

MANAGING THE IMAGE OF WAR: AN ANALYSIS OF THE RUSSIAN MILITARY DOCTRINE TEXTS 2010 AND 2014

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ABSTRACT

We make a discursive, close reading of the Russian military doctrine texts 2010 and 2014. We focus our analysis on the actors presented in the doctrines, the military dangers and threats facing Russia and the generic characteristics of the contemporary military conflict as presented in the doctrines. We study these representations as textual constructions. Our findings reveal that the doctrines create a defensive posture for Russia. The doctrines construct an image of Russia facing various threats and countering such threats through its military capability. The doctrines include and acknowledge the latest 'hybrid war' characterizations used to describe contemporary conflict, yet do not explicitly describe Russia deploying such tactics. The doctrines stay silent about Russia's tactical or operational means of waging war. Yet, the observations of the recent military conflicts involving Russian Federation reveal that the Russian military is capable of hybrid campaigning. We therefore argue that the military doctrines' primary function is to legitimize the Russian military's existence and development

INTRODUCTION

The current heightened geopolitical landscape has increased the Western interest towards Russian military strategy. Questions of interest relate to, among other things, on how does the Russian government see the nature of future military conflicts, against what kind of threats does the Russian military prepare themselves and what means does it see effective in countering such threats.

In this article we make a close reading of the Russian military doctrine texts aiming to find answers to these questions. The doctrines we focus on are the versions made public in February 2010 and in December 2014. Our textual analysis focuses on extracting the premises of contemporary conflict and the image of the landscape of modern warfare from the doctrines. In other words, we are interested in how the doctrines picture and frame the future of warfare. We do not make a systematic comparison of the total content of the doctrines, as such analysis is already available elsewhere (see Pynnöniemi & Mashiri, 2015).

We argue that military doctrines are good source material for this type of analysis because of their formal and public nature. According to Pukkila (2015: 103) in Russia the military doctrine is the most significant document of its' military politics. As public, such document does not of course reveal military secrets or other classified information (see Mikkola, 2014: 203), yet it does illustrate the most formally accepted assessments and analyses of a government about its' security environment. Therefore, to assess the Russian government's interpretation of the basic premises of the threats and dangers, characteristics of conflict and the primary means to counter them, such texts are suitable research material.

This article is organized as follows. In the following section we will make a short introduction to military doctrines in general and then turn to discussing Russian military doctrines in particular. After this we introduce our research data and the method we have used to analyse it. Following that, we present the findings of our close reading of the doctrines; the chosen text sections and our analysis of them. We make further arguments and explanations on what the doctrines reveal about Russian military strategy thinking and the Russian analysis of the nature of contemporary military conflict. The article ends with a discussion where we ponder the overall significance of our findings and discuss them in relation with the lately popularized concept of 'Hybrid warfare' (Hoffman, 2007; Murray & Mansoor, 2012).

MILITARY DOCTRINES

A military doctrine refers to a critical component of a national security policy or a grand strategy (Posen, 1984:13). Chapman (2009: 1) described military doctrines in general as “focusing military capabilities to determine strategic objectives and desired final results, detailing required military action, allocating resources, and restraining such allocations as directed by political leaders”. Military doctrine is a state's theory on how it can best render security to itself. A military doctrine identifies threats to state's security and devises political, economic, military, and other remedies for those threats. Ideally, a doctrine will also introduce a 'means-ends –chain of logics', an explanation why the theory is expected to work. Posen (1984) considers military doctrine a subcomponent of a larger strategy, dealing explicitly with military means: what means should be employed, and how they shall be employed. Therefore, a doctrine should explain the priorities and specifications on how military forces should be structured and employed to respond to recognized threats and opportunities. A military doctrine reflects the judgement of the nation's military professionals and to a varying extent also of the political leaders, on what is and is not militarily possible and necessary.

According to Posen (1984: 14), military doctrines come in three categories: offensive, defensive, and deterrent. Offensive doctrines aim to disarm an adversary – to destroy his armed forces. Defensive

doctrines aim to deny an adversary the objective that he seeks. Deterrent doctrines aim to punish an aggressor – to raise his costs without reference to reducing one's own. Koziej (1992 in Chapman, 2009:1) asserted that military doctrines come with three varying emphases: a) guaranteeing security at the expense of other countries and reducing overall security, b) guaranteeing national security by equalising a threat and stabilizing overall security, and c) guaranteeing national security by increasing other countries' sense of security, consequently weakening sources of threat. Military doctrines also vary in how integrated they are with political objectives. In addition, some doctrines show innovativeness, and some stagnation.

We have to recognize that doctrines illustrate a normative stance: how military force **should** be applied. Plans have never been enough to guarantee either execution or assessment and as already Clausewitz marked “the onset of combat makes for uncertainty of outcome however good the planning” (in Chapman, 2009:2). A doctrine is also a simplification and a compromise of the various complexities related to leading and managing a large force in volatile environments. Yet, doctrines aim to provide a coherent and consistent framework of concepts, tenets, and principles that are applicable in planning and conducting operations, and intended to assist in developing and executing operational plans (Codner, 1999).

MILITARY DOCTRINES IN RUSSIA

Russian federation has made public altogether four iterations of its military doctrine (1993, 2000, 2010, 2014). Military doctrines were also prepared during the Soviet Union era, but the documents were not public domain (Lalu, 2014: 331). The formulation of the doctrine is controlled by the Russian Security Council and its' contents are ratified by the President of Russia (Pynnöniemi & Mashiri, 2015: 15).

The Russian military doctrine is a political document, which defines the primary premises and goals of the nation's security policy. Both the 2010 and the 2014 versions consist of four parts: a) Generic provisions, b) The Security environment (military dangers and threats), c) Military policy and d) Military-economic defence support. Lalu (2015: 331) argues that the Russian doctrine is more holistic in comparison with its Western counterparts. The documents start with the basic definitions used in the discussion of the state's security status; differentiating dangers, threats and conflicts, and dichotomizing conflicts to armed conflicts, local wars, regional wars and large-scale wars. In the security environment section the various military dangers and threats threatening the Russian Federation are depicted. This section also presents a listing of the characteristics of contemporary military conflicts. The Military policy section lists the primary tasks of the Russian military and the development targets of the military organization. The fourth section

on Military-economic defence support discusses the support and sourcing of the military organization, the defence industry and also discusses Russia's military-political tasks and alliances with external states.

Historically, the Russian military thinking has emphasized offensive strategies (Lalu, 2014: 83). Only after 1987 and the reign of Mikhail Gorbachev, have the doctrines applied a more defensive posture (ibid: 293). The doctrines under study are defensive and balancing in style and approach. The texts are defensive in the sense that they aim to counter the threats facing the state and denying the adversaries their objectives. They are balancing as they aim to equal the threats and stabilize the security situation.

RESEARCH DATA AND METHOD

Our analysis focuses on the Russian Federation's military doctrine, the two separate versions published in 2010 and 2014. Overall, due to identical structures the documents are quite similar. All in all, the doctrines each consist of circa 20 pages of text. The new elements in the 2014 version are mostly related to substance details. This rather modest evolution gives an impression that the general role or function of the military doctrine text has not changed, but that the new version refines the text content to better fit the contemporary security landscape as understood by Russian government officials.

The analysis is based on an intensive, 'close reading' of the document texts.

Our approach is discursive: we focus on text as representation (Fairclough, 2003: 17). A discourse is a particular way of representing some part of the (physical, social, psychological) world – there typically are alternative and often competing discourses, associated with different groups of people in different social positions. Discourses differ in how social events are represented, what is excluded or included, how abstractly or concretely events are represented, and how more specifically processes and relations, social actors, etc. are represented. It is important to remember that discourses not only represent the world as it is (or rather how it is seen to be), they are also projective, imaginaries, representing possible worlds which are different from the actual world, and tied in to projects to change the world in particular directions (Fairclough, 2003: 124). Discourse represents a particular aspect of the world, and it does so from a particular perspective. Therefore, a textual analysis can focus on the themes of a text and/or on the points of view from which they are represented.

A military doctrine is a thoroughly prepared military-political text, carrying the history of previous doctrine texts and is an evolution of such past texts. From a discursive point of view, such texts can be seen to represent a particular view of the world, and be rather consistent in their approach, constituting one particular discourse, that of military-political discourse. Typically such texts are analysed in comparison to each other and the evolution of themes represented

in them is the preferred method of study. We, too, adopt such means to make sense of the text, but also aim to analyse the discourse as a stand-alone product.

We are interested in representational meaning in the doctrines. Which elements are included, which excluded, which are given the greatest prominence (see Fairclough, 2003: 136). We focus on the actors represented in the texts, and the actions and agencies they are associated with. We use both doctrine versions in the analysis, and make some comparisons between the texts.

Thematically, our analysis focuses especially on the second part of the doctrines: the security environment of the Russian Federation. This part includes a description of the alleged military threats and dangers facing Russia and the characteristics of the contemporary military conflicts. Yet, we include excerpts from other parts, too, whenever it helps us make our argument visible.

We base our analysis on the publicly available English and Finnish translations of the original Russian language doctrine texts. Due to the rather weak quality of the English translation available to us (Scribd, 2015), we have applied the Finnish translations made by The Finnish Institute of International Affairs in our basic analytic work (YLE, 2015). Yet, as this article is written in English, we present the doctrine excerpts from the

English translations as footnotes even if they are of limited quality. In the body text we apply our own translations from Finnish to English to ensure better clarity.

It needs to be also reminded that in general the use of translated texts for textual analysis is problematic, as it is probable or even likely that meanings associated with text vary and change in the translation process. We acknowledge this difficulty, and therefore aim to make our argumentation as transparent as possible. We also argue that the doctrines are originally targeted to both Russian and external (i.e. Western) audiences and therefore consider ourselves valid readers and interpreters of the doctrine texts.

FINDINGS

Russia as an actor in the texts

In general, the doctrines consist of texts that operate on a generic and abstract level. This is typical to any policy text. There are only a limited number of explicitly identified actors either internal or external to Russia. The key character in the doctrines is the Russian Federation, the state apparatus. Russian Federation is given three different positions in the doctrines. In the early parts, the state is an object: it is under increasing threat (Doct, 2014: I, 11)¹ and needs to be

1 There is a tendency of displacement and military threats in the information space and the inner the scope of the Russian Federation. At the same time, despite the decline probability unleashed against the Russian Federation large-scale war, in some areas military dangers for the Russian Federation strengthened.

protected. Later the state is also presented as a subject, as an active party, capable to prevent and restrain military conflicts (Doct, 2014: III, 19)². In addition, Russia is depicted as a legitimate actor, as someone who is entitled to action. The doctrine states that Russia has the right to apply military force to counter an attack towards Russia or its allies, to enforce peace and protect its' citizens abroad (Doct 2014: III, 22)³. In such sections, international law, treaties or United Nations are invoked as parties providing the legitimacy.

No explicit Russian internal actors are mentioned in the doctrines, for example no particular military units or branches are mentioned. There are some generic references to 'central' vs. 'regional' parties inside Russia. The troops and citizens are also background objects in the doctrine. They are either to be developed or protected by the state (see the previous text excerpt Doct 2014: III, 22 for example). The difference is striking when for example compared with another doctrine text: the US National Defence Strategy published in June 2015, where the individuals are made a protagonist in the text: *"Our military and civilian professionals are our decisive advantage.*

They are the foundation of our operational excellence and our ability to innovate" (US NDS 2015: 13). In the Russian texts, the state is the sole head character.

Other actors

Other explicitly named actors are other states or international diplomatic organizations. No other types of parties (e.g. terrorist organizations or quasi-military groups) are explicitly named, even if elsewhere in the doctrines such organizations are stated to be an integral part of contemporary conflicts. The named parties include the BRICS-countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) whom are categorized as potential partners (Doct 2014: III, 21g). Other parties explicitly mentioned are Russia's allies, which are named to include Belarus, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the CIS-countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan). Other parties explicated are the international treaty organizations (OSCE, CSTO, CIS, UN). They are depicted as negotiation arenas and action legitimizers, providing justification for political and military actions.

2 Russian Federation provides constant readiness of the Armed Forces, other forces and agencies to deterrence and prevention of military conflicts, to armed protection of the Russian Federation and its allies in the accordance with international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation.

3 The Russian Federation considers it lawful to utilize Armed Forces and other troops and bodies to repel aggression against it and (or) its allies, and maintaining (recovery) the world to address the UN Security Council and other structures collective security, and to ensure the protection of their citizens living outside the Russian Federation, accordance with generally recognized principles and norms international law and international treaties of the Russian Federation

European Union is mentioned just once in both the doctrines of 2010 and 2014. It is mentioned in the section where Russian Federation's most important tasks in conflict prevention are discussed. In the text sections European Union is coupled with NATO. The 2010 version states that Russia's goal is to develop security-related relationships with EU and NATO. In the 2014 version this has been changed to a stricter statement. In the 2014 excerpt European Union is depicted to be an equal negotiation partner with Russia in a dialogue over Europe's security (Doct 2014: III, 21g)⁴. The text promotes a reading that no longer is the goal to improve the relationship between Europe and Russia, but to promote a current status quo.

Russia's antagonists

The texts' primary element is the identification of various military dangers

and threats to Russian Federation. These dangers and threats are mostly depicted as dangerous events or developments. Yet, the threats or dangers are not caused by for example natural catastrophes or economic recession. They are depicted to be the result of wilful human action, potentially resulting in harm to the Russian Federation (Doct 2014; II, 9)⁵. Yet, the threatening agents remain primarily unnamed in the doctrine texts. The depiction of the enemy is a faceless, unidentifiable character in text, to be imagined by the reader himself or to be defined in some other context. A major difference from this unanimity strategy is the consideration of NATO. In both doctrine versions the first mentioned military danger Russia faces is related to NATO, especially to its strengthening and expansion closer to Russian borders (D2014: II, 12a, D2010: 8a)⁶. Yet, this has not always been so. Lalu remarks (2014: 353) that NATO was actually mentioned for the first time in Russian

4 Strengthening the collective security system in the framework of Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and increasing its capacity, strengthen cooperation in the field of international security within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the interaction with the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of South Ossetia in order to ensure joint defence and security, maintaining equal dialogue in European security with the European Union and NATO, helping build the Asia-Pacific region a new security model based on collective non-aligned basis

5 World development at the present stage is characterized by increasing global competition, the tension in the various areas interstate and interregional interaction, values and rivalry development patterns and processes of economic instability political developments at the global and regional levels background of the complications of international relations. Occurs gradual redistribution of influence in favour of new centres economic growth and political attraction.

6 D2014: II, 12a:Capacity power potential Organizations North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and giving it global functions carried out in violation of international law, the approach of military infrastructure countries – members of NATO to the borders of the Russian

doctrines in the 2010 version. About half of the listed military dangers in the 2014 doctrine are such that Russian government has accused NATO publicly of (2014: II, 12a-e,g). This textual strategy, distinctively different from the text in general, can be understood as direct communication to the named party. Such naming strategy acknowledges and defines the relationship between the parties, providing a premise and a starting point for diplomatic negotiations. Yet, even if NATO is constructed as the primary opponent of Russian Federation, no further characterizations are made of it. The texts stay silent for example about NATO's motives; the characterization is shallow and acts mainly to legitimize Russia's military actions as defensive.

Another malicious party to Russia are global extremists which is a concept referring to terrorists, organized crime organizations, armed radicals and foreign, privately owned military corporations (Doct 2014: II, 12j,k)⁷. These parties

are categorized, but not named in more detail. This textual strategy keeps the adversary distant and impersonal, as something that is easy to oppose by any reader. For example, the naming of extremist groups operating in Russian Caucasus might alienate some Russian citizens. Yet, some of the references to anonymous parties are not very hidden. For example, in the 2014 doctrine there is a new section (Doct 2014: II:12m)⁸, which includes a rather direct reference to Ukraine as a military danger.

The doctrine also includes a section of Russia's internal military threats. In here the threats are the responsibility of individuals, terrorist organizations or unspecified parties. The threats include actions that aim to destabilize the political status quo, the governmental administration and the nation's infrastructure. New threats in the 2014 version are anti-nationalistic information influences directed towards the nations' youth, and provocations that increase tensions between

Federation, including through further expansion of the bloc. D2010: 8a: The desire to endow the force potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with global functions carried out in violation of the norms of international law and to move the military infrastructure of NATO member countries closer to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by expanding the bloc.

7 D2014: II 12j: The presence (occurrence) foci of ethnic and Interfaith tension, activities international armed radical groups Foreign private military companies in the areas adjacent to the state border of the Russian Federation and its boundaries allies, as well as the presence of regional conflicts, the growth of separatism and extremism in some regions of the world; D2014: II 12k: The use of information and communication technologies in the military-political purposes for acts contrary to international law, aimed versus sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity of states and threatening international peace, security, global and regional stability;

8 The subversive activities of special services and organizations of foreign states and their coalitions against the Russian Federation.

religious and ethnic groups (Doct 2014: II, 13c,d)⁹. Even if these threats are named internal, they are more or less depicted to originate from external origins or sponsored by external parties with malicious intent. This textual strategy moves the agents behind the intended harm away from the state and the nation. It is the external party, ‘the others’ who are behind the potential harm – a representation that is psychologically easy to accept for a member of the inside group. Rationally thinking, for example a military coup might be considered a valid threat to Russian government, yet such threats are not explicitly named as they might be interpreted as a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’. The state is depicted to be unanimous and strong in the face of adversity.

The threats and dangers in general

In general, dangers and threats are discussed in the context of concept’s balance/imbalance. A threat causes an imbalance, and this imbalance must be countered and a balance returned with military or other means. Throughout

the texts imbalance is considered an undesired state: it is ‘something bad’. The primary task of the military is to preserve things as they are; to support the ‘status quo’. The use of these concepts creates an image of a defensive doctrine (Posen, 1984): the Russian military’s primary task is to keep things as they are, to resist and counter change.

Some of the threats have a dualistic character: they are both threats and means to Russia. In particular, new weapons technology both creates a military threat to Russia and also provides a means to increase the nation’s security. For example, the strategic missile defence system is represented as a primary military threat to Russia because of its destabilizing effect on the global political environment (Doct 2014: II, 12d)¹⁰. Yet, it is also a means to increase security if Russia is able to become a partner in the development of such a system (Doct. 2014: III: 21k)¹¹. The differentiating factor is whether Russia is included or excluded from the international development. Similar structure is presented in relation to military uses

9 D2014: II 13c: The activities of information influence on population, especially young citizens of the country, which has to undermine the historical, spiritual and patriotic traditions in defense of the Fatherland. D2014: II 13d: Provoking ethnic and social tension, extremism, kindling ethnic and religious hatred or enmity.

10 Creation and deployment strategic systems missile defense, undermining global stability and violate the balance of forces in nuclear-missile sphere, implementation of the concept of “global strike”, the intention to place weapons in space, as well as deployment of strategic non-nuclear systems, precision weapons.

11 Forming a mechanisms mutually beneficial bilateral and multilateral collaboration in Countering likely missile threats, including at the need for the establishment of joint missile defense with equal participation of Russia.

of information and communication technology (ICT). In the 2014 doctrine Russian Federation announces its willingness to negotiate on the rules and contexts that would restrain the military use of ICT (Doct 2014: III, 21s)¹². These kinds of text sections can be interpreted as a communication to external readers about Russia's intentions and aspirations.

Yet, when the doctrines of 2010 and 2014 are compared in general, the new doctrine includes less openings for cooperation than the past doctrine text. In the 2010 version Russia was textually constructed as a more active party towards developing relationships and making new openings especially towards the West. In the 2014 version an image of a more reactive Russia appears, a party aiming to prevent things from worsening rather than improving and developing the geopolitical system. For example, in the Doctrine 2010 the first mentioned goal of the Russian military politics was the stopping of the global arms race (Doct 2010, III, 17)¹³. In the 2014 version this has been omitted from the list of goals.

To be more precise, the 2014 doctrine describes the global political environment as more volatile in comparison with the 2010 situation. Both the doctrine versions describe regional, on-going conflict areas as 'spores' of other conflicts – the regional, local conflicts may escalate to wider conflicts. In fact, the doctrine text (2014) argues that certain areas in the world have become permanent conflict areas, and these areas feed to other potential conflicts in other regions (Doct 2014: II, 10)¹⁴. The doctrines see the probability of a major conflict involving Russia as lessening, yet in general it states that military dangers are strengthening. This assessment is in line with the characterizations of contemporary military conflicts in the doctrines. Future wars are restricted, not prone to escalate to full-scale wars between nation states, and involve many asymmetries and informal elements. The new doctrine sees the probability of constrained military conflict increasing and therefore also increases the probability of conflict with this assessment.

12 Creating conditions for a reduction in the risk use of information and communication technologies in the military and political goals for action, contrary to international law, against sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity states and representing threat international peace, security, global and regional stability.

13 The Russian Federation's military policy is aimed at preventing an arms race, deterring and preventing military conflicts, and improving military organization, the forms and methods of the utilization of the Armed Forces and other troops, and also means of attack for the purpose of defending and safeguarding the security of the Russian Federation and also the interests of its allies.

14 Unresolved are many regional conflicts. Is a tendency to force their resolution, in including in the regions bordering on the Russian Federation. Existing architecture (System) international Security does not provide equal security for all States.

THE FUTURE OF WAR ACCORDING TO THE DOCTRINES

Next we look at the Russian interpretation of the characteristics of contemporary military conflict from a thematic perspective. The 2014 doctrine presents ten special features characterizing contemporary warfare. They are (YLE, 2015; authors' translation):

1. *“the integrated use of military forces and political, economic, informational and other non-military means, which are further enhanced by the use of the protest potential of the population and the use of special operations forces”;*
2. *“the extensive use of weapons systems and military equipment; hypersonic precision weapons; electronic warfare; the use of novel weapons, based on new physical principles whose destructive power is comparable with nuclear weapons; digitalized information and management systems; the use of unmanned aerial and maritime vessels and robotized weapons systems and platforms”;*
3. *“the enemy is engaged throughout its territory simultaneously in global information space, airspace and outer space, land and sea”;*
4. *“the selectivity and high destructive range of targets, rapid maneuvering of troops and fire, the use of various mobile groups (forces)”;*
5. *“shorter preparation times to combat operations”;*

6. *“the centralization and automation of the management of forces and weapons systems due to the transition from a purely hierarchical management system to a global, automated, and networked management system”;*
7. *“the emergence of permanent war zones in conflict areas”;*
8. *“the involvement of non-military armed groups and private military companies in military conflicts”;*
9. *“the use of indirect and asymmetric means”;*
10. *“the use of foreign funded and guided political and social movements”.*

These features pay attention to developments in military technology, marking the digitalization and automatization of weapons systems. Such developments allow for increased operational agility, speed of operation and ability to focus force selectively.

Many of these characteristics are similar to what the Western military researchers have pointed out earlier (e.g. integrated arms systems, precision weapons, automated weapon systems, drones, networked management models). The discussion of nuclear weapons seems also quite traditional: nuclear weapons are described as an inhibitor of large-scale war – a deterrent element in the doctrine. Yet, interestingly, the technological development can be understood to be causing only parts of the new characteristics. There are also new premises in the tactical and operational understanding of fighting a contemporary military conflict.

The most interesting of these novel features are a) the depiction of the increase in the warring parties in conflicts, and b) the supplementation of military means with other means during strife. In the spirit of the 'hybrid warfare' (Hoffman, 2007) the latest doctrine sees the use of non-regular troops as a feature of modern warfare. The doctrine acknowledges that non-military armed groups and private military companies have become integral parts of contemporary military conflict (bulletpoint 8 in the list above). They are depicted both as a military danger (D2014: II, 12k)¹⁵ and as a characteristic of contemporary warfare (D2014: II, 15h)¹⁶. Observations of the Ukrainian and the Syrian conflicts show how such groups are used as buffers and means to conduct asymmetric and indirect operations (bulletpoint 9). However, there is no mention in the document of whether or how the Russian federation itself aims to develop the use of such forces, probably due to the document's overall defensive posture. The doctrines leave the reader ignorant of who is the party applying these new methods of war.

The supplementation of military means with non-military means is the other important facet in the military doctrine.

The first mentioned characteristic of the nature of contemporary conflicts states how military and political, economic, informational and other non-military means are used in a coordinated fashion (bulletpoint 1). These means are used in unison with propaganda influence on the local population and special troops. The antagonists are depicted to influence the target nation's society through political and societal channels (bulletpoint 10). The antagonists' toolkit for breaching a nation's security has become larger than in the past.

One of the most noted elements of the new conflict landscape is the militarization of the information space (Huhtinen & Rantapelkonen, 2001). In comparison with the 2010 doctrine, this element is presented also much more frequently and in more depth in the new doctrine. In section D2014: 11 the 2014 doctrine sums up that military dangers and threats are entering the information space and inside the Russian Federation. The doctrine supports a view where information is 'weaponized' (Saarelainen, 1999; Whitehead, 1997). It both constitutes a novel threat to Russian security and is an area of improvement for the Russian military organizations (D2014: III, 39l; D2014:III, 46c)¹⁷. The

15 The use of information and communication technologies in the military-political purposes for acts contrary to international law, aimed versus sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity of states and threatening international peace, security, global and regional stability.

16 Participation in hostilities by irregular armed groups and private military companies

17 D2014: III, 39l: Effective information security of Armed Forces and other troops and bodies. D2014: III, 46c: The development of forces and means of information warfare.

new doctrine argues that influencing the enemy simultaneously in global information space, airspace and space, land, and sea is a characteristic of contemporary military conflicts. It also argues that the contemporary conflicts do not consist of traditional fronts, but the enemy engages the target throughout its region.

The warfare in information space consists of influencing actions on many levels and against various targets. One of the levels recognized in the 2014 doctrine is the influence on nationalistic or patriotic valuations of the nation's population. Antinationalistic influence towards Russian youth and attempts to increase tensions between religious and ethnic groups are presented as a threat to the nation. The general ethos of the 2014 doctrine is that Russia is protecting itself from external propaganda. In the 2010 version a more open-ended depiction was included. In the earlier version one of the characteristics of contemporary warfare was "*the timely application of information combat to win a positive reaction from the global community that supports the later use of military force*" (Doct 2010: II, 13d)¹⁸.

This characteristic has been removed from the 2014 version.

There is an interesting contrast in the text in relation to the contemporary image of hybrid warfare. In 2010 version (D2010: I, 4)¹⁹ the doctrine stated that Russian Federation will use "*political, diplomatic, judicial, economic, ecologic, information, military and other means to protect its interests*". In the 2014 version (D2014:I, 5)²⁰ the text states that "*Russian Federation is committed to using military means **only after** political, diplomatic, judicial, economic, information and other non-kinetic means are exhausted*" (the authors' translation from Finnish, emphasis added). Taken literally, this would mean that Russia will not exert hybrid warfare strategies.

DISCUSSION

The experiences from the contemporary conflicts during the 21st century have made some military scholars argue that the modes of war have become blurred (Hoffman, 2007: 14). They argue that contemporary wars are more complex than the so called 'conventional war'

18 The prior implementation of measures of information warfare in order to achieve political objectives without the utilization of military force and, subsequently, in the interest of shaping a favourable response from the world community to the utilization of military force.

19 The Military Doctrine reflects the Russian Federation's adherence to the utilization of political, diplomatic, legal, economic, environmental, informational, military, and other instruments for the protection of the national interests of the Russian Federation and the interests of its allies.

20 The Military Doctrine reflects the commitment of the Russian Federation to protect national interests of the country and the interests of its allies by military action only after exhaustion opportunities applications political, diplomatic, legal, economic, information and other instruments of non-violent nature.

because regular and irregular warfare methods have become infused. What are nowadays called 'hybrid wars' incorporate a range of different modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder (ibid.). Other scholars argue that only the concept of 'hybrid war' is new, and that military conflicts have held such characteristics through the ages (Murray, 2012; Mansoor, 2012). Whether the phenomenon is old or new, the concept is still a useful tool in understanding the coordinated action of regular and irregular forces engaging in both symmetric and asymmetric combat (Mansoor, 2012: 3). Hoffman (2007: 15) describes the characteristics of hybrid wars by stating that they take place in complex terrain; in cities where the sorting out of military and civilian population is difficult. Hybrid conflicts create 'contested zones', where asymmetric means are used against technologically and materially superior adversaries. Hybrid conflicts include irregular and informal militant parties fighting either each other or conventional troops. Hybrid conflicts open up new fronts especially in the media space and information space where competing narratives about the legality and moral legitimacy of military action aim to influence audiences among the indigenous population, the home front of the warring nation, and the wider international community (McCuen, 2008). Hybrid wars are 'messy', and

require more means than the traditional weapons the military possesses allow for. The expanded hybrid toolkit includes intelligence, civil affairs, psychological operations, and interagency civilian capabilities (Mansoor, 2012). The hybrid can be called 'an underdog's method' used to outlast a technologically and materially superior enemy in a prolonged conflict.

Does the Russian military doctrines then represent the 'hybrid warfare' concept? Partly yes, and partly no. The doctrine texts' characterizations of contemporary conflicts do repeat many of the features included in the discussion of hybrid war. The integrated use of economic, political, informational and other non-military and military means; the creation of permanent war zones; the irregular and private military troops taking part in hostilities; and the use of symmetric and asymmetric means are such characteristics. Then again, the description also includes characteristics that focus on the increasing technological sophistication of arms systems, such as precision weapons, the unmanned and autonomous systems, or the networked management systems that were seen as the future of warfare in the West especially after the experiences of the First Gulf War (Murray, 2012: 290). Therefore, the Russian doctrines acknowledge both the technological imperative of increasing sophistication of military technology and the strategic lessons learned from military conflicts between imbalanced opponents during the early 21st century. The doctrines do not follow a single 'theory', but include characteristics from various sources.

Yet, the doctrine does not commit Russia to any particular mode of warfare. The doctrines stay silent about how Russia actually would wage war as the doctrines focus on constructing an ethos of defence. It is the Russia's antagonist who is the attacker in the doctrines, and Russia states that it is committed to first applying the non-military means of defence prior to military ones. So, we would argue that it is difficult to make far-reaching conclusions by looking solely at the doctrine texts. We would also argue that the doctrine versions of 2010 and 2014 are not very different from each other. An analysis might focus on the details that have changed between the documents, yet we argue that the consistency and durability of the contents is more important and interesting. In relation to the military doctrine, the Russian military regime is not making any big turns at the moment.

The idea of a doctrine as a military-political discourse also reminds us that a text does not directly create a replica of the real world, but it constructs a particular image of the world, promoting certain elements and staying silent about others. We would argue that the doctrines emphasize a political interpretation more than a military one. According to our reading the doctrine primarily aims to legitimate the existence and development of the Russian military – that it is necessary and vital for countering the threats facing the Russian Federation. What it does not say is how Russia actually would do it. To increase our knowledge about that, we need to

include observations about how the Russia's political leaders and the military are taking part in the on-going military conflicts. Pynnöniemi & Mashiri (2015) applied the term 'mirror image' to argue that Russian Federation is using the same military-political methods and means in Ukraine that it is describing as its' threats in the doctrines. What we see here is the dualistic nature of the characteristics – a threat is also a means or an instrument of war. The doctrines consistently apply a rhetorical strategy were a phenomenon is described as a threat, and its' use as a military instrument is silenced.

Another interesting dualistic element in the doctrines is the Russian military's relationship with NATO. NATO is explicitly named an antagonist and implicitly used as a benchmark. There are several areas where the Russian doctrines emulate the developments in NATO and especially the US. The threats and features of contemporary warfare are very similar to what Western analysts have written about over the last 20 years. We feel rather safe in betting that the Russian doctrine authors have familiarized themselves with for example the experiences of the military conflicts US has taken part in during the last two decades. We also feel confident that Russia's own experiences from Afghanistan and Chechnya, especially in relation to US experiences in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq have influenced the doctrine characterizations.

If we do compare the content of the military doctrines with the observations made about the recent military conflicts in Crimea and East Ukraine, an

interesting observation appears. What we have consistently seen in East Europe is Russia's denial that it is militarily active. According to news coverage, the annexation of Crimea and the rebellion in East Ukraine followed rather elegantly the descriptions of the hybrid characteristics of contemporary warfare as they are depicted in the doctrines. Both military conflicts are characterized by Russia's denial of its military role in them. Whereas on the doctrine level Russia states that it will not resort to military means before non-military means are exhausted, on a tactical level this could be executed by denying involvement in any military action. This could be interpreted as tactical craftiness and a major separation from the traditional Soviet military theory of deep battle of massing forces to force a breach (see Lalu, 2014 for a further description of the concept). This inference is supported by an observation made by Galeotti (2014), who quotes General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation from his article in *Military-Industrial Courier* in February 27, 2013. Gerasimov wrote:

“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 ... 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. The open use of forces – often under the guise of peace-keeping and crisis regulation – is resorted to only at a certain stage, primarily for the achievement of final success in the conflict.”

Grint (2014) refers to a Greek poet Archilochus (c. 680-645 b.c.), who wrote “The fox knows many things; the hedgehog one big thing”. This quote is often interpreted that the hedgehog's single defensive ability to curl up as a spiky ball is sufficient to defeat all the wily skills of the fox. It would seem that the Russian Federation does know how to illustrate both hedgehog and fox-like qualities. The doctrines exhibit a Russia curled up in a defensive ball, yet the recent observations of the East European and Syrian conflicts suggest that Russia does have some of the fox's capabilities, too.

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