans supporting Franco in the 1930's Spanish Civil War both theatres have served as a proving ground for Russian forces and as an international display that the Russian Federation will act to preserve what it perceives to be its own interests regardless of world opinion.

---

<sup>1</sup> Dmitri Trenin, "The Revival of the Russian Military- How Moscow Reloaded", *Foreign Affairs*. Volume 95 no 3 (May/June 2016), 23.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 24.

Rarely does anything in the world happen without precursors. Events that shape nations have their roots in history, the actions of different global factions, and the reaction to perceived issues or threats. To understand the Russian psyche entirely is beyond the scope of this essay. However, at the very least we need to understand the perspective of Russia. As part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) they were a key player in defeating the Axis powers in World War Two. They lead the Warsaw Pact until 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell and ultimately the USSR dissolved. Until that point they were a superpower on par with the United States. Russia assumed the mantle of this history, as they had been the dominant ‘socialist republic’. The West felt they were vindicated in their ideological victory, but the Russians never saw themselves as defeated<sup>4</sup>.

In a 2007 speech Vladimir Putin warned of the dangers of a unipolar world and spoke of strategic problems, including the expansion of NATO. His view was that the West was using democratic ideals to advance its strategic interests<sup>5</sup>. The West for its part ignored these concerns and expanded NATO eastward into countries which Russia considered its own sphere of influence. The Russian reaction in particular has been to resist this- which in part was the undoing of the Ukraine, and a reason to intervene in Syria<sup>6</sup>. “Resistance to Western liberalism” defines Putin’s vision of sovereignty, and Western powers have misjudged his resolve in the face

---

<sup>4</sup> Richard Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands* (London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 2015), 10.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 44.

<sup>6</sup> Andrea Kendall-Taylor and David Schullman, ‘How Russia and China Undermine Democracy’, *Foreign Affairs*, 2 October 2018, last viewed 20 May 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2018-10-02/how-russia-and-china-undermine-democracy>.

of sanctions<sup>7</sup>. The new role of NATO became the containment of Russia, something resented by a nation that still saw themselves as a great power of the world<sup>8</sup>. Russian fears of having regime change forced upon them was exacerbated by the weak economic conditions of the 1990s, and they moved to stabilize their nation economically and politically, even as Ukraine continued to endure “sociological upheaval”<sup>9</sup>. To some degree NATO countries share blame in shaping conditions for intervention- “when calls for reason proved powerless to stop NATO’s expansion, Russia halted it instead with an iron fist”<sup>10</sup>.

In the case of the Ukraine the shared history of the two countries in many ways set the conditions for the annexation of Crimea and both tacit and overt support for what has become a prolonged civil war in the Donbass region. Crimea has historically been Russian territory since Catherine the Great captured the area from the Ottoman Empire in 1783. It was only turned over to the Ukrainian SSR in 1954 by Khrushchev, when both countries were part of the USSR and the redistribution had fewer obvious effects on the Russian speaking area<sup>11</sup>. The Russian Black Sea fleet is based out of Sevastopol, and is the only warm water port available. In the end, concerns about the Ukraine joining NATO and the potential loss of the naval base were two main factors in seizing Crimea<sup>12</sup>.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ivan Krastev and Mark Leonard, ‘Europe’s Shattered Dream of Order’, *Foreign Affairs* Vol 94 No 3 (May/June 2015), p53.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>11</sup> Rajan Menon and Eugene Rumer, *Conflict in Ukraine* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), 6.

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Treisman, “Why Putin Took Crimea”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 65, No 3 (May/June 2016), 47.

Both the annexation of Crimea and the fighting in Donbass can be seen as a classic case of hybrid warfare. Economic pressure, the stirring up of political and social conflict, and information operations all formed part of these campaigns<sup>13</sup>. Although Russia had invasion plans for the Ukraine the use of hybrid warfare was thought to be less costly, and have fewer international consequences than a full-scale invasion<sup>14</sup>. However, the collapse of the Ukrainian parliament probably sped along these plans, and on 23 February 2014 Putin ordered Russian forces into Crimea, marking a ‘watershed in Russian foreign policy’<sup>15</sup>



**Figure 1.1**  
Ukrainian provinces.

16

<sup>13</sup> Yury E. Fedorov, “Russia’s ‘Hybrid’ Aggression against Ukraine”, *Routledge Handbook of Russian Security*, 4 February 2019, last accessed 26 April 2020, <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351181242-38>, 388.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 390.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Sakwa, *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands* (London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 2015), 124.

<sup>16</sup> Source: Rajan Menon and Eugene Rumer, *Conflict in Ukraine* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), 6.

If we consider that hybrid warfare is a strategy, as opposed to a new form of warfare, the process of annexation used the different instruments of state power to achieve what was essential a foreign policy goal<sup>17</sup>. Supported by the Kremlin, pro-Russian elements from within Crimea staged protests and formed ‘self-protection’ militias who were responsible for protests against Ukrainian rule. This is an evolution from the strategy in both Chechnya and Georgia, where the massive deployment of troops led to considerable international backlash, and the complete destruction of Grozny with massive civilian casualties.

It is difficult to trace the roots of the information campaign in the Ukraine, with precursors to the campaigns having this take place against the larger problems of the Ukrainian government. What is clear is that inherent political instability, along with associated corruption, made for a fertile place in which to sow discontent among areas in the east and south of the country, where Russian speakers were a large part of the population. Moscow created political pressure through the creation of “agents of influence” within the military, political and business communities in Ukraine<sup>18</sup>. By mobilizing the local population, the Kremlin could thus disguise its efforts and diffuse any Western response to subsequent military action<sup>19</sup>. In terms of tactics two campaigns are closely linked. Both had a long-standing information campaign by Russian media casting the Kyiv government in a negative light to gain domestic support for Russian

---

<sup>17</sup> Alexander Lanozka, “Russian Hybrid Warfare and Extended Deterrence in Eastern Europe”. *International Affairs*. Vol 192, issue 1 (January 2016), 178.

<sup>18</sup> Yury E. Fedorov, “Russia’s ‘Hybrid’ Aggression against Ukraine”, *Routledge Handbook of Russian Security*, 4 February 2019, last accessed 26 April 2020, <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351181242>, 389.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 389.

speaking separatists, and instill a feeling of patriotism related to this issue<sup>20</sup>. When the decision was made to seize the Crimea there was a lot of local support for this. Encouraged by the Kremlin, pro-Russian groups held massive rallies and formed armed groups that agitated for Russian intervention<sup>21</sup>. Amidst this instability the Russian naval base at Sevastopol, which had 20,000 troops, on 24 February took over key installations and locations throughout the region. The appearance of the ‘little green men’ at this stage helped to tip the scale in favour of Russian victory- while at the same time giving the Kremlin plausible deniability about the origin of the soldiers, who wore no insignia<sup>22</sup>. By 27 February *Spetsnaz* seized the Crimean parliament buildings, and the region was effectively Russian<sup>23</sup>.

As this campaign continued recruitment of ‘mercenaries and volunteers’ began, focussing on those with previous military experience, to serve elsewhere in Ukraine. Following the same pattern as in Crimea there was public disorder, anti-government rallies and clashes with police. This was guided by Russian military intelligence (GRU)<sup>24</sup>. Local separatists then seized power

---

<sup>20</sup> Rajan Menon and Eugene Rumer, *Conflict in Ukraine* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), 80.

<sup>21</sup> Yury E. Fedorov, “Russia’s ‘Hybrid’ Aggression against Ukraine”, *Routledge Handbook of Russian Security*, 4 February 2019, last accessed 26 April 2020, <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351181242>, 392.

<sup>22</sup> Vladimir Putin eventually admitted that they were Russian soldiers. *Richard Sakwa, Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands* (London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 2015), 174.

<sup>23</sup> John Simpson, “Russia’s Crimea plan detailed, secret and successful”, *BBC News*, 19 March 2014, last viewed 21 May 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26644082>.

<sup>24</sup> Yury E. Fedorov, “Russia’s ‘Hybrid’ Aggression against Ukraine”, *Routledge Handbook of Russian Security*, 4 February 2019, last accessed 26 April 2020, <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351181242>, 393.



and proclaimed the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics. To the outside world this helped portray the fight as a civil war in which the local citizenry had risen up against an oppressor<sup>25</sup>.

In the Ukrainian campaigns Russia applied lessons learned about the effectiveness of hybrid warfare. Overwhelming force could have easily been used to occupy the Crimea, and arguably would have been successful in overrunning the eastern areas of Ukraine before anyone could respond. Previous experience with fighting in Chechnya and Georgia no doubt made them wary of getting involved in campaigns which might be drawn out and result in large numbers of casualties which would make the fighting unpopular.

The fighting in Ukraine in 2014 was the testing ground for a new way of conducting warfare for Russia. Previously tactics reflected massive use of force using conventional forces. This failed in Afghanistan, and succeeded in the other two areas primarily because of overwhelming use of force in a relatively small area. But public opinion in Russia- particularly in Chechnya- focussed on the brutal way in which the war was fought, and the large number of casualties sustained. The conflict destroyed the city of Grozny, and allegations of war crimes were frequently raised as the war raged on for years (1994-1996; 1999-2006)<sup>26</sup>.

A determination not to repeat the same mistakes resulted in a revision of Russian military doctrine which redefined the relationship between the military and non-military parts of warfare. Formerly the war effort had been focused on military projection of force, with other efforts

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 394.

<sup>26</sup> Andrew Higgins, "The War That Continues to Shape Russia, 25 years on" *New York Times*, 10 December 2019, last viewed 23 May 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/10/world/europe/photos-chechen-war-russia.html>.

subordinate to this<sup>27</sup>. Operational Art in Russia has shifted to use the “full gamut of the state’s means of leverage to achieve an desired end state”<sup>28</sup>. This has been a major change in thinking, and reflects studies of the Western experience in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Russian theorists saw information operations as key to success, and observed that Western powers used diplomatic means as a primary means to prevent further uses of force in conflict. The changes in doctrine that were implemented in 2014<sup>29</sup>.

The application of this theory was first put into practice shortly after being adopted, although it is doubtful this was meant to be put to the test so quickly. However, the conditions in Ukraine made this an environment which was conducive to the use of the Russian version of asymmetric conflict. The use of information operations was already underway, used to influence both domestic and foreign opinions. It met with Kremlin goals of not allowing the Ukraine to become part of NATO, or be influenced too heavily by western liberalism. The Russian speaking majority in both Crimea and Donbass easily influenced the narrative that the Ukrainian government was oppressing people who wanted to be part of Russia, and fell within a sphere of influence that the West could not easily intervene in<sup>30</sup>. In Crimea the population was predominantly Russian, historically Russian, and there was a large military presence there,

---

<sup>27</sup> Charles K Bartles, “Russia’s Indirect and Asymmetric Methods as a response to the New Western Way of War”. *Special Operations Journal*. Vol 2, no 1 (2016), 2.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Yury E. Fedorov, “Russian ‘Hybrid’ Aggression Against Ukraine”. *Routledge Handbook of Russian Security*. 4 February 2019, last accessed 26 April 2020, <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351181242-38>.

supplemented by a sizable number of retired military personnel who could be expected to support a popular show of support for annexation<sup>31</sup>.

The Russian approach was built upon already existing conditions. Information operations were already in effect to discredit the Ukrainian government, and bolstered by pro-Russian separatists in the east and south of that country. The results were mixed- a near total success in Crimea, where by 16 March a referendum on secession from Ukraine was complete, quickly followed by annexation to the Russian Federation. Eastern Ukraine, despite similar support for the uprising in Donbass, settled into a stalemate in which neither side is likely to gain an outright victory, but neither (barring outright Russian intervention) is strong enough to win. But even this is in a sense a Russian victory and has achieved what it set out to do. The narrative of it being an internal matter of the Ukraine (with deniability of Russian forces fighting there) has blunted any desire of the international community to actively intervene. Ukraine is mired in a conflict which has further weakened it economically, talk of admission to NATO is gone, and Putin has largely been successful in portraying himself as a strong leader of the Russian people with relatively little loss of life. From a lessons learned perspective their military has gained valuable experience in hybrid operations.

Directly following the Russian experience in Ukraine has been their intervention in Syria. As with Ukraine this conflict has given Putin the chance to reassert great power status for the Kremlin. The war in Syria has had implications for Russian security, given the influence of Islam in the southern areas, and previous issues with ideologically motivated fighters coming to

---

<sup>31</sup> Alexander Lanoszka, "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Extended Deterrence in Eastern Europe", *International Affairs*, Vol 92, No 1 (2016), 188-189.

Chechnya to engage in *jihad*. Looking at the options- support to fractured rebel groups, and continued instability in the region or Assad- the choice was relatively easy.

Russia's desire to regain their status as a great power has been enhanced by their involvement in the Syrian civil war. It was Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov who was instrumental in negotiating with Assad for the surrender of chemical weapons after the use of sarin gas in Damascus enraged the world, negating the threat of American air strikes on government forces there<sup>32</sup>. By the spring of 2015 Assad's forces were clearly losing. A string of defeats had resulted in the loss of Ildib, and the armed forces had dropped in strength from 250,000 to 125,000. Millions of Syrians were either refugees or displaced persons, and the economy had collapsed<sup>33</sup>. The conflict had hundreds of rebel groups, as opposed to each other as they were the Assad government. The United States showed little interest in getting involved beyond the provision of weapons to the Syrian Free Army and other groups it felt were moderate.

In June of 2015 Putin announced his support for the Assad regime. The publicly declared focus was to be the fight against Islamic terrorism- something that, given previous battles in Afghanistan and Chechnya, might well have been part of the issue. However, this support also was in order to ensure that the Kremlin did not lose a key ally in the region<sup>34</sup>. Russia's build-up of military forces in Syria represented the largest deployment outside of the former Soviet Union

---

<sup>32</sup> David S. Sorenson, *Syria in Ruins*, (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2016), 57.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, 59.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 132.

since the end of the Cold War<sup>35</sup>. The weaponry deployed included attack helicopters, fighters, tanks and SA 22 missile batteries, based out of Latakia. Their contribution has bought them a voice in the Middle East, as well as a forward operating base in Syria. As with Crimea and Donbass, Putin got involved because it suited the interests of the Russian Federation.

In pursuing the model of hybrid warfare in *Russkiy Mir* (“Russian world”) the Kremlin had direct goals and reasons to involve themselves in Ukraine. With Syria the goals are less directly related to their own backyard, and more about projecting Russian influence on the world stage- reasserting their dominance to a country that sees its rightful place in the world as a great power. In a sense this is “state branding”; projecting an image of a peer to NATO and the United States<sup>36</sup>. In the case of Syria this power projection harkens back to the long association between them and the USSR, from which most Syrian weapons systems were obtained. Moscow is using these ties to solidify its position in the Middle East, and re-establish links there which were suspended after the end of the Cold War. This has made Russia the regional power broker in Syria, influencing other state actors such as Iran, Turkey, and even Israel. The coordination of state power with that of the military is in many ways unprecedented, and is as a result of lessons learned from Western powers, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq<sup>37</sup>.

---

<sup>35</sup> Jefferey A. Stacey, “Undeterred in Syria” *Foreign Affairs*, 2 October 2015, last viewed 22 May 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2015-10-02/undeterred-syria>.

<sup>36</sup> Michael Cecire, “Russia’s Art of War”, *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2020), 7 February 2017, last viewed 24 May 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2017-02-07/russias-art-war>.

<sup>37</sup> Charles K. Bartles, ““Russia’s Indirect and Asymmetric Methods as a response to the New Western Way of War””. *Special Operations Journal*. Vol 2, no 1 (2016):1-11.

Second to this has been the testing of Russian military capabilities, to a degree which was not possible in the Ukraine. Syria has turned into a proving ground for their equipment and leaders, gaining valuable combat experience in a modern environment<sup>38</sup>. This has led to improvements in tactics, techniques and procedures, especially with regard to the coordination of land and air forces (sea power has been relegated to the launching of cruise missiles and the short lived use of an aircraft carrier). Coordination of the two branches has allowed the Russian Armed Forces to address deficiencies which have existed for years. This has improved their capabilities in a similar fashion to how the Germans operated during the Spanish Civil War- allowing them to blood their troops, test new ideas and equipment, and demonstrate this on the worlds stage while not affecting vital strategic interests<sup>39</sup>. In the end “Moscow’s campaign in Syria affords the Kremlin invaluable combat experience that is helping it to refine the capabilities of its military forces”<sup>40</sup>.

The T-90 tank is one example of how Russian military technology has been battle tested by this conflict. The Syrian Army suffered significant armoured equipment losses to TOW and ATGM missile systems (some supplied by the United States), and was badly under-strength. T-90s supplied by Russia were first used in Aleppo in 2015 by the Syrian Army, and used in coordinated attacks with infantry in 2016<sup>41</sup>. The T-90 proved capable against both TOW and

---

<sup>38</sup> David Majumdar, “How The Russian Military Turned War-Torn Syria into a Testing Playground, 31 July 2018, last viewed 24 May 2020, <https://taskandpurpose.com/analysis/russian-military-syria-weapons-testing>.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Gabriel White & William McHenry, “An Early Operational Analysis of Russian-Supplied T-90s in Syria”. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*. Vol 33 no 1 (2020): 1-21.

ATGM systems, although the *Javelin* does not appear to have been extensively used. This has had the follow-on effect of arms sales of a now proven main battle tank- Iran, Vietnam and even Iraq are some of the purchasers of this equipment<sup>42</sup>. The economic benefit of this to a Russia beset with international sanctions has proved another benefit of fighting in Syria. It also has enabled Russia to establish closer military ties with these countries, and also look to places such as India and Pakistan for future sales. For many countries purchasing from Russia comes with fewer restrictions than that of western nations. In achieving this Putin has created a space for investment in Middle East arms deals, increasing influence in that region of the world.

Another weapons system trialed in Syria has been the SU 57 stealth fighter, comparable in capability to the F22 raptor, but still being fully developed<sup>43</sup>. There is less information on the extent of their involvement in specific battles. As with the T90 this campaign allows for combat testing of equipment, exposure of this on the world stage for potential sales, and the ability of Russia to give its pilots combat experience. This experience is not limited to cutting edge technology, however as Russian air strikes with other fighter types as well as helicopters have been a decisive weapon in turning the tide of war in Assad's favour while at the same time not risking the casualties that a large deployment of ground forces might bring. The use of air power has however raised concerns over the alleged targeting of civilians.

During the 1990s the Russian military suffered from corruption, low pay, and the degradation of combat capabilities as they went through severe economic problems following the disintegration of the USSR. Both Chechnya and the short war in Georgia revealed shortcomings

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Andrew Roth, "New Russian stealth fighter spotted in Syria", *The Guardian*, 22 February 2018, last viewed 24 May 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/22/new-russian-stealth-fighter-spotted-in-syria>.

in equipment, tactics and leadership. These needed to be corrected to have a credible military which could project Russian power on the world stage and bring back the desired state of being a peer competitor with the US and NATO. The Kremlin has used both theatres as a proving ground for both tactics and equipment. In doing so it has reasserted itself as a global player, and set out a clear message that the Russian Federation will act decisively to protect its own interests in the world.



## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Adamsky, Dmitry. "Putin's Syria Strategy". *Foreign Affairs*. 1 October 2015, last accessed 23 May 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2015-10-01/putins-syria-strategy>.
- Adamsky, Dmitry. "Russian Campaign in Syria- Change and Continuity in Strategic Culture". *Journal of Strategic Studies*. Vol 43, no 1 (2019): 104-125.
- Anderson, R. Reed *et al.* *Resurgent Russia: An Operational Approach to Deterrence*. New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2017.
- Bartles, Charles K. "Russia's Indirect and Asymmetric Methods as a response to the New Western Way of War". *Special Operations Journal*. Vol 2, no 1 (2016):1-11.
- Cecire, Michael. "Russia's Art of War". *Foreign Affairs*. 7 February 2017, last accessed 24 May 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2017-02-07/russias-art-war>.
- Charap, Samuel. "Russia, Syria, and the Doctrine of Intervention" *Survival*. Vol 55 no 1 (2013): 35-41.
- Editor. "Chapter Five: Russia and Eurasia" *The Military Balance*. Vol 120 (2020): 166-219.
- Federov, Yury E. "Russian 'Hybrid' Aggression Against Ukraine". *Routledge Handbook of Russian Security*. 4 February 2019, last accessed 26 April 2020, <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351181242-38>.
- Higgins, Andrew. "The War That Continues to Shape Russia, 25 years on" *New York Times*, 10 December 2019, last viewed 23 May 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/10/world/europe/photos-chechen-war-russia.html>.
- Hughes, Geraint Alun. "Syria and the Perils of Proxy War". *Small Wars and Insurgencies*. Vol 25:3 (2014): 522-538.
- Krastev, Ivan and Mark Leonard. 'Europe's Shattered Dream of Order'. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 94 No 3 (May/June 2015): 48-58.
- Lanoszka, Alexander. "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Extended Deterrence in Eastern Europe". *International Affairs*. Vol 192, issue 1 (January 2016): 175-195.
- Lukyanov, Fyodor. "Putin's Foreign Policy". *Foreign Affairs*. Vol 95, no 3 (May/June 2016): 30-17.

- Majumdar, Dave. "How The Russian Military Turned War-Torn Syria into a Testing Playground", *Task and Purpose*, 31 July 2018, last accessed 24 May 2020, <https://taskandpurpose.com/analysis/russian-military-syria-weapons-testing>.
- Menon, Rajan and Eugene Rumer. *Conflict in Ukraine*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015.
- Phillips, Christopher. *The Battle for Syria : International Rivalry in the New Middle East*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Roth, Andrew. "New Russian stealth fighter spotted in Syria". *The Guardian*. 22 February 2018, last accessed 24 May 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/22/new-russian-stealth-fighter-spotted-in-syria>.
- Sakwa, Richard. *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands*. London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 2015.
- Sorenson, Dave. *Syria in Ruins*. Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2016
- Stacey, Jeffery A. "Undeterred in Syria" *Foreign Affairs*, 2 October 2015, last viewed 22 May 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2015-10-02/undeterred-syria>.
- Stent, Angela. "Putin's Power Play in Syria". *Foreign Affairs*. Vol 95, No 1 (January/February 2016): 106-113.
- Trenin, Dmitri. "The Revival of the Russian Military- How Moscow Reloaded". *Foreign Affairs*. Volume 95 no 3 (May/June 2016): 23-29.
- White, Gabriel and McHenry, William. "An Early Operational Analysis of Russian-Supplied T-90s in Syria". *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*. Vol 33 no 1 (2020): 1-21.