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Crimea and Russia's Strategic Overhaul

Kristin Ven Bruusgaard

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ABSTRACT: Russian operations in Crimea in 2014 demonstrated an enhanced ability for implementing strategy; Russia effectively combined military and state tools to reach its policy goals. That means new demands for Western defense planners. Confronting Russian military power in the future will require an expanded toolkit.

Russia used military force in new ways to annex Crimea in March 2014. Experts have focused on the military novelties in the Russian approach—the use of asymmetric, covert, and otherwise innovative military tools. However, the real novelty in Crimea was not how Russia used its armed might (in terms of new military doctrine), but rather how it combined the use of military with state tools. This is an important distinction as it indicates an updated view of the military tools Moscow has at its disposal and how these can combine with other elements of state power to reach formulated policy goals.

Evidence for this argument is threefold. First, although Russia demonstrated new principles of warfighting in Crimea, most of the tactics and doctrine displayed represented traditional Russian (or Soviet) warfighting principles refitted for modern war. Second, Russia integrated military tools with other tools of pressure in innovative ways, and made use of a seamless transition from peace to conflict. Third, this improved Russian approach to strategy is no coincidence; several bureaucratic processes have served to enhance this ability in the past decade.

Why Does it Matter?

The question of whether the novelties Russian strategy displayed in Crimea were new may seem semantic. It is not; the question helps us understand the implications of Russian activities in Crimea. Russian doctrinal novelties have consequences in the military realm; strategic novelties have consequences for Russian policy on a broader scale.

Debates in the West and in Russia reveal slight different understandings of the terms strategy and military doctrine. In the West, strategy is the link between political ends and military means, relating to the potential or actual use of military force in war.¹ The Western concept of grand strategy expands this toolset to include all tools available to the state: the “capacity of the nation’s leaders to bring together all of the elements, both military and non-military, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation’s long-term (that is, wartime *and* peacetime)

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1 Richard K. Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?” *International Security*, no. 25 (2000): 5-50.

best interest.”² The difference between strategy and grand strategy is thus that strategy is concerned with linking military means and political ends in war, whereas a grand strategy is what links all available tools to political ends, in times of both peace and war.

Russian definitions of strategy resemble Western definitions: formulating the military-political goals of a country as well as the means of achieving them.³ However, Russian definitions of strategy contain more, as “the highest level of military activity, that is, the avoidance of war, the preparation of the armed forces and the country in general for repelling aggression, and the planning and carrying out of operations and war.”⁴ Indeed, one authoritative Russian definition closely resembles Western grand strategy: “the goals and tasks for strategy are defined by and stem directly from the aims and goals of state policy, of which military strategy is one means.”⁵ Any Russian analyst will tell you there is no such thing as Russian grand strategy; the Russian military dictionary defines this term as an American phenomenon.⁶ Nonetheless, scholars have debated the possible emergence of a Russian grand strategy in recent years, using varying definitions of such a grand strategy.⁷ For the purposes of this article, the Russian definition will be used: the link between all available (rather than only military) means and political ends – in times of both war and peace.

Military doctrine, as distinct from strategy, depicts how to employ military tools: what kind of wars one plans to fight, and how one plans to fight them. “Strategy decides how policy’s goals are to be advanced and secured, and it selects the instrumental objectives to achieve these goals. Military doctrine, for its vital part, explains how armed forces of different kinds should fight.”⁸ Military doctrine is “institutionalized beliefs about what works in war,” normally codified in written documents.⁹ Russian military doctrine “expresses the state’s views on how to prepare and conduct the armed defense of the Russian Federation” – in a similar vein to Western doctrine.¹⁰ This definition makes it possible to use existing Russian doctrine to examine whether the novelties in Crimea pertain to general Russian principles and traditions of warfighting (new doctrine), or to ways of connecting means and ends (new strategy).

2 Paul Kennedy, *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 5.

3 Yuri Gaidukov, “The Concepts of Strategy and Military Doctrine in a Changing World,” *International Affairs* 38 (Moscow, 1992): 60-69

4 “Voенно-Энциклопедический Словар” [Military-Encyclopedic Dictionary] Moscow: Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, <http://encyclopedia.mil.ru/encyclopedia/dictionary/list.html>.

5 Sokolovskiy (ed) et al, *Voennaya Strategiya [Military Strategy]*, 2nd. ed. (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1963), 24

6 “Voенно-Энциклопедический Словар” [Military-Encyclopedic Dictionary] Moscow: Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, <http://encyclopedia.mil.ru/encyclopedia/dictionary/list.html>.

7 Andrew Monaghan, “Putin’s Russia: Shaping a ‘Grand Strategy?’” *International Affairs* 89, no. 5 (2013): 1221-1236; Andrei P. Tsygankov, “Preserving Influence in a Changing World: Russia’s Grand Strategy,” *Problems of Post-Communism*, 58 no. 1 (March/April 2011): 28-44; Henriikki Heikka, “The Evolution of Russian Grand Strategy. Implications for Europe’s North,” *EURASIA Research Study* (Berlin Information Center for Transatlantic Security, 2000).

8 Colin S. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 78.

9 Harald Hoiback, “What Is Doctrine?” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34 (2011): 879-900.

10 “Voennaya Doktrina Rossiiskoy Federatsii” [Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation], *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, February 10, 2010 <http://www.rg.ru/2010/02/10/doktrina-dok.html>.

Russian Novelties

Active Use of Subversion and Covert Action

The first and most evident tactical novelty in Crimea was the covert use of special operation forces.¹¹ There was no Russian declaration of war or intent to annex Crimea, but armed individuals seized key points on the peninsula, disarmed Ukrainian military forces, and took control of territory. Russia combined covert military action with subterfuge (using civilian self-defense forces) to create conditions needed to legitimize further military action.

The tactics of using covert action and subversion are part of, in doctrinal terms, the Russian tradition of *maskirovka*: misleading the enemy with regard to the presence and dispositions of troops and military objectives. This is an old Soviet warfighting principle employed in both policy and military planning; indeed, deception was integral part of any successful military operation.¹² Today, deception and deniability are key doctrinal traits of special operations forces across the globe.

Russian strategy used covert actions and subversion to create plausible deniability. This approach also made it possible to present a *fait accompli* to Kiev in terms of Russian military control over the peninsula. This is what Sun Tzu referred to as the “perfection of strategy” that is, producing a decision without any serious fighting.¹³

The use of deception and deniability are hardly novel in Russian doctrine. However, the active use of subterfuge and civilians in the form of local self-defense forces is new. Since 2010, Russian military debates have focused on Western tactics for nurturing regime change by using political, economic or military support to selected groups, covert action and information operations.¹⁴ Despite heavily criticizing such Western practices, Russia clearly adopted and refined these elements in its own planning for modern military operations. Indeed, these topics are under scrutiny as Russia renews or amends its military doctrine.¹⁵

Overt Use of Russian Quick-Reaction Forces

As so-called “little green men” and units of self-defense forces established control in Crimea, Russia gradually transitioned to using clearly marked high readiness forces - deploying naval infantry, airborne troops and special operations forces to Crimea. The use of such forces is not new to Russian doctrine. The utility of these units has increased, due to a general modernization of the armed forces and last year’s renewed focus on snap drills and readiness. Better training made these units the natural choice for rapid operations; indeed, since 2010, Russian doctrine

11 Aleksey Nikolsky, “Russian Special Operations Forces: Further Development or Stagnation?” *Moscow Defense Brief*, 04 no. 42 (2014); Mark Galeotti, “Putin’s Secret Weapon,” *Foreign Policy* July 7, 2014.

12 Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker (Eds.), *Soviet Strategic Deception* (Lexington, MA/Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1987), xvi, 277.

13 Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 137.

14 Valeriy Gerasimov, “Tsennost’ Nauki V Predvidenii [The value of science in prediction]” *Voenno-Promyshlenniy Kur’er* 8 (2013): 2-3.

15 Vladimir Mukhin, “Moskva Korrektiruyet Voyennuyu Doktrinu” [Moscow Corrects Its Military Doctrine] *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (August 1, 2014).

highlighted rapidity and readiness as key to modern warfighting. Thus, there was no doctrinal novelty in deploying these troops to Crimea.

However, the new element consisted in gradually transferring them from covert to overt use of force to reach the political-military goal of establishing complete control of the peninsula. This gradual transition meant that once Russia was willing to acknowledge their presence, that presence could be boosted immediately.

Current Russian military doctrine says little about this transition, but experts elaborated on this phenomenon after 2010.¹⁶ One observer describes this as “a new form of warfare that cannot be characterized as a military campaign in the classic sense of the term.”¹⁷ The use of non-military tools curtailed the image of a conflict in the making. Western policymakers’ focus on the use, or non-use, of force possibly contributed to the surprise at the Russian annexation of Crimea. With the benefit of hindsight, one can discern a long-running Russian strategy of influencing the political trajectory of Ukraine throughout 2013 – culminating in the use of military force in 2014.

This view of modern conflict and the role of armed force is evident in academic debates and key political statements. The general conviction is the West is intent on bringing about regime change in a number of countries, including Russia, and armed force or subversive action is the policy tool of choice. One particularly interesting Russian article from 2013 portrays new-generation warfare as a series of eight phases, the first four of which entail non-military, covert, and subversive asymmetric means to reduce the enemy’s morale and willingness to take up arms.¹⁸ This article reads like a how-to manual for the operation that took place in Crimea – describing a careful political, psychological, economic preparation of the battlefield; eventually combined with the overt use of military force. This indicates careful thinking in military circles and the subsequent implementation of such ideas in Russian strategy.

Non-contact Warfare/Escalation Control

The Russian armed forces have been known for their brutality and lack of respect for human life, indeed, Soviet operational concepts made up for shortfalls in technological finesse with overwhelming manpower and firepower. Using heavy artillery in counterinsurgency operations in Chechnya is one example of this trait in recent history.

Yet, the tactics employed in Crimea were different: those of non-contact warfare through strict standard operating procedures adhered to by well-trained specialists. At a doctrinal level, controlling the level of violence, both one’s own and that of one’s enemy, is escalation control.¹⁹ This task entails leaving responsibility for escalation to the enemy – particularly if one’s enemy is more risk-averse. The Russians expertly

16 Yuriy Baluyevskiy and Musa Khamzatov, “Globalizatsiya i Voennoye Dyelo,” [Globalization and military affairs] *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozrenie*, August 8, 2014.

17 Janis Bersins, “Russia’s New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy,” National Defense Academy of Latvia Center for Security and Strategic Research, Report 02 (April 2014).

18 S.G. Chekinov and S.A. Bogdanov, “O Kharaktere I Soderzhanii Voi’ny Novogo Pokoleniya” [On the Character and Content of New Generation Warfare] *Voyennaya Mysl’* 10 (2013): 13-24.

19 Forrest E. Morgan, “Dancing with the Bear Managing Escalation in a Conflict with Russia,” *Proliferation Papers*, No. 40 (Winter 2012).

manipulated risk to their advantage in Crimea.²⁰ The political-military goal of this strategy was to deter Ukrainian armed resistance, and achieve a peaceful annexation of the peninsula.

Russian special operations forces can be expected to adhere to strict standard operating procedures. As such, these tactics were not new, albeit different from the common perception of the Russian armed forces. To be fair, comparing lax Russian conscripts smoking on top of their tanks in the 2008 Georgia war with well-equipped special operations forces in Crimea in 2014 does no justice to the diversity of units in the Russian armed forces. On the doctrinal level, escalation control is nothing new; this concept is an old Soviet one (which the 2000 doctrine also prescribed).²¹ The strategy of risk manipulation and limiting the level of violence was not new either – although the results of this strategy were unprecedented in Crimea. The emphasis on a different set of concepts and tactics from what Russia did in Georgia in 2008 does not amount to novel Russian doctrine.

Use of Asymmetric Means

The fourth novel element in Crimea is another old Soviet concept in new skins: asymmetrical warfare (now rephrased by many academics as non-linear war).²² This concept consists of utilizing any means (political, economic, informational, or other) to offset an enemy's military advantage.²³ In Crimea, this consisted of applying a wide range of tools to influence the situation; from early political consultations, complex information operations to influence the Crimean, Ukrainian and Russian populations, and to covert and ultimately overt military operations to support Crimean independence.

One thus can not talk about novelty at the level of military tactics or even military doctrine (although asymmetry features in both old and new Russian military doctrine). Again, the way in which military tools were combined with other tools to reach certain goals, was new. New thinking on asymmetric action is evident in recent academic debates where the focus has shifted from “direct destruction to direct influence, from a war with weapons and technology to a culture war, from traditional battleground to information or psychological warfare and war of perceptions.”²⁴ The Russian theory of victory has changed from direct annihilation to internal decay of an enemy, with the aim of destroying morale and willingness to fight.²⁵

To sum up, Russia was able to achieve new things by using old doctrinal principles in Crimea; and by combining a wide range of different tools, including military ones, but avoiding outright military confrontation. Strategy is as much about how to avoid war and use one's tools

20 Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).

21 “Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation” (2000), English translation available at https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000_05/dc3ma00.

22 Peter Pomerantsev, “How Putin Is Reinventing Warfare,” *Foreign Policy*, July 5, 2014.

23 Valeriy Gerasimov, “Tsennost' Nauki V Predvidenii [The value of science in prediction]” *Voenna-Promyshlennyi Kur'er* 8 (2013): 2-3.

24 Janis Bersins, “Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy” National Defense Academy of Latvia Center for Security and Strategic Research, 02 (April 2014).

25 Ibid.

in times of peace as well as war. The bulk of novelties in Crimea, as examined here, were new elements of strategy rather than doctrine.

The Real Novelty: Effective Implementation

Having established that what was novel in Crimea was Russian strategy, rather than doctrine, how does Crimea differ from Russian behavior in the past? Russia used military force to achieve political goals in Georgia in 2008: demonstrating a willingness to use force to retain its dominance in the near abroad. What kind of strategic overhaul took place?

Answering this question entails returning to the distinction drawn in the West between strategy and grand strategy – as it is here the novelty of the Russian approach in Crimea lies. Classical definitions of grand strategy are remarkably suitable to describe what Russia has done in Ukraine: “Fighting power is but one of the instruments of grand strategy – which should take account of and apply the power of financial pressure, of diplomatic pressure, of commercial pressure, and, not least of ethical pressure, to weaken the opponent’s will...”²⁶ The case of Crimea stands apart from Georgia in 2008 by the effectiveness of the combined pressure of all the tools employed. The tools emphasized in Crimea (escalation control, non-linearity, information operations and political pressure) were different from those in Georgia (large-scale operations, combined with some political and economic pressure). The efficacy with which these achieved Russia’s political goal was unprecedented, partly because observers had problems distinguishing between peace and conflict. Russia has refocused its ability to direct all state tools toward achieving strategic goals effectively.

This outcome does not mean Russia can always formulate effective strategies for political goal. Annexing Crimea was a limited strategic goal; and it may prove to be no long-term success for Russia. Moreover, specific conditions made Crimea a particularly easy strategic task: an existing Russian military presence, the possibility of pre-scripted contingency plans, pro-Russian popular sentiments, and the opportunity that arose with Yanukovitch’s resignation.

Nevertheless, Russian actions in Crimea offer lessons of value to any policymaker. They demonstrate the results of processes serving to enhance Russia’s ability for strategic coordination. Since Putin came to power, there has been increased academic and policy debate on the coordinated use of state tools to reach formulated goals. This awareness has led to a large-scale formulation of strategies for how to pursue policy goals, and, most recently, to bureaucratic changes have likely improved Russia’s ability to use its policy tools in an integrated manner.

Elevated Thinking about Strategy

The discussion above on the novelties in Russian warfighting highlighted recent Russian debates regarding strategy, the application of military force under modern conditions, and how this element of state power fits in with the other state resources. Such debates on strategic thought traditionally take place only within military circles in Russia,

26 Basil H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd rev. ed. (London: Faber and Faber Ltd. 1967), 322.

where the General Staff Academy and affiliated research institutes have been the leading institutions.²⁷ Civilians have limited access to military matters. Due to the prominence of military power in such strategic debates, and an increased focus on integrating military and non-military tools to reach political goals, these appear to be debates over Russian grand strategy, if one were use Western lenses and terminology. These debates have contributed to comprehensive thinking about the integrated use of state tools to reach political goals. The dividing lines between military, paramilitary and other forms of state power (covert as well as overt) are blurred in contemporary Russia.

Top bureaucrats in both military and civilian circles now speak similarly of Russian policy goals. This consensus suggests little controversy and internal disagreement across Russian military and civilian policy circles regarding the priorities of Russian foreign and security policy. The consolidation of the Putin regime over a period of 14 years is likely a contributing factor to such a consensus, be it forced or factual. The intermeshing of military and paramilitary or state security actors and elites is another contributing factor. An increased dominance of anti-Western sentiment, and particularly the conviction that the West intends to bring about regime change in Russia, may have served as a rallying point. Russian elites are increasingly communicating a coordinated view of the growing anarchy and role of military force in international politics – probably as a result of the broad concerns in policy circles on what modern conflict looks like.

These elevated Russian debates on strategy, grand strategy, and the integration of state tools to reach political goals, contrast to the state of the debate in the West – where some scholars claim strategy formulation is a neglected policy area.²⁸ Russian debates have flourished, with a focus on determining how best to secure Russian interests in the long term.

Increased Communication of Strategy

This lively debate is no coincidence; rather, it is the result of clear instructions from the supreme leadership (i.e. President Putin) to formulate long-term strategies for Russia.²⁹ A large number of strategies have been issued in the past 14 years, including foreign policy concepts, national security strategies, defense strategies, Arctic strategies, information strategies and strategies for the economic development of Russia. Strategy formulation and strategic planning has become almost a “keynote of Putin’s approach to the exercise of state power.”³⁰ Strategies are communicated frequently, conveying Putin’s intentions to his bureaucracy and to the outside world.

This process of strategy formulation and coordination has demanded new levels of cooperation from the Russian bureaucracy. Critics have questioned whether it is possible to implement all these strategies.³¹

27 Jennifer G. Mathers, “Déjà Vu: Familiar Trends in Russian Strategic Thought,” *Contemporary Security Policy* 16 (1995): 380-95.

28 Hew Strachan, “Strategy and Contingency,” *International Affairs* 87 (2011): 1281-1296.

29 Julian Cooper, *Reviewing Russian Strategic Planning: The Emergence of Strategy 2020* (Rome: NATO Defense College, 2012).

30 Julian Cooper, op.cit

31 Andrew Monaghan, “Defibrillating the Vertikal? Putin and Russian Grand Strategy”, Chatham House Research Paper (October 2014)

Moreover, several internal factors, such as endemic corruption and friction within the elite may obstruct implementation. Nevertheless, the process of producing an output has increased awareness of strategic goals across the Russian bureaucracy. Moreover, a forced focus on the relationship between different policy tools, including military tools, has contributed to a more comprehensive approach among key bureaucrats. The consolidation of power around Putin has also had a disciplining effect within the Russian bureaucracy.

With regard to the Crimean case in particular, strategic documents guiding foreign and security policy clearly state Russian priorities in its near abroad – where Russia believes it retains privileged interests. The 2010 military doctrine states “interference in the internal affairs of Russia or its allies, or the presence of armed conflict on the territories of states adjacent to Russia” can be a military threat (indicating this may legitimize the use of force). Moreover, it states a principal task of the Russian armed forces is (inter alia) “the protection of its citizens located beyond the borders of the Russian Federation.”³² Russia communicated its political goals in this region (remaining the key security guarantor) as well as its strategy for ensuring this goal (that of using all means available, including military means) *a priori*, and neither Russian goals nor priorities in its near abroad were new.

Rather, the formulation of comprehensive strategies has enabled linking and consolidation of the modern tools available to the Russian leadership, such as information technologies, modern military forces, and other levers of influence. This result, combined with an elite-wide, updated view of how modern conflict works, likely contributed to ensuring effective strategy implementation in Crimea.

Enhanced Tools for Implementation

The last development contributing to this consolidation is a bureaucratic overhaul in the strategic sphere. This development sets the current situation apart from what came before, as strategies have been a key feature of the Putin era; it is only recently that the ability to ensure implementation has been addressed.

The Russian Security Council was elevated bureaucratically in 2009, making it the key (formal) arena for strategic planning and coordination—integrating the perspectives of the military and other parts of the Russian bureaucracy. Although little is known of the academic merit and capacities of the Security Council, its authority and visibility in strategic matters highlighted the leadership’s focus on the cross-bureaucratic efforts to reach policy goals. Moreover, the Security Council’s prominence underscored the need to integrate military and other state tools to reach those goals.

Russia established a National Defense Center in 2014, with the explicit goal of coordinating all government agencies engaged in the defense of the Russian Federation (e.g. the armed forces, the Interior Ministry, the Federal Security Service, the Emergencies Ministry, and

32 “Voennaya Doktrina Rossiiskoy Federatsii” [Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation], published in *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, February 10, 2010 <http://www.rg.ru/2010/02/10/doktrina-dok.html>.

others, with a *primus inter pares* role for the Russian General Staff).³³ The National Defense Center is an addition to the already existing system of government-wide situation centers that has been developing since 2009.³⁴ The exact level of functionality and interoperability of these centers is unclear; but the intention of improved government-wide coordination is. Putin's preference for "manual control" optimizes this kind of centralized coordination (at the risk of system overload). In a regime where decision-making is as centralized as Putin's Russia, a "comprehensive approach" to using state power may be feasible.

Formulating long-term state strategies is no panacea – and success in Crimea it is not attributable to any single strategy document formulated by the Russian bureaucracy. Nevertheless, formulating strategic goals, enhancing awareness of such goals within the bureaucracy, and making organizational adjustments for carrying out complex operations with a wide range of tools will increase the ability to coordinate effectively. Effective strategy implementation in Crimea was thus no coincidence – Russia had prepared for this kind of operation by thinking carefully about not only strategic goals, but also on what tools were needed to get there and how they might be employed effectively. This is what amounts to the Russian strategic overhaul as seen in Crimea.

Conclusions & Implications

Russian military novelties in Crimea were an amalgamation of old Soviet ideas, augmented by observations of Western warfare, spun by threat perceptions, adopted and redesigned for use by the modernized armed forces. Although certain doctrinal novelties were on display, the integration of military tools with more unconventional tools was the real novelty. The "battlefield" was carefully prepared with the use of political, economic and informational tools. Special forces' deception capabilities were combined with subterfuge using the local population, serving to deceive and hide Russian intentions. This combination ensured a gradual transition from a condition of peace to one of conflict, presenting the Ukrainian side with a *fait accompli*. Lastly, an asymmetrical approach ensured the optimum use of military and non-military capabilities.

The implications of strategic innovation are more comprehensive than those for doctrine. Whereas the latter affects how foreign militaries plan for contingencies involving the armed forces, the former entails rethinking contingencies involving all elements of Russian state power. Russia will choose the tools it deems most suitable in any eventuality, be they military, paramilitary, political, economic, or informational. Russia is actively enhancing its ability for their coordinated use, which means over time, their skill at orchestrated strategy implementation may improve further.

The fact the debates on doctrine and strategy have taken different trajectories in Russia and the West represents an obstacle in this regard. An increased Western focus on strategy formulation and implementation may be necessary to counter the kind of strategic behavior Russia

33 Valerii Gerasimov, "General'niy Shtab i Oborona Strany," [The General Staff and the Country's Defense], *Voenno-Promyshlenniy Kur'er* 4(522) (February 5, 2014).

34 Julian Cooper, *Reviewing Russian Strategic Planning: The Emergence of Strategy 2020* (Rome: NATO Defense College, 2012).

demonstrated in Crimea. Planning for contingencies involving Russia should take account not only of military capabilities, but of the entire range of tools Russia might employ. Any potential confrontation with the West will likely include an asymmetrical or non-traditional Russian approach to offset Western conventional superiority. The modernized Russian military represents a tool the Russian leadership is unlikely to employ separately.

Moreover, US defence planners should keep in mind the current Russian leadership sees little distinction between a state of peace and a state of war. Thus, all options are on the table, at all times, in the pursuit of strategic goals such as economic prosperity and national security.

Strategic innovation as demonstrated in Crimea will also influence future military doctrine in Russia. New doctrine will likely focus on integrating military and other tools, and may thus reveal a comprehensive approach to the armed defense of the country, rather than a focus on the tasks of the Russian armed forces alone.