APPLYING MACHIAVELLIAN DISCOURSES TO RUSSIAN HYBRID WARFARE

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submitted by **FUAT YAMAN** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Arts in Eurasian Studies, the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kondakçı
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant
Head of Department
Department of International Relations _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant
Supervisor
Department of International Relations _____

Examining Committee Members:

Prof. Dr. Oktay Tanrısever (Head of the Examining Committee)
Middle East Technical University
Department of International Relations _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of International Relations _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Haluk Karadağ
Başkent University
Department of Political Science and International Relations _____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Fuat Yaman

Signature:

ABSTRACT

APPLYING MACHIAVELLIAN DISCOURSES TO RUSSIAN HYBRID WARFARE

Yaman, Fuat
M.A., The Department of Eurasian Studies
Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant

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This thesis aims to analyze the underlying necessitates related to the implementation of the hybrid warfare concept by the Russian Federation within the conceptual framework of Machiavellian political philosophy that prerequisites well-being of the state above all the idealist considerations, thereby requiring the statesman to adapt to whatever changing circumstances necessitate. This thesis claims that certain political and military events that the Russian Federation has witnessed in the near history, such as the Chechen Wars, the Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring movements, together with the historical predisposition of Russian society to hybridity aspects, have led it to update its military thinking towards a hybrid nature of warfare and conceptualize a distinctive hybrid warfare concept against its competitors. Within this scope, Russian understanding of modern warfare, especially as of the Crimean intervention in 2014, has evolved into a hybrid structure that incorporates political, military, cultural, technological and religious elements.

Keywords: Machiavellian, Political Philosophy, the Russian Federation, Hybrid Warfare

ÖZ

MAKYAVELYAN SÖYLEMLERİN RUS HİBRİT SAVAŞINA UYGULANMASI

Yaman, Fuat
Yüksek Lisans, Avrasya Çalışmaları Bölümü
Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant

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Bu tez Rusya Federasyonu'nun Hibrit Savaş konseptini uygulamasının altında yatan gereksinimleri, temel olarak devletin bekasını bütün idealist düşüncelerin üzerinde tutarak devlet adamının değişen şartların gereksinimlerine uyum sağlamasını gerektiren Makyavelist siyaset felsefesinin kavramsal çerçevesinde analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu tez, Rusya Federasyonu'nun yakın tarihinde şahit olduğu Çeçen Savaşları, Renkli Devrimler ve Arap Baharı hareketleri gibi belli başlı olayların yanı sıra Rus toplumunun hibrit unsurlara yönelik tarihsel yatkınlığının, Rusya Federasyonu'na askeri düşüncesini savaşın hibrit bir haline doğru güncellemesi ve rakiplerine karşı özgün bir Hibrit Savaş konseptini kavramsallaştırması konularında öncülük ettiğini öne sürmektedir. Bu kapsamda, Rus modern savaş anlayışı, özellikle 2014 yılındaki Kırım müdahalesinin ardından siyasi, askeri, kültürel, teknolojik ve dini bileşenleri içerisinde barındıran hibrit bir yapıya evrilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Makyavelizm, Siyaset Felsefesi, Rusya Federasyonu, Hibrit Savaş

To my daughter Bilge

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CIS-EMO	Commonwealth of Independent States Election Observation Mission
D&D	Denial & Deception
EESC	Eastern Europe Studies Centre
EU	European Union
EW	Electronic Warfare
FSB	Federal Security Service
GONGO	Government Organized Non-Governmental Organizations
GRU	Russian Military Intelligence Directorate
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles
IO	Information Operations
IRI	International Republican Institute of the Republican Party
IW	Information Warfare
KGB	Committee for State Security of the Soviet Union
KSSO	Komandovanie sil spetsial'nalnykh operatsii
	The Special Operations Forces Command)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDI	The National Democratic Institute of the Democratic Party (NDI)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OPCW	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PMC	Private Military Companies
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
ROE	Rules of Engagement
RIAC	Russian International Affairs Council
RC	Reflexive Control
ROC	Russian Orthodox Church
RT	Russia Today
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SVR	The Foreign Intelligence Service

UAOC	Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church
USAID	The U.S. Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UOC KP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate
UOC MP	Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate
USA	United States of America
UW	Unconventional Warfare
US	Unites States

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to analyze the underlying necessities behind Russia's application of hybrid warfare as a whole-nation approach within the framework of Machiavellian political philosophy. Although Russia is neither the founder nor the sole practitioner of the hybrid warfare concept, it is a widely acknowledged opinion that it has been adopted systematically and organized, most notably by Russia since its annexation of Crimea in 2014. This is at least what the Western researchers suggest in line with their sense-making efforts towards conceptualizing the Russian application of the multiple hybrid elements competitively to counterbalance it in the political and military arena. Henceforth, to put Russia's hybrid practices into a theoretical framework, this thesis draws on Machiavellian political and military philosophy. To this end, Machiavellian philosophy on political consequentialism and statesmanship will shed light on the underlying necessities behind the Russian implementation of the hybrid warfare concept. However, the theoretical framework of this thesis will neither directly justify the use of hybrid techniques in Russian strategic thinking nor will it function as a step by step guide for the specific cases of Russia's hybrid conducts as per Machiavellian advice on conventional military strategies and tactics. Instead, it will bring out a theoretical connection between the Russian perspective on the hybrid warfare concept and strict realist approach of Machiavellianism to the political philosophy that proposes a statesman to do whatever the existing circumstances of political and military atmosphere necessitate without taking ethical or moral considerations into account, thereby posing a 'flexible disposition' to maintain his power, sustain the well-being of the state and assure its survival in the anarchic world order.

In this aspect, three essential concepts of Machiavellian theory, namely *virtù, necessità* and the doctrine of *raison d'etat,* will be addressed in this thesis to understand the essence of Machiavellian political philosophy that takes its roots from his realist

approach to human nature, the relationship between politics and ethics as well as the necessary virtues that a statesman should possess to rule a state successfully. Further on, the Machiavellian approach to political philosophy acknowledges politics and warfare as complementary issues, and success in either field is dependent on the other and necessitates the use of all means (whether ethical or unethical) to achieve desired political and military ends. In this aspect, this thesis argues that the path to the hybrid warfare concept in Russian strategic thinking, incorporating a blend of conventional and unconventional military tools in its disposition such as political warfare, irregular warfare and information warfare with a whole-nation approach, is an outcome of specific necessities emerging from a series of groundbreaking events that happened in the recent history of Russia. In this manner, this thesis further argues that Russia's adoption of hybrid warfare concept can be assessed within the theoretical framework of realist Machiavellian theory, necessitating the state to update itself to the needs of existing circumstances.

Thus, the main research question of this thesis is: What were the specific circumstances that have necessitated Russia to adopt hybrid warfare approach as a military doctrine and how this approach can be evaluated theoretically?

Since Vladimir Putin's inauguration as the president of the Russian Federation, Russia has carried on multi-dimensional military interventions in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine as of 2014, which has especially attracted the attention of the Western policy-makers and military strategists. The Crimean annexation of Russia especially caught the Western world by surprise as to how Ukraine, as a sovereign country, could lose a territory without any significant armed clash or conventional firepower, rendering the Western countries, policy makers and institutions like the EU and the NATO helpless. Russia, by concurrently employing a blend of both conventional and unconventional hybrid tools ranging from Special Operations Forces (SOF), Private Military Companies (PMCs), and Information Warfare (IW) to Government Organized Non-Governmental Organizations (GONGOs) as well as the political power of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), annexed Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol and certain parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions covertly and without any significant solid reactions from the Western world. In the subsequent period, Russia also intervened in Syria and Libya conflicts to counterbalance the

Western influence *inter alia* other strategic aspirations, thereby incorporating various hybrid tools such as SOF and PMCs. In addition to these salient military interventions, Russia has also conducted soft power activities as complementary tools of its conventional power to promote Russian-oriented values and policy aspirations to counter the Western-centric world order by blurring the lines between war and peace and transforming the state of war into a permanent activity. In this aspect, Russia turned the IW concept into a powerful weapon of its hybrid warfare approach, thereby using the Internet environment and social media trolls to obscure the facts, sow discord and create disarray among the Western communities as well as destroy the information and communication infrastructures of its adversaries via cyber-attacks, as acquainted with the allegations of Russian meddling into the 2016 US Presidential elections and social media campaigns promoting the 'Black Lives Matter' movements in the USA.

The Western world, in an attempt to make sense of Russia's hybrid activities in the last two decades, conceptualized the 'Gerasimov Doctrine' in the scope of a famous article penned in 2013 by Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov, who describes the changing nature and necessities of the modern wars and makes suggestions as to how Russia should update military structure in accordance with these necessities. In this manner, putting aside the literary discussions whether Gerasimov's article should be considered as a benchmark to understand Russian hybrid approach or a military doctrine named after Gerasimov really exist in Russian strategic thinking[1], the path to the hybrid warfare in Russian strategic thinking, together with its historical predisposition to the strategic denial and deception (D&D) techniques, involves certain events and cases in the recent history of post-Soviet Russia including the chaotic atmosphere in Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Presidency of Vladimir Putin as of 2000 and his grand policy aspirations to revive Russia as a world power just like during the bipolar world order of the Soviet era and the strategic implications of the Chechen Wars and the Color Revolutions uprisings. These specific events all prepared the ground for renewal in the military thinking of Russia.

[1] See for example: Mark Galeotti, "I'm Sorry for Creating the 'Gerasimov Doctrine,'" Foreign Policy, 2018, https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/03/05/im-sorry-for-creating-the-gerasimov-doctrine/; Mark Galeotti, "'The Gerasimov Doctrine,'" *Berlin Policy Journal*, 2020, https://berlinpolicyjournal.com/the-gerasimov-doctrine/; Mark Galeotti, "The Mythical 'Gerasimov Doctrine' and the Language of Threat," *Critical Studies on Security* 7, no. 2 (May 4, 2019): 157–61, https://doi.org/10.1080/21624887.2018.1441623.

Subsequently, they led it to reform its military strategies, which has made the designations and suggestions of General Gerasimov in his famous article come to light. In this aspect, the so-called 'Gerasimov Doctrine' will function as a starting point to analyze the above-mentioned necessities of the Russian hybrid warfare strategy.

This thesis is composed of four main chapters with an introduction and a conclusion part. After the introduction, the second chapter will first provide introductory information about Niccolò Machiavelli, including his educational and professional background, to better assess how he developed his ideas on political philosophy and statesmanship. The fact that he studied humanist philosophy and then got appointed to a diplomatic mission in the city-state of Florence will help us understand how he approaches the relationship between politics, human nature and religion. Accordingly, his approach to human nature is very pessimistic. That is why he praises the absolute power of the rulership, putting a distinctive line between politics and moral values. In this aspect, various interpretations in the literature will be illustrated related to his thoughts on politics. At this point, there is a wide range of different interpretations of Machiavellian philosophy because of his harshly realistic approach to state governance that puts the state's survival in front of every other worldly or heavenly consideration. In this aspect, the literature is divided into two main camps, one of which is mainly led by the realist school of thought that justifies his beliefs while the other, primarily the idealists, opposes him in some way or the other. Thus, the first chapter will briefly mention these rival perspectives to evaluate the Machiavellian stance on politics and warfare. Then, three essential concepts of Machiavellian political philosophy will be deeply analyzed through insights in his most notable books, *The Prince* and *The Discourses.* His perspectives on human nature, statesmanship, ethics and moral values in state administration and the relationship between warfare and politics will highlight his ideas on statecraft that are determinant in Machiavelli's political philosophy. At the end of the first chapter, the *raison d'etat* doctrine, of which Machiavellianism is regarded as the forefather, will be briefly discussed with its historical implications. Accordingly, the *raison d'etat* doctrine prerequisites the sake of the state above everything else and defends the idea of power politics that put aside the other worldly or heavenly considerations on behalf of the state.

The third chapter will provide insights into the evolution of the hybrid warfare concept in post-Soviet Russian strategic thinking. In this regard, a general overview of the military deception concept will initially be explained with specific cases from the history of warfare. Then, the place of deception concept in the Soviet military strategy will be discussed. This is especially important to understand the contemporary Russian strategic thinking on hybrid warfare since it is regarded as the continuation of the legacy of Soviet military deception strategies. In this aspect, the two essential concepts, *Maskirovka* (translated as deception) and Reflexive Control (RC) theory, will be analyzed to understand the scope of the D&D tactics in the Soviet military strategy with specific examples of conduct. Aside from these, the historical background of the Russian disposition to deception both on the government and society level will be analyzed.

Later on, the hybrid warfare concept will be introduced with various definitions and interpretations since it encompasses a wide range of descriptions and dimensions and does not have a universal definition. To this end, different perspectives together with the most acknowledged definitions of the hybrid warfare concept will be illustrated with various points of view, both from the Western and Russian perspectives. To better grasp the essence of the Russian hybrid warfare phenomenon, a famous article of Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov titled *The Value of Science Is in the Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations* will be analyzed deeply since the general literature bases the Russian hybrid warfare strategy on the articulations made in the article. This article constitutes the basis of various literary discussions related to the conceptualization of Russian hybrid activities. General Gerasimov draws attention to the changing nature of modern wars by exemplifying a series of developments and events and thereby makes suggestions to make Russian military strategy updated enough to survive the modern warfare environment.

The fourth chapter aims to analyze three important topics, two of which are emphasized by Valery Gerasimov in his famous article regarding the changing nature of modern wars. These topics will be categorized under two subtitles, each designating the underlying necessitates suggested by Valery Gerasimov for the Russian state to update its military and strategic thinking in light of the existing circumstances of

modern wars. Separately, one specific subtitle will provide insights into the Russian perspective following the collapse of the Soviet Union and Vladimir Putin's presidency, including the grand policy aspirations of the Russian state in world politics. In other words, these three topics will answer the main research question of the thesis in that they constitute the underlying necessities that showed up in the last two decades and constituted profound implications for Russian strategic thinking with regard to reformation.

In this aspect, the first subtitle will analyze the situation in post-Soviet Russia in terms of the nation-building process and the end of the bipolar world order of which the Soviet Union was one of the two great powers. That said, Russian foreign policy aspirations were shaped with respect to regaining the status of the Soviet Union, especially with Vladimir Putin's presidency, leading Russia to renew its military strategies. The second subtitle will touch upon the Russian experience in the Chechen Wars, including the asymmetrical means and forms that entangle Russian dignity domestically and internationally. The third subtitle is about the Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring uprisings marked by the new information technologies and social media. These irregular aspects of the 'modern wars' and the grand policy aspirations of Russia with Vladimir Putin's presidency, created serious implications for Russian strategic thinking and unveiled the need for change.

The fifth chapter covers five preliminary tools of the Russian hybrid approach with specific examples. These tools represent the main components of Russia's hybrid strategy. Firstly, Russian Special Forces (SOF) will be introduced and particular deployment areas. They were especially effective during the Crimea and Eastern Ukraine campaigns, where Russian SOF, also known as "little green men", played an essential role during the annexation with their covert actions. Secondly, Private Military Companies (PMCs) and the locations of their operations such as Ukraine, Syria, Libya, Venezuela will be covered. These companies constitute a crucial part of the Russian hybrid strategy since they can easily deny their links to the Russian state. Also, the covert nature of their actions makes them act independently for Russian policy agendas. The third tool describes Information Warfare (IW), which is as effective as the kinetic cases. IW has two dimensions: physical and cognitive, and constitutes one of the most destructive tools of hybrid warfare concept. The cognitive

dimension aims at conducting social influence operations and perception management activities through Internet environments and social media against the target communities. The physical dimension, also known as cyber-attacks, is a kind of a non-kinetic weapon to destroy critical information networks and infrastructures. The other preliminary tool is Government Organized Non-Governmental Organizations (GONGOs), which conduct pro-Kremlin activities to counter adversary influence operations, while Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) should typically be independent of state activities. However, Russian-backed GONGOs are involved in a series of activities such as supporting separatists during the Crimean annexation and promoting Russian culture, language, and nationalism abroad. These are effective soft power elements of Russian strategic thinking, especially in the Color Revolutions uprisings where Russia believes that Western-oriented NGOs played a crucial role in inciting protests and demonstrations as democratic actions. In this aspect, Russian-backed GONGOs play an essential role in countering the foreign NGOs to block their influence.

Last but not least, the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) is another public diplomacy tool that Russia is using to impose its agenda through the religious influence of ROC on communities. ROC carries out specific actions such as promoting the Russian political agenda, especially in Ukraine, where Orthodoxy is very influential. For example, in Ukraine, Russia used ROC-linked proxy groups to influence separatists and create pro-Russian factions that helped Russia annexed Crimea and parts of Eastern Ukraine.

As an overview of the literature, this thesis will benefit from a plethora of sources such as books, journal articles, scholarly reports, thesis/dissertations, discussion papers, and official documents of the Russian state institutions. Regarding the fact that this thesis aims at analyzing the Russian hybrid warfare conducts through the lens of Machiavelli's realist political philosophy, Machiavelli's writings will be interpreted as primary sources to obtain first-hand information in addition to the information gathered from various interpretations in books, research articles and discussion papers to understand the essence of Machiavelli's realist political philosophy. Also, Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov's article will provide the ground on which the concept of the underlying necessities behind the Russian hybrid warfare strategy will be based.

Since Russia's hybrid warfare strategy contains clandestine operations and covert actions, most of the literary sources that describe the cases of Russian hybrid conducts will be from the Western perspective.

CHAPTER 2

THE MACHIAVELLIAN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

> "It is better to be loved rather than feared or feared rather than loved? It might perhaps be answered that we should wish to be both: but since love and fear can hardly exist together, if we must choose between them, it is far safer to be feared than loved."
>
> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

2.1. Legacy of Machiavelli in the History of Politics

Born on 3 May 1469 in Florence, an Italian city-state, Niccolò Machiavelli received an outstanding education in humanist philosophy. As of the fourteenth century, the concept of humanist philosophy in education regarded as a legacy of prominent philosophers had already been flourishing in the Italian Renaissance intellectual community. He was only 29 when he was appointed to a diplomatic mission in the Florence administration, although he had not got any experience in political affairs before. The trend of *studia humanitatis* as a philosophical approach was regarded as fundamental for political professions.[2]

Combined with his experience in political life as a diplomat for fourteen years, his educational background raised him to a status where he is respected as a philosopher of modern politics and one of the forerunners of Realism that is accepted as one of the earliest schools of thought. His time as a secretary and diplomat saw him deal with numerous statecraft issues, both internal and external affairs, helping him structure his thoughts on the issue. Besides, he had an exclusive chance to directly examine and

[2] Quentin Skinner, "Machiavelli- A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)," *OXFORD University Press*, 1996, 5–7.

grasp the mentality and practice of native and foreign political figures, particularly their policy implementations.[3] Thus, Machiavellian philosophy is grounded on his own distillation of political experience together with his interest in ancient philosophical approaches.[4]

Taking into consideration the public crises, wars and game of thrones of the Florentine city in the early sixteenth century along with the power struggles against powerful city-states like Milan and Naples, Machiavelli, as a civil servant, realized Florence's deficiency in political and military affairs, and thus, he was in search of new thoughts and concepts for a greater state.[5]

Among his books, *The Prince* and *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livy* are the most famous works that reflect his political conceptualization. In these well-known works, he presents political aspects of warfare and thereby justifies using coercive means for ultimate political gains. To clarify, Ramsey asserts that Machiavelli's political writings are believed to have one primary aim – to form and preserve a sovereign state in Renaissance Italy. Thus, he explains Machiavelli's political revolution as follows:

> He conceived the state as functioning solely for human purposes and constructed rules of conduct that were not moral rules, but which were informed by a realistic and practical view of the world gleaned from observation of events and examples drawn from history. Machiavelli radically secularized political thought and initiated new ways of looking at man and society. It is with Machiavelli, that modern social and political theory begins.[6]

Based on Ramsey's remarks, it is clear that Machiavellianism had a radical approach to state politics as a diplomat and politician through his paradigm, creating a path

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[3] Damian Ilodigwe, "Machiavelli and the Limits of Realism in International Relations" 7, no. 1 (2019): 22, https://doi.org/10.15640/jirfp.v7n1a3.

[4] Link Daniel, "A Brief Biography of Niccolo Machiavelli and His Ideas," accessed March 17, 2021, https://medium.com/@linkdaniel/a-brief-biography-of-niccolo-machiavelli-and-his-ideas-8c8cc7949512.

[5] Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Penguin Classics, 1999), 6–7.

[6] Garrath Williams, "Interpreting Modern Political Philosophy: From Machiavelli to Marx," *Contemporary Political Theory* 3, no. 3 (2004): 21, https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.cpt.9300139.

forward that is followed and constructed upon by the subsequent philosophers in history of politics. In this manner, Lewis interprets Machiavelli as "the first clear-headed advocate of the application of conscious systematic realism to political affairs": "From Machiavelli Marx learned a great deal about the autonomy of politics, which owes no allegiance to moral values outside the law of social necessity."[7] Additionally, Rees mentions that the Machiavellian concept of politics became an inspiration source for prominent philosophers like Hegel and Fitche, who were representatives of the German school of thought in philosophy. Besides, the author illustrates Machiavelli's prominence in Soviet thinking as:

> For Lenin, there was no other way; in a situation of revolution, politics was akin to warfare in which success depended on the willingness countenance all practical means. The success achieved in this, however, must also shape the ends attained. This realism which is so central to Machiavelli's thought is the reason why he has exercised such a strong influence on Marxist thinkers.[8]

Likewise, Rees describes Machiavelli's fame in the history of political philosophy as: "Machiavelli is famous for his view on politics as based on the calculation of contending forces, objectives determined by needs of the state, based on cold detachment, without any moral or sentimental judgement impinging."[9]

Behind the fact that Machiavelli is regarded as a forefather of modern politics lies his ground-breaking discourse of politics and ethics in a way disassociated from his predecessors'. His perspectives of human instinct, society and government mark a break with middle age reasoning and sixteenth-century political hypothesis dependent on theological suppositions about God's motivations for man. Henceforth, he separated political matters from higher purposes like Christian morality, religious philosophy and religion.[10] According to his vision, ethical considerations should not

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[7] John Lewis, *The Life and Teaching of Karl Marx* (International Publishers, 1965), 35, https://archive.org/details/LifeTeachingMarx.

[8] E. A. Rees, *Political Thought from Machiavelli to Stalin: Revolutionary Machiavellism*, *Political Thought From Machiavelli to Stalin: Revolutionary Machiavellism*, 2004, 27–240, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230505001.

[9] Rees, 18.

[10] Williams, "Interpreting Modern Political Philosophy: From Machiavelli to Marx," 21.

be considered in politics, and instead, political quests should be grounded on expediency. This paradigm makes him one of the pioneers in his field since he led the Realist theory by putting aside the propositions of influential philosophers like Plato and Cicero that suggest a relationship between politics and ethics. This separation has become known as "power politics" in political science.

As explained in this chapter, Machiavelli presents a vast amount of advice in *The Prince* and *The Discourses* based on his experiences in the state administration not only by merely exemplifying political and military strategies but also by digging into philosophical issues on human nature in an attempt to innovate a discourse on inter-state relationships.

2.2. Different Interpretations of Machiavellian Philosophy

Based on his above-mentioned radical approach to political philosophy, the interpretation of Machiavellianism in modern political thought varies as Daniel states: "Machiavelli has almost become synonymous with deception and cunning. Today, if a politician uses cunning and deceitful tactics, they were most probably influenced by Machiavelli in one way or another."[11] At this point, although it is beyond the scope of this thesis, the philosophical interpretations of Machiavellian theory among the schools of thought are divided into two separate camps in general, one of which justifies his opinions related to morality on specific grounds as Cochrane brings up a clear highlight:

> Machiavelli did not deny the validity of Christian morality, and he did not pretend that a crime required by political necessity was any less crime. Rather he discovered … that this morality simply did not hold in political affairs and that any policy based on assumption that it would end in disaster. His factual, objective description of contemporary political practices, then, is a sign not of cynicism or of detachment, but of anguish.[12]

[11] Daniel, "A Brief Biography of Niccolo Machiavelli and His Ideas."

[12] Eric W. Cochrane, "Machiavelli: 1940–1960," *Journal of Modern History* 33, no. 2 (1961): 115.

Similarly, Berlin says there are apparent confusions regarding the interpretation of Machiavellian ideas, especially what he explicitly states or hints. He states that scholars put forward conflicting views based on their interpretations of the Machiavellian approach to morality and ethics in contemporary academia. However, according to him, the confusion does not stem from Machiavellian realism or favouring severe, unethical or vicious strategies that have contradicted philosophers since then. Instead, he suggests that the morality issue does not pertain only to Machiavellianism by pointing out "… The fact that the wicked are seen to flourish or that immoral courses appear to pay has never been very remote from the consciousness of mankind. The Bible, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle – to take some of the fundamental works of western culture…" However, as Berlin notes, it is because of "though-mindedness" and sharp rhetoric of Machiavellian theory in that Machiavelli exquisitely expresses his thoughts.[13]

The other school of thought, as explained by Warburton, actually describes Machiavelli as the personified form of evil due to his stand on morality in politics in general. However, the author touches upon the confusion and the cases where Machiavellianism suggests rulers behave without moral and ethical considerations where necessary. This perplexes the contemporary readers who would anticipate emphasising the significance of trustworthiness, empathy, and benevolence in a fair ruler. So, he asserts that the reason lies in the contradiction of Machiavellian philosophy with the classical norms.[14] In the same manner, regarding the versatile interpretations of the Machiavellian paradigm, Ramsey states:

> In the interpretive literature Machiavelli is variously described as the Galileo of politics, the first political scientist, an anti-metaphysical empiricist, a positivist, a realist, a pragmatist, a cynic. Conversely, he is seen as lacking a scientific mind and a historical sense, more artistic and intuitive than scientific. Or, he is the founder of metapolitics, of raison d'état, an advocate of realpolitik, a cold technician of political life. He

[13] Isaiah Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," 1972, 26–27, accessed March 21, 2021, https://fliphtml5.com/qhhw/uhji/basic.

[14] Nigel Warburton, Jon Pike, and Derek Matravers, "Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince," in *Reading Political Philosophy: Machiavelli to Mill*, ed. The Open University, 1st Edition (London: Routledge in association with the Open University, 2000), 4.

> is condemned as an evil ideologue, a despot, an absolutist, a teacher of evil, an atheist, a pagan and an anti-Christian.[15]

Depending on the point of view, the Machiavellian theory has two strikingly contradicting interpretations, whose contextual analyses are out of this thesis's content. Nonetheless, these contradictions can be perceived regarding the complicity of Machiavellian thinking in Machiavelli's political philosophy. In this manner, Rees describes him as "the defender of dictatorship and the sworn enemy of tyranny; the democrat who despairs of democratic means; the humanist who advocates inhumane methods."[16]

All in all, Satici proposes that when we look at Machiavelli's theory on moral criticism, we can say that he is the founder of a new morality because he conceptualized modern republic, defines citizenship virtue that would be discussed by Rousseau and Diderot and, would appear in the American and French revolution later on.[17]

2.3. Key Concepts on Statecraft

Machiavellianism puts forwards his resolutions on how a ruler should act by giving empirical illustrations in his books, especially *The Prince* and *The Discourses*. Machiavellian stand on such key concepts as virtue, necessity, morality, human nature, and power politics represent ideal leadership traits that starkly contradict the Idealist theory, which stems from morality, ethics, and the common good. The point here is Machiavelli's revolutionary dimension. He actually felt the need to redefine the sphere of morality on behalf of the state and rejects the humanist concern that necessitates ethical sensitivity for political success.[18]

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[15] Williams, "Interpreting Modern Political Philosophy: From Machiavelli to Marx," 24.

[16] Rees, *Political Thought from Machiavelli to Stalin: Revolutionary Machiavellism*, viii.

[17] Murat Satici, "Ahlak-Politika İlişkisi Açısından Machiavelli'nin Politika Teorisi," 114

[18] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1978), 48, https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/CBO9780511817878.

2.3.1. *Virtù* and *Necessità*

In his most acknowledged book, *The Prince*, Machiavelli proposes a concept of political governance, rejecting the mediaeval discourse that associates it with moral quality and the common good. Accordingly, the political administration is only justifiable when conducted by a 'virtuous' leader with common moral traits. Nevertheless, Machiavellianism does not justify political governance as to whether it is grounded on an ethical basis or not. Instead, it emphasises a correlation between power and governance, thereby proposing that power is the source of absolute rulership. In this line of thinking, Machiavellianism suggests that the sole aim of the rulership is to acquire and sustain his reign, which means possessing absolute power beyond everything.[19] This is the hypothesis reached by Machiavelli with the help of political know-how that he practised during his political career in the Florence administration. In the same manner, Nederman explains Machiavelli's emphasis on power politics as: "For Machiavelli, power characteristically defines political activity, and hence it is necessary for any successful ruler to know how power is to be used."[20] In this line of thinking, Machiavellianism argues that "the defining characteristics of a truly virtuoso prince will be willingness to do whatever is dictated by necessity – whether the action happens to be wicked or virtuous – in order to attain his highest ends."[21]

In this aspect and concerning the theory of power politics, Machiavelli handles the morality concept pragmatically based on political utility. It can be justified through his stands on human nature. He thinks that conducting conventionally moral actions brings catastrophe to the ruler considering the nature of men. Accordingly, his views on morality are directly associated with his discourses on humanistic philosophy, by which he clearly defines humankind as corrupt and untrustworthy. Further on, he expresses his thoughts on human nature as follows:

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[19] Cary Nederman, "Niccolò Machiavelli (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)," Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/machiavelli/.

[20] Nederman.

[21] Warburton, Pike, and Matravers, "Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince," 28.

> One can make this generalization about men: they are ungrateful, fickle, liars, and deceivers, they shun danger and are greedy for profit; while you treat them well, they are yours. They would shed their blood for you, risk their property, their lives, their sons, so long ... as danger is remote; but when you are in danger they turn away.[22]

Considering the fact that Machiavelli's dictum has its source in his perspectives on human nature, it can be observed in his interest in classics and ancient Roman history to get lessons and understand the traits of humankind, drawing practical conclusions and reaching the firm conviction on the essence of power politics by which he formulates his perception that humankind's nature and deficiency is unchanging, as in the cases of Ancient Greeks and Romans. So, in the light of his perception, Machiavelli is pursuing what really has occurred and is probably going to occur instead of what should occur in an ideal world.[23] In this aspect, his perceptions of human nature formulate his political vision.

According to Jones' interpretation, Machiavellian political theory seeks to answer two crucial questions. The first question is what men aspire to. This aspiration, whatever it is, is their good. The second question is what should they do to reach their aims. These practices are the substance of their virtues. Machiavelli's answer to the first question is that "every man aims at maintaining and expanding his power." The second answer is his political theory's essence since he argues that "political theory is nothing but the exposition of the political virtues, that is, the best techniques for securing and maintain power."[24]

Similarly, as per Berlin's perspective on Machiavelli's vision of human beings, which he assumes as the cornerstone of his theory, Machiavellianism suggests that history repeats itself all the time. On the assumption that citizens become effective, talented and pragmatic again by setting utopic ideals aside, magnificent achievements of the ancient Roman statecraft are likely to be revived. In this direction, leaders may need to consult to brutal actions, violence, deception and treason to save decadent societies.

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[22] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 54.

[23] Warburton, Pike, and Matravers, "Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince," 6.

[24] W. T. Jones, *Hobbes to Hume: A History of Western Philosophy*, Second Edition (Wadsworth Publishing, 1969), 29.

Further on, these traits can still be used against the subjects even if the society reestablishes itself vigorously because human beings are powerless and insane and, can divert from the norms that make them live as per the desired measures. Hence, people should be governed in accordance with the above-mentioned traits that strikingly contradicts the ethical grounds of the time.[25] Thus, Machiavellian understanding of human nature is explained as "Machiavelli's view of human beings as natural egoists with a lust for domination and power led him to see history as an area of conflict involving deceit, treachery and violence.

Nonetheless, Machiavellianism accepts the evil nature of these traits and qualifies the common good, Christian faith, meekness and affection, thereby proposing the Prince adopt these properties if possible.[26] On the other hand, Machiavelli believes that a ruler cannot have these qualifications thoroughly in all cases due to the nature of humankind, and that's why he recommends the ruler act divergently to achieve his ultimate goals. So, he explains his thinking as:

> For a man who wants to make a profession of good in all regards must come to ruin among so many who are not good. Hence it is necessary to a prince, if he wants to maintain himself, to learn to be able not to good, and to use this and not use it according to necessity.[27]

Considering the above-mentioned traits of human nature, Machiavellianism puts forwards that an effective rule is impossible without intimidating force on the subjects. On this account, as Rees describes, Machiavelli conceives politics and warfare as interrelated spheres while effectively separating ethics from politics and basing politics on practicality.[28] Thus, he adopts the idea that "…because there cannot be good laws where there are not good arms, I shall leave out the reasoning on laws and shall speak of arms."[29] That is to say, that intimidating force is the essence of political

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[25] Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," 44.

[26] Niccolò Machiavelli and Harvey C. Mansfield, *The Prince* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 68.

[27] Machiavelli and Mansfield, 61.

[28] Rees, *Political Thought from Machiavelli to Stalin: Revolutionary Machiavellism*, x.

[29] *Niccolò Machiavelli and Luigi Ricci, The Prince… Translated into English by Luigi Ricci* (London: Grant Richards, 1903), 47.

power and enforcement consolidates the ruling on a society. So, Machiavelli favours intimidating power as he states: "From this arises the question whether it is better to be loved more than feared, or feared more than loved. The reply is, that one ought to be both feared and loved, but as it is difficult for the two together, it is much safer to be feared than loved."[30]

In this line of thinking, the above-mentioned perspectives of Machiavelli represent his rejection of the old thinkers as an exploration of facts rather than imagination. According to him, the absolute truth that should be sought is all about the pragmatic actions required for the benefit of the state and the prosperity of the people.[31]

Likewise, he proposes that the grandest object of a "far-seeing and virtuoso" prince should be building an administration that will bring honour to him.[32] Thus, he puts aside an old school concept of virtue in favour of his conception of Machiavellian *virtù*[33] that is associated with patriotism and incorporates "different qualities at different times given what is necessary to attain goals in particular circumstances. Qualities which manifest *virtù* include fortitude in adversity, foresight and insight, willingness to take risks… The qualities of *virtù* can be displayed in evil actions as well as good."[34] In this line of thinking, the overall concept aims at saving decadent societies and reviving a corrupt state by the restructuring of *virtù*. There is a vast amount of definition of *virtù* in Machiavelli's works and the interpretations of scholars

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[30] Machiavelli and Ricci, 66.

[31] Julian W Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2018, 1–24, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/realism-intl-relations/.

[32] Skinner, "Machiavelli- A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)," 34.

[33] *Virtù, an Italian word meaning "virtue" or "power", is derived from the Latin virtus. (lit. "Manliness"). Virtù is a concept theorized by Niccolò Machiavelli, centered on the martial spirit and ability of a population or leader. But also encompassing a broader collection of traits necessary for maintenance of the state and "the achievements of great things".* Wikipedia contributors, "Virtù," *Wikipedia, The FreeEncyclopedia,* https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Virt%C3%B9&oldid=920555389 (acces sed April 2, 2021).

[34] Warburton, Pike, and Matravers, "Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince," 36.

in philosophy. Despite being interpreted in various manners, Machiavellian *virtù* is directly related to his vision of statecraft, as constantly highlighted in his studies.

Further on, the concept of *virtù* constitutes a benchmark for Machiavelli's vision since he justifies the ruler's success with having *virtù* while linking his failure to lack of it. Thus, Machiavelli praises Cesare Borgia as a successful ruler having these traits despite being cruel:

> ... a prince must want to have a reputation for compassion rather than for cruelty: none the less, he must be careful that he does not make bad use of compassion. Cesare Borgia was accounted cruel; nevertheless, this cruelty of his reformed the Romagna, brought it unity, and restored order and obedience. On reflection, it will be seen that there was more compassion in Cesare than in the Florentine people who, to escape being called cruel, allowed Pistoia to be devastated.[35]

As mentioned, Machiavelli's ideas on human nature lay the ground for his primary concept that segregates ethics from politics, which means possessing *virtù* according to him. This is very well explained by Jones' remarks that read as "The essence of Machiavelli's conception of politics lies in his conviction that most men are stupid, irrational, quite incapable of governing themselves intelligently."[36] Because politics and ethics interrelate in the humanist tradition of mediaeval philosophy, Machiavelli's attitude summarizes his vision of statecraft. He puts forward in his own words to emphasize the imperfect nature of humankind as "Those who have been present at any deliberative assemblies of men will have observed how erroneous their opinions of are; and in fact, unless they are directed by superior men, they are apt to be contrary to all reason."[37]

According to Machiavellianism, *virtù* is associated with gaining and sustaining absolute power. Henceforth, his concept of virtue is starkly contrasting those of others like Plato, whose perspectives on humankind is unlike Machiavelli's in that statecraft

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[35] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 53.

[36] Jones, *Hobbes to Hume: A History of Western Philosophy*, 27.

[37] Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Historical, Political, And Diplomatic Writings of Niccolo Machiavelli* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), 286, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo1.ark:/13960/t53f59x9n.

should be implemented as per the norms according to which the facts should be evaluated.[38]

As the medium of *virtù*, Machiavellianism ultimately aims at making the state and people reach worldly dignity and prosperity. In the third book of *The Discourses*, Machiavelli says:

> When the entire safety of our country is at stake, no consideration of what is just or unjust, merciful or cruel, praiseworthy or shameful, must intervene. On the contrary, every other consideration being aside, that course alone must be taken which preserves the existence of the country and maintains its liberty.[39]

On this front, while he advocates the use of all instruments (both ethical and unethical) to accomplish the desired political outcome, Machiavelli simultaneously accepts the malign nature of unethical political conduct.[40] In this line of thinking, the ruler can conduct vicious methods to reach the intended goal in particular political affiliations, but that does not mean that the traditional concept of virtue is atrocious and not preferable in communal or individual manners. Instead, the reason is that men are not good in essence and do not live as indicated by these intangible virtues in either the general population or the private circle. So, he does not seek to designate the moral codes or determine the ethical actions to be implemented by the ruler or citizens. Instead, he searches for capabilities and dispositions that the ruler needs to create, recover or sustain prosperity and cohesion.[41]

Therefore, as the pragmatic requirements necessitate, the ruler should focus on the ends rather than means as implied in *The Prince* "as to the actions of all men and especially those princes, against whom charges can not be brought in court, everyone looks at their result."[42] These remarks suggest that Machiavellian political philosophy

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[38] Jones, *Hobbes to Hume: A History of Western Philosophy*, 29.

[39] Nicollò di Bernado dei Machiavelli, "Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius: Book 3," *Machiavelli*, 2020, 178, https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822381570-015.

[40] Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations."

[41] Warburton, Pike, and Matravers, "Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince," 34–37.

[42] Machiavelli and Mansfield, *The Prince*, 71.

involves consequentialism at the heart of it as the essential element. To this end, Leo Strauss asserts that Machiavelli was in quest of "a complete revolution in thinking about right and wrong" in that he offers the ruler to adopt the doctrine that "the end justifies the means."[43]

In this aspect, the concept of *virtù* is one of the core elements of the Machiavellian theory, representing his vision of constructing a new ethical base for political actions bearing in mind the paradigm suggesting that means are justified by the end. The following quotation describes his vision of *virtù*:

> In particular, Machiavelli employs the concept of virtù to refer to the range of personal qualities that the prince will find it necessary to acquire in order to "maintain his state" and to "achieve great things", the two standard markers of power for him. This makes it brutally clear there can be no equivalence between the conventional virtues and Machiavellian virtù.[44]

Further on, Nederman points out that the Machiavellian concept of *virtù* breaks up with the traditional idea of virtue to a great extent. It requires the Prince to adjust to changing situations and thereby possess a "flexible disposition."[45] This is to say that anything is possible for the ruler to maintain his power; he should adapt to the circumstances. It is put forward by Machiavelli, referring to the Prince as:

> He must be prepared to vary his conduct as the winds of fortune and changing circumstances constrain him … and not deviate from right conduct if possible, but capable of entering upon the path of wrongdoing when this becomes necessary.[46]

At the same time, *virtù* is associated with the strategic capability of a military commander by Machiavellianism. It requires him to adjust himself to the prospects of warfare as the changing situations necessitate. According to him, politics is also a kind of warfare conducted in a distinct field. Therefore, the prince also needs to adopt *virtù*

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[43] Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Clencoe: The Free Press, 1958), 67.

[44] Nederman, "Niccolò Machiavelli (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)."

[45] Nederman.

[46] N. Machiavelli, "Machiavelli: The Prince," in *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price, 2nd Edition, vol. 53, 2019, 61.

just like the military commander does in conforming to the needs of the warfare.[47] This flexibility, necessitated by Machiavellianism for the ruler to sustain his reign, actually requires him to conduct all the possible actions as per the political circumstances dictate. Additionally, as the essence of *virtù*, the success is justified by Machiavelli regarding the flexibility of the ruler and thereby exemplifying the perpetual success Pope Julius II in that he adapted to the times and circumstances.[48]

Similarly, the Machiavellian concept of morality is distinctively grounded on a paradigm that requires a prince to stay prepared for war all the time, including the times of peace when he still needs to train and keep himself updated in theoretical and practical military affairs more than in war as asserted in *The Prince*: "A Prince ought to have no other aim or thought, nor select anything else for his study, than war and its rules and discipline…"[49]

Besides, Wood interprets Machiavellian *virtù* in association with the two determinant factors, war and *necessità*[50], or necessity. According to his analysis, *virtù* is "a set of qualities, or a pattern of behaviour most distinctively exhibited under what may be described as battlefield conditions, whether actual war or politics provide the context." In this line of thinking, he interprets that people conduct their actions either as a result of a *necessità* or preference. A higher virtù is what is generated by necessity since anarchy and chaos erupt when men act by their preferences. That's why he quotes that good actions happen when the necessity arises, and therefore, men become earnest in times of starvation and hardship.[51] Similarly, as per the Berlin's interpretation of Machiavelli, nations should consistently be at war with each other because they have disparate aspirations. Henceforth, Machiavellianism considers history as a perpetual

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[47] Neal Wood, "Machiavelli's Concept of Virtù Reconsidered," 1967, 170–71.

[48] Nicollò Machiavelli, *Machiavelli: The Chief Works and Others*, ed. Allan Gilbert (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1989), 91.

[49] Machiavelli and Ricci, *The Prince*, 67–68.

[50] As per the interpretation of Meinecke, *necessità* is term that describes the sole aim of the politics as the survival of the state. In this regard, this ultimate goal requires the use of all practical means. Sullivan, Robert R. "Machiavelli's Balance of Power Theory" 54, no. 2 (1973): 258–70. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42859158.

[51] Wood, "Machiavelli's Concept of Virtù Reconsidered," 166.

interaction of vicious rivalry, in which the sole aim of reasonable men is to prevail in the eyes of their associates and descendants.[52] Consequently, through Machiavellian perception, war is a case of necessity and creates *virtù.*

Further on, war makes people dynamic and robust, and as a result, they acquire *virtù* that is required endurance in states of escalation and battle. Bearing in mind the consistent hostilities, each belligerent should act accordingly with their military well prepared for the necessities of the existing conditions. So, *virtù* can be defined as the repercussion of the inevitability of warfare.[53] Thus, Machiavellian *virtù* includes being flexible in warfare, the fact that is attributed paramount importance in Machiavellian vision as stated in the fourteenth chapter of *The Prince* – "How a prince should organize his militia": "A prince, therefore, must have no other object or thought, nor acquire skill in anything, except war, its organization, and its discipline. The art of war is all that is expected of a ruler."[54]

On the whole, Machiavelli creates his moral concept that is no surprise different from the ancient understanding of ethics and the common good. He thinks that moral values should serve the state's interests, and that is how a ruler can acquire the greatest virtue. What Machiavellian *virtù* offers to the Prince in some instances is described clearly as:

> For politics, Machiavellian thought, at least in its most challenging form, is quite different; the idea is that it is sometimes legitimate for political rulers, precisely because they are rulers, to deceive, cheat, betray or even torture and murder, where these acts are clear violations of the moral code that seems to bind us all.[55]

As highlighted in the above-mentioned remarks, Machiavelli suggests specific violent means for the Prince to maintain his reign if circumstances require. For him, political necessity determines the nature of actions adapted to particular cases. However, it is essential to note that conducting these violent and forceful means is aimed at

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[52] Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," 73.

[53] Wood, "Machiavelli's Concept of Virtù Reconsidered," 168.

[54] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 87.

[55] Warburton, Pike, and Matravers, "Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince," 61.

maintaining society's cohesion, peace, and well-being. On this direction, Rees' interpretation of the perception that Machiavellianism is associated with immoralism on certain occasions instead of amoralism is worth mentioning as he says: "… amoralism in politics was justified in particular circumstances, to deal with specific problems, and that it was not envisaged as a permanent system of rule: it was concerned with constructing a new state or reforming an existing state."[56]

Consequently, Machiavelli's realistic approach assumes the most challenging scenarios in that his advice carries the aspects of Renaissance Italy where Machiavelli sees degeneration and volatility in internal and external political affairs, and he thereby presents his teachings for the Prince to maintain his rule in all possible circumstances by creating a conceptual joint between *virtù* and *necessità* that constitutes Machiavellian philosophy of statecraft in that the former is the recognition of latter in his way of thinking.

2.3.2. The *Raison d'etat* Doctrine

Another aspect of the Machiavellian theory worth analyzing is the doctrine of *raison d'etat,* which was identified with Machiavellianism in the modern age, although he never uses the term in his works. In this manner, Rees puts forwards that "The idea of raison d'etat was developed from Machiavelli, and elaborated famously by the German scholar Friedrich Meinecke.[57] Accordingly, Meinecke approaches to morality and the sake of state subjects from the *raison d'etat* perspective, which occupies a preliminary place in Machiavellian philosophy. So, he puts forward that "The striving for security and self-preservation at any price is behind all conduct according to *raison d'etat".*[58] Similarly, Ramsey argues that the subject of necessity in political actions is the essence of *raison d'etat* in that the concept requires seeking power by any means. Thus, the author defines the term as "*Raison d'etat* refers to what a statesman must do, what it

[56] Rees, *Political Thought from Machiavelli to Stalin: Revolutionary Machiavellism*, 242.

[57] Rees, 241.

[58] Friedrich Meinecke, "Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison D'Etat and Its Place in Modern History," 265, accessed March 23, 2021, https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=79xwh_Rx9xkC&pg=PA25&hl=tr&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false.

is logical and rational to do to preserve the interests of the state." [59] In the light of the definition, the term constitutes one of the core elements of Machiavellianism, clearly emphasizing the priority of the state over ethical considerations.

Further on, Meinecke sheds light on the doctrine of *raison d'etat*, dating it back to ancient times, and provides ancient cases as: "In Book 3 of *De officiis*, Cicero discussed fully from the Stoic point of view the conflict between morality and what is useful to the State…".[60] He describes the concept from the beginning, the ancient world, to the modern age. As he explains, the doctrine of *raison d'etat* was nurtured in ancient times due to the absence of a universal religion, making states use their free power without being bounded by articles of faith. As a result, secular tendencies in state traditions created the accordance between the ethics of men and states and, so did between politics and ethics.[61] Obviously, the author highlights the analogy between the sake of state and morality, meaning that they may clash in specific periods depending on the dominant trends of philosophy. On this account, *raison d'etat* lost its influence in mediaeval times with the dominance of Christian ethics that positioned itself to a supra-national point where they dictated their ethical codes by restraining political actions into morally drawn lines.[62]

In this sense, the notion of *raison d'etat* in the mediaeval age has supreme importance to understanding the Machiavellian theory. It is also starkly relevant to what Machiavellianism was against. In addition, Jones highlights the centre of mediaeval ideology and the relationship between political issues and morality as:

> For the middle ages, the center from which all thoughts proceeded and to which it returned was the conviction that there exists a God, who is perfect, infinite and completely good, whose representatives on earth is the pope in Rome and whose heavenly kingdom finds an earthly counterpart in the holy and apostolic catholic Church… For the middle

[59] Williams, "Interpreting Modern Political Philosophy: From Machiavelli to Marx," 27.

[60] Meinecke, "Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison D'Etat and Its Place in Modern History," 25.

[61] Meinecke, 25.

[62] Meinecke, 27.

> ages, the salvation of the soul is not merely man's primary concern, it is his only concern.[63]

Thus, mediaeval ontology dictates a moral concept that prerequisites heavenly virtues on all aspects of worldly affairs and politics. As a result, it creates a political order obedient not to the will of state administration but supra-national sentiments. At the time, the universal moral code was prevailing with Christianity, binding even for the states and the concept of *raison d'etat* was losing ground in parallel. When the national states, with the lead of strong emperors, consolidated their power over the Christian faith and ethics in the late mediaeval age, the interests and sake of states were on the rise again. Nonetheless, the modern era took over a tradition witnessing a harsher clash between *raison d'etat* and morality.

As mentioned in the previous part by Wood's interpretation of *necessità*, Meinecke argues that the theory of necessità is the propeller of virtù as per the vision of Machiavellianism that he regards as forerunner the *raison d'etat* doctrine. These two terms are reiterated perpetually in Machiavelli's writings and have paramount importance in shaping Machiavellian theory. Accordingly, Machiavelli's use of these two theories condensates his statecraft vision. In this aspect, he formulates a cause and effect relationship between these two theories by attributing the willpower and sense of governing a state to *virtù*, together with a vast amount of implications, while connecting the driving force behind this concept to *necessità*. So, the correlation between *virtù* and *necessità* is what suggests the ruler implement 'underhand measures' and makes them legitimate to use.[64] Likewise, he discusses the vital importance of *necessità* in the third book of *The Discourses*. He says that it is an indispensable actor in defining the practices of a ruler in that it winds him up to triumph in his practices. The same applies to human beings because their actions become more fabulous when forced by *necessità* and faced with difficulties.[65]

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[63] W. T. Jones, *Masters Of Political Thought Vol-II Machiavelli to Bentham*, n.d., 26.

[64] Meinecke, "Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison D'Etat and Its Place in Modern History," 37–40.

[65] Niccolò Machiavelli, Harvey C. Mansfield, and Nathan Tarcov, *Discourses on Livy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 144–45.

Additionally, regarded as a benchmark in inter-state relations, Machiavellian ideas originated due to the necessity that requires him to offer advices for the fraudulent situation of the Florentine government in the Renaissance era. This brought him distinctive fame in the history of politics. What makes Machiavellianism distinct in political science is the concept that correlates politics and warfare, as Amoroso clearly states:

> Even though "Machiavellian" became the term used to describe his cynical analysis of deceptive politics, his greatest contribution to historical thought was coupling his ideas of politics to a subject that had never before been considered a political issue: war. Prior to Machiavelli, war regarded as a means of gaining territory, resources, settling religious differences or achieving glory for oneself on the field of battle. Machiavelli discussed how his experiences had taught him that war, and military matters in general, had always been used politically.[66]

Henceforth, the fact that he links the political deficits to military incapability should essentially be analyzed to understand Machiavelli's vision of statecraft and the doctrine of *raison d'etat*. In the last chapter of *The Prince* – "Exhortation to Seize Italy and to Free Her from the Barbarians" – Machiavelli draws attention to military incapability and advises the new ruler who newly rises to power. Accordingly, he asserts that turmoil in Italian state administration and society results from the loss of 'military virtue' or capability. Hence, he proposes the new ruler adopt a new *modus operandi* since the ancient military techniques are useless and unfunctional. By inventing such updated tactics that ensure excellent and steady governance, he can gain a unique glory as a ruler who just comes to power. So, new military structures with an avantgarde military strategy are a priority for the state's safety against foreigners.[67] Likewise, this was clearly described in the interpretation Craig and Gilbert as reads: "… his conviction that the military organization of contemporary Italian states needed changing was a driving force, a central concern behind all his reflections on the world politics."[68] Machiavelli's standpoint on warfare matters

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[66] Alexander Amoroso, "War and Politics in the Thought of Machiavelli," *Armstrong Undergraduate Journal of History* 6, no. 2 (2016): 11–2016, https://doi.org/10.20429/aujh.2016.060206.

[67] Machiavelli and Mansfield, *The Prince*, 105.

[68] Gordon A. Craiig and Felix Gilbert, *Makers of Moderd Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret, 2010, 11, https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400835461-003.

constitutes the ground of his political vision. His exclusive legacy in the history of warfare takes its roots from his paradigm that constructs a bridge between the developments in the military structure and revolutionary progress in the communal and political circles. What his political and military distillations taught him is the notion that societies can confront the strength of fortune by possessing *virtù*, capability and power. In this way, they can survive the anarchic nature of the world order. Besides, Machiavelli's enthusiasm for Roman statecraft legacy was influential for him to grasp the essence of international relationships that necessitates nations to engage in warfare with each other constantly. Therefore, all governments' ultimate aim is to bolster and spread since warfare is the indispensable practice of political affairs.[69]

Thus, the Machiavellian dictum asserts that successful governance is only possible by "recognizing the force of circumstances, accepting what necessity dictates, and harmonizing one's behavior with the times."[70]

As mentioned above, Machiavellianism puts forward the perception that warfare is not conducted only with conventional means. Instead, it requires the deployment of all other means, including political, diplomatic and so on, because war is the continuation of political objectives. By explaining Caesar's case, in which his political opponents plotted to assassinate him during a senate meeting to take over the power, Machiavelli depicts conspiracy as a substance of warfare in political affairs that is implemented without conventional troops and military actions. This illustration lays the ground of Machiavellian perception as he practices "the combined strategies of war commanders in politics, thus making political governance and military leadership coherently linked."[71] In this direction, to redefine the sphere of ethics in his philosophy, by replacing "…the theocentric ontology of medievalism with an anthropocentric ontology…"[72], Machiavelli constructs his moral values based on his political experience distilled in politically fragile Renaissance Italy of the time.

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[69] Machiavelli and Mansfield, *The Prince*, 11–24.

[70] Warburton, Pike, and Matravers, "Niccolo Machiavelli: The Prince," 27.

[71] Amoroso, "War and Politics in the Thought of Machiavelli."

[72] Ilodigwe, "Machiavelli and the Limits of Realism in International Relations," 27.

All in all, this chapter seeks to present the essence of Machiavellian political philosophy based on the three key concepts that attribute certain qualities to the ruler and describe what traits he should adopt to protect the state's sovereignty. Thus, these concepts underlie the Machiavellian approach to politics. At the heart of Machiavellian political philosophy, there lies the stability of state and peace of society as priorities by setting aside ethical considerations and heavenly concerns. With his insights into human nature, he proposes an unprecedented notion of statecraft in his time. To grasp the essence of the Machiavellian paradigm, two fundamental principles that he offers to the statesman have paramount importance. First of all, a statesman must do what is necessitated by each particular circumstance. Secondly, a statesman must have a flexible orientation to adapt himself to the changing conditions of the time, both in political and military practices.

Henceforth, Machiavelli's most outstanding feature or what makes him either famous or infamous in the history of political philosophy is his stand on ethics and morality, which also makes him the forefather of Realist theory. In conclusion, Machiavellian political philosophy takes its roots from political consequentialism rather than the clash between politics and morality. In this aspect, the conceptual framework based on Machiavellian political insights will pave the way for understanding the question as to what necessitated Russia to adopt hybrid warfare methods.

To this end, the next chapter will examine the political and military evolution of post-Soviet Russia by considering the effects of the USSR's collapse, the Chechen wars, the Western influence both on its soil and neighbour states, the Color Revolutions and in a nutshell, the reasons as well as the necessities that have led Russia on adopting hybrid methods together with a quick introduction to the Soviet legacy and the implementations of modern sense hybrid methods back then. In this aspect, two essential concepts will be exemplified to assess Russia's hybrid mentality better. All these will give clues about how Russia has evolved into a conservative and xenophobic society and has developed an inclination towards deception. Later on, this chapter will introduce the hybrid warfare concept, based on a famous article written in 2013 by Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov. It will describe Russian perspectives on modern wars, thereby revealing the need for an update in Russian strategic thinking, which will pave the way towards a hybrid warfare approach.

CHAPTER 3

THE PATH TO HYBRID WARFARE IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN STRATEGIC THINKING

The concept of hybrid warfare has become the focus of attention among military theorists since Russian intervention into Crimea in March 2014. Although roots of the hybridity concept are taken back to the ancient times in the war literature, it is preliminary associated with Russian activities by the Western strategists and scholars as Russia is acknowledged as the pioneer practitioner of the concept in 21st-century military thought. To this end, the term is considered a conceptualization of the Western thinkers to counter the complex nature of Russian belligerence. On the other hand, this complexity is necessitated by the developments encountered in political, social, technological and military arenas after the USSR's dissolution and President Putin's idea of Novorossiya (New Russia). Therefore, this chapter introduces Russia's historical predisposition to the concept of hybrid warfare together with the legacy of Soviet thinking that carries the aspects of hybrid methods.

3.1. Soviet Legacy of Maskirovka: The Art of Deception

The idea of hybrid warfare is not new to Russian strategic thinking. It was implemented in the framework of denial and deception techniques and identified as *Maskirovka* – the art of deception – in the Soviet statecraft tradition. In his article *Maskirovka 2.0: Hybrid Threat, Hybrid Response,* Roberts identifies the concept of hybrid warfare that Russia has been implementing as the continuation of Soviet military thinking.[73] Similarly, Vowell shares the same understanding and states that

[73] James Q. Robberts, "Maskirovka 2.0: Hybrid Threat, Hybrid Response," 2015.

Russian application of hybrid techniques is an expansion of Soviet operational doctrine of "Maskirovka" that encompasses all methods such as ploy, fraud, etc. both political and military wise, aiming at winning strategic leverage or victory against the enemy before triggers are pulled on the battlefield.[74] Wither also states that "Many of the methods Russia has used in Ukraine date back to the Soviet era and the application of *Maskirovka*, or military deception. Soviet forces effectively applied this during World War II and Cold War proxy conflicts."[75] Thus, this chapter first analyses the historical background of deception in Russian strategic thinking. Secondly, the roots of hybrid warfare observed in the Soviet military doctrine of *Maskirovka* that later evolved into Reflexive Control (RC) theory as of the 1960s will be mentioned.

3.2. The Evolution of the Hybrid Warfare in Russian Strategic Thinking

Understanding the evolution of the hybrid concept and the path forward to it in contemporary Russian strategic thinking requires an understanding of the legacy of Soviet military doctrine that is called *Maskirovka* in Russian and harbours today's hybrid tools or, more specifically, the concept of denial and deception(D&D) as core elements in military affairs of the Soviet Union. *Maskirovka* means deception and is an umbrella term in Soviet thinking that consisted of camouflage, concealment and deception as constituent elements. However, in the literature, deception is more generally used as a general term to describe the above-mentioned aspects of *Maskirovka*.[76] So, the deception term will be used to refer to the concept of *Maskirovka* and its constituent elements in this thesis. Regarding the definitions in military terms, *Soviet Military Encyclopedia* designates deception as "[A] means of securing combat and the daily activities of forces; a complexity of measures, directed to mislead the

[74] JB Vowell, "Maskirovka: From Russia, With Deception | RealClearDefense," 2016, https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2016/10/31/maskirovka_from_russia_with_deception_110282.html.

[75] James K. Wither, "Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare," *The Quarterly Journal* 15, no. 2 (2016): 73–87, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26326441.

[76] David Hamilton, "Deception in Soviet Military Doctrine and Operations" (Naval Postgraduate School, 1986), 49, http://hdl.handle.net/10945/21758.

enemy regarding the presence and disposition of force."[77] Gerwehr and Glenn make a similar definition by stating, "Military deception aims to deliberately induce misinterpretation in another for tactical, operational or, strategic advantage… Deception is used to adversely affect an opponent's decision-making processes most often to influence or degrade enemy command and control."[78] Shaw has a similar approach to deception and defines it as: "… military commanders use deception to gain an advantage over the enemy by presenting information (either true or false) that leads the enemy commander to take actions that disadvantage his forces relative to one's own."[79]

In this aspect, the Soviet Army is the most ardent practitioner of deception concept broadly and practically in the history of modern wars. It was examined both theoretically and practically by Soviet military strategists in a comprehensive manner in two decades before World War II as to how and why implement the D&D tactics. *Maskirovka* was conducted essentially in all Soviet military campaigns, most notably during the Great Patriotic War. Together with the conventional use of the Soviet Army, clever use of deception methods is one of the core elements of Soviet victory. Since then, the importance of the successful conduct of *Maskirovka* became subject to numerous scholarly works by Russian/Soviet military theorists.[80]

With a brief introduction to the deception concept in Soviet military doctrine, the historical background of the idea is worthy of mention. The idea of deception has a long history in military thought. Sun Tzu, the ancient Chinese military strategist who lived in 6th century B.C., mentions the importance of deception *inter alia* numerous other war strategies in *The Art of War* and describes it as "All warfare is based on

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[77] "Military Deception Tactics of the World Wars | Historical Spotlight | News | Wargaming," accessed May 23, 2021, https://wargaming.com/en/news/military_deception_tactics/.

[78] Scott Gerwehr and Russell W Glenn, "Deception," in *The Art of Darkness Book Subtitle: Deception and Urban Operations* (RAND Corporation), 18–20, accessed May 23, 2021, https://doi.org/10.7249/mr1132a.11.

[79] Eric Shaw, "Military Deception at the Operational Level War," 2014, 2, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264145645_Military_Deception_at_the_Operational_Level_War.

[80] David M. Glantz, "Soviet Military Deception in the Second World War," *American Intelligence Journal* 12, no. 1 (1991): 21, https://www.jstor.org/stable/44319066.

deception."[81] Another well-known example of military deception is illustrated in *The Iliad*, which dates back to the 8th century. Accordingly, the big wooden horse full of Greek soldiers inside was offered a gift to Troy city by the Greeks who could not penetrate the city's walls by conventional means. As a result, the deceptive tool called the "Trojan Horse" brought the Greeks victory in the city's conquest.[82] These are the two prominent illustrations of the deception concept that date back to ancient times. As a similar but not that old example, Machiavellian discourse also underlies the prominence of deception in *The Discourses on Livy* and praises the use of deception in warfare as the following phase highlights: "Although to use fraud in all one's actions is detestable, nevertheless in carrying on war it is praiseworthy and brings fame; he who conquers the enemy by fraud is praised as much as he who conquers them by force."[83]

It is clear from the above-mentioned definitions that deception is a commonly used non-conventional tool in military affairs and has a decisive influence in warfare to convince the opponent to a fact different from the truth. It also has its evolution depending on the means of political, military, social and technological developments through centuries, especially in the modern world where information is one of the most dominant factors and makes deception an indispensable part of modern wars.

Turning back to the Soviet heritage of deception, Hamilton dives deeper into the socio-cultural reasons regarding the place of deception in Russian society in his MA thesis named *Deception in Soviet Military Doctrine and Operations.* He thinks that examining the Soviet employment of military deception especially has attracted attention since World War II because the Soviet Army's experience during the war constituted the foundation of their approach to modern conventional warfare. Similarly, military deception was deeply rooted in this experience they acquired during

[81] Giles, "Sun Tzu On The Art Of War," *Sun Tzu On The Art Of War*, 2013, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315030081.

[82] George Fredric Franko, "The Trojan Horse at the Close of the Iliad," *Classical Journal* 101, no. 2 (2005): 121–23, https://www.jstor.org/stable/30038644.

[83] Machiavelli, *Machiavelli: The Chief Works and Others*, 518.

the war.[84] That's why World War II has paramount importance to grasp the essence of deception in Soviet thinking.

Apart from this fact mentioned above, Hamilton also questions the underlying factors regarding the Soviets' predisposition for deception. According to him, the primary reason for a state to adopt such a predisposition is related to the need for security due to the threats perceived. To avoid threats and maintain security, it is a typical approach for a state to deceive the enemy. Henceforth, he classifies the Soviet Union as one of such states asserting that "The Soviets have shown a distinct proclivity for using deception and they have a long Russian history in which this proclivity is deeply rooted."[85] In this aspect, there are specific experiences in Russian history that led to the feeling of insecurity and sense of siege and perception of constant threat in Russian thinking. As Diligensky and Chugrov assert, one of the primary reasons behind Russian alienation from the rest of the world, especially from the west, is the adoption of Eastern Orthodoxy, which cut the ties off from Europe. To this end, the authors argue that "Russia's Byzantine orientation resulted in a conservative, anti-intellectual, and xenophobic worldview that became increasingly isolated from the mainstream of European history for a number of centuries…"[86] Likewise, another aspect of the Russian predisposition *inter alia* various determinants is related to geopolitical insecurity together with "besieged fortress mentality" that shapes Russia's view of international relations and comprehensive strategic goals. This notion has shaped its relations with other nations for hundreds of years. This is to say that:

> This "persistent sense of vulnerability that never lies far beneath the surface in the consciousness of Russia's rulers" is born of a geography that is difficult to defend from external invasion, a close proximity to other great powers, and—as much as any other factor—Russia's own expansionist tendencies, which throughout history have frequently reduced security rather than bolster it.[87]

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[84] Hamilton, "Deception in Soviet Military Doctrine and Operations," 8–38.

[85] Hamilton, 39–97.

[86] Guerman Diligensky and Sergei Chugrov, "'The West' in Russian Mentality," 2000, 5.

[87] "Four Myths about Russian Grand Strategy | Center for Strategic and International Studies," accessed May 23, 2021, https://www.csis.org/blogs/post-soviet-post/four-myths-about-russian-grand-strategy.

Both these facts shape the Soviet predisposition for deception as per the remarks of Hamilton, who additionally states that the predisposition is also related to "autocratic, oligarchic, secretive, and deceptive" nature of Soviet leaders. To this end, Soviet bureaucracy is closed to the outer world as a result of which "Deception is used habitually in all realm of Soviet behavior, be it political, ideological, economic, or military, to protect them from any perceived threat."[88] In this aspect, the fact that Soviet ideology of communism saw capitalism as the greatest constant threat was what made the Soviet community, as the mere fortress socialism according to their views, lean on deception and clandestineness regarding the fact that "Deception is an art which transcends the military realm; in fact, it permeates almost every aspect of any given society."[89]

These are some illustrations, among many others, on Russian predisposition to deception. It seems clear that Russian society's geopolitical and socio-cultural background has paved the way into a more isolated community with scepticism and ethnocentrism. To this end, deception is the best way to appease this scepticism and ethnocentrism of Russian society historically. Hamilton's other argument on the predisposition issue is related to the Mongol invasion of Russia in 1223.[90] Known as 'Kievian Russia', it stayed under Mongol control for 250 years. In the literature, it is a widely acknowledged fact that the invasion had a profound impact on Russian society in various aspects, be it political, economic or military wise. Kievian Russians most specifically inherited the military tactics of the Mongols. It is also acclaimed that the above-mentioned totalitarian nature of modern Russia and the Soviet Union is a heritage of the Mongol rule of Kievian Russia, where democratic practices somewhat prevailed until the Mongol administration, when it was severely damaged. The rule of the Mongols lasting 250 years was also influential in Russia's separation from the western values and becoming an Asiatic society in that the Mongols both carried and applied the aspects of Chinese influence in administrational and military affairs that

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[88] Hamilton, "Deception in Soviet Military Doctrine and Operations," 41.

[89] Hamilton, 14.

[90] Hamilton, 25–98.

Russia inherited during that period. It is especially emphasized that the Mongol rule was decisive in sealing the fate of Russian society in all spheres more than any occasion in Russian history.[91] In this manner, it is suggested that the Soviet military strategy and tactics inherited a great deal from the Mongols, who were the most creative and outstanding practitioners of military deception. Henceforth, the Soviet predisposition to deception is rooted in the Mongol invasion in the 13th century.[92] In the light of these remarks, deception in Russian strategic thinking has a long history, even dating back to the Mongol invasion. Thus, it can be observed in both Soviet and post-Soviet military thought.

Regarding the application of *Maskirovka*, there are specific examples in Soviet history, while the technical and operational content of these examples is out of the context of this thesis since it will be quite detailed and lengthy. So, only the most prominent and well-known cases will be provided as examples with brief information. These are namely the deception techniques conducted in World War II and Soviet invasions that took place in the subsequent period.

The Soviet experience in World War II showed that the Soviet Army had the skill of running massive military operations compromising deceptions methods such as camouflage and concealment. In this direction, the following quote summarizes the significance of World War II for the development of deception in the Soviets:

> The devastation wreaked on the Soviet Union in the opening weeks of World War II, after the German surprise attack, reminded them of the value of surprise, while four traumatic years of the war forced them to develop an expertise in the planning and execution of deception.[93]

As a specific example, the Soviet *Maskirovka* hit the top deception during World War II. Against the Germans during Operation Bagration, thousands of model tanks were utilized, and simulations were made to mislead the German troops. A unit of German

[91] Dustin Hosseini, "The Effects of the Mongol Empire on Russia," GeoHistory, 2005, https://geohistory.today/mongol-empire-effects-russia/.

[92] Hamilton, "Deception in Soviet Military Doctrine and Operations," 224–99.

[93] Hamilton, 99.

forces ultimately perished. Against the Japans, they managed to camouflage more than a million Soviet armed forces with their materials.[94]

In addition to World War II, three primary Soviet operations in which deception techniques had a decisive impact are commonly referred to in the literature. These are the invasions of the Soviet Army respectively in Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1958), and Afghanistan (1979). In this aspect, Bristol states that the Soviet Union conducts hybrid tactics regularly to challenge its opponents in cases where conventional war techniques were unattainable for various reasons. In these three cases, the Soviet Union utilized "the cover of peace keeping, ensuring democratic government and civil stability as cover to insert military forces to preserve its control over restive populations."[95] To this end, these cases will be very briefly described since the operational aspects are out of the context of this thesis. In the first case, the Soviets expressed their intentions to stop civil unrest in Hungary by disguising their true aims of gaining military and diplomatic leverage. Together with the Soviet press, they used Hungarian radio messages and Soviet diplomats to spread disinformation related to their disguised intentions that were reflected as the protection of the military premises from rebellions. However, they later captured those critical points on the contrary and ended the unrest's bloody violence by promising to withdraw at the end. However, instead of withdrawing, they invaded the country with armed forces.[96]

The second case carried similar traits with Hungary invasion, but with a different pretext. Similar deception methods were used, but the invasion preparation was carried out under the disguise of a joint military drill with Czechoslovakia, which removed its military elements away from the courses of the Soviet approach, as a result of which the invasion was facilitated.

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[94] Gregory K. Butts, "Russian Deception Operations: Another Tool for the Kit Bag" (School of Advanced Military Studies United States Army Command and General Staff College, 1999), 28–37, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA370313.pdf.

[95] Jeffrey Bristol, "Hybrid War and What to Do About It," The Strategy Bridge, 2021, https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/4/21/hybrid-war-and-what-to-do-about-it.

[96] Butts, "Russian Deception Operations: Another Tool for the Kit Bag," 30–32.

In the Afghanistan case, the pretext was to help state security and counter-terrorism to the Afghan government, while the true intention was to replace it with a friendly one. In this case, deception methods can be divided into political and military categories. On the political side, the deception efforts aimed at convincing the West about the diplomatic and military presence of the Soviets in Afghanistan. Regarding the military deception cases during the preparation phase of the invasion, the Soviets were allowed to dispose of an air force unit, relatively more extensive than initially demonstrated, to Kabul airport under the pretext of protecting it. On another occasion, the Soviet experts suggested that batteries of Afghan Army vehicles be detached for seasonal maintenance. Also, the Soviets persuaded the same troops to hand over their military equipment for inventory purposes.

Last but not least, the Soviet officials got Afghan military personnel drunk in a feast and kept them closed in.[97] These specific cases show the extent of the use of M*askirovka* in Soviet military practices. A more refined version of Maskirovka will be discussed with specific examples in the next part.

3.3. Reflexive Control (RC) Theory

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the Soviet *Maskirovka* was evolved or refined into Reflexive Control (RC) theory as of the 1960s. Vladimir A. Lefebvre is acknowledged as the originator of the concept, and he designated the theory as a "process by which one enemy transmit the reasons or bases for making decisions to another."[98] or as one of his books' title suggests: "a Soviet concept of influencing an adversary's decision-making process."[99] It is also stated by Thomas as: "Reflexive control is defined as a means of conveying to a partner or an opponent specially

[97] Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1981) quoted in Butts, "Russian Deception Operations: Another Tool for the Kit Bag."

[98] Vladimir A. Lefebvre, *Elements of Reflexive Games Logic* (Moscow, 1966) quoted in Volodymyr N. Shemayev, "Cognitive Approach to Modeling Reflexive Control in Socio-Economic Systems," *An International Journal*, vol. 22, 2007, 30.

[99] Vladimir A. Lefebvre, *Reflexive Control: The Soviet Concept of Influencing an Adversary's Decision-Making Process* (Moscow: Science Applications, 1984) quoted in Shemayev, "Cognitive Approach to Modeling Reflexive Control in Socio-Economic Systems."

prepared information to incline him to voluntarily make the predetermined decision desired by the initiator of the action."[100] In the light of both these definitions, RC theory carries similar traits with *Maskirovka* in that both concepts are based on deception. At the same time, the latter incorporates the former *inter alia* various other tools. To put it in a broader vision, it is a particular influence operation and predecessor of modern information warfare. In the essence of RC theory (see Figure 1), there lies a core component that is described as: "an actor provides specific and predetermined information to another actor, with the explicit goal to control decisions made by the receiver."[101]

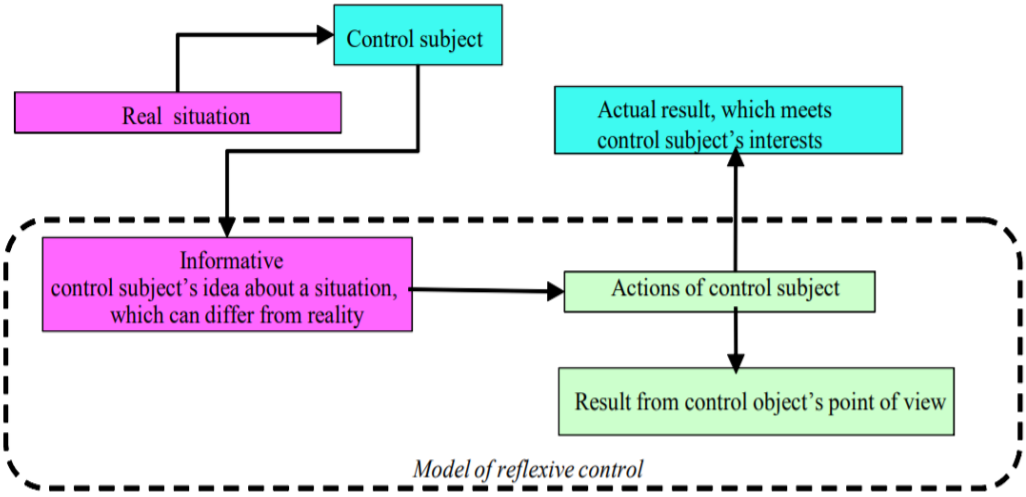

Figure 1: Model of Reflexive Control.[102]

In other words, by interfering with the decision-making mechanisms of a target by applying methods such as "camouflage, disinformation, encouragement, blackmail by force", the aim is to create an environment where the target is led to make incorrect choices resulting in the failure of itself or an outcome on behalf of the originating actor. Just like *Maskirovka*, RC theory was conceived by the Soviet military strategists

[100] Timothy L. Thomas, "Russia's Reflexive Control Theory and the Military," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 17 (2004): 237, https://doi.org/10.1080/13518040490450529.

[101] Christian Kamphuis, "Reflexive Control | Militaire Spectator," 2018, https://www.militairespectator.nl/thema/strategie-operaties/artikel/reflexive-control.

[102] Shemayev, "Cognitive Approach to Modeling Reflexive Control in Socio-Economic Systems", 30.

at least as equally significant as traditional firepower or even more effective. To this end, the Soviet Army used the concept as a part of their military doctrine as of the end of the 1970s, although it was considered by the Soviet military strategist a decade ago. However, the concept neither took place in any Soviet military directories at the time nor had a formal presence. That is the reason it did not have any indications in military publications.[103]

In the same manner, Chotikul makes an analysis both on the paramount importance of RC theory for the Soviets and their proclivity to it by saying:

> Reflexive control appears to have been an outgrowth of the historical and cultural soil of Russia; germinated by the emphasis on control; nourished by psychological aspects of the Russian mindset such as dependence on a leader, awareness of external others, the importance placed on cognition and reflection, and a society characterized by vranyo and maskirovka; and kept flourishing by the social and political realities inherent in the Soviet system.[104]

This explanation carries the same traits as the previous descriptions on *Maskirovka*. Hence, these characteristics of the Russian society and culture are fundamental determinants that demonstrate the historical tendency to adopt non-conventional means as a part of any related concept, be it *Maskirovka*, RC theory, Hybrid Warfare or whatever title is chosen.

Regarding the places of use, the concept has been used by Soviet/Russian military officials for half a century now. The earliest applications took place during the Cold War period when the US perception of the nuclear arms race was attempted to manipulate the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the goal was to deceive the West by demonstrating that the potential of Soviet nuclear means was more dreadful than they were in reality. Soviet military officials demonstrated fake Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) during military ceremonies as part of their deception methods.

The other famous example that can be classified in the *Maskirovka* and RC theory scope is the Cuban missile crisis. With an excellent cover story and series of deception

[103] Kamphuis, "Reflexive Control | Militaire Spectator."

[104] Diane Chotikul, "The Soviet Theory of Reflexive Control in Historical and Psychocultural Perspective: Preliminary Study," 1986, 76–77, https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/30190.

techniques, the Soviets deployed SS-4 and SS-5 nuclear missiles to Cuba in 1962 as a deterrence measure against the US deployment of Jupiter missiles to Italy and Turkey. From the very first moment of loading cargo ships to transportation, unloading and deployment phases, the operation was carried out with utmost secrecy to deceive both the US officials and the Soviets about Moscow's real intentions. Strict Maskirovka precautions were binding for both the US and Cuban sides. To clarify a few, for example, the destination of shipments was declared as a large island in the Arctic for such Soviet officials as missile engineers who needed more accurate information as part of their expertise. In contrast, the other officials were just told that they would be dispatched to a cold region. To further strengthen the deception operation, they were even provided winter armaments.

Additionally, the shipments were departed from multiple locations to obscure the outsiders. Also, during the unloading phase, the equipment, simulated as agricultural instruments, were unloaded during the daytime while the weapons and other military equipment were unloaded in darkness.[105] The list goes on and includes every piece of detail in terms of deception.

As mentioned above, the Soviet Army is considered the practitioner of military deception with a greater rate of success and persistency than the other armies, as illustrated with specific examples and the historical tendency of Russians to deception. The next part will analyze the concept of Hybrid Warfare in Russian military thought, commonly associated with Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov's famous doctrine.

3.4. Defining Hybrid Warfare: The Gerasimov Doctrine

The following part aims at defining the concept of Hybrid Warfare in Russian strategic thinking by precluding the ongoing discussions with different perspectives towards placing it into a theoretical conception.[106] In this way, it will put forward a general

[105] James H. Hansen, "Soviet Deception in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Learning from the Past," *Center for the Study of Intelligence - Studies in Intelligence* 46, no. 1 (2007).

[106] See for example: Wither, "Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare"; Alexander Giles, "Valery Gerasimov's Doctrine," 2020, https://doi.org/DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.10944.35848; Tad A. Schnaufer, "Redefining Hybrid Warfare: Russia's Nonlinear War against the West," *Journal of Strategic Security* 10, no. 1

framework of the concept that has occupied the agenda of especially the Western policy makers, scholars and military strategists since the Russian annexation of Crimea and Eastern Ukraine in 2014. In the literature, there are two main perspectives, one of which reflects thoughts of the Westerners who entitle the concept as 'Hybrid Warfare' and associate it mainly with Russian activities, while the other perspective is of Russians who name it as 'Asymmetric Warfare" or 'New Generation Warfare' and, associate these with external activities targeting either Russia or its near abroad, where it wants to sustain sphere of influence in the post-Soviet era, both directly and indirectly.[107]

There are still discussions related to the definition and conceptualization of hybrid warfare. In this manner, it would not be wrong to assume as if one of the prerequisites of the hybridity nature of the hybrid warfare concept required an ambiguous and blurry definition and conceptualization. Some studies date the idea back to Russia's Georgia intervention in 2008, while most literary works take Russia's Crimea and Eastern Ukraine annexations in the Spring of 2014 as *dies que* in terms of implementing hybrid tools.

(March 1, 2016): 17–31, https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.10.1.1538; Sergiy Gerasymchuk, "Russian Non-Linear Warfare in Ukraine and Moldova," *International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* 26, no. 3–4 (2017): 68–92, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26592059; Charles K. Bartles, "Getting Gerasimov Right," *Military Review* January-Fe, no. 1 (2016): 30–38, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329933852_Getting_Gerasimov_Right; Victor Morris, "Grading Gerasimov: Evaluating Russian Nonlinear War Through Modern Chinese Doctrine," *Small Wars Journal*, 2015, 6, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/grading-gerasimov-evaluating-russian-nonlinear-war-through-modern-chinese-doctrine.

[107] Latvian scholar Jānis Bērziņš brings a clear approach to the theoretical discussions between the Western and Russian perspectives. Accordingly, there is a discrepancy between these two conceptualizations of 'hybrid warfare' concept and, he suggests that defining the new Russian strategy, first observed during Crimean annexation in 2014, in the framework of Western theoretical approaches (such as 'Gerasimov Doctrine', 'Hybrid Warfare', 'Non-Linear Warfare' and 'Grey Zone Conflict') is a mistake. In this aspect, the overall concept is called as new-generation warfare in Russian strategic thinking, a product that comes out of Russian military strategists' own comprehension of Western military strategy while it carries aspects unique to the Russian's own theoretical framework. The reason why 'hybrid warfare' is so popular especially among Western military thinkers to label Russian activities is that it is easy to understand and comprises anything that is blended with multiple elements. However, classifiying the new Russian strategy under 'hybrid warfare' concept means missing the essence as it is "multi-layered and comprehensive" and, includes "asymmetrical and kinetic components."Jānis Bērziņš, "The Theory and Practice of New Generation Warfare: The Case of Ukraine and Syria," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 33, no. 3 (2020): 355–80, https://doi.org/10.1080/13518046.2020.1824109.

Before getting to the famous article, it is worthy of mentioning definitions in the literature, both from Russian and Western perspectives. As mentioned above, hybrid warfare incorporates scores of different definitions, which is unsurprising since the concept has been characterized in divergent means and evolved in a short period, turning into a widely used designation to explain and comprehend the intricacy of 21st-century warfare. As a result of its nature, hybrid warfare contains various parties and obscure the lines between versatile means of warfare and also between peace and war.[108] To this end, the most commonly referenced definition belongs to Hoffman, who designates hybrid warfare as:

> Threats that incorporate a full range of different modes of warfare including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder, conducted by both sides and a variety of non-state actors.[109]

In this aspect, it is essential to note that hybrid warfare can be conducted both by state and non-state actors in that the concept, at least from the Western perspective, is associated mainly with Russian activities as a state case. In contrast, counter-insurgency operations against irregular fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns, the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006 and more recent activities of Islamic State (IS) are exemplified as non-state cases of hybrid warfare, conducted through merging both guerilla and conventional military tactics, advanced arms and communication structures including the practical use of Internet, information management systems and the other media sources for propaganda and information warfare purposes.[110]

On the roots of the hybrid warfare term, Herta makes a pertinent designation by expressing that the hybrid warfare term was first used in 2002 by William J. Nemeth

[108] Wither, "Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare," 74.

[109] Frank G. Hoffman, "Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars," *Potomac Insitute for Policy Studies*, 2007, 14, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-21936-3_11.

[110] Wither, "Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare," 75.

in his master's thesis titled *future war and Chechnya: a case for hybrid warfare.* According to his interpretation:

> … Nemeth used this concept in order to analyze how 'increasing dislocation brought about by globalization enhances the drive toward ethnic or tribal affinity', hence determining 'devolving societies' to reorganize their military forces and conduct in warfare. Additionally, Nemeth claimed that 'hybrid warfare will become increasingly prevalent' and that the "Chechen insurgency[is] a model for hybrid warfare.[111]

It is evident from this quote that the Chechen insurgency is a well-known case in terms of hybrid warfare usage as acknowledged not only by Western perspective but also by Russian perspective, which will be covered in the next chapter.

Regarding the other credited definitions of the hybrid warfare concept, Mansoor states that "conflict involving a combination of conventional military forces and irregular (guerillas, insurgents, and terrorists), which could include both state and non-state actors, aimed at achieving a common political purpose."[112] According to US Army Officer Tad A. Schnaufer, traditional conventional warfare is no longer sufficient to compensate for political objectives. As a result, a new discourse has emerged regarding warfare, advancing some concepts such as 'Fourth Generation Warfare', 'Full Spectrum Warfare', and 'Hybrid Warfare', most of which do not have a commonly acknowledged definition. Hence, Russian hybrid activities in Ukraine in 2014 and Syria a year later are illustrated with these terms.[113] Additionally, in a Defense News conference in 2019, Army Lt. Gen. Karen H. Gibson, the U.S. national intelligence deputy director for national security partnerships, defined hybrid warfare as:

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[111] William J Nemeth, "Future War and Chechnya : A Case for Hybrid Warfare" (Naval Postgraduate School, 2002), http://hdl.handle.net/10945/5865 quoted in Laura-Maria Herța, "Hybrid Warfare – A Form of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Conference KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATION* 23, no. 1 (June 20, 2017): 135–43, https://doi.org/10.1515/kbo-2017-0021.

[112] Williamson Murray and Peter R. Mansoor, *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present*, *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present*, 2012, 2, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139199254.

[113] Tad A. Schnaufer, "Redefining Hybrid Warfare: Russia's Nonlinear War against the West," *Journal of Strategic Security* 10, no. 1 (2016): 17, https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.10.1.1538.

> The effort to achieve strategic objectives without using significant force… Hybrid warfare can include information operations, troops movements, disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks or a combination of all these things. It can also include actual force, as the Russians used in Ukraine.[114]

In the same manner, Herta makes a broader definition and describes hybrid wars as:

> They represent the blending of various forms of tactics and strategies, the simultaneous military and cyber-attacks, the instantaneity of targeting and inflicting harm, all facilitated by globalization and developments in technology and information… Hybrid wars basically combine cyber, kinetic, media, terrorist, and military (regular and irregular) command structures.[115]

That said, Wither emphasizes the importance of information technology as a crucial aspect of hybrid warfare. Accordingly, non-state groups such as Hezbollah and IS have gained immense leverage with the practical application of information warfare, challenging the states and directing the public opinion. To this end, the author points out that information warfare is a milestone for the hybrid warfare concept, adding that it was also at the heart of Russia's successful campaign in Ukraine.[116]

These are basic definitions of hybrid warfare, mainly representing Western points of view and associating the term mainly with Russian activities. On the other side of the coin, Russian strategic thought perceives the subject as a threat directed to Russia, mainly by the U.S. and other political and military developments in the near history of post-Soviet Russia.[117] In this manner, Clark makes a comparative analysis of Russian perception, suggesting that the US perceives the Russian hybrid warfare as a set of actions below the threshold of conventional war, while the Russian approach to

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[114] Jim Garamone, "Military Must Be Ready to Confront Hybrid Threats, Intel Official Says," 2019, https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1952023/military-must-be-ready-to-confront-hybrid-threats-intelligence-official-says/.

[115] 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*, no. 21 (2016): 55–56, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316509802_Russia's_hybrid_warfare-why_narratives_and_ideational_factors_play_a_role_in_international_politics.

[116] Wither, "Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare," 77.

[117] See for example: Bērziņš, "The Theory and Practice of New Generation Warfare: The Case of Ukraine and Syria," 380; and Charles K. Bartles, "Getting Gerasimov Right," *Military Review* January-Fe (2016): 32.

hybrid warfare encompasses the application of kinetic force if necessary, which creates a misconception in the US perception. Furthermore, the Russian perception acknowledges hybrid warfare as a permanent total war, while the US perceives it as a means of war. Kremlin's worldview perceives that the West, under the leadership of the US, has maintained a campaign of hybrid warfare against Russia since the collapse of the USSR in such cases as Ukraine, Libya and Syria, aiming at creating a unipolar world order by destabilizing Russian interests. As a result, Russia shapes its military strategy as a whole-nation approach to counter-attack its perceived enemies.[118]

That said, understanding the roots of Russian perspective in this subject requires a comprehensive analysis of the so-called "Gerasimov Doctrine", entitled by the Western thinkers based on the article of Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov, *The Value of Science Is in the Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations.*[119] The article was first published in February 2013 in a weekly Russian journal called *Military-Industrial Courier*. In the article, Gerasimov fundamentally touches upon the military, political and social developments of his time. Under the light of these developments, he introduces projections on the future forms of warfare, which he defines as "modern war".[120] This Russian 'modern war' concept incorporates hybrid tools at the core of it as clarified by Bērziņš in the following quote:

> The Russian view of modern warfare is based on the idea that the main battlespace is the mind and, as a result, new-generation wars are to be dominated by information and psychological warfare… The main objective is to reduce the necessity for deploying hard military power to the maximum necessary, making the opponent's military and civil

[118] Mason Clark, "Russian Hybrid Warfare: Military Learning and the Future of War Series," 2020, 11–17, http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Russian Hybrid Warfare ISW Report 2020.pdf.

[119] Valery Gerasimov, "The Value of Science Is in the Foresight - Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations," *Military Review (Oprinnelig Publisert i Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kurier 27. Februar 2013. Oversatt Til Engelsk Av Robert Coalson)*, no. January-February (2016): 23–29, http://www.vpk-news.ru/articles/14632.

[120] Gerasimov, 24.

> population support the attacker to the detriment of their own government and country.[121]

The article was so widely credited by the Western powers that they even named a doctrine after him called 'Gerasimov Doctrine'. It mainly came to the focus of Western military and political strategists as a part of their attempts to make sense of the Russian intervention in Crimea and Donbass region of eastern Ukraine in 2014, which carried unusual aspects outside the conventional military strategies and tactics, catching the West by surprise. Hence, in an attempt to comprehend this new Russian way of warfare and put it into a theoretical concept, the Western world attributed the intervention and the way it was conducted to the perspectives in Gerasimov's article and designated the concept as Russian hybrid activities against its opponents.[122] At the beginning of the article, Gerasimov draws attention to the "so-called colour revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East" and thereby states that "In the twenty-first century we have seen a tendency toward blurring the lines between the states of war and peace. Wars are no longer declared and, having begun, proceed according to an unfamiliar template."[123]

He warns how a state can find itself in the middle of a chaotic situation, an armed conflict or a civil war all of a sudden, as in the case of the Arab Spring, even without a conventional war is started to be fought. In this aspect, he thinks that in the 21st century, warfare is naturally evolved into an unusual pattern and express his interpretation as: "The very 'rules of war' have changed. The role of nonmilitary means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness."[124]

> According to him, these are "new-type conflicts", and their results are as equally destructive as a conventional war. That said, he proposes that lessons should be taken from the Arab Spring case, specifically

[121] Jānis Bērziņš, "Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy," *National Defence Academy of Latvia Center for Security and Strateguc Research*, no. 2 (2014): 5, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Security-.

[122] Giles, "Valery Gerasimov's Doctrine," 1.

[123] Gerasimov, "The Value of Science Is in the Foresight - Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations," 24.

[124] Gerasimov, 24.

> concerning the *modus operandi* of these conflicts that combines the use of "political, economic, informational, humanitarian and other nonmilitary measures – applied in coordination with the protest potential of the population." and "supplemented by military means of a concealed character, In North Africa, we witnessed the use of technologies for influencing state structures and the population with the help of information networks… New information technologies have enabled significant reductions in the spatial, temporal, and informational gaps between forces and control organs.[125]

including carrying out actions of informational conflict and the actions of special operations forces." [126]

It is clear from these remarks that Gerasimov's ultimate aim is to catch up with the necessities of his time, thereby drawing attention to changing nature of modern warfare and, as can be observed in the Western perspective too, non-military tools such as information warfare have vital importance in modern wars, the fact he emphasizes that as:

Subsequently, he touches upon the Russian experience of "asymmetrical forms and means" used in Afghanistan and the North Caucasus. In this aspect, he emphasizes the value of asymmetrical actions and praises the use of special operations forces in an armed conflict as significant leverage.[127] (See Figure 2)

[125] Gerasimov, 24–27.

[126] Gerasimov, 24.

[127] Gerasimov, 26–27.

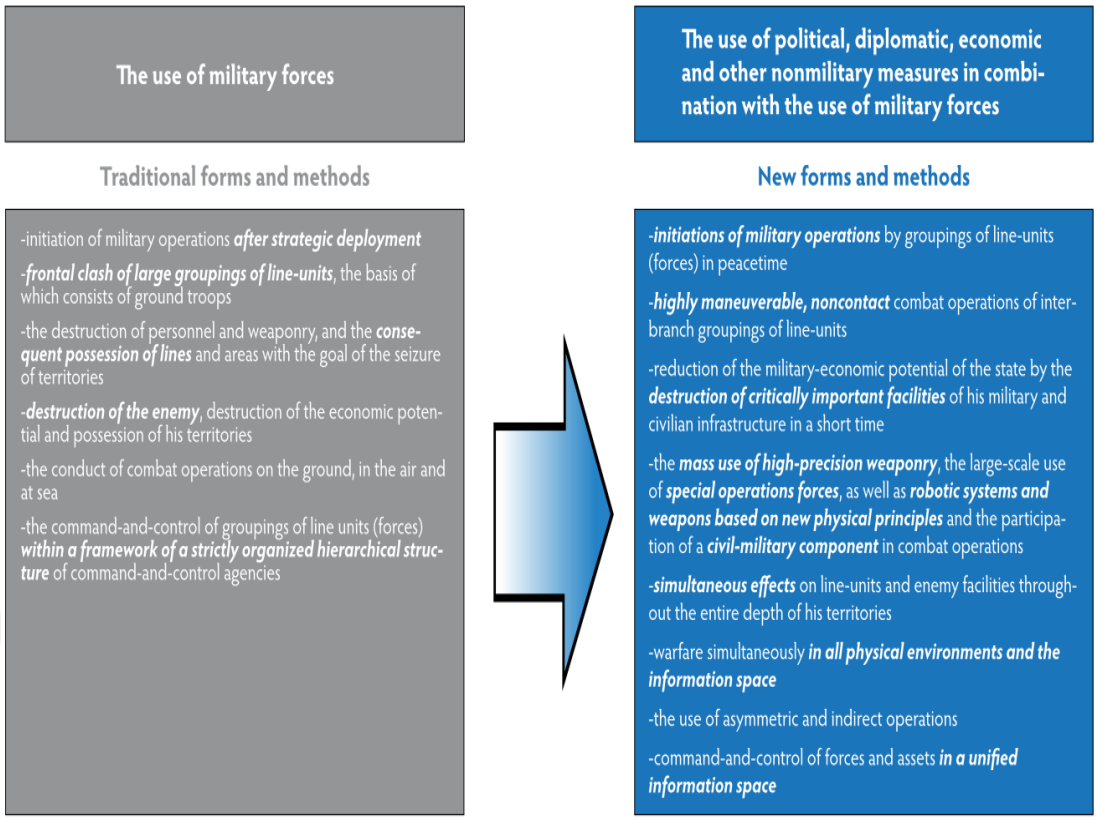

Figure 2: Graphic from Gerasimov article in *Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kurier*, 26 February 2013, translated by Charles Bartles[128]

Apart from these, Gerasimov also mentions to mentions to the application of "modern automated complexes of military equipment and research in the area of artificial intelligence" by emphasizing the importance of military science and the need for further research and development in these fields."[129]

All in all, Gerasimov's foresight revolves around three remarkable topics, among other ideas aiming to update the Russian military thinking to the actual necessities of warfare. In this aspect, Clark summarizes the Russian approach as: "The Russian conception of an ongoing defensive hybrid war against the West shapes strategic Russian priorities and assessments of the future of war."[130]

[128] Bartles, "Getting Gerasimov Right," 2016, 36.

[129] Gerasimov, "The Value of Science Is in the Foresight - Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations," 26.

[130] Clark, "Russian Hybrid Warfare: Military Learning and the Future of War Series," 18.

The next chapter will analyze the background related to the Russian adoption of hybrid tools as a strategic approach by highlighting specific necessities or events in post-Soviet Russia's near history, pushing it to develop counter-measures as evidenced in the article of Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov. It will have three sub-titles, each analyzing a specific influential cause and bore serious results for Russian strategic thinking. The first sub-title will mention the chaotic situation in Russia following the dissolution of the USSR. It will also provide information related to the presidency of Vladimir Putin and his grand policy aspirations to make Russia reach a status that the USSR enjoyed until collapsing. The other two sub-titles are related to the necessities of modern wars that Valery Gerasimov emphasizes in his article. These aspects required Russia to update its strategic thinking, thereby inclining towards hybrid tools. Thus, this chapter will provide the theoretical basis of the thesis in that they are necessities of modern wars and Russia's strategic objectives.

CHAPTER 4

POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVES AND THE NECESSITY OF HYBRID WARFARE

The Russian annexation of Crimea and the Federal City of Sevastopol in 2014 is regarded as the milestone in terms of Russian hybrid warfare conducted in Western strategic thinking. The occupation of the Crimean Peninsula was accomplished in a couple of weeks without any significant clashes and violence between Russian and Ukrainian forces, which caught the Western world by surprise as to how a sovereign state loses its strategically important territory – even without a declaration of conventional war – in 21st-century international order shaped by World War II. It would have been deemed a cause of a continental war if it had occurred in the past. The occupation was so unordinary and fast-moving in all aspects that the West could not even show any solid reactions.[131]

From that day on, the hybrid warfare concept was associated mainly with Russian activities in Syria, Venezuela, Libya and will most likely be associated with the possible future confrontations in the eyes of Western policymakers, thinkers and scholars who have constructed their conceptualization of the concept of Russian belligerency based on the so-called "Gerasimov Doctrine", as an umbrella concept to make sense of Russian hybrid warfare.[132]

In this manner, Russia's way of conducting hybrid campaigns involved an array of constituting elements synchronizing conventional and unconventional tools such as

[131] Stephen M. Dayspring, "Toward a Theory of Hybrid Warfare: The Russian Conduct of War During Peace," *Calhoun: The NPS Institutional Archive* (Naval Postgraduate School, 2015), 1, https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/47931.

[132] Galeotti, "I'm Sorry for Creating the 'Gerasimov Doctrine.'"

political subversion, information warfare, irregular warfare and conventional warfare. That said, Russia presents a whole-nation approach with "hybridization of political and military warfare" by using all the available means of its national power to achieve a strategically important victory.[133] In this aspect, Russia's tactical adoption of hybrid warfare has paved the way in conducting non-linear and asymmetrical strategies, including being assertive in information and psychological domains against technologically and militarily stronger adversaries by means combining "both old and new, drawing on lessons from the successful use of Soviet-era asymmetric strategies, but amplified with the power of modern technology and social media"[134], designated as pre-war arrangements towards blurring the lines between peace and war and keep the status of conflict below the threshold of kinetic warfare in the light of the asymmetric nature the 21st-century warfare as clearly described by Bristol with the following quote: "The current international system necessitates hybrid versatility."[135] To this end, the author makes a vivid interpretation of Gerasimov's hybrid approach step by step as:

> Local politics provide entrée to the Russian military. Information operations shape the environment initially. Once organized protest solidifies, military operators, infiltrate covertly. Conventional forces then invade, finalizing the conquest. This cycle, presented by Gerasimov as the result of new technologies and political realities, is hybrid war.[136]

From the Russian perspective, the tactical use of hybrid warfare is related to the range of necessities rooted fundamentally in Russia's power competition, mainly against the West and other adversaries in the light of its 'besieged fortress mentality' and concerns of encirclement by the prominent Western institutions like the NATO and the EU. In

[133] Dayspring, "Toward a Theory of Hybrid Warfare: The Russian Conduct of War During Peace," 1.

[134] Kateryna Zarembo and Sergiy Solodkyy, "The Evolution of Russian Hybrid Warfare," 2020, 3, https://cepa.org/the-evolution-of-russian-hybrid-warfare-ukraine/%0Ahttps://cepa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2014-03-01T120000Z_318715592_GM1EA311RSC01_RTRMADP_3_UKRAINE-CRISIS-1.jpg%0Ahttps://cepa.org/a%0Ahttps://cepa.org/author/%0Ahttps://cepa.org/.

[135] Bristol, "Hybrid War and What to Do About It."

[136] Bristol.

the light of the aforementioned aspects, these necessitate can be evaluated under the Machiavellian political philosophy.

According to a study conducted by Vilnius think tank called Eastern Europe Studies Centre (EESC), Russia's overall political aspirations are described as "Russia seeks to gain superpower status and reshape the rules of the international system so that Western domination ends and a multipolar world order emerges. This could help Russia expand its influence over the post-Soviet region, Central and Eastern Europe, and even the Middle East."[137]

That said, post-Soviet Russian strategic thinking compromises certain underlying factors that necessitate Russia to adopt the hybrid warfare concept as a whole-government activity. Based on Gerasimov's article, this chapter will first analyze the underlying necessities for Russia in adopting the hybrid methods as a military through specific cases that have taken place in the post-Soviet world order and constitute severe threats to Russian interests.

4.1. Dissolution of the USSR and the Putin Effect

In the course of a forum in the city of Kaliningrad in 2018, Russian President Vladimir Putin replied to a question of what circumstance he would have wished to hinder in Russian history as "the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Further on, in 2005, he defined the disintegration as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century.[138] There is no doubt that the collapse of the USSR brought many chaotic consequences for the Russian state identity, such as changes in power balance, the end of the bipolar world order and the start of a unipolar one. Under the Yeltsin administration, Russia got through a turbulent period, witnessing political clashes in state-building efforts,

[137] Tomas Janeliunas, "Russia's Foreign Policy Scenarios: Evaluation by Lithuanian Experts," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 2016, https://www.fpri.org/article/2016/11/russias-foreign-policy-scenarios-evaluation-lithuanian-experts/.

[138] "Putin: If He Could, He'd Try to Prevent 1991 USSR Collapse," March 2, 2018, https://apnews.com/article/d36b368c6ad44bb2b8e883fc8d800514.

severe economic turbulence, social unrest together with the impacts of the Chechen Wars. Cayias summarizes the chaotic atmosphere as:

> New leaders tried to piece together a new identity and grand strategy for a state that was still coming to terms with the fact that it was no longer the center of a union. Its new borders were unstable and unsecure, and secession of any one republic threatened a potential chain reaction throughout the region.[139]

In this manner, one of the earliest reactions came from Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov in 1995 by rejecting this new unipolar world order, led by the US. According to Primakov's vision, also called the 'Primakov Doctrine', Russia should be a primary actor in the post-Soviet sphere and keep the former Soviet republics consolidated under its auspices. To this end, Russia should prevent the flourishing of prominent Western organisations such as NATO and EU or the Western-oriented world order. Accordingly, Primakov's doctrine suggests that "a unipolar world organized by a single global centre of power (the United States) is unacceptable to Russia."[140] Subsequently, the Putin administration has undertaken a mission to revive Russian dominance to make Russia a regional and global power. The situation after the collapse of the Soviet Union and Putin's presidency is neatly expressed by Baldoni as:

> Russians then felt that the West humiliated them even further by constantly reminding them that, as a defeated power, their country could not aspire to occupy as important a position on the world stage as did the victorious Western powers. For two decades, Russians felt like wandering, identity-less ghosts. The predominant leader changed all of this by giving back to Russians an identity and a mission in the world, a reason to be proud of their country.[141]

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[139] Jennifer Cayias, "A Strategic Analysis of The Chechen Wars: The Keystone of Good Leadership" (The Ohio State University, 2012), ii, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251236595_A_Strategic_Analysis_of_The_Chechen_Wars_The_Keystone_of_Good_Leadership.

[140] Eugene Rumer, "The Primakov (Not Gerasimov) Doctrine in Action -," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2019, https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/06/05/primakov-not-gerasimov-doctrine-in-action-pub-79254.

[141] Giovanni Baldoni, "A Theoretical Analysis of Russian Foreign Policy: Changes Under Vladimir Putin," 2016, 22, https://www.e-ir.info/2016/09/10/a-theorical-analysis-of-russian-foreign-policy-changes-under-vladimir-putin/.

Putin's speech at the 2007 Munich Security Conference is a remarkable indicator of this mission. In this aspect, Putin asserted that Russia has a right to defend its interests against its adversaries. He criticized the US-led world structure and European security system, opposed NATO enlargement and blamed the US for subverting international order and law. Further on, during another speech at the Valdai conference in October 2014, Putin harshly criticized the US for its destabilizing activities against the global order, blaming it for undermining regional and international security.[142] In this aspect, Russian strategic thinking sheds light on the Russian grand strategy and the hybrid tools used in this manner by the following quotation:

> As Moscow strongly believes (or professes to believe) that the aim of the West (the US and NATO in particular) is to weaken Russia, it endeavors to weaken the West, to break alliances, and to weaken countries by interfering in elections, spreading fake news through television stations (Russia Today) or the internet (Sputnik), etc. Not only the US, but various European countries have been at the receiving end of Russian interference as well… Russia pursues an aggressive foreign policy to reestablish its place as a global player on par with the US, it defends its "sphere of influence" in its near abroad, it aims to weaken the West, and to set up an alternative international community, in alliance with China and other emerging countries.[143]

In the light of these remarks, it is clear that Russia presents a whole-nation approach against its perceived adversaries, combining all of the available tools regarding the "besieged fortress" mentality and grand strategy aspirations. It is also evident in the first *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* approved by President Putin in 2000, which can also be regarded as a road map and general policy principle of him, emphasizing the need for new multi-polar world order as per the following quotation:

> The modern world is going through fundamental and dynamic changes that profoundly affect the interests of the Russian Federation and its citizens. Russia is an active participant in this process. Being a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, possessing a substantial potential and resources in all spheres of vital activity and maintaining intensive relations with the leading states of the world,

[142] "Putin Lashes out at US, West for Destabilizing World," *RT World News*, 2014, https://www.rt.com/news/198924-putin-valdai-speech-president/.

[143] Marc Franco, "Russian Grand Strategy and How to Handle It," *Security Policy Briefs*, 2021, 1–6, https://www.egmontinstitute.be/russian-grand-strategy-and-how-to-handle-it/.

> Russia exerts significant influence on the formation of a new world order.[144]

Another important aspect related to Putin's geopolitical aspirations specifically stemmed from his idea of Novorossiya (translated as New Russia) that can be observed, especially as Crimea annexation. It is a czarist-era term and represents a time when today's Ukraine was under the ruling of the Russian empire in the 18th century. During eastern Ukraine intervention, pro-Russian insurgents conducted their actions using the "New Russia" slogan and czarist era flag as a symbol of their movement. "The region that we're talking about was once called Novorossiya, Lugansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Odesa weren't included as part of Ukraine. They were given to it by the Soviet government." says Putin by defining the Ukrainians and Russians as "one people" and explicitly giving out his grander aspirations.[145] This also turned out to be effective rhetoric, and a strong pretext for Putin to intervene in Crimea and eastern Ukraine especially when it was officially addressed on the official website of the Russian Presidency in 2014 with the headline of *President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed Novorossiya militia.*[146]

Last but not least, Putin's game plan to sustain his power has important implications for foreign policy implementations of Russia that necessitates hybrid applications since he knows that Russia cannot beat the West with conventional means considering the political, economic, military and cultural dominance of the West. According to Baldoni's theoretical analysis of Russian foreign policy changes under the Putin administration, Putin, as a "predominant leader", is the ultimate decision-maker in foreign policy implementations. His second term in the presidency as of 2012 was a determinant factor in this aspect. Thus, Russian foreign policy is shaped by Putin's desire to stay in power and empower his reign. To this end, the economic crash in 2008 and the worsening of living standards of Russian people were influential factors

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[144] "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation," 2000, https://fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm.

[145] Paul Sonne, "With 'Novorossiya,' Vladimir Putin Plays Name Game With Ukraine," *Wall Street Journal*, 2014, https://www.wsj.com/articles/with-novorossiya-putin-plays-the-name-game-with-ukraine-1409588947.

[146] Vladimir Putin, "President of Russia Vladimir Putin Addressed Novorossiya Militia," 2014, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46506.

for Putin in terms of losing and regaining public support. The author considers Ukraine and Syrian interventions in this scope to consolidate his rule.[147]

These two aspects are primary indicators and sources of Russia's adaptation to necessary circumstances in aspiring to change the unipolar world order established with the collapse of the USSR.

4.2. Russian Experience in the Chechen Wars: Asymmetrical Means and Forms

After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia's first large scale military campaign was conducted in Chechnya in 1994. In this aspect, it was then assumed as a demonstration arena for Russia both for testing itself militarily and at the same time proving its political will in such a chaotic atmosphere, as mentioned in the previous part. The Second Chechen War, started in 1999, was especially a testing ground for Vladimir Putin, taking over the helm of Kremlin from Boris Yeltsin in the same year.

Despite the declaration of independence by National Congress of Chechen People (OCChN, or ОКЧН-Общенационального конгресса Чеченского народа) with the dissolution of the USSR, Kremlin rejected the Chechen aspirations for independence because it is was not a federal republic but rather a part of Russian Federation.[148] This is the primary source of the Russo-Chechen Wars and Russian pretexts of restoring 'constitutional order' and 'disarm illegally armed bands'.[149] It can also be associated with Russian aspirations to block a possible wave of independence movements of other autonomous regions, especially in such a fragile situation.

The first Chechen War was started in December 1994 with Russian troops entering Grozny, the capital city of Chechnya, to replace the Chechen government with a Russian friendly one and sprit off separation ideas. Russian forces were composed of 38,000 men, armed with 230 tanks, 454 ACVs, 388 guns and mortars. On the other

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[147] Giovanni Baldoni, "A Theoretical Analysis of Russian Foreign Policy: Changes Under Vladimir Putin," 20–23.

[148] Cayias, "A Strategic Analysis of The Chechen Wars: The Keystone of Good Leadership," 1.

[149] Sebastian Smith, *Allah's Mountains: Politics and War in the Russian Caucasus* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 149.

side, Chechen forces, as per the estimation of Russian military intelligence, were around 15,000 men, 50 tanks, 100 ACVs and 60 guns and mortars and 30 BM21 'Grad' MRLs.[150] In this aspect, Russian authorities had anticipated an easy victory with massive deployment of heavy weapons, troops and fireworks and, relatively small scale of Chechen resistance as a response, especially with regards to President Yeltsin's remarks to "deploy all means at the state's disposal" smash Chechen aspirations for independence[151] and, Russian Defense Minister Grachev's boastful expression "only one Russian parachute regiment to topple the Dudayev regime in a couple of hours."[152] However, this anticipation was proved wrong due to the strong repulsion of Chechen irregular forces. The Russians faced strong resistance from Chechen forces causing massive casualties and failure on the Russian side. As a result, Russian troops had to withdraw two years later, with approximately 6000 killed. Once a super power, Russia experienced a defeat despite being superior in technological and military means, weaponry and number of forces.

In this aspect, Russia employed conventional means against the Chechen forces, who applied unconventional means as one of the main reasons for Russian defeat.[153] At the end of 18 months, Russian troops took control of Grozny. Still, the result was not a decisive victory; actually, a gridlock that awarded Chechnya limited political autonomy. Russia could neither fully exert dominance over Chechnya nor accomplish its desired goals, which led to the second round of the war three years later.[154] Higgins, depicting it as a humiliation for Russia, also makes a similar description of the outcome as "Russia pulled out after signing a peace accord that left Chechnya's ultimate status

[150] Timothy L. Thomas, "The Caucasus Conflict and Russian Security: The Russian Armed Forces Confront Chechnya III. The Battle for Grozny, 1–26 January 1995," *International Journal of Phytoremediation* 10, no. 1 (1997): 58, https://doi.org/10.1080/13518049708430276.

[151] Andrew Higgins, "The War That Continues to Shape Russia, 25 Years Later," *The New York Times*, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/10/world/europe/photos-chechen-war-russia.html.

[152] Robert M. Cassidy, "Russia in Afghanistan and Chechnya: Military Strategic Culture and the Paradoxes of Asymmetric Conflict," 2003, 44, http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep11653.

[153] Cassidy, 1–2.

[154] Cayias, "A Strategic Analysis of The Chechen Wars: The Keystone of Good Leadership," 25.

undecided but essentially gave the region the self-rule that Moscow had gone to war to prevent."[155]

In the scope of the First Chechen War, the Chechen forces adopted guerilla tactics and conducted asymmetric warfare against Russian forces. In this aspect, there are two salient points regarding the asymmetric approach of the Chechen insurgents. These are urban and mountain guerilla tactics. The Chechens incorporated both conventional and unconventional means to combat the Russians. There was a striking asymmetry between the Chechen and Russian forces. In urban battle, Chechens' 'hit and run' tactics were very effective because they avoided confrontation with the Russian troops. After all, the Chechen forces were relatively constrained in military aspects, be it the number of soldiers, weaponry and equipment. It was evident that the Chechen forces would lose a conventional war against the Russians under those circumstances. Thus, instead of aiming for a victory in a conventional war, the Chechen forces sought to cause as much causality as possible on the Russian side to erase their determination to combat. The Chechens applied "asymmetric" means against the Russians because of Russian military superiority. As part of the Chechens' asymmetric strategy, they carried the battlefield to urban areas to decrease the effectiveness of Russian artillery and airpower and target the Russian forces in close proximity. This also caused the Russian airpower to target residential places, which helped raise Chechen public sentiment and anger against the Russians, increasing support and recruitment to the Chechen forces.[156]

At the tactical level, the Chechen forces conducted mobile area defence stratagem to avoid Russian airpower and used neighbourhood locations such as wracked buildings, cellars and back streets to pull through the Russian forces. They also used public buildings to combat the Russian troops by opening quick fire and keeping out of the side to prevent casualties. To this end, the Chechen combat stratagem was based on ambush, fighting at night, and antitank hunter-killer teams throughout the war. Apart

[155] Higgins, "The War That Continues to Shape Russia, 25 Years Later."

[156] Cassidy, "Russia in Afghanistan and Chechnya: Military Strategic Culture and the Paradoxes of Asymmetric Conflict," 22.

from these, the Chechen forces also used mountainous areas to make Russian forces military vehicles unfunctional.[157]

Bearing in mind the conventional superiority of the Russian Army, the Chechen command echelon also played upon Yeltsin's political opponents in Moscow with various "unorthodox approaches" with the hope of obliging them to dissuade Yeltsin administration from stopping the battle. They also knew that Yeltsin's political support was declining, and it was essential to influence Russian public opinion. In this aspect, to achieve this both in Russia and worldwide, the Chechens used media and psychological operation tools very effectively by making themselves heard through sensational raids on Russian soil. Budionovsk and Pervomaiskoye hostage crises were the most devastating events conducted by the Chechen guerillas. These raids had widespread media coverage that raised Russian public concern over the military campaign in Chechnya.[158] In this aspect, Cassidy describes the impact of these raids as:

> Budionovsk had shown the Yeltsin government the very high political price it might have to pay for continuing the war, as well as the Chechens' capacity to inflict serious public humiliation through asymmetric attacks. The debacle at Pervomaiskoye showed the Russian public and the world how poorly trained and unwilling the Russian troops were to risk their lives taking a small village, even against an outnumbered and surrounded enemy.[159]

These raids at the same time aimed at compensating Chechens' large-scale losses by gaining time for restoration and consolidation because of the quantitative superiority of Russian military tools. On the contrary, by applying a large scale of force along with heavy air and artillery shelling of Grozny and other urban areas, the Russian troops made a haphazard slaughter, causing thousands of military and civilian losses, which was an influential factor for Russia to lose credit both domestically and

[157] Sean J. Edwards, "Mars Unmasked: The Changing Face of Urban Operations," January 1, 2000, 28–30, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA380477.

[158] Cassidy, "Russia in Afghanistan and Chechnya: Military Strategic Culture and the Paradoxes of Asymmetric Conflict," 29–31.

[159] Cassidy, 46.

internationally and also for Chechen people to increase their hatred against Russians and close their ranks.[160]

The aspects mentioned above of the First Chechen War represent certain asymmetric features that were determinant in Russian failure. The second Chechen War carried similar asymmetrical forms and means of the Chechen forces like the first war. However, the Russian military presence was much stronger and more effective. The battle was ended when Putin appointed Akhmad Kadyrov as the head of the Chechen government in June 2000 and declared the end of the Grozny siege started in 1999 due to Chechen fighters' attack Dagestan.[161] In 2006, Russian authorities announced their victory in the Chechen conflict while the Chechen militias continued their actions from time to time.[162]

It is no doubt that there are a lot of salient lessons for Russia to be drawn in these wars. As a matter of fact, the Chechen Wars can be considered the most fundamental benchmark in shaping Russia's modern strategic thinking in the military and political wise, especially in relation to the hybrid orientation. These wars have taught Russia that conventional superiority does not guarantee victory. It is as also put forward by Roh that Russian counterinsurgency campaigns in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999 suggest that:

> A state cannot completely rely upon conventional methods to achieve success in an irregular war. Rather, it must adopt tailored measures that apply to the specific situation in order to increase the likelihood of success in unconventional wars. The Russian military had previous experience in the North Caucasus – specifically in Chechnya in the nineteenth century – with which to operate effectively against irregular forces in both Afghanistan and Chechnya. However, it chose to proceed with the invasion of both nations under a comfortable and conventional paradigm rather than tailoring their approach to the specific situation.[163]

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[160] Cassidy, 29–31.

[161] Cayias, "A Strategic Analysis of The Chechen Wars: The Keystone of Good Leadership," 60.

[162] Katherine T Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions" (Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2017), 38, https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/52991.

[163] Anthony M. Roh, "Russian Organizational Learning in the Context of the Afghanistan and Chechnya Counterinsurgencies," 2014, 1–2, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA614153.

Further on, Edwards describes the Chechnya case as "the most recent example of how an insurgent force defeated a conventional military power by means of a superior political-military strategy." and names various reasons that cost the Russians war as "lack of a political-military strategy that integrated the seemingly disparate elements of the media, psychological operations (PSYOP) and rules of engagement (ROE)."[164] On the contrary, Nemeth describes the fundamental aspect of Chechen insurgency as "… it is the strength of the Chechen society, their vehement anti-Russian stance, their pre-state social construct, and their ability to assimilate technology as needed into an effective albeit not a thoroughly modern insurgency."[165]

As emphasized in Gerasimov's article, the Chechen Wars were very determinant in shaping the Russian modern strategic thinking by means of touching upon unconventional forms and means.

4.3. The Color Revolutions and Arab Spring: New Information Technologies and Social Media

As noted in the previous parts, Gerasimov's article draws attention to specific necessities for Russian strategic thinking to develop countermeasures. In this aspect, another critical case is the series of events called "the Color Revolutions" that occurred in some former Soviet states and "the Arab Spring" that prevailed in the Middle East and North Africa as of 2010, which have severe and longstanding strategic as well as political implications for Russia and whose course of actions were effectively reinforced by hybrid tools, namely new information technologies and social media.

From a Western perspective, the Color Revolutions are defined as popular demonstrations and mass protests to overturn the pro-Russian regimes between 2003-2005, labelled as Rose Revolution in Georgia, Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and Tulip revolution in Kyrgyzstan. All three events had their sources from the allegations of fraudulent elections and anti-democratic practices of the involved governments. The outcome was reelections and replacement of these governments with the new ones

[164] Edwards, "Mars Unmasked: The Changing Face of Urban Operations," 22.

[165] Nemeth, "Future War and Chechnya : A Case for Hybrid Warfare," 62.

that were supposedly more democratic and western-oriented, at least at the beginning.[166] Of course, the outcomes are much more comprehensive. These events various social, political and scholarly discourses in terms of reasons and consequences not only for Russia but also globally, which is out of the scope of this thesis. Putting aside the ongoing discussions as to whether these events are genuine democratic breakthroughs[167] or Western-supported interventions to domestic affairs of sovereign states,[168] this part will underline the unconventional tools used in these events that have significant ramifications for the modern Russian strategic thinking. Before that, the Russian view of these events is worthy of mention.

The Russian approach to these events unsurprisingly contradicts the Western stance. Russia held the US or the West responsible for the Color Revolutions to destabilize the countries mentioned above. According to the Russian view, these pro-democracy and pro-revolutionary discourses could spread to other former Soviet states or Russia.[169] Thus, in the scope of the "besieged fortress" mentality, Russia views the Color Revolutions as the Western efforts to undermine its sphere of influence, specifically regarding NATO and EU enlargement aspirations. In this aspect, Lukyanov sheds light on the Russian perspective of the colour Revolutions as:

> The wave of "colored revolutions" that swept Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan; the disorder in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan; and the criticism of the post-Soviet regimes for the absence of democracy or for violations of human rights - these are all parts of Washington's plan to drive Russia out of its sphere of influence and to establish control over it.[170]

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[166] Lincoln A. Mitchell, *The Color Revolutions* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 1.

[167] Federica Prandin, "Color Revolutions and Regime Change in Georgia and Ukraine," RIAC, 2019, https://russiancouncil.ru/en/blogs/fprandin/color-revolutions-and-regime-change-in-georgia-and-ukraine/.

[168] See for example: Nicolas Bouchet, "Russia's 'Militarization' of Colour Revolutions," *Policy Perspectives* 4, no. 2 (2016): 1–4, https://www.rt.com/politics/official-word/putin-russia-; Yulia Nikitina, "The 'Color Revolutions' and 'Arab Spring' in Russian Official Discourse," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 14, no. 1 (2014): 87–104, https://doi.org/10.11610/connections.14.1.04; Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions."

[169] Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions."

[170] Fyodor Lukyanov, "America as the Mirror of Russian Phobias," *Social Research* 72, no. 4 (2005): 860, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40971800?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

As per Russian authorities' views, the West was blamed for the Color Revolutions, described as "Western-sponsored coups". Western-sponsored non-governmental organizations (NGOs) intentionally attempted to destabilize the Color Revolution countries. The most remarkable aspect of these subversive activities was the role of youth movements supported by these NGOs to achieve their desired ends. Russia especially drew attention to NGOs and youth movements that the West utilized to trigger protests, resulting in the Color Revolutions.[171]

Further on, what Putin emphasized about these events in 2005 was the rule of law and constitution. Accordingly, his concern was not that these chaotic events were happening but that these events were exceeding the limits of the rule of law and constitution. The real issue was that the problems should be addressed according to the constitution instead of revolutions and street democracy. According to the interpretation of Nikitina, Putin had the opinion that "the West way of acting is through the financing of radical, nationalist, neo-fascist and fundamentalist forces, at least that is just how it happens in the post-Soviet region… Elections that take place after a coup are merely a cover for those who financed the overthrow."[172]

In this aspect, the US linked supporters of the Color Revolutions, including the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Democratic Institute of the Democratic Party (NDI), International Republican Institute of the Republican Party (IRI) and NGOs such as Freedom House and the Open Society Institute had a determinant contribution to the Color Revolutions as they provided "funding to activists, assisted with training and public relations, and conducted independent exit polling of the elections."[173] Apart from these, as mentioned above, youth movements mainly composed of university students and called the *Kamara!* ("Enough!") in Georgia, *Pora* ("It's time") in Ukraine was funded and supported by the Western institutions and NGOs and effectively took part in the

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[171] Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions," 74.

[172] Nikitina, "The 'Color Revolutions' and 'Arab Spring' in Russian Official Discourse," 88.

[173] Mohammad Soltanifar, "US-Russian Rivalry in the Caucasus: Towards a New Cold War?," *Global Dialogue* 7, no. 3/4 (2005); quoted in Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions," 17.

pro-democracy activities through street protests, marching, elections monitoring, publications, social media activities and so on.[174] The youth movement in Kyrgyzstan was labelled as *Kelkel ("Resistance")* and carried similar characteristics in terms of associations and funding.[175]

To this end, Kuzio emphasizes the role of young people in controlling civil societies, actually in all democratic revolutions and illustrates the Color Revolutions countries in this aspect. Accordingly, they are more associated with technical communication skills than the rest. In this aspect, the above-mentioned young people, also called "e-revolutionaries", adapt themselves to the most updated communication tools to undermine the practices of state affairs. As a result, "info-age revolutions" create an atmosphere for a "*coup d'etat* without violence."[176] Further on, the role of mobile phones in mass communication practices and picking up evidence of fraudulent elections using phone cameras and instant sharing of these in social media was very effective in the Color Revolutions. In this aspect, Kuzio describes the Ukraine uprising as "the world's first internet revolution." and underlines the prominent place of the Internet in the above-mentioned youth activities as: "The internet opened up possibilities for private chat rooms to discuss tactics and strategy, e-mail, bloggers, and hosting NGO web sites."[177]

The situation was not so different during the Arab Spring uprisings. First started in late 2010 in Tunisia, they quickly sprawled to Egypt, Libya, Syria and other Arab countries. The purpose of these movements carried similar aspects, most commonly described as seeking a fair and unbiased ruling. Leading to regime changes in most of these countries or civil wars, the Arab Spring uprisings were much more violent than the Color Revolutions. For example, in Libya, due to an eight-month-long conflict

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[174] Olena Nikolayenko, "The Revolt of the Post-Soviet Generation: Youth Movements in Serbia, Georgia, and Ukraine," *Comparative Politics*, 2007, 179–81.

[175] Tristan Landry, "The Colour Revolutions in the Rearview Mirror: Closer Than They Appear," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 53, no. 1 (2011): 14, https://doi.org/10.1080/00085006.2011.11092663.

[176] Taras Kuzio, "Civil Society, Youth and Societal Mobilization in Democratic Revolutions," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 39, no. 3 (2006): 374, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.postcomstud.2006.06.005.

[177] Kuzio, 375.

between the NATO-supported insurgents and pro-Qaddafi troops, an estimated 30,000 death toll took place, leading the country to ongoing civil war and domestic turbulence. Other countries exposed to the uprisings shared a similar fate in casualties. Especially in Syria, the uprising led to a bloody civil war causing thousands of casualties.[178]

Despite being bloodier and more devastating, the Arab Spring uprisings carried similar features with the Color Revolutions in terms of the way they were organized and conducted. They involved "active engagement of youth, use of information technologies by protesters and the broad character of social movements" while the six-year period between these two revolutionary movements enabled the information technologies and social media tools to get more resourceful and advanced during the Arab Spring uprisings.[179] In this aspect, information technologies were very effectively used during the Arab Spring uprisings, sometimes called as "Facebook Revolution" or "YouTube Revolt", to mobilize the masses by sharing videos on YouTube or posting tweets on Twitter. In this manner, the Tunisian uprising is one of the most striking examples. A Facebook video of a fruit-seller setting himself on fire after being arrested and harassed due to his critical stance about corrupt government practices sparked the first protests and widespread anger. The video spread on the internet and caused mass political demonstrations leading to the Tunisian uprising.[180] The function of social media in terms of escalating such kind situations can be described with the following quotation:

> Social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and others have played an important role in this first stage of political mobilization. These platforms allowed the different segments of society to access a free, flexible and uncensored means of communication, which undoubtedly contributed to the rebuilding of the collective identity and

[178] Jessica Rettig, "Death Toll of 'Arab Spring,'" *U.S. News and World Report [Internet]*, 2011, https://www.usnews.com/news/slideshows/death-toll-of-arab-spring.

[179] Anastasiia Kudlenko, "From Colour Revolutions to the Arab Spring: The Role of Civil Society in Democracy Building and Transition Processes," *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 23, no. 2–3 (2015): 172–74, https://doi.org/10.1080/0965156X.2015.1116790.

[180] Emily Fekete and Barney Warf, "Information Technology and the 'Arab Spring,'" *The Arab World Geographer / Le Géographe Du Monde Arabe*, vol. 16 (Allen Press, May 1, 2013), 219, https://doi.org/10.5555/ARWG.16.2.U2Q0427U4883L635.

> opened a dialogue concerning cooperation among different ethnic, religious and generational groups.[181]

Russia's overall approach to the Arab Spring was fundamentally different from the US and the EU approaches, as in the case of the Color Revolutions. In the beginning, Russia was more inclined to justify these events to pursue democratization attempts and political reforms among the Arab communities. However, Western military intervention into Libya and concerns regarding the prevalence of Islamist extremism caused Russia to adopt a more cynical discourse against these events. Additionally, internal politics was also a driving force the Russian stance in that the Arab Spring uprisings were oriented upon the Western style of "liberal democracy" concept, contradicting with the Russian idea of "state-managed political order" that was simultaneously under threat by the flourishing internal opposition at the time in Russia.[182]

As a complementary approach, the Arab Spring events were perceived as the continuation of the Color Revolutions with the same scenarios and thereby constituting a direct threat to Russian interests in the region by many Russian commentators who had the belief that the West orchestrated both uprising movements in the different geographies to place pro-Western rulers under the pretext of "democracy promotion."[183] Therefore, the strategic implications and the changing face of the modern wars with new methods were interlinked with these uprisings by the Russian intelligentsia as to how the West is implementing its policy goals with unconventional methods. In this aspect, the National Security Strategy of Russia signed in 2015 depicts "foreign-sponsored regime changes" as a security threat. Similarly, Russian officials labelled such concepts as an "anti-constitutional coup" triggered by the US and the EU.[184] "In the last two years, Russia has formulized its

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[181] Qutaiba Idlbi and Kassem Eid, "The Syrian Uprising: What Role Did Social Media Play?," Hoover Institution, 2017, https://www.hoover.org/research/combo.

[182] Roland Dannreuther, "Russia and the Arab Spring: Supporting the Counter-Revolution," *Journal of European Integration* 37, no. 1 (2015): 77–93, https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2014.975990.

[183] Alexey Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring," 2013, 8–9, https://carnegieendowment.org/files/russia_arab_spring2013.pdf.

[184] Bouchet, "Russia's 'Militarization' of Colour Revolutions," 1–5.

official view of ‘foreign-sponsored’ anti-regime protests a non-military warfare by the West.” says Bouchet by adding that Russia’s discourse and approach on the Color revolutions have had a divergence and became harsher after the EuroMaidan events in Ukraine.

Consequently, in the scope of this thesis, the unconventional aspects and the strategic implications of these two uprising events and asymmetric characteristics of the Chechen Wars were among the most significant paradigms that are paid special attention in Gerasimov’s notable article, assumed to be the cornerstone of the Russian modern military thinking and foreign policy aspirations, especially in the post-Soviet domain. In this respect, the ‘Gerasimov Doctrine’ can be evaluated as a counter-measure discourse of Russian strategic thinking against the world political and military developments in recent decades. Similarly, Machiavellianism offers advice specific to an army commander, thereby justifying his strategic capability through assessing whether he adjusts to the prospects of warfare as the changing situations necessitate or not. In this aspect, the “Gerasimov Doctrine” can be evaluated within the context of Machiavellian teachings.

The next chapter will mention five separate Russian hybrid warfare approach tools. Each of those tools has different places of conduct. Some of those can be evaluated under Russian public diplomacy efforts, thereby constituting the main components of its hybrid warfare approach. These tools were incredibly influential during the Crimean annexation in 2014. Besides, they took place in Russia’s eastern Ukraine intervention. We can also see their deployments in different conflict zones such as Syrian and Libyan civil wars, Venezuela and certain parts of Africa. These tools are the products of the Russian hybrid approach necessitated by the causes detailed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5

PRELIMINARY TOOLS OF RUSSIAN HYBRID CONDUCT

In the light of the above-mentioned policy goals and the necessities of 21st-century warfare, as emphasized by Gerasimov, Russia practices hybrid warfare campaigns in different geographies and extents against multiple adversaries both in peace and war times.

The adoption of these tools also contributes to the theoretical basis of the thesis in the scope of the Machiavellian political philosophy regarding the fact that it requires a statesman to adopt no matter what the current political and military atmosphere requires and use all available instruments at his disposal. In this aspect, because the Russian strategic thinking acknowledges the developments in modern warfare as mentioned in the previous chapters, the application of these tools can be considered a counter-measure against foreign influence and an adaptation attempt to modern warfare requirements.

While the underlying strategic reasons behind Russia's prominent hybrid applications – interventions respectively in Georgia, Ukraine, Syria and Libya, Russia's alleged meddling into 2016 US elections, cyber-attacks in Estonia in 2007 as the most infamous cases – may vary, this part aims at illustrating the hybrid tools and asymmetrical strategies of Russian hybrid warfare with five examples.

5.1. Special Operations Forces (SOF)

As a complementary element of Russian hybrid warfare campaigns, Special Operations Forces (SOF) have a determinant role in Russia's ground hybrid operations. The Russian abbreviation for Special Operations is Spetsnaz (*spetsialnoe naznachenie* or special designation). It refers to any "non-conventional Russian

military or paramilitary unit, and as such covers a wide range of military and state security units with widely varying degrees of training and operational capability."[185] The roots of *Spetsnaz* date back to the Cold War era when the Russian Military Intelligence Directorate (GRU) formed special units for infiltration and sabotage inside enemy lines and also for positioning deep behind NATO lines with particular tasks of locating and eliminating nuclear elements.[186] Russian security bodies, including the Russian Army, Russian Navy, and intelligence services, have their exclusive and separate *Spetsnaz* units with various purposes ranging from surveillance and counterinsurgency to power-projections missions.[187] That said, Russia established the stand-alone entity named The Special Operations Forces Command (KSSO: *Komandovanie Sil Spetsial'nykh Operatsiy*) in 2013 as an umbrella organization above all elements *Spetsnaz* to ensure unity of command. In this aspect, Russia's military intervention into Georgia in 2008 was a driving force behind the establishment in terms of deficiencies and necessities aroused during the campaign as per Woellner's remarks that read as:

> Two facets explain how SSO became an important tool for achieving Russian objectives. First, SSO belongs to the historical legacy of Russian Spetsnaz and of the special operations elements in the non-military security services. Second, the 2008 war in Georgia provided 21st century lessons for how SSO could fit into deliberate Russian campaign; as a shaping element before the onset of hostilities and as a supporting element during hostilities.[188]

Further on, Woellner emphasizes the lack of a competent SOF force as a complementary element to Russia's conventional military activities in George,

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[185] Anthony Seaboyer and Keir Giles, "Russian Special Forces and Intelligence Information Effects" (Ontario, 2019), 23, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343888005_Russian_Special_Forces_and_Intelligence_Information_Effects.

[186] Stefan Hedlund, "The Future of Russia's Special Operations Forces," 2019, https://www.gisreportsonline.com/the-future-of-russias-special-operations-forces,defense,2813.html.

[187] Seaboyer and Giles, "Russian Special Forces and Intelligence Information Effects," 23.

[188] Bret P. Woellner, "The Advent of the Russian Special Operations Command," May 23, 2019, 18–19, https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/AD1083710.

thereby defining the deficiencies as "reconnaissance", "air-ground integration", "Unconventional Warfare (UW)" and "counter-SOF efforts."[189]

In the light of Gerasimov's remarks that read as "… all this is supplemented by military means of a concealed character, including carrying out actions of informational conflict and the actions of special operations forces"[190] and, the fact that contemporary Russian military thinking suggests a non-linear approach in accomplishing the state interests, Russian KSSO serves this purpose of combining conventional military tasks with covert measures, especially with regards to their role in political warfare operations and recent deployments in Crimea, Donbas and Syria.[191] In this aspect, KSSO, as deniable assets, carries out the most sensitive operations and has specially trained elements possessing proficiencies such as political operations, military reconnaissance, sabotage, assistance to proxies, elite infantry integrated with conventional units.[192]

Officially formed in 2013, Russian KSSO inaugurated the first time in 2014 Crimean annexation and had a leading role during the campaign that was conducted covertly and mostly without direct battling in that they paralyzed the local Ukrainian armed forces and acquired control of Crimea's strategic institutions along with the other components Russian armed forces.[193] The operation also involved the deployment of different branches of Spetsnaz and Federal Security Service (FSB) and GRU both previously and during the conflicts.[194] Known as the "little green men" – armed

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[189] Woellner, 18–19.

[190] Gerasimov, "The Value of Science Is in the Foresight - Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations."

[191] Mark Galeotti, "Spetsnaz: Operational Intelligence, Political Warfare, and Battlefield Role," 2020, https://www.marshallcenter.org/en/publications/security-insights/spetsnaz-operational-intelligence-political-warfare-and-battlefield-role-0.

[192] Seaboyer and Giles, "Russian Special Forces and Intelligence Information Effects," 23.

[193] Sergey Sukhankin, "Russian Special Operations Forces: Image Versus Substance," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 16, no. 43 (2019), https://jamestown.org/program/russian-special-operations-forces-image-versus-substance/.

[194] Tor Bukkvoll, "Russian Special Operations Forces in Crimea and Donbas," *Parameters* 46, no. 2 (2016): 16–17, https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters.

operatives with their faces covered, wearing unmarked green uniforms, speaking Russian and carrying Russian weapons and even launching a coup main in Crimea– had a determinant role both in Crimea and Donbas campaigns. Although any relationship between these "little green men" and Russia was denied initially, Russian officials later officially admitted that they were Russian SOF operatives.[195] In this aspect, Reeves and Wallace identify these SOF elements who mingled freely with the crown in Crimea streets and desired goal of them as:

> …commandos, practicing maskirovka or military deception, use uniforms devoid of any insignia to make it difficult to attribute their actions to Russia. This unconventional method of warfare is intended to cause confusion and disorientation among the Ukrainian government and its allies in hopes of slowing any defensive response.[196]

Since the campaign was carried out with covert actions, newly founded KSSO also had significant roles, one of which was confiscating local assembly building, enabling a pro-Russian figure to be elected as the new Crimean prime minister. Further on, the KSSO pioneered the acquisition of Ukrainian military headquarters and some other crucial military facilities. All these actions were facilitators to the campaign of other paramilitary and conventional troops.[197]

In Donbas, since 2014, SOF operatives have been involved in some tasks such as battleground reconnaissance, force protection or, more generally, political missions. Especially, they were allegedly held responsible for the assassinations of prominent local militia commanders.[198] According to Ukrainian oligarch Serhiy Taruta, Russian SOF operatives most probably triggered insurgency movements in Donbas. He states

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[195] See for example: Ron Synovitz, "Russian Forces In Crimea: Who Are They And Where Did They Come From?," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, March 4, 2014, https://www.rferl.org/a/russian-forces-in-crimea--who-are-they-and-where-did-they-come-from/25285238.html; Reeves Shane and Wallace David, "The Combatant Status of the 'Little Green Men' and Other Participants in the Ukraine Conflict," *International Law Studies* 91, no. 1 (2015): 393, http://news.yahoo.com/russian-troops-over-ukra; Lucy Ash, "How Russia Outfoxes Its Enemies," *BBC News*, January 29, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-31020283.

[196] Shane and David, "The Combatant Status of the 'Little Green Men' and Other Participants in the Ukraine Conflict," 393.

[197] Bukkvoll, "Russian Special Operations Forces in Crimea and Donbas," 16–17.

[198] Galeotti, "Spetsnaz: Operational Intelligence, Political Warfare, and Battlefield Role."

that the Ukrainian officials were able to convince the insurgencies to set free the municipal building of Donetsk that they had sized. The same "little green men" who then showed up in Donetsk and changed insurgents' minds.[199] According to Bukkvoll, SOF elements were partly responsible for launching anti-Kiev insurgency in Donbas, representing a preliminary example of Russian SOF operatives' taking part in a covert operation hybrid warfare role by training, equipping and supervising the local rebels and separatists.[200]

Syria is another field of Russian SOF deployments, although they have little open sources coverage due to the sensitive nature of operations. Being around 250 men, they especially had a critical role in recapturing Aleppo from the rebel forces in 2016 together with Syrian troops and Iranian-backed Hezbollah elements. Their primary tasks on the Syrian battlefield have been to "advise Syrian and Hezbollah forces on tactics and strategy, to go after key leadership targets, to quickly fuse actionable intelligence with operations, and to help direct the brutal onslaught of air power."[201] Rather than engaging in direct fighting, the Russian SOF operatives conducted a distanced engagement away from firing lines with new reconnaissance and weapon systems.[202]

Another example of Russian SOF presence in the Syrian battle was during the retaking of Palmyra from ISIS in collaboration with Syrian, Iranian and Hezbollah forces. It was publicly stated by the Russian officials that Palmyra was "liberated with participation of *Spetsnaz* and military advisers."[203] It was also corroborated by military

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[199] Sonia Koshkina, *Maidan – Nerasskazannaia Istoria* (Kiev: Brait Books, 2015), 400; quoted in Bukkvoll, "Russian Special Operations Forces in Crimea and Donbas," 18.

[200] Bukkvoll, "Russian Special Operations Forces in Crimea and Donbas," 18.

[201] Tyler Rogoway, "Russian Special Operations Commando Seen Wearing Hezbollah Patch In Syria," The Drive, 2016, https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/6741/russian-special-operations-commando-seen-wearing-hezbollah-patch-in-syria.

[202] Charles Bartles and Lester Grau, "The Russian Ground-Based Contingent in Syria," 2020, 13–14, https://www.fpri.org/article/2020/10/the-russian-ground-based-contingent-in-syria/.

[203] Thomas Gibbons-Neff, "How Russian Special Forces Are Shaping the Fight in Syria -," *The Washington Post*, March 29, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/03/29/how-russian-special-forces-are-shaping-the-fight-in-syria/.

expert Kofman stating that "Russian special forces are doing a lot of the targeting for Russian airstrikes and a lot of advising for the Syrians… They provide most of the intelligence on the ground for Russian airpower and help run Syrian operations."[204]

Russian SOF operatives were also deployed to Venezuela as a part of a Russian political warfare campaign against the US during the Venezuela-US crisis in 2020 when the Venezuelan rebels and an American private military company reportedly made a failed coup attempt to topple down Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.[205] In an effort to confront the US efforts in Venezuela, Russia deployed troops, including SOF operatives. Their tasks in Venezuela included searching for participants of the failed coup attempt by operating drones over Venezuela.[206]

These are among the most prominent cases of Russian SOF operations that constitute a crucial component of Russian hybrid activities worldwide.

5.2. Private Military Companies (PMCs)

The term Private Military Companies (PMCs) is defined by *Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces* as "a business that offers specialized services related to war and conflict, including combat operations, strategic planning, intelligence collection, operational and logistical support, training, procurement and maintenance."[207] However, Russian PMCs are not sovereign formations managed by professional directors detached from the government.[208] Instead, Russian PMCs undertake vital roles in accomplishing Kremlin's policy goals and sustaining Russian

[204] Gibbons-Neff.

[205] Kevin T. Dugan, "Inside Operation Gideon, a Coup Gone Very Wrong - Rolling Stone," *Rolling Stone*, December 6, 2020, https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/venezuela-operation-gideon-coup-jordan-goudreau-1098590/.

[206] "Russian Troops to Help Venezuela Search for Members of Failed Incursion," *Reuters*, May 8, 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-security-russia-idUSKBN22K2LZ.

[207] "Private Military Companies," *The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces*, 2006, 1.

[208] "Russia's Use of Its Private Military Companies," *International Society for the Systems Sciences* 26 (2020), https://www.iiss.org/publications/strategic-comments/2020/russias-use-of-its-private-military-companies.

national security aspirations worldwide. Although PMCs are prohibited under Article 13.5 of the Russian Constitution, specific figures in Putin's inner circle, like Yevgeny Prigozhin, lead one Russian PMCs named the Wagner Group, the most widely reported. As a critical element of Russian hybrid policies, PMCs are a crucial quasi-deniable tool used for Russian interests as a complementary tool of conventional means. As low-profile and deniable forces, PMCs gained a growing reputation, especially as of Russia's Crimean intervention in 2014. Their use areas have been extended to various conflict zones, including Syria, Libya, sub-Saharan and Central Africa and Latin America. They have a broad spectrum of missions ranging from foreign policy, military, intelligence, economic, and political to informational and ideological perspectives.[209] As per suggestions of the Gerasimov Doctrine, the Russian military strategists believe that the modern battles are increasingly being based on information and political influence, thereby increasing the value of unorthodox means of coercion in modern warfare. In this aspect, PMCs are influential for Russia regarding their deniability, casualty avoidance, rapid deployment and withdrawal and low-cost features.[210]

To this end, PMCs were inaugurated in Russia's Crimea annexation in 2014, and, in the subsequent period, they actively took part in Kremlin's covert operations in Eastern Ukraine. According to the estimations, the total number of PMC's in Ukraine was about 2,500-5,000 during the most intense period of conflict. They were effective in destroying the stability in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, subverting and suppressing the Ukrainian government and its Western allies for strategic compromises, supporting the local rebels and separatists in eastern Ukraine and, thereby helping Kremlin and its local surrogates in eastern Ukraine to take over new administrations in Donetsk and Luhansk. Wagner Group was especially involved in training and supervising dissidents in Donbas. PMCs also took part in conventional operations with heavy weaponry against Ukrainian armed forces. Besides, exclusive PMC forces are

[209] Nicholas Harrington Brian Katz, Seth G. Jones, Catrina Doxsee, "The Expansion of Russian Private Military Companies," *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, September 2020, https://doi.org/10.1080/1060586X.2019.1591142.

[210] Andrew S. Bowen, "Russian Private Military Companies (PMCs)," *Congressional Research Service*, 2020, 2, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IF11650.pdf.

involved in intelligence gathering activities and other underground activities like sabotages and assassinations. Further on, PMC-controlled media institutions conducted information operations to incite vexation and volatility among residents and predominantly young population of the conflict zones to convince them to Russian-oriented dissident discourses and propagandas.[211]

In Syria, PMCs were involved in the training and equipping of pro-regime paramilitary groups and regime forces. They were actively engaged in direct combat with rebel forces and even with the US forces and indirect surveillance activities. They gathered intelligence to direct Russian air power and regime forces. PMC operatives from Wagner Group, Vegacy, E.N.O.T., Vostok Battalion *inter alia* others were numbered approximately 3,000, and they were especially influential in seizing and protecting energy bases from insurgents.[212]

In Libya, PMCs, including the Wagner Group, have contributed to Russian policy goals by supporting National Army leader Khalifa Haftar since 2018 by engaging in fighting, training, advising, and managing air defence systems and air power.[213] PMCs have various missions in African states, like exchanging military assistance for economic benefits and political effects.[214]

These illustrations show Russia's increasing utilization of PMCs to achieve its global policy aspirations.

5.3. Information Warfare (IW)

Information Warfare (IW) constitutes a vital Russian hybrid warfare strategy component. It has gained popularity in public discourse, especially after Russia's Crimea intervention in 2014 and allegations of Russian interference in the 2016 US elections. As a general definition, *Congressional Research Service (CRS)* defines

[211] Brian Katz, Seth G. Jones, Catrina Doxsee, "The Expansion of Russian Private Military Companies."

[212] Brian Katz, Seth G. Jones, Catrina Doxsee.

[213] Bowen, "Russian Private Military Companies (PMCs)," 2.

[214] Brian Katz, Seth G. Jones, Catrina Doxsee, "The Expansion of Russian Private Military Companies."

information warfare as a "strategy for the use and management of information to pursue a competitive advantage, including both offensive and defensive operations.[215] As a more comprehensive definition, the term IW is described by the Russian Ministry of Defense as:

> Information War is the confrontation between two or more states in the information space with the purpose of inflicting damage to information systems, processes and resources, critical and other structures, undermining the political, economic and social systems, a massive psychological manipulation of the population to destabilize the state and society, as well as coercion of the state to take decisions for the benefit of the opposing force.[216]

In the light of these definitions, IW can be considered an umbrella term with two main dimensions, one of which covers the physical domain that is colloquially known as "cyber-attacks" and described by the Russians as "digital-technology level". Accordingly, it aims to "disrupt and compromise the physical dimension of the information environment by penetrating, manipulating, and destroying information networks and command control systems.". The other dimension is related to the cognitive domain. It fundamentally seeks to conduct social influence operations by affecting perceptions and decision-making processes of the targeted communities via such tools as traditional media, social media and so on.[217]

In this aspect and regarding the fact that Russia exhibits a holistic approach in IW domain by not only affecting "the target state and its armed forces' ability to manage information and exercise effective command and control functions" but at the same time accomplishing "desired effects in mind of target populations' perceptions and decision-making processes that favor Russia's interests and goals"[218], the term IW

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[215] Catherine A. Theohary, "Defense Primer: Information Operations," 2020, https://crsreports.congress.gov.

[216] "Russian Federation Armed Forces' Information Space Activities Concept: Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation," accessed June 29, 2021, https://eng.mil.ru/en/science/publications/more.htm?id=10845074@cmsArticle.

[217] Blagovest Tashev, Michael Purcell, and Brian McLaughlin, "Russia's Information Warfare: Exploring the Cognitive Dimension," *MCU Journal* 10, no. 2 (2019): 139, https://doi.org/10.21140/mcuj.2019100208.

[218] Tashev, Purcell, and McLaughlin, 139.

contains cyber-attacks on the physical dimension and information operations (IO) on the cognitive dimension as the two main components. While cyber-attacks were brought into use as of the 1990s with the proliferation of the Internet, IO has a long history in Russian strategic thinking. It was mainly in use in the Cold War period against the US.[219] It carries similar traits with the RC theory in that both aim to affect the perceptions of the target, as mentioned in the previous chapter with specific illustrations. Some commentators even define the RC theory as the basis of Russian IW.[220] In the light of modern technological developments, today's IW tools are more advanced forms of those utilized during the Soviet era, namely posters, publications and traditional broadcastings. For example, in 1984, before the Summer Olympics, Committee for State Security of the Soviet Union (KGB) agents postured as Ku Klux Klan members in Los Angeles. They sent intimidating letters to African and Asian nations saying, "The Olympics – for the whites only," and "African monkeys! A grand reception awaits you in Los Angeles! We are preparing for the Olympic games by shooting at black moving targets." To frighten them not to participate in the games by sparking racial concerns.[221] Today, IW has evolved into a more technologically advanced form, including "microtargeting social media posts and engineering online echo chambers" and, Russian operatives use more elaborate forms of technological tools such as Facebook and Twitter ads to popularize "Black Lives Matter" and "Blue Lives Matter" movements on the social media to incite the same concerns among the US communities.[222] According to a report by the US House Intelligence Committee titled *Exposing Russia's Effort to Sow Discord Online,* the Moscow-associated

[219] Conor Cunningham, "A Russian Federation Information Warfare Primer," 2020, https://jsis.washington.edu/news/a-russian-federation-information-warfare-primer/.

[220] See for example: Tashev, Purcell, and McLaughlin, "Russia's Information Warfare: Exploring the Cognitive Dimension"; Hansen, "Soviet Deception in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Learning from the Past"; Maria Snegovaya, "Putin's Informationa Warfare in Ukraine. Soviet Origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare," *ISW Russia Report*, no. 1 (2015): 10.

[221] "Russians Targeted U.S. Racial Divisions Long Before 2016 And Black Lives Matter," NPR, 2017, https://www.npr.org/2017/10/30/560042987/russians-targeted-u-s-racial-divisions-long-before-2016-and-black-lives-matter.

[222] Timur Chabuk and Adam Jonas, "Understanding Russian Information Operations," *SIGNAL Magazine*, September 2018, https://www.afcea.org/content/understanding-russian-information-operations.

Internet Research Agency is behind a total of 3,519 purchased ads on Facebook, and these ads became available to more than 11.4 million American users.[223]

In this aspect, the Russian IW strategy incorporates a state-sponsored media reinforced by Russian trolls and bots. All these components have one common goal: to bolster world events serving Russia's global interests by destabilizing the Western-oriented international system. Besides, the state-controlled Russian media has another mission to blur the facts by creating alternative rhetoric with a Russian version of events to cause confusion and discord. To this end, Russia Today (RT) and Sputnik are the spearheads of Russia's state-oriented media institutions. They are strongly oriented to bolster Moscow's agenda in international politics and produce pro-Russian news to affect perceptions in printable publications and social media. As a complementary component of media, Russia also harbours "troll factories" to spread disinformation on the Internet environment, thereby enhancing Russian disinformation campaigns' effectiveness.[224]

On the roots of IW in contemporary Russian strategic thinking, military intervention into Georgia in 2008 was one of the most determinant factors among others that are covered in the previous chapters in terms of Russia's orientation towards the hybrid warfare strategy in general but specifically, the Georgian war experiment was what revealed the need for change in IW domain. Although Russia won the kinetic warfare on the battlefield, with Georgia losing almost 20 per cent of its territory, some Russian strategists believed that Russia was defeated in the IW aspects worldwide. To this end, a prominent Russian IW theoretician and propagandist, Igor Panarin, stated that the Georgian war indicated Russia's insufficiency in guarding its objectives and interests in the worldwide information domain, thereby emphasizing the need for further development for IW aspects, particularly in international propaganda wise.[225] Together with factors mentioned in the previous chapter, the Georgian War has led to

[223] "Exposing Russia's Effort to Sow Discord Online: The Internet Research Agency and Advertisements," accessed June 30, 2021, https://intelligence.house.gov/social-media-content/default.aspx.

[224] Cunningham, "A Russian Federation Information Warfare Primer."

[225] Volodymyr Lysenko and Catherine Brooks, "Russian Information Troops, Disinformation, and Democracy," *First Monday* 23, no. 5 (2018), https://firstmonday.org/article/view/8176/7201.

various reform movements not only on the conventional aspects of Russian military strategy but also on the unconventional aspects with the principle of shrinking the army quantitively while making it more efficient and mobile, thereby leading to the appointment of a more reformist Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov in 2012, which brought the hybrid warfare concept onto the agenda of Russian military strategy.[226]

Regarding the fact that IW is relatively easier and cheaper to execute and, most notably due to its deniability features, it is the backbone of Russian hybrid strategy that consists of a "deliberate disinformation campaign supported by actions of intelligence organs designed to confuse the enemy and achieve strategic advantage at a minimal cost."[227] The use of IW under the scope of Russian hybrid strategy has especially gained prominence with advancements in information technology, specifically regarding the way people interact with each other and exchange information. Russian strategic thinking is acceleratingly correlating IW with the military domain more significantly. At the same time, it is preliminary a product of Russia's whole-nation approach, including "multiple government bodies and agencies and both military and non-military methods and instruments."[228] In this aspect, the following quote vividly describes the growing importance of IW in Russian security agencies:

> There is an 'intelligence-war' dimension beyond the 'military war'. The Kremlin has devoted particular resources in its intelligence community. The Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU, military intelligence), and even the Federal Security Service (FSB), which is increasingly involved in overseas operations, are not only agencies tasked with gathering information about foreign capabilities and intentions. Rather, they are also instruments of non-linear warfare, spreading despair and disinformation, encouraging defections, and breaking or corrupting lines of command and communications.[229]

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[226] Snegovaya, "Putin's Informationa Warfare in Ukraine. Soviet Origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare," 10.

[227] Snegovaya, 9.

[228] Tashev, Purcell, and McLaughlin, "Russia's Information Warfare: Exploring the Cognitive Dimension," 139.

[229] Paul Chaisty and Stephen Whitefield, "Putin's Nationalism Problem," in *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*, ed. Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska and Richard Sakwa (E-International Relations, 2015), 158–59, https://www.e-ir.info/publication/ukraine-and-russia-people-politics-propaganda-and-perspectives/.

Further on, this notion is related to the Russian hybrid idea of requiring the adoption of a whole-nation approach to boost Russian national aspirations. It also requires non-military activities to be conducted constantly and even in times of peace, which increases the priority of IW as a strategic weapon of Russia to be utilized against its adversaries in encountering where affecting the perceptions and behaviours of people in a target community has vital importance to shape the results of bilateral or multilateral encountering cases.[230] The role IW concept in hybrid warfare can be considered similar to the role infantry class of an army in a conventional war where they are the first to enter the conflict zone and make close contact to soften enemy elements. To this end, IW has a similar function, which will also be highlighted with the Ukrainian case in the following parts, to change the perceptions of the target community as described by the following quote:

> What analysts refer to when they speak about Russian 'hybrid warfare' against the West are first of all Russian attempts to use information channels (media, social media and political statements) to influence public opinion or political processes in other countries, but they also include actions as diverse as cyber-attacks originating in Russia.[231]

To this end, Russian strategic thinking equates the activities and policies towards advancing IW with nuclear and conventional fire power proliferation.[232] This can be observed in the Ukraine case where Russia conducted confusing methods against its adversary and, thereby denying the presence of its troops as a result of active propaganda activities that disguised its military operations and also brought diplomatic and military flexibility in determining ways to incite the clashes in Ukraine by enlarging the sphere of potential diplomatic solutions. [233]

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[230] Snegovaya, "Putin's Informationa Warfare in Ukraine. Soviet Origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare," 7–10.

[231] Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, "Russia and Hybrid Warfare - Going Beyond the Label," 2016, 11, www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/publications/aleksanteri_papers.html.

[232] Tashev, Purcell, and McLaughlin, "Russia's Information Warfare: Exploring the Cognitive Dimension," 134.

[233] Snegovaya, "Putin's Informationa Warfare in Ukraine. Soviet Origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare," 9.

As mentioned above, Russia has a holistic approach to the IW concept. It incorporates cyber-attacks as one of the two main components. Cyber-attacks are conducted through such complementary elements as electronic warfare (EW), psychological operations (PsyOps), strategic communications and influence operations.[234]

Mshvidobadze describes this approach of Russia as "Russia views cyber-capabilities as tools of information warfare, which combines intelligence, counterintelligence, maskirovka, disinformation, electronic warfare, debilitation of communications, degradation of navigation support, psychological pressure, and destruction of enemy computer capabilities."[235] In this aspect, the Ukraine case provides a significant illustration of Russia's IW implementations on the tactical level.

Before Russian intervention into Crimea with unidentified Russian operatives called "little green men" and other conventional warfare elements in 2014, Russian security apparatus had already started to penetrate Ukraine's state information and communication networks together with other elements of its crucial infrastructure via different types of malicious spying and subversive software since Moscow was aware of the possible implications of the public anger that would potentially lead to toppling down of pro-Russian Ukrainian president Victor Yanukovych.[236] To reinforce the pro-Russian administration in Ukraine against the widespread outrage, Russia applied tactics such as more traditional form of disinformation together with cyber interventions to alter public opinion, thereby making use of various tools from "traditional mass media, such as TV, radio and newspapers, to the Internet-based news outlets and social media.[237] In this aspect, a NATO report describes the process as follows:

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[234] Keir Giles, "'Information Troops' - A Russian Cyber Command?," 2011, 46, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/224247775_Information_Troops_-_A_Russian_Cyber_Command.

[235] Khatuna Mshvidobadze, "The Battlefield On Your Laptop," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 2011, https://www.rferl.org/a/commentary_battlefield_on_your_desktop/2345202.html.

[236] David A. Sanger and Steven Erlanger, "Suspicion Falls on Russia as 'Snake' Cyberattacks Target Ukraine's Government," *The New York Times*, 2014, https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/09/world/europe/suspicion-falls-on-russia-as-snake-cyberattacks-target-ukraines-government.html.

[237] Lysenko and Brooks, "Russian Information Troops, Disinformation, and Democracy."

> Shortly after the appearance of armed groups in Crimean towns, the unfolding events demonstrated the special role of the Russian TV channels. On 6 March 2014, ten days before the Crimean referendum, armed men broke into the building of the Simferopol Radio and TV Broadcasting Station. Consequently, the broadcasting of various Ukrainian TV channels was suspended. They were substituted by Russian TV channels – Inter was replaced by NTV, the 1+1 channel by First Channel. A Molotov cocktail was thrown in the window of Black Sea TV, the only channel covering the whole Crimea region, while the webpage of the channel suffered from a DDoS (distributed denial-of-service) attack. Overall, broadcasts of Ukrainian TV stations were replaced by seven Russian TV channels.[238]

The desired goal of these disinformation endeavours was to sway public opinion towards the justification that Russian intervention into Crimea and eastern Ukraine was a requirement to address illegal actions in Kyiv.[239] Further on, Cunningham describes Russia's policy aspirations such as affecting the perceptions of the Ukraine case as two-legged and, thereby states that "First, it exploits the ongoing Russian-backed struggle in the east of Ukraine which, along with Crimea, situates Russia as the defender of Russian peoples abroad. Second, Russia has used its media and troll armies to project a narrative favourable to Moscow." In this aspect, Russia constantly propagated pro-Russian discourses through its media channels that depicted the 2014 public uprisings in Ukraine as a Western-sponsored coup attempt, thereby attempting to stalemate pro-Western protesters and polarize ethnic Russians in Ukraine. [240] Similarly, Russian "troll factories" were in action in 2014 when Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down by a ground-to-air missile above territory controlled by Russian-backed rebels in eastern Ukraine. The Russian-linked IRA posted a record-high amount of 111,486 tweets in three days after the explosion to put the blame on Ukrainian administration for the crash of flight MH17 with hashtags #КиевСбилБоинг ("Kiev shot Boeing"), #ПровокацияКиева ("KievProvocation")

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[238] Elina Lange-Ionatamišvili, "Analysis of Russia's Information Campaign Against Ukraine: Examining Non-Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine from a Strategic Communications Perspectives," 2015, 14, https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2015/sfpdpe/sfpdpe15_rr03.pdf.

[239] Lysenko and Brooks, "Russian Information Troops, Disinformation, and Democracy."

[240] See for example: Bouchet, "Russia's 'Militarization' of Colour Revolutions"; Nikitina, "The 'Color Revolutions' and 'Arab Spring' in Russian Official Discourse"; Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions."

and #КиевСкажиПравду ("KievTelltheTruth"), which indicates how "the Russian trolls worked to shift blame for the massacre and create a dense fog of conspiracy theories to obscure the facts."[241]

Another specific example of Russian IW strategy was in relation to electronic warfare (EW), a crucial component of IW, conducted in again Ukraine intervention when Ukrainian forces on the battlefield took text messages aiming at subverting coherence and morale of the troops. Liam Collins describes the unfolding events as a result of these text messages as:

> At times, these texts may also target family and friends and include kinetic strikes. In one tactic, soldiers receive texts telling them they are "surrounded and abandoned." Minutes later, their families receive a text stating, 'Your son is killed in action,' which often prompts a call or text to the soldiers. Minutes later, soldiers receive another message telling them to "retreat and live,' followed by an artillery strike to the location where a large group of cellphones was detected. Thus, in one coordinated action, electronic warfare is combined with cyberwarfare, information operations and artillery strikes to produce psychological and kinetic effects.[242]

On the extensive subversive effects of Russian "troll factories" for the Western world, the *New York Times Magazine* reporter Adrian Chen's publication titled *The Agency* describes a series of covert Russian influence operations in 2014 for which the author holds the civilian "troll farm" located in Saint Petersburg responsible. Accordingly, these operations included complex lies and fake news to create anarchy and disarray among the American society. Among these lies and fake news, there was a fake explosion at the Columbia Chemical plant located in Louisiana on September 11, fake news of Ebola cases in Atlanta and false comments on the murder of an unarmed black woman by the police in Atlanta.[243] These fake stories were quickly disseminated in social media with such hashtags as #ColumbianChemicals, #EbolaInAtlanta,

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[241] Amy Knight, "MH17: Russia Deployed Its Trolls to Cover Up the Murder of 298 People," *The Daily Beast*, May 31, 2019, https://www.thedailybeast.com/mh17-russia-deployed-its-trolls-to-cover-up-the-murder-of-298-people.

[242] Liam Collins, "Russia Gives Lessons in Electronic Warfare," *Association of the United States Army* 68, no. 8 (2018), https://www.ausa.org/articles/russia-gives-lessons-electronic-warfare.

[243] Adrian Chen, "The Agency," *The New York Times*, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/07/magazine/the-agency.html.

#shockingmurderinatlanta, and, thereby, attempting to escalate a sense of turmoil and horror in the US. For example, Chen explains his view of the events unfolded in "Louisiana hoax" as:

> …a highly coordinated disinformation campaign, involving dozens of fake accounts that posted hundreds of tweets for hours, targeting a list of figures precisely chosen to generate maximum attention. The perpetrators didn't just doctor screenshots from CNN; they also created fully functional clones of the Web sites of Louisiana TV stations and newspapers. The YouTube video of the man watching TV had been tailor-made for the project. A Wikipedia page was created for the Columbian Chemicals disaster, which cited the fake YouTube video. As the virtual assault unfolded, it was complemented by text messages to actual residents in St. Mary Parish. An effort of this scale must have taken a team of programmers and content producers to pull off.[244]

Last but not least, allegations regarding the Russian interference in 2016 US elections, hacking of Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and e-mail leakages, spreading of politically subversive disinformation on social media by "Russia-linked hackers", all seeking to "damage the Clinton campaign, boost Trump's chances and sow distrust in American democracy overall", are among the most striking examples of Russian IW operations in the recent history.[245]

These are primary examples of Russian IW strategy, an essential component of Russia's grand hybrid warfare concept specifically against the US and the Western ideals by muddying the waters, bending the truths, creating suspicion in minds and triggering chaos and disorder in the target societies as well as destructing information infrastructures of adversaries through cyber strikes and information operations. To this end, the most specific feature of the Russian IW concept is its consistency both in peace and war times, which makes it distinctive from other hybrid tools of Russian

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[244] Chen.

[245] See for example: "How Russia-Linked Hackers Stole the Democrats' Emails and Destabilised Hillary Clinton's Campaign - ABC News," *ABC News*, November 4, 2017, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-04/how-russians-hacked-democrats-and-clinton-campaign-emails/9118834; Abigail Abrams, "Here's What We Know So Far About Russia's 2016 Meddling | Time," *TIME*, April 18, 2019, https://time.com/5565991/russia-influence-2016-election/; John Swaine, "Russians Tried to Hack Clinton Server on Day Trump Urged Email Search," *The Guardian*, July 13, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jul/13/russians-hillary-clinton-email-server-trump-indictment.

strategic thinking. IW concept is especially conducted as the preparation phase of the battlefield.

5.4. Government Organized Non-Governmental Organizations (GONGOs)

The concept of Government Organized Non-Governmental Organizations (GONGOs) is another crucial component of Russian hybrid warfare strategy that began to gain prominence with Vladimir Putin's presidency and reached its peak with the Color Revolution uprisings in former-Soviet states as of the mid-2000s as a response to block Western influence on Russian sphere of interests in the post-Soviet space. The concept itself is oxymoronic, as it is evident by its name. The idea of NGO should typically be independent of government activities and instead deal with civil society subjects such as social, political, humanitarian, or environmental cases in national or international domains.[246] However, the Russian hybrid warfare strategy encompasses many GONGOs to advertise the Russian perception of world politics and sustain the bonds with Russian nationals residing abroad.[247] The indispensable public diplomacy role of GONGOs based on "civil society potential, information, cultural and other methods and technologies alternative to traditional diplomacy" was first officially underlined in 2013 Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation with the emphasis on "…involvement of civil society institutions in addressing international issues in order to enhance the effectiveness of the Russian foreign policy." and, the establishment of "Russia's positive image worthy of the high status of its culture, education, science, sports achievements."[248]

As mentioned in the Color Revolutions part with specific illustrations, these uprising movements were a milestone in the Russian approach to NGOs. The Russian

[246] Jean Folger and Margaret James, "What Is an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization)?," Investopedia, 2021, https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/13/what-is-non-government-organization.asp.

[247] Henrik Sundbom and Martin Kragh, "Resilience Against Influence Operations in the Eastern Partnership Countries," 2018, 16, https://www.ui.se/globalassets/ui.se-eng/publications/ui-publications/2018/ui-brief-no5.-2018.pdf.

[248] "Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation," The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2013, https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/122186.

viewpoint held the West responsible for the Color Revolutions movements to destabilize related countries. In this view, the Western-oriented NGOs such as the Open Society Foundation and Freedom House intentionally conducted subversive activities by supporting the activists and young protesters in achieving their desired ends, toppling down the Russian-oriented incumbent leaders.[249] In addition, the 2011 Russian parliamentary elections caused mass demonstrations and public unrest in Russia, which Putin held the US-sponsored NGOs responsible for triggering those protests.[250] To this end, Russia took concrete steps to restrain both the establishment and funding of foreign NGOs in Russia by issuing laws and executive decrees.[251] More importantly, Russia established alternative organizations (GONGOs) that would carry out similar tasks with NGOs domestically as a counter-measurement against the western-oriented NGOs and founded various international organizations to confront "Western democracy-promotion" endeavours as experienced in the Color Revolution and the Arab Spring movements.[252] In this aspect, as a part of Russian attempts towards stalemating foreign NGO activities, Civic Chamber (*Obshchestvennaya Palata*) was one of the primary GONGOs founded by the Russian administration in 2005 to maintain coordination between citizens, NGOs and government officials.[253]

Further on, Russia formed the Institute for Democracy and Cooperation that had offices in Paris and New York in 2007 with the designated objectives to challenge NGOs and general public opinion to "intensify debate of the general public, NGOs and experts about the ways of organizing the electoral process, electoral monitoring, to discuss the situation with national minorities and migrants, rights of children and

[249] Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions," v.

[250] Andrew Osborn, "Vladimir Putin Accuses Hillary Clinton of Encouraging Russian Protests," *The Telegraph*, December 8, 2011, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/8942456/Vladimir-Putin-accuses-Hillary-Clinton-of-inciting-protests.html.

[251] Evgeny Finkel and Yitzhak M Brudny, "Russia and the Colour Revolutions," *Democratization* 19, no. 1 (2012): 17, https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2012.641297.

[252] Hinkle, "Russia's Reactions to the Color Revolutions," 24–25.

[253] Finkel and Brudny, "Russia and the Colour Revolutions," 17.

youth, and freedom of speech."[254] As also mentioned in the Color Revolutions part, these motivations were the driving forces behind the idea of the Color Revolutions that are associated with destructive interference attempts of the Western powers by Russia.

Additionally, to fund Russian-oriented NGOs in other countries, guard the rights and benefits of Russian nationals living abroad, and build a bridge with them, Russia formed the Russian World Foundation.[255] To this end, Saari interprets these policy aspirations of Russia as:

> Here the links between internal and external strategies are most clear. It is remarkable that while criticizing Western actors for funding civil society activity in Russia and thus interfering in its internal affairs, Russia is simultaneously openly stepping up its engagement in counter-promotion and anti-assistance.[256]

In light of the above-mentioned interpretation, GONGOs can be considered practical public diplomacy tools in the Russian hybrid strategy concept to counter adversary influence operations domestically and internationally. In this aspect, there are specific dimensions of GONGOs in Russia. Some of these are closely interlinked to upper cadres of Russian administration and directed by these cadres to bolster Russian dignity at the international level. They also aid native institutions to reinforce the Russian policy agenda. Some of them are partially sovereign but obtain financial support from ministries, and they have a close association with Federal Security Service (FSB). For example, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov heads some of these GONGOs. Among the most prominent Russian GONGOs are Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (*Rossotrudnichestvo*),

[254] Sergey Lavrov, "We Are Ready for Joint Constructive Work with All Concerned Parties," *Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security* 14, no. 2 (January 2008): 11–14, https://doi.org/10.1080/19934270.2008.9756534; quoted in Sinikukka Saari, "European Democracy Promotion in Russia before and after the 'Colour' Revolutions," *Democratization* 16, no. 4 (2009): 732–55, https://doi.org/10.1080/13510340903083018.

[255] Saari, "European Democracy Promotion in Russia before and after the 'Colour' Revolutions," 747.

[256] Saari, 747.

Russkiy Mir, Gorchakov Fund, Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) and, Russian Institute for Strategic Studies.[257]

These institutions, working in tandem with the Russian policy agenda, receive various kinds of support with various proportions both from the Russian state foundations and from such figures as oligarchs and business enterprises that have closely linked to the inner circles of the Russian ruling elite. Their proposed agendas include such objectives as the bolstering of the Russian World, Eurasian integration and union of Orthodox countries within the framework of Eurasian ideology and Russian nationalism and their ultimate aim is to "… project Russian soft power abroad and help turn the hearts and minds of citizens and in neighboring countries towards accepting Russia's supremacy."[258] For example, the concept of the Russian World (*Russkiy Mir*) is promoted by Moscow-oriented GONGOs to legitimize Russian policy implementations both in the post-Soviet and international domains by organizing and catalyzing ethnic Russian communities and Russophones.[259] To this end, Lutsevych describes the functions of Russian GONGOs very clearly as:

> Russian pseudo-NGOs undermine the social cohesion of neighboring states through the consolidation of pro-Russian forces and ethno-geopolitics; the denigration of national identities; and the promotion of anti-US, conservative Orthodox and Eurasianist values. They can also establish alternative discourses to confuse decision-making where it is required, and act as destabilizing forces by uniting paramilitary groups and spreading aggressive propaganda.[260]

The Ukraine case provides vivid examples to prove these organizations' effectiveness. For instance, Russian-sponsored GONGOs such as the Cooperation Agency, the Luzhkov Sevastopol Foundation and the Moscow House of Crimea gave financial support to separatist factions during the Crimean intervention by inciting Russian

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[257] Sundbom and Kragh, "Resilience Against Influence Operations in the Eastern Partnership Countries," 16.

[258] Orysia Lutsevych, "Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood," 2016, 3, https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2016-04-14-agents-russian-world-lutsevych.pdf.

[259] Sundbom and Kragh, "Resilience Against Influence Operations in the Eastern Partnership Countries," 16.

[260] Lutsevych, "Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood," 2.

ethnicity notion to spread Russian ideology, orienting protests against NATO and promoting discourses of reintegration with Russia within the framework of the Novorossiya concept.[261]

Further on, Russian-speaking communities are valuable assets to impose a Russian worldview. In this aspect, The Russian World Foundation is an excellent example of propagating the Russian language and culture abroad. In addition, Pushkin Institute and the International Association of Russian Language Teachers conduct activities for the same purposes.[262]

The Eurasian integration concept is also an essential subject for Russian-oriented GONGOs that specifically attach importance to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia since these countries tend to access EU membership. In this aspect, the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies is one of those prominent ideology-shaping GONGOs that produces subversive rhetoric on the EU integration in terms of cultural and economic factors and praises the concept of Eurasian integration.[263] Similarly, Victor Medvedchuk, a prominent figure from the inner circle of President Putin, runs a GONGO named Ukrainian Choice and has been very influential in Ukrainian politics for a long time. He has long promoted pro-Eurasian discourses to subvert the EU sentiment and conducted policies to sway public opinion in Ukraine on behalf of Russian interests. Also, Medvedchuk and his GONGO Ukrainian Choice carried out significant tasks to obstruct 2004 and 2014 uprisings in Ukraine to counter-revolutionary movements against Kremlin-friendly regimes.[264]

Election monitoring is also a prominent sphere of activity for GONGOs. As mentioned above, rumours of fraudulent election monitoring processes were the most significant factors that incited the colour revolutions uprisings. To counter such threats, the

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[261] Joshua P. Mulford, "Non-State Actors in the Russo-Ukrainian War," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 15, no. 2 (2016): 103, https://doi.org/10.2307/26326442.

[262] Lutsevych, "Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood," 14.

[263] Lutsevych, 20–21.

[264] John Hardie, "Kyiv Ramps Up Campaign Against Putin's Man in Ukraine" (Washington D.C, 2021), https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2021/05/21/kyiv-campaign-against-putins-man-in-ukraine/.

Commonwealth of Independent States Election Observation Mission (CIS-EMO) performs essential duties as an alternative selection monitoring organization to defend Kremlin's interests. It has been involved in election monitoring processes both in post-Soviet space and in some of the EU countries by appointing election observers to legitimize or discredit election processes depending on the agenda of the Kremlin.[265]

These cases illustrate how Russian GONGOs are weaponized as alternative NGOs and public diplomacy tools to contribute to Russia's hybrid activities in performing Russian policy interests against its adversaries. As a complementary component of the other hybrid devices or may be at least as equally efficient as the others, GONGOs as quasi-NGOs strengthen Russia's hand, especially against the US and the EU, in that they can disguise their activities under the pretext of independent civil society organizations while undermining the Western ideals, obscuring the facts, creating discord and confusion among rival communities and supporting Kremlin-friendly administrations.

5.5. Russian Orthodox Church (ROC)

Like the GONGOs or the other public diplomacy tools of Russia's hybrid warfare strategy, the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) assumes a determinant role in implementing the grander Russian policy aspirations, especially the *Russkiy Mir* (Russian World) doctrine. As of Vladimir Putin's presidency, the Russian administration has revealed the political power of the ROC, which has been evolved into a practical tool of the Kremlin's foreign policy agenda.[266]

As also mentioned in the previous part, the *Russkiy Mir* doctrine is a geopolitical tool to challenge the Western-oriented world order, and it has crucial implications for constructing Russian dominance over the post-Soviet space, especially the Eastern Slavic geography, with its constituent elements of language, culture, history, shared

[265] Sundbom and Kragh, "Resilience Against Influence Operations in the Eastern Partnership Countries," 19.

[266] Juan Carlos Antunez, "The Role of Religion and Values in Russian Policies: The Case of Hybrid Warfare," *GESI Analysis*, 2017, https://global-strategy.org/the-role-of-religion-and-values-in-russian-policies-the-case-of-hybrid-warfare/.

history and religion. To this end, Russia has introduced distinctive history rhetoric incorporating a blend of Russian imperial and Soviet traits with the emphasis on placing the 'Kievian Rus' and *Russkiy Mir* discourses as the backbone of Eastern Slavic nations [267]

Further on, The *Russkiy Mir* concept shares similar traits with the idea of the Eurasian concept developed by a Kremlin strategist, Alexander Dugin, who has an anti-Western and socially traditional stance. In this aspect, Dugin constructed his ideological stance on such components as "integrative patriotism (pride in Russia diversity, its history and its place in the world; sovereign democracy (the conviction that Russians should define their democracy and protect themselves from values exported from outside); and orthodox Christianity (unite the East Slavonic people around Orthodox Christian cultural norms and values)"[268] and these notions have formed the backbone of Putin's ideology.

In this aspect, the discourses mentioned above are the core of Kremlin's foreign policy ends that take religious motifs, precisely the conservative and Orthodox ideals, as the basis with such labels as "Orthodox civilization" or "Eastern Slavic brotherhood."[269] That said, ROC has carried out a special mission to promote the idea of 'Russian World' and Russian-centric world order through various organizations, publications, charity groups with the advantage of its dignity and influence over the adherents both domestically and internationally.[270]

To this end, Ukraine, as the "religious core of the Russian World"[271], is a significant country for Russia. It has historical, cultural and religious ties to Russia more than

[267] Lutsevych, "Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood," 7–16.

[268] Vira Ratsiborynska, "When Hybrid Warfare Supports Ideology: Russia Today" (Zurich, 2016), 8, https://css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/publications/publication.html/3e0ceea7-97b3-4add-ba0f-e810d9194a83.

[269] Andreas Umland and Khrystyna Karelska, "How Religious History Helps Us Understand Russia's War Against Ukrainian Independence," History News Network, 2020, https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/174251.

[270] Lutsevych, "Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood," 25.

[271] Lutsevych, 26.

post-Soviet states. However, what makes it strategically more crucial for Russia is its religious heritage in the Orthodox world. It has a historically distinctive feature among today's Eastern Slavic nations because the baptism of the first Orthodox Eastern Slavic state, the Kievian Rus, in the 10th century is one of the most prominent occasions in the history of Eastern Orthodoxy. Stretching from today's central and northern Ukraine to eastern Belarus and western Russia, Kievian Rus laid the foundations of the modern Ukrainian state, as per what Ukraine claims. In this manner, Ukraine constitutes the centre of gravity for the Kremlin-sponsored 'Russian World' and 'Kievian Rus' doctrines, thereby becoming the primary target of Russia's ROC policies as a hybrid warfare tool.[272] This is a result of a long-standing conflict of perspectives between Russian and Ukraine due to Russia's defining a common historical background of the Kievian Rus legacy on one side and Russia's 'Russian World' discourse on the other side. In this aspect, both Russia and Ukraine separately assert that Kievian Rus is their ancestors. To this end, when Vladimir Putin unveiled a statute of Vladimir the Great, emperor of the Kievian Rus, next to the Kremlin in 2016 by describing him as "the unifier and founding father of an All Rus' state", Ukraine showed a harsh reaction claiming that Vladimir the Great was from Ukrainian descendant. He had a pro-European orientation and the current Ukrainian state, as a part of European legacy, has its unique history and culture separate from Russia, which Russia firmly rejects.[273]

In the light of the statements mentioned above, this clash of opinions between Russia and Ukraine is also evident in religious institutions. Accordingly, Ukraine's pro-European policies after gaining independence with the dissolution of the USSR have paved the way towards a kind of dispute between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC KP) and Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) against the preeminence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP) in Ukraine. The fact that UOC MP is subordinate to ROC,

[272] Umland and Karelska, "How Religious History Helps Us Understand Russia's War Against Ukrainian Independence."

[273] Sam Appels, "The Legacy of Kievan Rus': The Memory War between Russia and Ukraine," 2019, https://www.institutegreatereurope.com/single-post/2019/02/18/the-legacy-of-kievan-rus-the-memory-war-between-russia-and-ukraine.

which is linked to Moscow agenda although it is officially independent of the state, bears various geopolitical and geostrategic implications for Russia to implement subversive hybrid policies on Ukraine, making the ROC a hybrid tool.[274] For example, the ROC has hundreds of proxy groups in Ukraine that conduct perception management activities by propagating the pro-Kremlin agenda of "spiritual, cultural and moral unity with the brotherly nations of Belarus and Russia."[275] Further on, the ROC performed calamitous tasks to sow discord in the East of Ukraine by conducting meetings with bishops of the border dioceses of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus in Moscow, thereby promoting the Russian World discourse.[276] Additionally, in collaboration with the ROC, Moscow has performed activities to form paramilitary groups under the scheme of Orthodox religious communities in Ukraine and strengthen them by loading a charge of ensuring public safety.[277]

Russian business circles also promote the 'Russian World' discourse by propagating the Orthodox values domestically and internationally via their charity organizations. Among these businessmen, also labelled as 'Orthodox oligarchs', Konstantin Malofeev is one of the most famous actors who has founded pro-Kremlin organizations such as the Foundation of Saint Vasily. It has made a lot of investments into pro-Russian organizations in Russia, such as the "Orthodox Union of Youth" and the "Russians Without Russia" community. Also, in an attempt to consolidate young believers of the Russian World, it has founded a community in collaboration with the ROC. Malofeev also owns a TV channel, Tsargad TV, which defames Western civilizations and thereby propagates the ROC agenda or Orthodox values and Slavic nationality discourses. Similarly, in Moldova, the Metropolitan Orthodox Church,

[274] Umland and Karelska, "How Religious History Helps Us Understand Russia's War Against Ukrainian Independence."

[275] Lutsevych, "Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood," 26.

[276] "Means of Russia Hybrid Warfare Against Ukraine" (Kyiv, 2017), 9, https://nuou.org.ua/assets/documents/scientific-edition.pdf.

[277] Taras Kuzio, "Vladimir Putin's Forever War against Ukraine Continues," 2020, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/vladimir-putins-hybrid-war-against-ukraine-continues/.

which strongly relies on the Moscow Patriarchate, conducts anti-EU propaganda and promotes anti-Western narratives.[278]

[278] Sundbom and Kragh, "Resilience Against Influence Operations in the Eastern Partnership Countries," 20.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to clarify a fundamental question of what necessitated post-Soviet Russia to adopt hybrid warfare methods under the guidance of Machiavellian political philosophy. Machiavellianism has a strictly realistic approach to politics in the international relations of the states, prerequisite the sovereignty of the state above all the other worldly or heavenly considerations. This notion makes him one of the forerunners of the realism theory. In this aspect, Machiavellianism suggests that politics should be grounded on sole expediency and power without justifying the means to bring the desired ends for the state. Accordingly, it constructs a correlation between two essential concepts *virtù* and *necessità,* and thereby attributing certain traits to the ruler of a state as being virtuous in statecraft, which requires him to do whatever is necessitated by the existing conditions of political or military affairs to make the state and people reach a worldly dignity and prosperity and use of all instruments to accomplish the desired political outcome. This correlation also requires a military commander to possess a 'flexible disposition' to adjust himself to the prospects of warfare as the changing situations necessitate since Machiavellianism perceives war as the continuation of politics, the idea of which Machiavelli is the forefather. Thus, Machiavellianism supposes that warfare is not only performed with conventional military actions but also requires the deployment of all other means, including political, diplomatic, etc. This idea also requires nations to constantly engage in war with each other since it is the ultimate desire of all states to strengthen and expand, with warfare being the fundamental practice of political affairs.

The Russian Federation, as the most powerful successor of the USSR, found itself in the middle of a power struggle after the dissolution of the USSR to regain the status of one of the two great powers by trying to maintain its sphere of influence on the post-Soviet space and to prove Russian dignity, especially against the Western world. In

the light of Valery Gerasimov's article, this thesis argues that there were a series of developments in post-Soviet Russian space affecting Russia's sphere of interests domestically and internationally. With Vladimir Putin's coming to power as a strong leader and his grand policy aspirations that aim at making Russia reach a point where it will again confront the world by its political and military power, certain developments both in the domestic and international politics such as the Chechen Wars, the Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring movements were among the essential factors that necessitated Russia to adopt itself to the existing conditions of 'modern wars' as emphasized by Valery Gerasimov. Already having a predisposition to deception techniques throughout its history, especially during the Soviet era when the USSR made use of *Maskirovka* and RC theory, Russia has adopted hybrid warfare methods against its adversaries to survive the changing nature of new wars of the 21st century that is described explicitly by Valery Gerasimov in his article. Accordingly, wars are no longer conducted solely on battlefields. Instead, they have started to be undertaken in people's minds, especially since information technologies dominated the world order in the mid-20th century. In this aspect, affecting people's perceptions has crucial importance to win rivalries, which necessitates employment on unconventional warfare tools and conventional methods. Having experienced a considerable loss because of the asymmetrical means and forms during the Chechen Wars despite being superior in conventional military terms, Russia felt the need to reform its military thinking that was first exhibited during Crimea and Eastern Ukraine annexations in 2014. In this aspect, Ukraine is one of the cases that Russia implemented its hybrid tools to the greatest extent, as detailed in the previous chapters. These annexations also reflect the Color Revolutions uprisings in the post-Soviet space that Russia perceives as the hybrid threats against itself and holds the West responsible for. The employment of new information technologies and social media and other unconventional tools such as Western sponsored thinks-tanks, youth organizations, and NGOs during these uprisings intensified their impacts, which is another crucial aspect that Russia takes lessons from. Similarly, the Arab Spring movements showed how easily the West could destabilize the exposed countries without military intervention. In this aspect, this thesis asserts that all these lessons were influential for Russia to adopt a hybrid strategy that is composed of some different elements besides its conventional military force to forestall any threats likely to emanate from the above-mentioned

unconventional warfare aspects. Machiavelli's political philosophy justifies this notion.

By blurring the lines between war and peace, the hybrid warfare concept makes warfare a permanent activity conducted with different conventional and unconventional elements. It has D&D tactics in its core to at least destabilize its perceived adversaries, if not defeat them militarily. Russian hybrid warfare concept, prioritizing a bloodless victory over the enemy, incorporates D&D tactics in its core as Russia officially can deny the linkage between the SOF elements, also known as "little green men", in Crimea annexation or PMCs deployed to different parts of the world and Russian state. Russia also officially can deny any linkage to the cyber-attacks that crippled critical information infrastructures of Ukraine during the annexation or the social media campaigns aimed at changing the perceptions of local Crimean residents on behalf of Russian ideals via its troll armies. The other soft power tools such as GONGOs and ROC are also invisible weapons of Russian hybrid strategy to control perceptions both domestically and internationally while imposing its covert policy agenda.

All in all, this thesis provides answers to the question of what were the driving forces for Russia to lean on hybrid methods, which is theoretically highlighted with Machiavellian political philosophy—constantly emphasizing the separation between politics and ethics in his teachings, Machiavellianism priorities power politics over ethical considerations, bringing forward a new field of research to be further researched about the ethical dimension of the hybrid warfare concept.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Hibrit Savaş doktrininin özellikle 2014 yılında gerçekleştirilen Kırım müdahalesinden bu yana sistematik ve organize bir şekilde en dikkat çekici olarak Rusya tarafından uygulandığına dair literatürde genel bir kanı bulunmaktadır. Bu durum, Hibrit Savaş konseptinin daha çok Rusya ile bağdaştırılması gibi bir sonucu doğurmaktadır. Bu durum, özellikle Batılı araştırmacılar ve düşünürler tarafından Rusya'nın 2014 yılında gerçekleştirdiği Ukrayna müdahalesi esnasında uyguladığı karmaşık savaş tekniklerini kavramsallaştırabilmek ve teorik bir temelde ifade edebilmenin yanı sıra siyasi ve askeri alanda Rusya'ya karşı tezler geliştirebilme amacının bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Yukarıda yer alan bilgiler ışığında bu tez, Rusya tarafından icra edilmekte olan Hibrit Savaş uygulamalarını, Makyavelist siyaset felsefi bağlamında analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu kapsamda, Makyavelist siyaset felsefesinin özellikle siyasi sonuççuluk ve devlet adamlığı konularında öne sürdüğü paradigmalar, Rusya'nın Hibrit Savaş konsepti uygulamalarını benimsemesinin arkasında yatan gereksinimler konusunda teorik bir çerçeve çizmektedir. Fakat söz konusu teorik çerçeve, ne hibrit tekniklerin Rus askeri ve siyaset stratejinde kullanımını haklı çıkarmakta ne de Makyavelizmin konvansiyonel askeri strateji ve taktik öğretileri bağlamında Rusya'nın spesifik hibrit uygulamalarına kılavuzluk etmektedir. Bunun yerine, Hibrit Savaş konseptine ilişkin Rus perspektifi ile temel olarak bir devlet adamına gücünü muhafaza ettirmesi, devletin bekasını korumak ve "anarşik" dünya düzeninde ayakta kalmasını sağlamak amacıyla "esnek dispozisyon" tutumu takınarak etik ve ahlaki kaygıları göz önünde bulundurmaksızın mevcut siyasi ve askeri şartlar neyi gerektiriyorsa onu yapması yönünde salık veren realist Makyavelist siyaset felsefesi arasında teorik bir bağlantı kurulmaktadır.

Dolayısıyla bu tezde, köklerini bir devlet adamının devleti başarıyla yönetmesi için gerek duyulan erdem ile siyaset ve etik arasındaki ilişkinin yanı sıra Makyavelizmin insan doğasına yönelik realist yaklaşımından alan Makyavelist siyaset felsefesinin özünü anlamak amacıyla "*Virtù*" (Erdem), "*Necessità*" (Gereklilik) ve "*Raison d'état*" (Ulusal çıkar) konseptlerine değinilmiştir. İlaveten, Makyavelist siyaset felsefesi, siyaset ve savaşı birbirlerini tamamlayan alanlar olarak kabul etmekte ve bu alanlardan birinde elde edilecek başarının diğer alanda elde edilecek başarıya bağlı olduğu ve hedeflenen siyasi ve askeri amaçlara ulaşmak için etik olsun ya da olmasın mevcut bütün yolların kullanılabileceğini görüşünü öne sürmektedir. Bundan dolayı, bu tez; Rus stratejik aklında yer edinen ve konvansiyonel askeri yöntemler ile Politik Savaş, Psikolojik Savaş ve Bilgi Savaşları gibi konvansiyonel olmayan yöntemleri bünyesinde barındıran Hibrit Savaş konseptinin, Rusya'nın yakın geçmişinde deneyimlediği bazı sıra dışı gelişmeler sonucu ortaya çıkan gereksinimlerin bir yansıması olduğu savını ortaya koymaktadır. Buna ek olarak, bu tez, Rus stratejik aklının hibrit savaş konsepti yöneliminin devletin gelişen şartlara ayak uydurması gereksinimini öne süren realist Makyavelist siyaset felsefesi çerçevesinde değerlendirilebileceğini savunmaktadır.

Bu kapsamda, tezin temel araştırma sorusu şu şekildedir: Rusya'nın hibrit savaş konseptini bir askeri doktrin olarak benimsemesini gerektiren nedenler nedir ve bu yaklaşım teorik olarak nasıl değerlendirilebilir?

Rusya, Devlet Başkanı Vladimir Putin'in göreve gelmesinden sonra 2014 yılı itibariyle Kırım ve Doğu Ukrayna'da çok boyutlu askeri müdahaleler gerçekleştirmiştir. Bu müdahaleler, özellikle Batılı siyaset yapıcıların ve askeri stratejistlerin dikkatini çekmiştir. Rusya'nın Kırım'ı ilhakı; Batılı devletler ve siyaset yapıcıları ile AB ve NATO gibi kuruluşlarını çaresiz bırakan bir durum olarak Ukrayna gibi bağımsız bir ülkenin büyük bir silahlı çatışma ya da konvansiyonel silah gücü olmaksızın nasıl toprak kaybedebildiği konusunda özellikle Batı dünyasını şaşkınlığa uğratmıştır. Rusya; Özel Harekât Kuvvetleri, Özel Askeri Şirketler, Bilgi Savaşları ve Hükümet Destekli Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları gibi araçların yanı sıra Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi'nin siyasi gücünü eşzamanlı ve koordineli bir şekilde kullanarak Ukrayna'nın Kırım Özerk Cumhuriyeti'ni, Sivastopol şehrini ve Donetsk ile Luhanks

bölgelerinin belirli alanlarını gizlice ve Batı dünyasından elle tutulur bir reaksiyon görmeksizin ilhak etmiştir. Müteakip süreçte Rusya, diğer stratejik hedeflerinin yanı sıra Batı etkisine karşı koyabilmek amacıyla; Özel Harekât Kuvvetleri ve Özel Askeri Şirketler çeşitli hibrit araçlar yardımıyla Suriye ve Libya çatışmalarına da müdahil olmuştur. Yine aynı doğrultuda, söz konusu askeri müdahalelere ilaveten savaş ve barış arasındaki hattı bulanıklaştırıp savaş durumunu kalıcı hale getirerek Rus yanlısı değerleri ve politik hedefleri geliştirmek için konvansiyonel gücünün tamamlayıcı unsuru olarak kamu diplomasisi faaliyetleri de yürütmektedir. Bu kapsamda Rusya, 2016 ABD Başkanlık seçimlerine yönelik Rus müdahalesi iddialarında ve ABD'de gerçekleşen "Siyahi Hayatlar Önemlidir" hareketini destekleyen sosyal medya kampanyalarında da görüldüğü üzere siber saldırılar vasıtasıyla hasım devletlerin bilgi ve iletişim altyapılarına zarar vermenin yanı sıra gerçekleri çarpıtmak, Batılı ülkeler arasında nifak tohumları ekmek ve kargaşa yaratmak amacıyla İnternet ortamını ve sosyal medya trollerini kullanarak "Bilgi Savaşı" aracını hibrit savaş yaklaşımının önemli bir silahı haline çevirmiştir.

Bundan dolayı, Batı dünyası, geçtiğimiz yirmi yılda Rusya'nın icra ettiği hibrit faaliyetleri anlamlandırabilmek amacıyla, modern savaşların değişen doğası ve gereksinimlerini anlatan ve Rusya'nın bu gereksinimler çerçevesinde askeri yapısını nasıl güncellemesi gerektiğine ilişkin tavsiyelerde bulunan Rusya Genelkurmay Başkanı Valery Gerasimov'un 2013 yılında kaleme aldığı ve konuyla ilgili literatürde önemli bir yere sahip olan makale temelinde "Gerasimov Doktrinini" kavramsallaştırmıştır. Bu minvalde, Valery Gerasimov'un makalesinin Rusya'nın Hibrit Savaş yaklaşımını anlamak için bir ölçüt olup olmadığı ya da Rus stratejik aklında "Gerasimov" adını taşıyan bir askeri doktrinin gerçekten var olup olmadığına ilişkin akademik tartışmalar bir kenara bırakıldığında, stratejik öneme haiz inkar ve aldatma tekniklerine yönelik tarihsel yatkınlığı ile birlikte Rus stratejik aklında Hibrit Savaş paradigmasına giden yol; Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından sonra Rusya Federasyonu'nun içerisinde düştüğü kaotik atmosfer, Vladimir Putin'in 2000 yılı itibariyle Devlet Başkanı olarak göreve gelmesi ve Rusya'yı Sovyetler Birliği döneminin iki kutuplu dünyasında olduğu gibi yeniden bir dünya devi haline getirme yönündeki hedefleri ile Çeçen Savaşları, Renkli Devrimler ve Arap Baharı kalkışmalarının stratejik etkileri gibi bazı etmenler sonucunda şekillenmiştir. Buna

göre, söz konusu spesifik etmenler, Rusya'nın askeri doktrinlerini yenilenmenin zeminini hazırlamış ve müteakip süreçte askeri stratejilerini güncellemesine yol açarak General Gerasimov'un makalesinde yer alan tespit ve tavsiyeleri Batılı siyaset ve askeri bilimciler nezdinde gün yüzüne çıkarmıştır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, "Gerasimov Doktrini" olarak adlandırılan paradigma, yukarıda yer aldığı üzere Rusya'nın Hibrit Savaş stratejisi ihtiyacını ortaya koyan etmenleri analiz etmede çıkış noktası olarak işlev görmektedir.

Bu kapsamda tez, giriş ve sonuç bölümleri de dahil olmak üzere toplamda altı bölümden oluşmaktadır. Giriş bölümünün ardından ikinci bölümünde, Makyavelist felsefenin temel hatlarına değinilmiş ve bu kapsamda Niccolò Machiavelli'nin siyaset felsefesi ve devlet adamlığı üzerine fikirlerini nasıl geliştirdiğini daha iyi değerlendirebilmek için eğitim ve profesyonel hayatına ilişkin bilgiler verilmiştir. Machiavelli'nin hümanist felsefe üzerine aldığı eğitim ve ardından Floransa kent devletinde diplomatik görevde bulunması; Makyavelist felsefenin siyaset, insan doğası ve din arasındaki ilişkiye yaklaşımını anlamamıza yardım etmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, Makyavelist felsefenin insana dair yaklaşımı kötümserdir ve bu nedenle de siyaset ile ahlaki ve dini değerler arasına ayırt edici bir çizgi çekerek yöneticinin mutlak gücünü ön plana çıkarmaktadır. Makyavelist siyaset felsefesi, devleti ve toplumu dünyevi itibara kavuşturmak için mevcut siyasi ve askeri koşullar neyi gerektiriyorsa yapmayı ve hedeflenen amaca ulaşmak için mevcut bütün araçları kullanmayı gerektirmesi bağlamında devlet yöneticisine "erdemli" olmak gibi bazı vasıflar yükleyerek "erdem" ve "gereklilik" kavramları arasında korelasyon kurmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Makyavelizm, "erdem" kavramını Orta Çağ dini öğretilerinin şekillendirdiği genel etik ve ahlak değerlerinin aksine farklı yorumlamış ve sonrasında da literatürde "Makyavelist erdem" konseptini kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Buna göre, bir devlet adamında olması gereken gerçek erdem, kendisini onurlandıracak bir yönetim tarzı benimsemesiyle alakalıdır. Benzer şekilde, Makyavelist erdem, vatansever olmakla ilişkilendirilmekte ve belli durumlarda hedefleri gerçekleştirmek için gerekli olan şeyler göz önüne alındığında farklı zamanlarda farklı kabiliyetlere sahip olmayı gerektirmektedir. Erdem kavramını ortaya koyan bu kabiliyetler, güç bir durumda cesaret ve dayanıklılık, öngörü ve feraset ile risk alma isteği gibi kapsama sahiptir. Söz konusu kabiliyetler, iyi ya da

kötü eylemlerde ortaya çıkabilir. Böylelikle, Makyavelizme göre, yeniden yapılandırılan "Makyavelist erdem" kavramıyla itibarını yitirmiş toplumların kurtarılması ve yozlaşmış bir devletin hayata döndürülmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Benzer şekilde, "gereklilik" kavramı da "Makyavelist erdem" konseptinin bir tamamlayıcı unsuru olarak ele alınmaktadır. Buna göre, insanoğlu ya gerekli olduğu için ya da tercihleri doğrusunda hareket etmektedir. Makyavelizme göre, insanoğlu tercihleri doğrultusunda hareket ettiğinde kaos ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu sebepten dolayı daha yüksek erdem, gereklilik durumlarından doğmakta ve iyi eylemler gereklilik sonucu ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, Makyavelist felsefe, insanların açlıkta veya zor zamanlar yaşadıklarında daha ağırbaşlı hale geldiği tezini ortaya atmaktadır. Aynı düşünceye göre, insanlık tarihi kısır bir rekabetten oluşmaktadır ve bu durum da toplumların sürekli olarak birbirleriyle savaş halinde olması gereksinimini doğurmaktadır. Bu sebeple, savaşı da bir gereklilik olarak gören bu düşünce, savaşın yüksek erdem, yani "Makyavelist erdem" ortaya çıkardığı tezini gün yüzüne çıkarmaktadır. Bundan dolayı, savaşmak, insanları çalışkan ve güçlü hale getirmekte ve sonuç olarak da insanlar, bir çatışma ya da muharebe esnasında gerekli olan erdeme yani dayanıklılığa sahip olmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, "Makyavelist erdem", savaşın kaçınılmazlığının bir yansıması olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

İlerleyen bölümde, Makyavelist siyaset felsefesine ilişkin literatürde yer alan çeşitli yorumlamalar da örneklendirilmiştir. Makyavelist felsefenin devletin bekasını her şeyin üzerinde tutan sert bir realist devlet yönetimi yaklaşımı nedeniyle söz konusu felsefeye ilişkin farklı yorumlamalar ve bakış açıları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu doğrultuda literatür iki ana kampa bölünmüştür: Makyavelist siyaset felsefesini savunan realist düşünce tarzının öncülük ettikleri ve Makyavelist siyaset felsefesine karşı çıkan genel olarak idealist düşünce tarzına sahip olanlar. Bu kapsamda, tezin ikinci bölümü, Makyavelist düşüncenin siyaset ve savaş üzerine tutumunu daha iyi değerlendirebilmek amacıyla yukarıda bahsedilen karşı görüşlere yer vermektedir. Ardından, Makyavelist siyaset felsefesinin üç önemli konsepti, *Prens* ve *Titus Livius'un İlk On Kitabı Üzerine Söylevler* adlı eserlerinde yer alan fikirler üzerinden analiz edilmiştir. Makyavelist siyaset felsefesinin temelinde insan doğası, devlet adamlığı, devlet yönetimindeki etik ve ahlaki değerler ile savaş ve siyaset arasındaki ilişki yatmaktadır. İkinci bölümde ele alınan bir diğer konu ise *Raison d'état* (Ulusal

çıkar) adlı doktrindir. Söz konusu doktrinin kaynağının Makyavelist siyaset felsefesi olduğu bilinmektedir. Bu kapsamda, *Raison d'état* doktrini, devletin bekasını her şeyin üzerinde tutarak "güç diplomasisi" fikrini savunmaktadır.

Tezin teorik bölümünün anlatıldığı ikinci bölümün ardından üçüncü bölümüne gelindiğinde ise hibrit savaş konseptinin Rus stratejik aklındaki evrimine dair bilgiler verilmiştir. Bu kapsamda, "askeri aldatma" konsepti, savaş tarihinden belirli örneklerle açıklanmıştır. Müteakiben, aldatma konseptinin Sovyet askeri stratejisindeki yerinden bahsedilmiştir. Bu durum, modern Rus askeri stratejisinin Hibrit Savaş teorisine ilişkin yaklaşımını anlamak açısından önemlidir. Çünkü, Rusya tarafından uygulanmakta olan Hibrit Savaş teorisi, Sovyet döneminde uygulanan askeri aldatma taktiklerinin bir mirası olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bundan dolayı, Sovyet askeri stratejisindeki inkâr ve aldatma taktiklerinin önemini anlamak açısından "*Maskirovka"* (Aldatma) ve "*Reflexive Control Theory*" adlı iki önemli konu belli başlı kullanım alanlarıyla birlikte analiz edilmiştir. Örneğin, Küba Füze Krizi'nin yaşandığı dönemde füzelerin Küba'ya naklinin üst seviye gizlilik önlemleri ve aldatıcı unsurlar uygulanarak icra edilmesi, *Reflexive Control Theory* bağlamında literatürde yerini almaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın en bilindik örneklerinden biri olarak Bagration Operasyonu esnasında Alman Birliklerine karşı binlerce model tankın kullanılması gibi uygulanan çeşitli aldatıcı metotlar da Sovyet stratejik aklının Maskirovka tekniklerinin uygulaması kapsamında örneklendirilmiştir.

Müteakip kısımda hem yönetim anlamında hem de toplumsal olarak Rus toplumunun "aldatma" eğiliminin tarihsel arka planından bahsedilmiştir. Bu kapsamda, Rus toplumunun sahip olduğu bu eğilim, doğrudan tehdit algılamasıyla ilişkilidir. Güvenliğin sağlanması ve tehditlerin bertaraf edilmesi için düşmanı aldatmak, olağan bir yaklaşım olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Bu kapsamda; Rus tarihinde güvensizliğe, kuşatılmışlık hissine ve daimî tehdit algısına sebebiyet veren bazı gelişmelere yer verilmiştir. Bunların başında, Doğu Ortodoksluğunun benimsenerek Avrupa'dan uzaklaşılması gelmektedir. Rus kimliğinin Bizans oryantasyonu; Rus toplumunda muhafazakâr ve yabancı düşmanı bir dünya görüşünün gelişmesinde ve giderek Avrupa kültüründen uzaklaşmasında etkili olmuştur. Buna ek olarak, aldatma eğiliminin bir diğer etkeni de Rus devlet kültürünün uluslararası ilişkiler ve kapsamlı

stratejik hedeflerinin arka planını teşkil eden "kuşatılmış kale" mantalitesinin yanı sıra jeopolitik güvensizlik ile ilgilidir. Son etmen olarak da Sovyet dönemi devlet yapısı ve ideolojisinin gizli ve dışa kapalı doğası da yönetici kademesinde otokratik, oligarşik, gizemli ve aldatıcı eğilimler ortaya çıkarması ve bu durumun topluma da sirayet etmesi konusu açıklanmıştır.

İlerleyen kısımlarda, genel bir tanımdan ziyade geniş yelpazeli tasvirlere ve boyutlara sahip olmasından dolayı Hibrit Savaş teorisinin çeşitli tanımlamaları ve yorumlamalarına değinilmiştir. Bu bağlamda, Hibrit savaş teorisinin en bilindik tanımlarının yanı sıra hem Batı hem de Rus bakış açılarından farklı görüşler ve değerlendirmeler örneklendirilmiştir. Literatürde, Rus stratejik aklı tarafından benimsenen Hibrit Savaş teorisinin genel olarak Rusya Federasyonu Genelkurmay Başkanı Valery Gerasimov tarafından kaleme alınan *The Value of Science is in the Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations* adlı makaleye dayandırılması sebebiyle bahse konu teorinin özünü kavrayabilmek amacıyla, adı geçen makale analiz edilmiştir. Söz konusu makale, özellikle Batılı bakış açısından Rus hibrit aktivitelerinin kavramsallaştırılmasına yönelik ortaya konulan çeşitli tartışmaların temelini oluşturmaktadır. General Gerasimov, makalesinde belirli gelişme ve olaylardan örnek vermek suretiyle modern savaşların değişen yüzüne dikkat çekerek Rus askeri stratejisinin modern savaş ortamında ayakta kalabilmesi amacıyla tavsiyelerde bulunmaktadır. Özellikle, Rusya'nın Çeçen Savaşları esnasında deneyimlediği asimetrik savaş teknikleri, Gerasimov tarafından makalesinde dikkat çekilen önemli hususlar arasında yer almaktadır. İlaveten, Renkli Devrimler ve Arap Baharı olayları esnasında İnternet ve sosyal medya gibi teknolojik imkanların yanı sıra Batı kökenli Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarının da olaylara destek verir nitelikle yürüttüğü faaliyetler, Gerasimov tarafından Batı dünyasının ülkeleri konvansiyonel güç kullanmaksızın nasıl istikrarsızlığa kavuşturabildiği bağlamında açıklanmakta ve bu durumun modern savaşların değişen yüzü kapsamında değerlendirilebileceği ifade edilmektedir. Bu bağlamda, Rus stratejik aklı, General Gerasimov'un makalesinde yer verdiği üzere söz konusu gelenek dışı metotları kendi etki alanına ve değerlerine karşı tehdit olarak görmektedir. Hibrit Savaş konsepti, Rus literatüründe Asymmetrical Warfare (Asimetrik Savaş), Irregular Warfare (Düzensiz Savaş) ya da Non-Linear Warfare

(Doğrusal Olmayan Savaş) gibi tanımlamalara sahip olsa da temel olarak modern savaşların artık muharebe sahasında değil beyinlerde yapıldığı sonucunu ortaya çıkarmaktadır.

Dördüncü bölümde, ikisi General Gerasimov'un makalesinde yer verdiği modern savaşların değişen doğasına ilişkin hususlar olmak üzere üç önemli konu analiz edilmiştir. Söz konusu hususlar, Valery Gerasimov'un modern savaşların mevcut koşulları ışığı altında Rusya Federasyonu'nun askeri ve stratejik düşüncesini güncellemesi yönünde verdiği tavsiyeleri ve bu tavsiyelere dayanak noktası oluşturan gereksinimleri irdelemektedir. İlaveten, Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması ve Vladimir Putin'in devlet başkanı olarak göreve gelmesinden sonra Rusya'nın dünya siyasetindeki büyük politik hedeflerini de kapsayan Rus bakış açısından bahsedilmektedir. Bir başka deyişle, yukarıda yer alan üç konu başlığı, son yirmi yılda meydana gelmesi ve Rus stratejik aklının yeniden yapılandırılması ihtiyacı konusunda ciddi etkilere sahip olması açısından bu tezin ana araştırma sorusuna cevap niteliği taşımaktadır.
Bu kapsamda, alt başlıkların birincisi, Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasının Rusya'nın ardından yaşadığı ulus inşası süreci ile Sovyetler Birliği'nin iki büyük güçten biri olduğu iki kutuplu dünya düzeninin sona ermesi açısından Sovyet dönemi sonrası Rusya'daki durumu analiz etmektedir. Bununla birlikte, Rus dış siyaseti hedefleri, özellikle Vladimir Putin'in devlet başkanlığına seçilmesiyle birlikte temel olarak Sovyetler Birliği'nin statüsünü geri kazanmak temelinde şekillenmiştir. Bu durum, Rusya'nın askeri düşüncesinde yenilenme gereksinimini ortaya çıkarmıştır. İkinci alt başlık, Rusya'nın Çeçen Savaşları esnasında yaşadığı ve itibarını hem ülke içerisinde hem de uluslararası alanda sarsan asimetrik yöntem ve formları da kapsayan deneyimlere değinmektedir. Üçüncü alt başlık, yeni bilgi teknolojileri ve sosyal medyanın damga vurduğu Renkli Devrimler ve Arap Baharı hareketlerinden bahsetmektedir. Modern savaşların yukarıda yer alan düzensiz yönleri ile Rusya'nın Vladimir Putin'in başkanlığı ile belirlemiş olduğu büyük politik gayeleri, Rus stratejik aklına yönelik ciddi etkiler meydana getirmiş ve değişim ihtiyacını ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Beşinci bölüm, Rus hibrit savaş uygulamalarından beş aracı kullanım alanlarıyla birlikte irdelemektedir. Söz konusu araçlar, Rus hibrit savaş stratejisinin ana

omurgasını oluşturmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, ilk olarak Rus Özel Harekât Kuvvetleri, spesifik konuşlanma alanları ile birlikte açıklanmıştır. Söz konusu Özel Harekât Kuvvetleri, özellikle Kırım ve Doğu Ukrayna müdahalelerinde etkili olmuştur. Ukrayna sokaklarında "Küçük Yeşil Adamlar" olarak tanınan bu birlikler, ilhak esnasında gizli faaliyetleri ile önemli bir rol üstlenmiştir.

İkinci olarak, Özel Askeri Şirketler ve bunların Ukrayna, Suriye, Libya ve Venezüella gibi ülkelerde konuşlanması konusu ele alınmıştır. Bu şirketler, Rusya ile var olan bağlarını kolay bir şekilde inkâr edebildikleri için Rus hibrit savaş stratejisinin önemli bir unsurunu teşkil etmektedir. Gizli doğaları nedeniyle de Rus politik hedeflerinin icrasında bağımsız olarak hareket etmektedirler.

Beşinci bölümde ele alınan bir diğer araç ise en az konvansiyonel araçlar kadar etkili olan Bilgi Savaşları konseptidir. Bilgi Savaşları'nın fiziksel ve bilişsel olmak iki boyutu bulunmakta olup hibrit savaş konseptinin tahrip gücü en yüksek araçlarından birisidir. Bilişsel boyut, İnternet ortamı ve sosyal medya üzerinden hedef kitlelere yönelik sosyal etki operasyonları ve algı yönetimi faaliyetleri yürütmeyi kapsamaktadır. Siber saldırılar olarak da bilinen fiziksel boyut ise kritik bilgi ağları ve altyapılarını zarar veren bir tür silahtır.

Diğer bir araç ise Hükümet Organizesindeki Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarıdır. Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarının normal şartlarda devlet faaliyetlerinden bağımsız olması gerekirken Hükümet Organizesindeki Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları ise, düşman etki operasyonlarına karşı koymak amacıyla Kremlin'in politikaları ile paralel faaliyetler yürütmektedir. Bunun yanında, Rusya hükümeti tarafından desteklenen Hükümet Organizesindeki Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları, Kırım müdahalesi esnasında ayrılıkçıların desteklenmesi ile yurt dışında Rus kültürü, dili ve milliyetçiliğinin yaygınlaştırılması gibi faaliyetlerde bulunmaktadır. Söz konusu kuruluşlar, Rusya'nın Batı oryantasyonlu Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarını gösteri ve protestoları demokratik eylemlermiş gibi körüklemekle suçladığı Renkli Devrim ayaklanmalarından bu yana Rus stratejik düşüncesinin işlevsel araçları arasında yerini almıştır. Bu kapsamda, Rusya hükümeti tarafından organize edilen Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları, yabancı Sivil

Toplum Kuruluşlarının zararlı etkilerinin önüne geçmek amacıyla gerek yurt içinde gerekse de yurt dışında önemli roller üstlenmektedir.

Beşinci bölümde ele alınan son hibrit araç ise Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi'dir. Rusya, Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi'ni toplum üzerindeki dini nüfuzunu kullanarak özellikle Ortodoksluğun etkin olduğu Ukrayna'da kendi politik gündemini empoze etmektedir. Örneğin Rusya, Kırım'ı ve Ukrayna'nın doğusunda bazı bölgeleri ilhak etmesine destek olan bir husus olarak ayrılıkçılar üzerinde etki kurmak ve Rus yanlısı hizipler ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi ile bağlantılı vekil grupları kullanmıştır.

Sonuç olarak bu tez, Rusya Federasyonu'nun hibrit yöntemlere yönelmesinin arkasında yatan gereksinimlerin Makyavelist siyaset felsefesi açısından analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Makyavelist siyaset felsefesi, devletin bekasını her şeyin üzerinde tutması sebebiyle katı bir realist siyaset anlayışına sahiptir ve bu konuda realizmin öncülerindendir. Bu doğrultuda, Makyavelizm'e göre siyaset ve devlet yönetimi, "hedefe giden her yol mübahtır" anlayışıyla tamamen fayda ve güç üzerine inşa edilmelidir. Bu teorik çerçeve kapsamında, savaş ve barış arasında kalan alanı bulanık hale getiren Hibrit Savaş konsepti, savaşı çeşitli geleneksel ve gelenek dışı bileşenler ile icra edilen ve inkâr ve aldatma tekniklerini merkezine alarak düşmanları askeri anlamda mağlup etmese de en azından istikrarsızlaştıran daimî bir faaliyet haline getirmektedir. Böylelikle, düşman karşısında kan dökülmeden elde edilen galibiyetleri önceleyen ve böylelikle uluslararası ilişkileri, kinetik muharebe eşiği statüsünde tutan Rus Hibrit Savaş konsepti, Rusya'nın Kırım'ı ilhakı esnasında faaliyet gösteren ve "Küçük Yeşil Adamlar" olarak da bilinen Özel Harekât Kuvvetleri ve dünyada çeşitli çatışma bölgelerine konuşlandırılan Özel Askeri Şirketler ile bağlarını resmi olarak inkâr edebilmesine imkân tanımaktadır. Benzer şekilde, Kırım'ın ve Ukrayna'nın doğusunda bazı bölgelerin ilhak edilmesi esnasında Ukrayna'ya ait kritik bilgi teknolojileri altyapılarını felce uğratan siber saldırıları ya da söz konusu bölgelerde yaşayan yerel halka yönelik trol ordusu vasıtasıyla Rusya'ya kendi değerleri lehinde algı yönetimi yapmayı amaçlayan sosyal medya kampanyaları ile olan bağlarını da inkâr etme imkânı vermektedir. İlaveten, hibrit bileşenlerin görünmez silahı

niteliğindeki Hükümet Organizesindeki Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları ile Rus Ortodoks Kilisesi'nin etkin gücü de Rusya'ya algı yönetimi kapsamında fayda sağlamaktadır.

Sonuç olarak bu tez, Makyavelist felsefe öğretilerinde siyaset ve etik arasında kalın bir çizgi çekilmesi ve siyaseti çıkarların etik değerler üzerinde konuşlandırılması bağlamında Hibrit Savaş konseptinin genel anlamda etik boyutu konusunda yeni bir araştırma alanı açmaktadır.

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Soyadı / Surname : Yaman
Adı / Name : Fuat
Bölümü / Department : Avrasya Çalışmaları / Eurasian Studies

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