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### How to Beat Russia: An Analysis of Hybrid Warfare throughout History and the lessons it presents for the NATO Alliance Today

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Much has been made recently of Russia's use of so called "Hybrid Warfare"<sup>1</sup>, although there is no agreed definition<sup>2</sup> this is broadly seen as the covert deployment of state resources to undermine another state. There has been much debate around the need for NATO to develop techniques to counter this specific

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<sup>1</sup> Parameswaran, P. (February 13, 2015). "Are We Prepared for 'Hybrid Warfare'?": From Russia in Ukraine to China in the East China Sea, it is worth assessing how the world may respond." Retrieved May, 2015, from <http://thediplomat.com/2015/02/are-we-prepared-for-hybrid-warfare/>.

<sup>2</sup> HOFFMAN, F. G. (October 2009). "Hybrid vs. compound war." *Armed Forces Journal*(Military Strategy, Global Defense Strategy): p1.

form of warfare<sup>3</sup>. However the question arises how new “Hybrid Warfare” really is and, if nations have combated it in the past, can those same techniques still be used in the current environment? Inevitably due to the limited nature of this thesis it is not possible to exhaustively cover every element of “Hybrid Warfare” throughout history. However by focusing specifically on a small number of key case studies this thesis will aim to offer a reasonably robust analysis of the historical nature of hybrid warfare. Specifically this thesis will look at: Hybrid Warfare in the Ancient World, Warfare in the Napoleonic Era and the German use of Hybrid Warfare during World War Two, followed by discussing the extent to which most conventional campaigns are preceded with an asymmetrical or hybrid component, before concluding with an evaluation of warfare in the age of nuclear weapons. In sum although this thesis addresses each specific area individually, as an overarching argument this thesis would argue that “Hybrid Warfare” is not a new phenomenon, indeed variations of attempts to circumvent another party’s strength and exploit their weaknesses have been used in almost every military campaign and contest throughout history. The idea of utilising the asymmetrical is an essential part of warfare and Hybrid Warfare is in effect a continuation of this process. The way to combat Hybrid Warfare is therefore not to descend to the level of the opposite party, it is instead to focus upon those areas in which the other party has no possibility of triumphing. For the NATO Alliance this means focusing on its core values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law whilst concurrently retaining sufficient forces, both hybrid and conventional, to prevent other nations undermining these values through the use of force.

The concept that Hybrid Warfare is almost as old as humanity may seem initially of dubious validity. However the idea of using an enemy’s strength against them, and fighting in an asymmetrical manner to exploit the enemy’s weakness is at least Biblical. In the battle between David and Goliath it was David’s use of non-conventional tactics which won the day<sup>4</sup> and more than that, the very nature of a fight between Champions was a method of undermining the opponent army’s will to fight, without risking large numbers of conventional troops<sup>5</sup>. Indeed Sun Tzu himself stated: “Attack

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<sup>3</sup> Review, N. (2015). "Hybrid war – does it even exist?" Retrieved May, 2015, from <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2015/Also-in-2015/hybrid-modern-future-warfare-russia-ukraine/EN/>.

<sup>4</sup> (NIV), B. N. I. V. (2015). "1 Samuel 17 Paragraph 48." Retrieved May, 2015, from <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17>.

<sup>5</sup> (NIV), B. N. I. V. (2015). "1 Samuel 17 Paragraph 51." Retrieved May, 2015, from <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+17>.

[an enemy] where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected.”<sup>6</sup> And “the skilful leader subdues the enemy's troops without any fighting; he captures their cities without laying siege to them; he overthrows their kingdom without lengthy operations in the field.”<sup>7</sup> Even in 500BC it was recognised that conventional campaigns were fraught with risk and “to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.”<sup>8</sup> An early reflection of Clausewitz’s dictum that war is the realm of chance<sup>9</sup>. Potentially the greatest example of Hybrid Warfare in the Ancient World is Rome’s campaign against Carthage in the Second Punic War of 218 to 201 BC<sup>10</sup>. Conventionally Rome was totally defeated during the battle of Cannae<sup>11</sup> with the largest loss of life in any single battle until Waterloo in 1815<sup>12</sup> however the refusal to surrender and the adoption of the Fabian strategy<sup>13</sup> was in effect an awareness of the multifaceted nature of warfare outside of the sole determinant of the battlefield, and a precursor to concepts of Total War<sup>14</sup>. Rome itself would go on to use tactics of Hybrid Warfare at numerous points throughout the empire’s history, particularly in the enforced creation of Protectorates and Client States<sup>15</sup>, but also in situations such as found on Hadrian’s Wall. Where combinations of bribes, tactical alliances and military force were used to disrupt the Scottish tribes beyond the wall and prevent them unifying into a single threat<sup>16</sup>. Much the same tactics as adopted by the Chinese under “i chi i”<sup>17</sup> in relation to the Mongol Tribes before Genghis Kahn’s unifying efforts. Indeed warfare in the Ancient World is littered with usage of Hybrid Warfare, Persia under Darius and Xerxes was famed for playing the Greek city states off against each other through bribery, diplomatic persuasion and outright threats<sup>18</sup>. Whilst Alexander the Great, although ultimately forced to defeat the adjacent Greek States conventionally, benefited greatly from the widespread argument

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<sup>6</sup> Tzu, S. (18 Feb 2013 ). The Art of War. New York, Start Publishing LLC.p4

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p10

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p9

<sup>9</sup> Clausewitz, C. v. (2008). On War. Radford, Wilder Publications. p40

<sup>10</sup> Hoyos, B. D. (1997). Unplanned Wars: The Origins of the First and Second Punic Wars. Berlin, Walter de Gruyter. pp1-5

<sup>11</sup> Daly, G. (2005). Cannae: The Experience of Battle in the Second Punic War. London, Routledge. viii

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. viii

<sup>13</sup> Fronda, M. P. (2010 ). Between Rome and Carthage: Southern Italy during the Second Punic War Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Pp40-41

<sup>14</sup> Phifer, M. (2012). A Handbook of Military Strategy and Tactics. New Delhi, Vij Books India pp121-122

<sup>15</sup> Homo, L. (2013). Roman Political Institutions. London, Routledge. Book 4 Section 2 Subsection 3

<sup>16</sup> Collins, R. (2012). Hadrian's Wall and the End of Empire: The Roman Frontier in the 4th and 5th Centuries. London, Routledge. p4

<sup>17</sup> Bartlett, W. B. (2012). The Mongols: From Genghis Khan to Tamerlane. Stroud, Gloucestershire, Amberley Publishing Limited. Chapter 2

<sup>18</sup> Holland, T. (2011). Persian Fire: The First World Empire, Battle for the West London, Hachette.

of the time that the Greek should stop fighting each other and unify to fight the threat of Persia<sup>19</sup>. Similarly on the other side of the world in China during the Warring States Period warfare was not contained solely to the battlefield with rulers enacting policies, such as the Qin encouraging migration from adjacent states, to weaken neighbouring states whilst increasing the population of the Qin<sup>20</sup>.

This idea of utilising the asymmetrical can be found even before the Napoleonic Wars during the American War of Independence, not only with the US use of Guerrilla forces<sup>21</sup> and privateers, to combat a more powerful British opponent<sup>22</sup>; but also in the wider sense as a method of other countries, particularly France and Spain, advancing their interest against the British through supporting a third non-nation-state actor, the US<sup>23</sup>. What is particularly interesting from this case study, and indeed which can apply to the majority of the studies this thesis touches upon, is that the US War of Independence also highlighted the limitation of asymmetrical warfare. George Washington's ultimately successful goal was always to create a conventional military force, the Continental Army, based upon European lines, and which could defeat the British on the Battlefield and force a National capitulation<sup>24</sup> as it subsequently did during the siege of Yorktown<sup>25</sup>. Indeed where the US relied too heavily on solely militia and state forces to fight against British Regulars, it suffered some of its most significant defeats of the conflict<sup>26</sup>. This concept of the irregular vs regular can be further found during the Napoleonic Period; on the one hand you have few irregular forces, with the vast majority of national combatants adopted into National Armies - along the lines of France's Levee en Masse<sup>27</sup>. On the other these very forces were so divergent from the norm that entirely new tactics, the fighting column<sup>28</sup>, were adopted to enable battlefield victories using

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<sup>19</sup> W. W. Tarn, W. W. T. (2003). Alexander the Great: Volume 2, Sources and Studies. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp399-402

<sup>20</sup> Sage, S. F. (1992). Ancient Sichuan and the Unification of China. Albany, State University of New York. p99

<sup>21</sup> Joes, A. J. (2015). America and Guerrilla Warfare. Kentucky, University Press of Kentucky. pp29-35

<sup>22</sup> Donald Stoker, K. J. H., Michael T. McMaster (2009). Strategy in the American War of Independence: A Global Approach London, Routledge. p36

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p159

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. pp11-12

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p52

<sup>26</sup> Buker, G. E. (2015). The Penobscot Expedition. Maine, Down East Books.

<sup>27</sup> Bell, D. A. (2007). The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know it. New York, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. pp148-150

<sup>28</sup> Schneid, F. C. (2012). Napoleonic Wars. Virginia, Potomac Books, Inc. pp9-11

generally poorly trained conscript soldiers<sup>29</sup>. Where those same soldiers came up against regular British infantry they were repeatedly defeated using conventional musket tactics which would have been familiar to Fredrick the Great<sup>30</sup>. Moreover the issue is even further confused by the use of Guerrillas by the Spanish during the Peninsula War<sup>31</sup> wherein the French Army was eroded and effectively unable to win against a disparate and irregular hostile populace<sup>32</sup>. Potentially the most asymmetrical nature of the conflict can be seen on the International Level, from Lord Nelsons overturning of the naval line of Battle Orthodoxy and organising his forces into two columns of battle<sup>33</sup> to the British experimenting with Torpedo's<sup>34</sup>, Rifle Skirmisher's<sup>35</sup> & Rockets<sup>36</sup> and indeed the British consistently using their economic dominance to underwrite the coalitions against France - at one point under the terms of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1803, Britain paid a subsidy of £1.25 million for every 100,000 Russian soldiers in the field<sup>37</sup> – Similarly the use by both sides of Privateers<sup>38</sup>, spies and espionage<sup>39</sup> and France's attempt at an early form of economic sanctions through the Continental System<sup>40</sup> all point to a situation where the emergence of Total War<sup>41</sup> and the idea of "A nation in arms"<sup>42</sup> meant adopting any and all tactics required, conventional, hybrid and asymmetrical to achieve victory. Likely only confused by Napoleon's battlefield genius<sup>43</sup> which meant France as a nation was more willing to contest matters on the Battlefield then attempt other asymmetrical or hybrid methods of extending policy.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid. pp9-11

<sup>30</sup> Grehan, J. (2013). British Battles of the Napoleonic Wars 1807-1815. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, Pen and Sword. pp66-70

<sup>31</sup> Fraser, R. (2008). Napoleon's Cursed War: Spanish Popular Resistance in the Peninsular War, 1808-1814. London, Verso. P398

<sup>32</sup> Gates, D. (2009). The Spanish Ulcer: A History Of Peninsular War. Cambridge MA, Da Capo Press.

<sup>33</sup> Howarth, D. (2003). Trafalgar: The Nelson Touch, Phoenix.

<sup>34</sup> Gray, E. (2004). Nineteenth-century Torpedoes and Their Inventors. Annapolis, Naval Institute Press. p5

<sup>35</sup> Cusick, R. (2013). Wellington's Rifles: The Origins, Development and Battles of the Rifle Regiments in the Peninsular War and at Waterloo from 1758 to 1815. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, Pen and Sword. pp87-100

<sup>36</sup> Professor, J. H. L. (2006). How Invention Begins : Echoes of Old Voices in the Rise of New Machines. New York, Oxford University Press. pp96-97

<sup>37</sup> Esdaile, C. (2008). Napoleon's Wars: An International History, 1803-1815 Penguin UK.

<sup>38</sup> Robson, M. (2014). History of the Royal Navy, A: The Napoleonic Wars New York, I.B.Tauris. pp209-210

<sup>39</sup> Crowdy, T. (2011). The Enemy Within: A History of Spies, Spymasters and Espionage Oxford, Osprey Publishing. pp155-159

<sup>40</sup> Gregory Fremont-Barnes, T. F. (2004). The Napoleonic Wars: The Rise and Fall of an Empire. Oxford, Osprey Publishing. p195

<sup>41</sup> Bell, D. A. (2007). The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know it. New York, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. p9

<sup>42</sup> Rothenberg, G. E. (1980). The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon. Indiana, Indiana University Press. p95

<sup>43</sup> Schuster, S. a. (2009). The Campaigns of Napoleon London, Simon and Schuster. p xxxix

In a similar manner the Second World War is seen predominantly as a conventional clash of arms between belligerent nations. However the extent of the conventional war is only apparent with the benefit of hindsight, the predominant German actions in the run up to 1939 were of a non-conventional proto-Hybrid nature. For example the destabilisation of Austria in 1938<sup>44</sup> and the internal overthrow by the Austrian Nazi Party of Austria's state institutions in Vienna<sup>45</sup>. Was a direct method of Germany influencing a neighbouring states policy though the use of domestic elements, aided by the widespread pro-Nazi support within Austria at the time<sup>46</sup>. Whilst the rapid entry of Wehrmacht troops into Austria to enforce the Anschluss<sup>47</sup> and the subsequent suggested 99%<sup>48</sup> victory of the Nazi party in the plebiscite<sup>49</sup> showed that this interference needed to be directly supported with conventional troops and given a veneer of legality to mitigate both internal and external objections. Something the Russian's were equally very careful to arrange during their invasion of Crimea<sup>50</sup>. In a similar manner the German Invasion of Poland was preceded by numerous covert actions by the Germans to create the idea of Polish aggression<sup>51</sup> reinforced with domestic propaganda in Germany<sup>52</sup> and culminating in the infamous Gleiwitz incident<sup>53</sup>. Whilst these case studies appear to show that Hybrid Warfare can be particularly successful where a large proportion of the target state's population is supportive of the belligerent nation and the international response is indifferent. What they also show, and what is most concerning, is that when Hybrid Warfare reaches its limits; conventional warfare generally follows. For the modern world where a country such as Russia is deploying the full resources of the state to destabilise neighbouring nations, the NATO Alliance would do well to take note, and understand how often Hybrid Wars are followed by conventional ones.

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<sup>44</sup> Leitz, C. (2004). Nazi Foreign Policy, 1933-1941: The Road to Global War. London, Psychology Press. pp11-29

<sup>45</sup> Bukey, E. B. (2002). Hitler's Austria: Popular Sentiment in the Nazi Era, 1938-1945. North Carolina, UNC Press Books. pp24-26

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. pp26-29

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p26

<sup>48</sup> Epstein, C. (2015). Nazi Germany: Confronting the Myths. Oxford, John Wiley & Sons. p118

<sup>49</sup> Faber, D. (2009). Munich, 1938: Appeasement and World War II. New York, Simon and Schuster. pp139-140

<sup>50</sup> News, B. (9 March 2015). "Putin reveals secrets of Russia's Crimea takeover plot." Retrieved May, 2015, from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-31796226>.

<sup>51</sup> Delarue, J. (2008). The Gestapo: History of Horror. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, Frontline Books. p171

<sup>52</sup> Pinkus, O. (2005). The War Aims and Strategies of Adolf Hitler. North Carolina, McFarland. p64

<sup>53</sup> Launay, J. D. (2014). Major Controversies of Contemporary History London, Elsevier. pp200-208

What this thesis has so far shown is that asymmetrical tactics have been used in conflicts throughout history, particularly where opponents, generally the weaker party, preferred not run the risk of settling their differences solely on the battlefield. However it is not just on the national level where these asymmetrical actions have occurred. By far the vast majority of conventional campaigns are preceded with covert attempts to destabilise and undermine the enemy's ability to resist, the most notable successful ones include the capture of the Gennep railway bridge by German Troops disguised as Dutch Military Police, at the outset of German-Dutch hostilities<sup>54</sup>, and the use by Germany of American speaking and uniformed German saboteurs sent behind Allied lines in the run up to the Battle of the Bulge<sup>55</sup>. Indeed Ruse de Guerre's litter military history, from the suggestion of a Greek filled Wooden Horse at Troy<sup>56</sup> to the use by General Schwarzkopf of a diversionary landing force to fix the six Iraqi divisions deployed along the Kuwaiti coast<sup>57</sup>; and allow the coalition forces to flank the Iraqi army from Saudi Arabia<sup>58</sup>. This therefore raises the question of whether hybrid warfare is just the normal preparation for a conventional campaign, occasionally not followed by a subsequent conventional campaign, due to political refusal to deploy forces or a sea change on the ground; or whether it is instead an entirely new and different method of warfare. An excellent example of this is the Bay of Pigs incident<sup>59</sup> effectively an unsuccessful CIA funded Hybrid War with a conventional campaign called off by the political leadership<sup>60</sup> contrasted with the US Arming of the Mujahedeen during the Russia-Afghanistan conflict<sup>61</sup> in which the irregular forces were so successful conventional forces were not required<sup>62</sup>. What is particularly interesting is that during and since the Second World War there has been an understanding amongst national militaries that there was a lack of certain "irregular" capabilities within conventional forces. Which has seen the creation and growth of elite forces such as Paratroopers, Marines and Chindits<sup>63</sup> and special forces<sup>64</sup>; used to

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<sup>54</sup> Lloyd, M. (2003). The Art of Military Deception. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, Pen and Sword. p88

<sup>55</sup> Caddick-Adams, P. (2014). Snow and Steel: The Battle of the Bulge, 1944-45. Oxford, Oxford University Press. pp361-363

<sup>56</sup> Homer (2013). The Odyssey. Baltimore, Maryland, JHU Press. Lines 480-500

<sup>57</sup> Pokrant, M. (1999). Desert Storm at Sea: What the Navy Really Did Westport, Greenwood Publishing Gro. pp95-96

<sup>58</sup> Lowry, R. (2008). The Gulf War Chronicles: A Military History of the First War with Iraq Lincoln, iUniverse. pp73-79

<sup>59</sup> Jones, H. (2008). The Bay of Pigs. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

<sup>60</sup> Kornbluh, P. (1998). Bay of Pigs Declassified: The Secret CIA Report on the Invasion of Cuba. New York, New Press.

<sup>61</sup> Crile, G. (2003). Charlie Wilson's War: The Extraordinary Story of the Largest Covert Operation in History. New York, Atlantic Monthly Press.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Moreman, T. R. (2009). Chindit 1942-45. New York, Osprey Publishing. pp4-6

achieve goals the conventional military is not trained or generally able to<sup>65</sup>. With regards to the Russian use of Hybrid Warfare much like Germany its use, so successful in Crimea<sup>66</sup> reached its limits in Eastern Ukraine, where the collapse of the military forces of the Eastern Ukrainian Donetsk People's Republic in the face of a conventional military offensive by the Ukrainian military<sup>67</sup>, forced a Russian counter invasion to prevent total collapse<sup>68</sup>. Again echoing the concept that where Hybrid Warfare reaches its limits conventional force is required to achieve desired policy projection goals.

There is however a key question this thesis has not addressed and one which in many respects defines the question of Hybrid Warfare in the modern world: That of the influence of nuclear weapons on warfare. The Romans when attacking Carthaginian supply lines had no concern that their entire empire could be wiped out almost instantly with the press of a button, Napoleon was able to repeatedly recover from battlefield setbacks and raise new troops and fresh equipment to replace that which was lost<sup>69</sup> something likely impossible in the aftermath of a nuclear war<sup>70</sup>. Even Hitler was able to gamble a reasonable chance that his forces could triumph on the battlefield. In instances of mutually assured destruction the key concept is "assured". The scale of nuclear destruction is such that a conflict between two nuclear states would not leave a victor, or indeed a defeated party. How then do nations fight wars? On the surface Hybrid-Warfare tactics appear eminently sensible, they are covert<sup>71</sup> predominantly use indirect means such as bribery and propaganda<sup>72</sup> and work by exploiting another parties weaknesses and divisions<sup>73</sup>. However as has

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<sup>64</sup> Warner, P. (2004). *Secret Forces of World War Two*. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, Pen & Sword Military. p114

<sup>65</sup> Adams, T. K. *US Special Operations Forces in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare* Oxon, Routledge. Chapter 3

<sup>66</sup> Paul, A. (24 March 2015). "Crimea one year after Russian annexation." *European Policy Centre*(Policy Brief). pp1-2

<sup>67</sup> Balmforth, R. (Aug 5, 2014). "Ukraine keeps up anti-rebel offensive with nervous eye on Russia." Retrieved 2015, May, from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/05/us-ukraine-crisis-action-idUSKBN0G50UW20140805>.

<sup>68</sup> Economist, T. (Sep 6th 2014). "Reversal of fortune." Retrieved 2015, May, from <http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21615605-now-willing-use-russian-troops-more-or-less-openly-eastern-ukraine-vladimir-putin-has>.

<sup>69</sup> Price, M. (2014). *Napoleon: The End of Glory*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. pp111-115

<sup>70</sup> Kahn, H. (2011). *On Thermonuclear War* New Jersey, Transaction Publishers. p57

<sup>71</sup> Marcus, J. (1 December 2014). "Putin problem gives Nato headache." Retrieved May, 2015, from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-30273813>.

<sup>72</sup> Review, N. (2015). "Hybrid war – does it even exist?" Retrieved May, 2015, from <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2015/Also-in-2015/hybrid-modern-future-warfare-russia-ukraine/EN/>.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

been seen in Poland in 1939 and Eastern Ukraine in 2014 where these tactics do not succeed, often the only alternative is conventional force. The use of which can all too easily escalate into outright nuclear war, as the weaker party increasingly is forced to resort to using tools further up the escalation ladder, to mitigate Hybrid or conventional weakness (as shown in the NATO doctrine of nuclear weapon usage during the cold war to mitigate larger Russian conventional forces<sup>74</sup>; and in the current Russian nuclear doctrine to mitigate qualitatively better NATO forces<sup>75</sup>). The key point is that although by pushing conflict further down the escalation ladder away from conventional force and into Hybrid Warfare nations can create a space which they can dominate, this does not remove the option for other states to reach back up the ladder and utilise, initially conventional, and then latterly nuclear forces. Which means, importantly, that whilst nations and the NATO Alliance need to be able to successfully combat the hostile use of Hybrid Warfare techniques and tactics; it should not do this at the expense of Conventional and Nuclear forces. As these have not been removed from the equation, and would become essential to deterring and combating any escalation of a particular conflict.

In conclusion therefore, warfare throughout history has consisted of attempts to circumvent the other party's strengths and exploit their weaknesses. War has evolved numerous times throughout history from battles solely on the battlefield, to campaigns attacking the enemy's supplies and secondary cities (Punic Wars). To the Total mobilisation of a nations people (Napoleonic Wars) and then the Total mobilisation of a nations resources (World War Two) generally linked with attempts to disrupt an opponent's conventional campaign before it even begins. Hybrid Warfare is in effect a continuation of the use of unconventional tactics by parties who for whatever reason are unwilling to resort to conventional force. This is not a new phenomenon: from guerrilla wars to using privateers, state support for mercenary forces, and espionage where two parties' engage in a conflict any and all tactics can be deployed to achieve victory. Although the technology has changed and the tactics have evolved Hybrid Warfare is nothing new, indeed at best the recent usage should be considered as an evolution not a revolution. Ultimately there is no getting away from the ability

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<sup>74</sup> Terzuolo, E. (2009). NATO and Weapons of Mass Destruction: Regional Alliance, Global Threats. London, Routledge. p15

<sup>75</sup> Schmemmann, S. (November 4, 1993). "Russia Drops Pledge of No First Use of Atom Arms." Retrieved May, 2015, from <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/11/04/world/russia-drops-pledge-of-no-first-use-of-atom-arms.html>.

of violence to solve disputes, and to realise that states, when denied in one arena, will seek others in which they can triumph. How then can Hybrid Warfare be combatted? Hybrid Warfare is about driving war underground; it is designed to keep conflicts covert and secret<sup>76</sup>, and effectively hidden from the home population which are funding them. Nations now use drones, Special Forces and mercenary troops so national casualties are limited, and the home nation does not become concerned at their nation's loss of life. Where casualties do occur these are either covered up<sup>77</sup> or justified by control of the media and extensive use Propaganda<sup>78</sup>. The way to combat Hybrid Warfare therefore is not to descend to the level of the opposite party, NATO should not transform itself into another Russia. Instead it is actually necessary to bring these conflicts back into the light and increase their transparency. Countering Propaganda with the Truth, building national institutions, supporting human rights and embedding the rule of law amongst every individual, will not only help the NATO Alliance triumph, it will also reinforce and reiterate the very values on which the Alliance was founded. This does not mean that the NATO Alliance should not use Special Forces, Military Trainers and, if required, conventional force. What it does mean is that the NATO Alliance should trust that when its public is properly informed, and made aware of the reasons and justifications for using force, it will be fully understanding and supportive of the pursuit of collective security. In sum beating Russia at Hybrid War will not ultimately solve the inherent idealistic clash between a Dictatorial Russian regime with a nationalistic Russian public; conflicting against a libertarian and democratic Western World. However by combating Russia where Russia is weak; in areas such as human rights, the rule of law and civil society, and by emphasising its support of those values, whilst retaining sufficient forces, both hybrid and conventional, to prevent other nations undermining these values through the use of force. The NATO Alliance will be able to find ground where it can consistently triumph, and ultimately on which it can build a strategy to eventually result in either the internal reform, or collapse, of those same hostile nations.

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<sup>76</sup> Pukhov, R. (May. 27 2015 ). "Nothing 'Hybrid' About Russia's War in Ukraine." Retrieved 2014, May, from <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/nothing-hybrid-about-russias-war-in-ukraine/522471.html>.

<sup>77</sup> News, B. (28 May 2015). "Putin declares Russian troop deaths in peacetime a secret." Retrieved 31 May, 2015, from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-32913929>.

<sup>78</sup> RT. (May 19, 2015 ). "Ukraine army shelling: 'Naïve to think Poroshenko does it on his own'." Retrieved May, 2015, from <http://rt.com/op-edge/259969-ukraine-us-shelling-poroshenko/>.

## A Ring of Ire – NATO Expansion in the Balkans

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*With the potential accession of Montenegro to the NATO Alliance this December, Dr. Andreas Stradis, one of ACUK's Senior Research Fellows, looks ahead to weigh the benefits and drawbacks of such a move in the balance.*

### Introduction: The Hawthorne Effect

Much recent debate about NATO expansion in Eastern Europe has been monolithic, largely focused on membership criteria and the roadmap to accession. In doing so, it has been woefully circumspect about the potential impact of further enlargement, whether specifically in the Balkans or in general. With the Wales Summit's target for military spending as 2% of GDP already failing to be met by many existing members, not least those wealthier states that ought to be leading in this regard, some fundamental questions need to be asked. Montenegrin accession may not be as simple as asking whether it can be a 'net contributor' to security in the immediate future. This is because the accession itself may drive further spending by the wider Alliance to guard against any retaliatory response.

These pressured geopolitical circumstances produce something of a Hawthorne Effect among the states concerned. Coined by Henry Landsberger in 1950, the concept refers to the marked change in behaviour when subjects are aware of intensified scrutiny by an observer: though originally applied to factory workers observed under varying degrees of ambient lighting, it is apposite for these geopolitical conditions. Both Montenegro and



Russia are under the lamp, both are keen to present themselves in the best possible light. For the

former, this will mean emphasizing preparedness and downplaying the risks associated with accession to NATO; for the latter, given her foreign policy track record over the past decade, there is little reason to think that she will not play up to the spotlight.

With the world watching, defence budgets in jeopardy, the absence of credible Western intent in Eastern Europe, NATO would be ill-advised to invite further Russian flexing of her already prizewinning foreign policy muscles.

### **Enlargement Creep or Risk Satiety?**



One of the recurring criticisms by prospective NATO members is that the Alliance is suffering from ‘enlargement fatigue’, but given the rising tensions over the eastward creep of NATO’s borders, it ought better to be understood as a diminishing risk appetite. This is because geographical periphery of Western Europe is as anything but peripheral to Russia: proximity is in the eye of the beholder. Former Warsaw Pact countries have a special relationship of their own with the old motherland, which brings unique and acute sensitivities that the West rides roughshod over at its own risk. Regardless of how the issue of expansion is cast, the geopolitical and historical maps speak volumes of their own. What is being done to allay the sense of an accelerating process of expansion that Russia is bound to be feeling? Or the growing sense of encirclement in Serbia? Or, more

fundamentally, the lack of existential definition for NATO in the post-ISAF environment, leading to a strategic open-endedness that in itself looms ominously eastwards? Is this Fukuyama’s ‘end of history’ by other means?

These three phenomena – accelerating expansion, encirclement, and the broader absence of a concrete *raison d'être* for the Alliance – will be explored in turn in this article, and set unflinchingly against the calls for the 29th member state. Without clear purpose and delimitation to its Eurasian footprint, NATO teeters on the brink of classical overreaching for the polis that eventually breaks the Alliance's back.

### **NATO's Accelerating Pattern of Growth**

An historical perspective puts Montenegro's potential accession to NATO in December 2015 into the first important context. After an initial flurry of uneven growth in the immediate aftermath of World War II, the rate of NATO enlargement slowed considerably: with Germany in 1955, it was not until 1982 that Spain was brought into the fold. The next round brought Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary in 1999, reducing the timeframe between the previous expansions from 27 to 17 years. Thus the next two rounds of expansions in two successive blocks of five years represented a significant acceleration, setting an understandably troubling pattern for the outside observer. The ineluctable eastward march of NATO therefore appears doubly threatening: both in terms of increasing geographical proximity and increasing speed, like a tidal rush building with successive waves. For a state like Russia, struggling politically as well as economically, there is nothing like the sense of imminence to force a response.

This is in no way to condone Russian activity in Eastern Europe, however it does provide a relevant framework within which to place it in order to make sense of what is too often dismissed as irrational, rather than rash. Even with the weakest arithmetical abilities, any Russian policy-maker on 1st April 2009 – the last round of NATO enlargement – could have predicted that NATO would be angling for a further addition within five years. In fact, no sooner had Albania and Croatia become members, than Montenegro received its Membership Action Plan in December of that year. Equally, any policy-maker with an appreciation of Russian cultural sensitivities over the region would

doubtless have predicted some form of knee-jerk response: Georgia and the Crimea. Rash Russian action may be, but irrational it is not.



### Serbia and the Ring of Ire

The geographical unfolding of NATO expansion is the second factor that makes the situation in the Balkans particularly acute. Top-and-tailed since 2009 by the two newest additions, Croatia in the north and Albania to the south, there is a ringed landmass external to the Alliance that is, in geopolitical terms, highly contestable.

The situation is made all the more delicate by Serbia's insistence on military neutrality with respect to NATO and of course its historic links with Russia. One cannot help but empathise with this potentially suffocating distribution of allegiances, a veritable tinderbox in geopolitical terms if there ever was one. And as if to add insult to injury from Russia's point of view, new incisions are being made into the fabric of the Eurasian landmass when holes still remain in NATO's very back pocket, with Austria and Switzerland patently absent from the Alliance's roster of members. Whichever way it is looked at, from Russia's perspective or from NATO's, the situation is one of glaring incompleteness: it is either an island of resistance encircled by an ever-tightening noose, or a heart of darkness in the centre of NATO's pleasant lands. For both sides, a ring of ire has descended upon the region, the resentment fanning the flames in Ukraine and liable to ignite further instability.

### **Satiety and Statecraft: The Pan-Oceanic Treaty Organisation?**

Of course, the issue of NATO expansion would be far less emotive if the Alliance was clearly philosophically delimited. In this post-Afghanistan phase, it is crucial that the organisation sets its own limits to accompany its many and laudable aspirations.

Leaving this issue open means that from an outside – i.e. Russian – perspective, the Alliance remains teleologically protean and thereby significantly more threatening. What, any reasonable Russian might ask, is the end-state? And if one has not been envisioned, then why not, and what assurances could possibly be given to truly remove the chronic concern about a fundamental lack of satiety at the heart of the Alliance's philosophy?



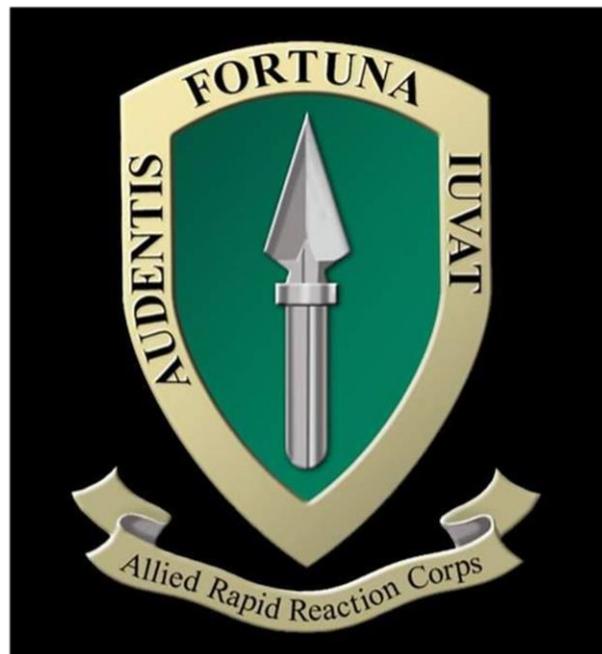
A lack of satiety is a problem that dogs most aspects of American and Northern European life, but this has been thrown into sharp relief in international dealings: a failure to set limits has resulted time and again in mission creep, strategic overstretch and, worst of all, resentment, whether deserved or not. And time and again, this resentment has been the source of almost all future problems for the Alliance, a seemingly endless chain of new problems engendered by the very solutions put into place to deal with previous ones. The US even have a phrase

for it, the 'boomerang effect', alluding to the potentially painful consequences of actions taken without a clear-eyed appreciation of their likely trajectory. Of course Huxley's World State is an exaggeration, but exaggerations are differentiated from pure fantasy by the kernel of truth they contain.

### **Noah's ARRC: Creaking Credibility in Eastern Europe**

So much for diagnosis. An adequate prognosis is difficult to arrive at, but it may be approached by a simple question: what is it that is achieved by NATO membership in the Balkans that cannot be achieved through bilateral agreements? By their very nature less threatening, they have the potential for a far more nuanced approach to the wishes of Montenegro or Kosovo. Indeed, with the benefit of hindsight of course, one could argue quite strongly that this ought to have been the approach to all of NATO's entrants post-1999, because since that date, the Alliance has been locked into unfortunate political and diplomatic brinkmanship with Russia. Overstepping the traditional boundaries of Western Europe has undeniably contributed to Russian recidivism: if you give someone the feeling of being backed into a corner, you contribute to their apprehension and their liability to react, however your actions may be couched. Omit to give any sense of limitation to your actions, and sooner or later a reaction – however unjustified – will occur.

Something else that the current discourse on NATO enlargement fails to address entirely is the effect that further additions would have upon existing members. Already stretched thin, with even wealthy Allies struggling to meet their 2% targets, NATO is struggling to convince members to be 'net contributors' as things currently stand. The addition of further smaller states, even if they were to meet their 2% targets, would, to many people, be an unjustifiable economic let alone strategic burden to bear. Public opinion is already creaking under the strain of having to



reinforce the eastern borders of Europe, with the US and Britain once again bearing a disproportionate share of the activity, whether through the provision of new nodal military bases or providing a rapid reaction corps (the ARRC) constellated around a British brigade. Even its current commander, Lieutenant General Timothy Evans, recently expressed concerns about the ARRC's credibility at the RUSI Land Warfare Conference in London. Many people will be justified in feeling that the current NATO enlargement agenda is simply a zero-sum game with far too many chips passed south-eastward for no return. This makes claims that states like Montenegro are crucial to NATO's 'strategic depth' or that membership is necessary for wider regional stability ring all the more hollow.

Continued insistence on the expansion of NATO in the Balkans threatens to ignite tensions as the 'ring of ire' around Serbia closes. Superficially sold in 'strategic' terms, the expansion cannot be described as such from the perspective of the Alliance as a whole, merely the parochial interests of the prospective states. NATO has a great deal of soul-searching to do before it can reasonably and rationally justify further expansion to itself, let alone Russia, Serbia, and other perplexed onlookers.

Fear, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder, perhaps the most profound strategic truth with a history as old as war itself. 2,500 years ago, Thucydides observed that what made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power, and the fear this inspired in Lacedaemon. 2,500 years later, NATO is poised as the new Delian League, on the brink of the same tragic strategic mistake. It would do well to heed Thucydides' wisdom.

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## NATO and the Politics of Inaction

Dr Andrew Stephen Campion  
ACUK Head of Research



More than a year after Russia's annexation of Crimea and its encroachment into Ukraine, at a time when NATO has been gifted a new and cohesive mandate, the Alliance is suffering from internal discord. According to a recent study carried out by the Pew Research Center, although NATO members are willing to provide economic aid

to Ukraine, most are wary of escalating tensions through tougher sanctions. Moreover, the research shows that key NATO members would be unwilling to use military force to combat Russian aggression against fellow member states. It is curious that the study found that Canada and the United States, the only non-European members, were also the only key members who had the majority of their publics back military action against future Russian aggression. Support for such action languished below the 50% mark for other members. This article explores the idea that this inertia largely stems from the fact that as a political organization, NATO is susceptible to the policies of its members' political elites who are themselves informed by changeable public opinions which

tend to emphasize self-centred short-term gains – gains which are often at odds with long-term Alliance commitments. To mitigate this lethargy, it is argued that public engagement with the politics of NATO needs to be encouraged.



While the Alliance faces myriad external threats, the central argument made here is that the most pressing threat is an inherent infirmity which is the result of a public which is increasingly disenfranchised from, or simply disinterested in NATO’s mission. This sense of disenfranchisement is largely a result of growing narcissism demonstrated

by states and individuals who feel that the proximity of a threat is more important than its magnitude. Thus, a smaller threat at home is more acute than a larger threat abroad. Therefore, before we deal with the capabilities of NATO, we must deal with perceptions about the Alliance as they need to be addressed in order to redefine NATO’s narrative in public discourse.

In the 21st century there seems to be some ambiguity about who NATO represents and what its role is. Hastings Ismay famously claimed that the Alliance’s *raison d’être* was to “keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down”. This, however, seems incongruous in a political climate where German leadership in Europe is accepted while American leadership on a global level is increasingly challenged. Moreover, far from keeping the Russians out, much of the last decade was spent wooing the Russian Federation to normalize relations with the West. While hopes of getting Russians ‘in’ through the NATO-Russia Council were ultimately dashed by Russia’s war in Georgia, the fact that much of the 2000s were spent actively engaging this former adversary suggests how fickle perceptions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ can be.

Despite the clarity of purpose which is inherent to the North Atlantic Treaty, Western attitudes towards NATO can be ambivalent – often at times of acute pressure, as demonstrated by the crisis in Ukraine. The Treaty states that members of NATO “are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law”. However, while this statement reflects the universal aims of the Alliance, there are those who struggle to accept the growing heterogeneity of the organization. Kori Schake, a Bush-administration defence official with the Hoover Institute, gives voice to arguments that NATO expansion has diluted the Alliance’s purpose and identity when she sates that “We must be inflexible on Article 5, but it is no good half-caring about countries that are part-way Western”. The logic behind NATO’s eastward expansion has clearly not been articulated well enough to those who feel that those in ‘Western’ NATO countries share little in common with newer, ‘Eastern’ member states. The collective identity of the Alliance therefore needs to be bolstered and the public needs to be re-sold on the idea of collective defence in the 21st century. Most simply, at a time when zero-hours contracts and payday loan companies are dominating news headlines, NATO needs to be able to clearly express why and how collective defence matters at an individual level.

There is a growing egocentrism demonstrated by nations on behalf of their citizens and the prevalence of inward-looking policies is affecting relations on regional and international levels. Increasing antipathy amongst NATO members is paralleled by growing indifference about our adversaries. In contrast to the post-Cold War environment, from the start of the Berlin Airlift in 1948 to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Western countries of NATO had a discernible threat they could easily castigate. The Soviet Union was positioned as an antagonist in a very simple us/them binary, and because the stakes were so high (it is inconceivable how threats could elevate above mutually assured destruction), the Soviet threat was ensured a place within broad Western discourse. During the 1990s and 2000s, however, public perceptions towards the Alliance became increasingly indifferent as it searched for renewed purpose through a widened mandate.

Security in Western discourse moved beyond the Soviet threat to include issues such as economic and energy security, human security and development, cultural hegemony, and many others beside. Gone was the looming Red Menace, and in its place emerged a feckless and fleetingly democratic Russia. The diminishment of Russia's importance occurred tangentially with proliferation of smaller conflicts such as that in Kosovo. Western publics were initially amenable to these interventions because missions in the Balkans were copasetic with new security concerns of the unipolar New World Order. Furthermore, NATO was able to use these conflicts to redefine its mandate and it found purpose in protecting its member states from the democratization and de-centralization of violence. However, while the Alliance itself found renewed purpose Western societies became increasingly disinterested with peacekeeping, interventions, and other security concerns. Feeling that they no longer stood in the shadow of annihilation, Western powers devoted much less attention to their physical wellbeing, and safety from violence became presupposed. The corollary was that focus and expenditure on national defence plummeted, and this trend looks set to continue well into the new millennium. Many NATO members struggle to convince their publics of the need to spend 2% of their GDP on national defence in the face of increased pressure to spend more on social welfare. Defence is simply not seen to be a priority.



Although the apathy to violence was shattered by 9/11, a protracted war in Afghanistan and a politically misguided war in Iraq have caused fatigue in the public consciousness about orthodox security concerns. Political elites, keen to avoid association with unpopular conflicts, are increasingly formulating their manifestos around domestic

politics with dangerous disregard for foreign policy. Indeed, in the last UK general election, aside from issues of the EU and those surrounding the Trident programme, foreign policy was rarely raised or addressed. Inderjeet Parmar, professor in International Politics at City University London,

explains the nature of the phenomenon: “Before we look at the politics of foreign policy, you have to look at the character of inequality in the society, which bleeds into politics in general”. This is the crux of the matter. There is now a sense that we need to get our own house perfectly in order before we can look outside. However, we must ask ourselves whether this is in our best interests and whether it is even possible.

NATO, as a political body, cannot set the agendas of its member states, but it must articulate its relevance by responding to public opinion and working within that discourse. Those who disregard the significance of NATO or disagree with its mission must be engaged. In keeping, there is a pressing need to emphasize the political nature of the organization to make the public feel enfranchised with it. There is therefore scope, and pressing need, for NATO, national governments, and NGOs such as the ACUK to stimulate critical debate about the role and virtue of collective defence. In order to demonstrate the value of the Alliance in the contemporary context it is important that we accept increasing individualism and not rail against it. For NATO to thrive, it cannot expect its member states to be guided by altruism but it must sell collective defence and demonstrate how it is commensurate with self-interest.

To return to the crisis in Ukraine, while it is right to confront Russia on its increasingly aggressive stance, it is clear that altruism alone cannot be relied on to be a motivating incentive for action. To ensure it remains a robust tool of collective defence NATO needs to incentivise the investment and enthusiasm necessary to make it work.

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## **Event: NATO And The Resurgence Of Ideology**

**Date:** Tuesday, 10th November 2015, 09:00-17:00

*Luncheon and evening drinks reception (dress: lounge suits/ladies' equivalent)*

**Venue:** The Honourable Artillery Company, Armoury House, City Road, London, EC1Y 2BQ

### **Speakers:**

- Prof Brian Holden Reid, Dept. of War Studies, King's College London
- Prof John Louth, Director: Defence, Industries & Societies, RUSI
- Stephen Covington, Strategic Intl. Affairs Adviser to SACEUR
- H. E. Sir Adam Thompson KCMG, UK Perm. Rep. to NATO
- The Rt. Hon. James Gray MP, House of Commons Defence Committee

**Website:** [www.atlanticcounciluk.org](http://www.atlanticcounciluk.org)

**Contact:** [andreas.stradis@atlanticcounciluk.org](mailto:andreas.stradis@atlanticcounciluk.org)

**Conference Director:** Dr Andreas Stradis, Senior Research Fellow, ACUK

**Cost:** Please note that the registration fee for the event is £50 (£30 for students) which includes luncheon and drinks and is Payable via Paypal, Cheque or Bank Transfer

(<http://www.atlanticcounciluk.org/#!support/ct9g>)

**More Info:** <http://www.atlanticcounciluk.org/#!nato-and-the-resurgence-of-ideology/c1a1y>