

How, Why, and When Russia Will Deploy Little Green Men – and Why the US Cannot

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The focus of applied methods of conflict has altered in the direction of the broad use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian, and other nonmilitary measures – applied in coordination with the protest potential of the population. All this is supplemented by military means of a concealed character.

-General Valery Gerasimov

*I see them here, I see them there, I see them always everywhere.
I hear their footsteps on the stair. I listen, hope, and then despair.*

-Anonymous

Developments in Ukraine and the South China Sea signal an emerging gap in asymmetric warfare capabilities, according to a nearly year-old warning from Admiral James A. Winnefeld:

"Not only are our potential adversaries beginning to pace us in the things at which we have become adept, they're doing so in asymmetric ways as well, whether it's little green men in Ukraine or precious habitat being destroyed in the South China Sea to put new facts in the water, hybrid warfare is here to stay."^[1]

The claimed emergent advantage in asymmetric warfighting — *nonlinear war*^[2] as conceptualized by Russian strategists, sometimes called *hybrid warfare* — concerns such Western military commanders as General Philip M. Breedlove. "NATO must be prepared for little green men," those "armed soldiers without insignia that create unrest, occupy government buildings, incite the population," he said. "Once the green men are there," General Breedlove warned, "a revolution happens quickly."^[3] A year later he added, "What we see in Russia now in this hybrid approach to war, is the use of all the tools that they have to reach into a nation and cause instability."^[4]

In late January, Naval Special Warfare Command commander Rear Admiral Brian L. Losey asked a defense industry audience to imagine the possibility of American "little green men" for use in low-intensity operations.^[5] The hypothesized force begs several questions, a primary one being this: are American values too incongruent with the demands of nonlinear/hybrid warfare to allow United States forces to execute such a strategy effectively? Restated, is American political culture simply uncongenial to ideas of nonlinear/hybrid warfare? A related — and equally important — question is whether the conditions required to prosecute nonlinear/hybrid

warfare successfully are congruent with American geopolitical interests?

Russia's "Green Men"

Russian special operations forces engaged in nonlinear/hybrid warfare are known euphemistically as *zelonyye chelovechki* or "green men". TASS correspondent Vladimir Zinin explains the term:

"The notorious 'green men' who appeared in Crimea — they're like the toy soldiers children play with, without a name or a face. Their past and their future is a cardboard box, which can be opened when it's time to begin playing a new game."^[6]



When Russian special operations forces began appearing on Sevastopol streets, some Crimeans adopted a slight semantical shift, from *zelonyye chelovechki* — green men — to *zelonyye lyudishki* — little green men — an Americanism purposefully appropriated for its association with fantastic stories of alien encounters and flying saucers. It conveys "an ironic sense, something which in any case cannot be trusted, a knowingly false report."^[7] Ilya Varlamov elaborates:

"Intuition tells us if something looks like a Russian soldier, rides on Russian military equipment, and says it's a Russian soldier, then it's probably a Russian soldier. But Russian propaganda tells us it's a 'local defense force'. Locals sardonically call them 'polite people' or simply 'green men'."^[8]

Varlamov drives home his commentary with this photograph from the first days of Russia's 2014 incursion into Ukrainian Crimea:



Credit: Ilya Varlamov^[9]

Opting for another euphemism popular among Crimeans — *vezhlivyye lyudi* or "polite people" — another commentator wrote, "With regard to who these polite people are who took Crimean airfields, the Council of Ministers, and the Supreme Council, it's not difficult to guess, it's special army units."^[10] In February 2014, the 3rd Guards Spetsnaz Brigade of Russia's Main Intelligence Director (*aka* GRU) deployed "for the protection of strategic facilities in Crimea...until the full stabilization of the situation in Ukraine" according to the Regnum news service.^[11]

In May 2015, a life-sized monument was unveiled in the Russia Far East city of Belogorsk during celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. The monument honors Russian special operations forces that occupied Crimea ahead of its annexation from Ukraine.



Source: Prestupnosti NET^[12]

It is based on this photograph by TASS photojournalist Aleksandr Ryumin, minus the mask concealing the green man's face.



Source: Gazeta.ru.^[13]

It is worth pausing for a moment to clarify the concept of nonlinearity, a term more often used than understood well. It is rooted in the Soviet-era doctrine of Deep Battle, usually attributed to the Russian strategist Mikhail Tukhachevskiy.^[14] Drawing on Tsarist-era strategist Genrikh Antonovich Leyer's principle of simultaneity of action, Tukhachevskiy's influential contemporary Georgii Isserson argued that the contact area with the opposing forces must be increased:

"[T]he reasons for failure lay...with the fact that neutralization and attack of the defense were conducted only along the front line of direct combat contact. The defensive depths remained untouched."[15]

Increasing the contact area in depth is, of course, unnecessary when two opposing forces array linearly across a front, but this condition rarely if ever exists in modern warfare. Depth is always present. Thus simultaneity requires a degree of nonlinearity. Under Isserson's concept of "future war" (*budushchaya voyna*) "the 'front-against-front' situation should not appear as something unexpected...[F]or us a future operation...will be a continuous chain of merged combat efforts throughout the entire depths." [16]

The concepts of linearity and nonlinearity are borrowed from mathematics, the latter (nonlinearity) introducing the quality of unpredictability. Linearity and nonlinearity can be systemic or geometric. Systemic nonlinearity is perhaps most easily understood as the "fog of war," a concept attributed (erroneously) to the Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz. [17] He emphasized unpredictability — in effect, systemic nonlinearity — that arises as a function of the interaction of two opposing forces. He called the first of these "friction" (i.e., when military action is impeded by incidents and physical objects encountered on the battlefield), and the second he called *chance*. By the latter, he meant something different than probability — Clausewitz several times juxtaposed the terms "laws of probability" [*Wahrscheinlichkeitsgesetze*] and chance. For Clausewitz, *chance* was the unpredictable and the incalculable.

"Circumstances vary so enormously in war, and are so indefinable, that a vast array of factors has to be appreciated — mostly in the light of probabilities alone. The man responsible for evaluating the whole must bring to his task the quality of intuition that perceives the truth at every point. Otherwise a chaos of opinions and considerations would arise, and fatally entangle judgment."[18]

Geometric linearity is the context for such terms as *rear* and *close*, both of which are defined by their position relative to the line of contact. *Depth*, too, is linear though not in a one-dimensional sense. [19] Thus geometric nonlinearity involves the introduction of deviations to destabilize a geometrically linear setting. Unlike systemic linearity (which is as old as organized warfare), geometric nonlinearity did not truly emerge until the development of modern command and control (*aka* "C2") systems. One characteristic of nonlinear battlefields is large spatial gaps between tactical units. Destabilizing a geometrically linear battlespace is achieved through nonlinear tactics as *swarming* to create deviations or find weaknesses in the deployment of enemy units. [20] During the 1990s wars with Russia, for example, Chechen insurgents used so-called "vapor swarms" to converge on a target from all directions and coalesce into a ring. The insurgents took advantage of their superior knowledge of terrain, preplanned subterranean passages, and dispersion across the battlespace to evade and flank Russian units as they moved into insurgent-held territory. Though greatly outnumbered — the disparity ranged from 2:1 during the First Chechen War to as high as 47:1 during the Second Chechen War — teams of insurgents swarmed Russian tanks and armored vehicles in Grozny's narrow streets and overwhelmed them volley rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) fire.

Anton Shekhovtsov suggests three conditions are necessary for Russian nonlinear/hybrid operations. The first condition is that hybrid forces can only be deployed in Russian-speaking regions, where they are ethnically and culturally transparent, and cannot be easily detected. The second is that hybrid forces must arrive covertly, a condition that favors Russia's near abroad (though successful deployments are possible elsewhere). The third condition is that covert deployment presumes border controls are poor and state power is weak in the target country.[21]

Ambiguity is often the friend of Russian nonlinear/hybrid operations. Take for example the Russia government's diavowal of claims by Ramzan Kadyrov (later reversed) that so-called "Chechen special forces" are deployed in Syria. [22] The day after Mr. Kadyrov, who is Head of the Chechen Republic, [23] made his widely publicized claim, his press secretary, Alvi Karimov, walked the statement back. Mr. Karimov said "self-organized Chechen

young people intent on confronting a terrorist organization...are in Syria exclusively on their own initiative."[\[24\]](#)

Fomenting internal suspicion, too, is a friend of nonlinear/hybrid operations. Chechen jihadists are perhaps the most experienced combatants within the Syrian-Iraqi battlespace, and have been effective despite internal rivalries and disputes. Amidst rumors that Chechen agents have penetrated its ranks, the Islamic State Defense, Security & Intelligence Council (*aka* Security & Sharia Committee) embarked on a mole hunt. Former Mukhabarat[\[25\]](#) officers are leading the investigation and targeting Chechen jihadists under the direct order of the Council's head, Abu Ali Anbari.[\[26\]](#)

It hopefully is clear by this point that the conventional Western understanding of modern Russian nonlinear/hybrid warfare suffers from important conceptual weaknesses, as Alexander Lanoszka observes. Three of these bear immediate correction. First, **hybrid warfare is a strategy, not a form of war.**[\[27\]](#) The Russian understanding of *war* strays little from its century-old Leninist definition. War is "a continuation of policy by other means,"[\[28\]](#) a variation on Clausewitz's dictum that "War is a continuation of politics by other means." It cannot be understood, Lenin continued, "without considering its bearing on the preceding policy of the given state."[\[29\]](#) The contemporary (official) definition elaborates the more cryptic Leninist one:

"War is a socio-political phenomenon associated with a radical change in the nature of relations between states and nations, and the transition of opposing sides from the use of non-military, non-violent forms and methods to a struggle involving the direct use of weapons and other violent means of armed struggle in order to achieve certain political and economic goals. At its core, war is a continuation of the policies of states and their ruling elites through violent means."[\[30\]](#)

Those "other violent means" include hybrid ones. This leads to the second correction, *viz.*, that **nonlinear/hybrid warfare is born out of strength, not weakness.**[\[31\]](#) The third correction is that **war is "hybrid" in the sense it combines aspects of insurgency-type irregular warfare and conventional force, where the threat to escalate to higher gradations deters forceful retaliation.** This exposes a vulnerability of hybrid warfare — it requires local escalation-dominance, a condition Russia established against the odds in places like Crimea and Syria by exploiting Western fears of direct military confrontation. Against Lanoszka's observation that hybrid warfare target-states (e.g., Ukraine) self-deter out of a fear of escalating the conflict, the author adds, so, too, it seems, does NATO and the United States.

Much attention has been directed toward the Baltic countries — Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, all NATO member-states — as likely targets for Russian hybrid warfare. The author's view is this attention is somewhat misplaced, notwithstanding near-habitual Russian probing in the region, for the simple reason that Baltic countries are unlikely to engage in self-deterrence in the face of a hybrid threat. Estonia's senior military officer, Lieutenant General Riho Terras certainly sounds unlikely to do so. Regarding Russian green men, "You should shoot the first one to appear," General Terras said. "If somebody without any military insignia commits terrorist attacks in your country, you should shoot him...you should not allow him to enter."[\[32\]](#) Latvia's Raimonds Vējonis, then-Defense Minister (and now President), issued a similar warning: "If necessary, we will shoot these 'green men'. But if they behave peacefully, the Security Police and the State Police will deal with them."[\[33\]](#) The leaders of Lithuania and neighboring Poland say much the same.[\[34\]](#)

Hic Sunt Leones[\[35\]](#)

We turn then to the central question of a United States nonlinear/hybrid warfare force. Some three years ago, General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation, used a widely followed Russian defense weekly to publish what Jane's Intelligence Review later called "an article that went unregistered at the time but proved to be a crucial statement of emergent Russian thinking on non-linear warfare."[\[36\]](#) In the light of recent military actions in Libya (which he cites), Syria, and elsewhere, few Americans would likely dispute General Gerasimov's thesis statement:

"The 21st century saw a diminution of earlier distinctions between a state of war and a state of peace. War is no longer declared, but having begun, unfolds along often unfamiliar patterns. [...] So, too, the rules of war have changed. Non-military means to political and strategic ends have become more important, often exceeding in effectiveness the force of arms."^[37]

A recent Finnish Defense Agency report noted these means are most effective against "collapsed or nearly-collapsed states in which the populations are divided into conflicting factions due to ethnic, economic or religious grounds."^[38] These conditions are associated with many contemporary conflicts. They are not as a rule, however, descriptive of conflicts in which the United States has intervened with notable success.^[39] The conditions better describe the former Soviet space, with its ethnic heterogeneity, latent historic grievances, weak civil society, and regional complexity.^[40] It is terrain more congenial to the assertion of Russian geopolitical interests than American ones:

"Russia has a tactical advantage by virtue of being in [the former Soviet political landscape]; it has historical familiarity with the plethora of conflicts in it; and it is well positioned to frame local events and conflicts in a manner helpful to its interests, thereby forestalling unfavorable responses from outside actors. Yet these factors would be irrelevant if Russia did not have escalation dominance over its neighbors and an interest in expanding its zone of influence and revising the status quo."^[41]

The same can be said of Chinese interests in the maritime domain of the South China Sea. China exerts nonlinear/hybrid force in the South China Sea through its maritime militias — the so-called "little blue men". These militias use the Hainan Province commercial fishing fleet — under the command of Luo Baoming, the provincial party chief — to prosecute the PLA's "People's War at Sea."^[42] The maritime militias are an irregular force, the members of which are recruited from local Hainan fishing communities or other maritime industries who remain employed in these positions while they are trained and made available for government tasking. The PLA's official newspaper puts it succinctly:

"Putting on camouflage they qualify as soldiers, taking off the camouflage they become law abiding fishermen."^[43]

A prime example is the Fugang Fisheries Co., Ltd. Established in 2001 and based in Sanya, on Hainan's southern coast. Fugang Fisheries has dispatched vessels and crews multiple times to act as maritime militia, principally to advance and defend China's island and maritime claims in the area of the disputed Spratley Islands.^[44] Other significant maritime militias include:

- The Danzhou Militia of Baimajing Harbor *aka* the Hainan Provincial Marine Fishing Industry Group. Based in Danzhou Bay on Hainan's west coast, it played a significant role in China's operation to seize the Paracel Islands' Crescent group from Vietnam during the January 1974 Battle of the Paracel Islands.
- The Tanmen Village Maritime Militia Company of Qionghai County. Established in 1985 and based on Hainan's southeast coast, it was directly involved in the April 2012 Scarborough Shoal Standoff with Philippine naval forces.
- The Sansha City Maritime Militia, which was established in 2013 on Woody Island, one of the Paracel Islands claimed by both China and Vietnam. In future it is expected to play an important role in Paracel affairs.^[45]

China's maritime militias are grounded in the concept of the "people's war," in which civilian and military sectors are integrated. The maritime militias function as a hybrid civilian-naval force that is integrated into the PLAN as unofficial constabulary and military auxiliaries. Their peacetime role is to support coercive maritime diplomacy

against Japan, Vietnam, and the Philippines; to enforce China's unilateral seasonal fishing ban in the South China Sea; and to provide support services for the Chinese Coast Guard, such as resupply of Chinese artificial installations in the region. The maritime militias are designed to augment Chinese military power during any conflict at sea.[46]

During any conflict, China is almost certain to exploit the maritime militias as a force multiplier by deploying its thousands of fishing vessels to engage in paramilitary activities, and to augment PLAN operations and intelligence activities.[47] The PLAN has developed elite units within the maritime militias that are the most likely to be deployed on more operations that involve monitoring, displaying presence in front of, or opposing foreign actors. All such actions involving "hiding in plain sight" are intended to support Chinese naval and coast guard forces.[48] It is likely that any maritime militia vessels destroyed in naval combat will be the centerpiece of political and public diplomacy efforts by China to undermine enemy resolve.[49]

Is Nonlinear/Hybrid Warfare "Un-American"?

The question whether nonlinear/hybrid warfare is un-American raises cultural and geopolitical concerns. A starting point to discussing those concerns is to acknowledge frankly that the United States possesses a robust capacity for waging certain elements of nonlinear/hybrid warfare — for example, in the cyber and special operations realms. Another is to clearly distinguish nonlinear/hybrid warfare prosecuted by states from operations prosecuted by (or against) hybrid organizations such as the proto-states ISIS and Hezbollah. It also is worth disposing of the suggestion that nonlinear/hybrid war is a uniquely modern concept: the Soviet Union employed hybrid tactics during circa 1920s attempts to overthrow sovereign governments in Bulgaria (September 1923) and Estonia (December 1924).[50]

Perhaps the single characteristic that best defines nonlinear/hybrid warfare is the systematic use of varied means that, in the aggregate, have the capacity to undermine and seriously weaken an adversary without crossing established thresholds that would trigger a military response.[51] As has been argued, however, nonlinear/hybrid operations (on the Russian mode at least) are limited to situations that meet a set of conditions, including geographical proximity. That condition alone challenges whether the United States is likely in the foreseeable future to engage in nonlinear/hybrid warfare operations, as it did in Central America in the 1980s.

Then there is the question of temperament. The Estonian sociologist Juhan Kivirähk writes that Russia works assiduously to erode social cohesion in his country. Under the guise of protecting Russian culture and language, Russia promotes the narrative that "diaspora" Russian-speakers are excluded from Estonian society.[52] A campaign of low-intensity subversion on this scale and duration — just one element of a state-centered hybrid war strategy — requires deep social knowledge and an enduring commitment, neither of which favor the United States. Aside perhaps from Central America, is there a regional theatre in which such an approach is well suited to the United States' capabilities and interests? America has demonstrated its capacity to destabilize countries and turn them into failed states, to be sure — witness Libya— but that is neither new, nor in any meaningful sense, nonlinear or hybrid.

Moreover, nonlinear/hybrid war (at least Russian-style) is intended principally as a means of perimeter defense. The objective is to subvert neighboring countries, destabilizing them and where necessary, creating a ring of failed states and frozen conflicts that serve Russian defense-in-depth objectives. Here again, fundamental differences between Russian and American regional geography challenges whether a nonlinear/hybrid approach — as distinct from basic counterinsurgency — is well suited to American geopolitical interests.

The suggestion of an American "green men" (or for that matter, blue men) force also raises legal questions regarding its combatant status. It is true that while wearing a uniform is not an absolute requirement to comply with the principle of distinction.[53] Combatant status is conditioned on combatants distinguishing themselves from both the civilian population and the opposing armed forces, but does not necessarily require them to identify their nationality. The singular act of using unmarked uniforms does not constitute a violation of the principle of distinction, assuming, however, that the combatants in question are clearly not impersonating opposing military personnel nor are attempting to blend into the civilian population.

While an American "green men" force might meet the legal test of combatant status, it is questionable today whether it would meet the domestic political test. There are certainly good historic analogues for a modern American "green men" force — one that immediately comes to mind is the Vietnam-era 5th Special Forces Group trained and led Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG)[54] — there is little basis for believing that the American public would long tolerate nonlinear conflicts actions on the model of the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) or the early 20th century interventions in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua.

As to the notion of a "green on green" (or in the maritime realm, "blue on blue") conflict, this, too, has an overlay of unreality. Take this suggestion that NATO forward deploy (here, in the Baltics) to deter Russian nonlinear/hybrid operations:

"The clearest way to undermine Putin's strategy of ambiguity and to deny him the advantage of time and space is to station NATO (especially U.S.) forces in the Baltic countries. [...]With this simple stroke, Putin's advantage in time, geography as well as his advantage with rapid decision making is muted."[55]

Really?

Further to the point, "Cultivate increased NATO commitment and resolve" is the first of "ten key objectives U.S. and NATO leaders should pursue to counter the Russia advantages that drive its hybrid operational approach" according an influential 2015 United States Army War College paper.[56] Again, really? Russian leaders are inveterate practitioners of what Thomas Schelling termed "competition in risk taking." They achieve geopolitical objectives "not so much by tests of force as by tests of nerve." It means, as Schelling wrote nearly 50 years ago, "not by who can bring the most force to bear in a locality, or on particular issue, but by who is eventually willing to bring more force to bear *or able to make it appear that more is forthcoming.*"[57] [Emphasis added] It hardly bolsters the deterrent effect of the so-called "Article 5 trigger" if NATO must first cultivate increased commitment and resolve. As a July 2015 study by the Polish Institute of International Affairs noted, "Russia's comparative advantage is its unpredictability as a factor of deception, and a desire to introduce or enhance instability in the international system as a revisionist power,"[58] something the authors of the Army War College paper called a "strategy of ambiguity."

Days of Goblins

*These are days of demons, goblins. I see them here,
I see them there, I see them everywhere.*

-Dickson M. Mwansa, *The Headmaster and Other Rascals*

By this point the author's frustration should be evident with efforts to advance a sanitized Russian nonlinear/hybrid war doctrine as justification for an American green (or blue) men force. The case for an openly acknowledged force within the armed services — here the author includes the end-around method of sheep dipping uniformed personnel — is at best uncertain. As Sam C. Sarkesian cautioned in his 1984 book *America's Forgotten Wars*:

"There is a need to learn from history, analyze American involvement and the nature of low-intensity conflict, and translate these into strategy and operational doctrines. Without some sense of historical continuity, Americans are likely to relearn the lessons of history each time they are faced with a low-intensity conflict."[59]

One lesson is that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is best suited to conduct operations intended to be wholly covert or disavowable. The author acknowledges this is contrary to Recommendation 32 of the 9/11 Commission report, which states:

“Lead responsibility for directing and executing paramilitary operations, whether clandestine or covert, should shift to the Defense Department. There it should be consolidated with the capabilities for training, direction, and execution of such operations already being developed in the Special Operations Command.”^[60]

It can be persuasively argued that planning and executing nonlinear/hybrid operations is directly related to CIA's intelligence-gathering responsibilities. The habitual sheep dipping of uniformed personnel prior to nonlinear/hybrid missions both negates their combatant status, and makes the larger point that these missions properly belong within CIA. It also begs the question whether the United States should (re)establish a bright line between military and intelligence operations, rather than slide up and down the conflict scale ad hoc in a state of perpetual quasi-war. These and other questions each bear further consideration in their own right.

Stepping back, perhaps the best summary of the emerging argument for nonlinear/hybrid operations is found in the proceedings of a June 2015 workshop held by the Scottish Centre for War Studies:

“Russia’s operations in Ukraine have roots in the Soviet system yet are ‘new’ in the context in which they are applied. [...] Epochal warfare analysis projects that a shift from a Westphalian to post-Westphalian global system is underway. In such a period of transition, the dominant state form undergoes a deinstitutionalization process and war is less about issues of state sovereignty and, instead, increasingly over what the new form of social and political organization will be. During this era of change, non-state soldiers and mercenaries become dominant actors on the new battlefield that is emerging — in the present instance, one derived from the 5th dimensional battlespace attributes of humanspace and cyberspace.”^[61]

The translation of all source material is by the author unless otherwise noted. The quoted verse by an anonymous author was published in the 19 November 1898 edition of Punch magazine.

[1] He spoke in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. See: "Adm. Winnefeld's Remarks at the 142nd U.S. Naval Institute Annual Meeting." Transcript of a 22 April 2015 speech published by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. <http://www.jcs.mil/Media/Speeches/tabid/3890/Article/586582/adm-winnefelds-remarks-at-the-142nd-us-naval-institute-annual-meeting.aspx>. Last accessed 21 February 2016.

[2] The author has written previously on the Russian practice of nonlinear warfare. See: "[Russia's Use of Disinformation in the Ukraine Conflict](#)" (February 2015). "[Ukraine: The Squandered Renaissance](#)" (October 2015). "[A Method to the Madness: The Logic of Russia's Syrian Counterinsurgency Strategy](#)" (January 2016).

[3] "Die Nato muss auf grüne Männchen vorbereitet sein." *Die Welt* [published online in German 17 August 2014]. <http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article131296429/Die-Nato-muss-auf-gruene-Maennchen-vorbereitet-sein.html>. Last accessed 21 February 2016. General Philip M. Breedlove, USAF, spoke in his capacity as Commander, U.S. European Command, and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

[4] Munich Security Conference (2015). Munich Security Report 2015, 34. <http://www.eventanizer.com/MSC2015/MunichSecurityReport2015.pdf>. Last accessed 23 February 2016.

[5] Such a force would raise a host of issues for the United States. A significant one outside the scope of this essay is the operational demand for low visibility platforms capable of penetrating a conflict zone. At the same symposium by General Joseph Votel, commander of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), noted such special purpose-designed platforms for discreet special operations forces missions must either be special-purpose military platforms that appear to be civilian platforms, e.g., the USSOCOM's modified commercial vehicle *aka* "Non-Standard Commercial Vehicle" and similar non-standard rotary wing

aircraft, or modified commercial vessels.

[6] Vladimir Zinin (2015). " Igra v soldatikov: Pochemu reputatsiya armii okazalas' pod ugrozoy" ("Playing Soldiers: Why the Army's reputation is threatened"). *Gazeta.ru* [published online in Russian 22 July 2015]. http://www.gazeta.ru/comments/2015/07/22_e_7652977.shtml. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[7] Alexander Anichkin (2014). "Zelenyye Chelovechki" ("Little Green Men"). *Tetradki* ("Notebooks") blog [published online in Russian 13 March 2014]. <http://european-book-review.blogspot.com/2014/03/little-green-men.html>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[8] Ilya Varlamov (2014) "Situatsiya v Krymu. Sevastopol'." ("The Situation in Sevastopol, Crimea."). *Varlamov.ru* [published online 5 March 2014]. <http://varlamov.ru/1017991.html>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[9] *Ibid.* The photograph's caption reads: "Utrom vyvezhayem iz Simferopolya. Na ulitsakh stoyat «zelenyye chelovechki»." ("We leave in the morning from Simferopol. 'Little green men' are in the streets.")

[10] Anichkin (2014), *op cit.*

[11] <http://regnum.ru/news/1771548.html>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[12] <https://news.pn/ru/RussiaInvadedUkraine/132682>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[13] See: http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2015/03/11_a_6503589.shtml. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[14] His transliterated last name sometimes is spelled "Tukhachevsky". It is worth noting that while Deep Battle doctrine is customarily attributed to Tukhachevsky, some of his contemporaries wrote more specifically about it, for example, Georgii Samoilovich Isserson's 1936 treatise *The Evolution of Operational Art*, and Vladimir Kiriakovitch Triandafilov's 1929 *The Nature of the Operations of Contemporary Armies*.

[15] Georgii Samoilovich Isserson (1936). *The Evolution of Operational Art*, Bruce W. Menning, trans. (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press), 98.

[16] *Ibid.*, 46-47.

[17] Clausewitz never actually used the term "fog of war" in his seminal *On War* though he did use *fog* four times. For an exhaustive discussion of the question, see the military historian Eugenia C. Kiesling's 2001 article "On War Without Fog" *Military Review* (September-October 2001), 85-87. <http://www.clausewitz.com/bibl/Kiesling-OnFog.pdf>. Last accessed 23 February 2016.

[18] Carl von Clausewitz (1832; 1976). *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and transls. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 112.

[19] This has been described as "longitudinal linearity" since it is measured from front to rear rather than along the front. See: MAJ A. Dwight Raymond, USA (1992). "Firepower, Maneuver, and the Operational Level of War." DTIC AD-A254-156. (Fort Leavenworth, KS: School of Advanced Military Studies), 26.

[20] For example, Chechen insurgent light infantry organized into small anti-armor teams used tactical swarming against Russian T-72 tanks during the First Chechen War's battle for Grozny (1994-96) and did so again against Russian mechanized infantry and armor in the battle for Grozny (1999) during the Second Chechen War.

[21] Anton Shekhovtsov (2015). "Who is afraid of the 'little green men'?" *The Intersection Project: Russia/Europe/World* [published online 21 September 2015]. <http://intersectionproject.eu/article/security/who-afraid-little-green-men>. Last accessed 21 February 2016.

[22] Both President Putin and Defense Minister Shoigu forcefully disclaimed any Russian involvement in grounds operations inside Syria. However, Presidential spokesperson Dmitri Peskov was less categorical,

deferring questions about Chechen special forces "to the relevant authorities." See: "Peskov otvetil na vopros o chechenskom spetsnaze v Sirii" ("Peskov responds to questions about Chechen special forces in Syria"). *Vesti.ru* [published online in Russian 8 February 2016]. <http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=2717910>. Last accessed 22 February 2016. Mr. Kadyrov earlier claimed on Russian television that Chechen special forces members infiltrated Islamic State training camps. See: "Kadyrov soobshchil o rabote chechenskogo spetsnaza v Sirii" ("Kadyrov reported on the work of Chechen special forces in Syria"). *Kavkazskiy Uzel* [published online in Russian 8 February 2016]. <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/277274/>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[23] Mr. Kadyrov stated in a 27 February interview on Russia's NTV television channel (which is owned by Gazprom) that he will step down from his post when his current term expires in April 2016.

[24] "Vlasti ob'yavili chechenskikh boytsov v Sirii dobrovol'tsami" ("Authorities declare Chechen fighters in Syria are volunteers"). *Kavkazskiy Uzel* [published online in Russian 9 February 2016]. <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/277345/>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[25] Jihaz Al-Mukhabarat Al-Amma aka the Mukhabarat, was the Iraqi state intelligence service under Saddam Hussein.

[26] Anbari is the caliphate's deputy leader in Syria, reporting directly to Amir al-Mu'minin Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. This council is the most important in the organization's structure. The Council is partly responsible for Baghdadi's security, and has overall responsibility for the execution of security plans and for intelligence gathering and assessment.

[27] Specifically, hybrid warfare is an offensive strategy to localize a conflict while undermining the target's territorial integrity, subverting its internal political cohesion, and disrupting its economy. Alexander Lanoszka (2016). "Russian hybrid warfare and extended deterrence in eastern Europe." *International Affairs* 92: 1. https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/publications/ia/INTA92_1_09_Lanoszka.pdf

[28] V.I. Lenin (1917). "War and Revolution." *Lenin Collected Works*, v.24. (Moscow: Progress Publishers).

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Dmitry O. Rogozin, Andrian A. Danilevich & Dmitry V. Loskutov (2011). *Voyna i mir v terminakh i opredeleniakh* [War and Peace: Terms and Definitions]. Electronic source. <http://www.voina-i-mir.ru/article/47>. Last accessed 24 February 2016.

[31] Adapted from Lanoszka (2016), *op cit.*

[32] "Estonia ready to deal with Russia's 'little green men'." *Financial Times* [published online 13 May 2015]. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/03c5ebde-f95a-11e4-ae65-00144feab7de.html#axzz40q8DNutl>. Last accessed 21 February 2016.

[33] "Ja vajadzēs, nošausim tos «zaļos cilvēciņus»." ("If necessary, we will shoot the 'green men'." *Ir* [published online in Latvian 10 September 2014]. <http://www.irlv.lv/2014/9/10/ja-vajadzēs-nosausim-tos-zalos-cilvecinus>. Last accessed 22 February 2016. The Latvian Security Police (*Drošības policija* or "DP") has primary responsibility for the nation's counter-terrorism and counter-subversion efforts, and includes the State Border Guards (*Valsts Robežsardze*). The Latvian State Police (*Valsts policijas* or "VP") is tasked with crime prevention. Vējonis was widely quoted in regional news portals, including *Ukrayinska Pravda*. See: "Ministr oborony Latviyi poobitsyav strilyaty v 'zelenykh cholovichkiv'." ("Latvian Defense minister promises to shoot 'green men'."). *Ukrayinska Pravda* [published online in Ukrainian 11 September 2014]. <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/09/11/7037505/>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

Estonia's Russian language *Postimees* ("The Postman") wrote Vējonis' use of "the term 'green men' apparently meant armed formations, similar to those in Ukraine's self-proclaimed separatist DPR and LPR" (the reference is to the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic, respectively). *Postimees* disputed Vējonis' key contention, arguing "the appearance of 'green men' on Latvian territory is legally ambiguous, because technically it does not constitute a direct invasion. Therefore, Article 5 of the NATO charter regarding

collective defense is not applicable." See: "Ministr oborony Latvii: yesli nado — pristrelim «zelenykh chelovechkov»" ("Latvian Defense Minister says to 'green men,' if necessary, we will shoot you"). *Postimees* [published online in Russian 11 September 2014]. <http://rus.postimees.ee/2917323/ministr-oborony-latvii-esli-nado-pristrelim-zelenyh-chelovechkov>. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[34] "Glavkom VS Pol'shi v Vil'nyuse: my gotovy k 'zelenym chelovechkam'." *RU.Delfi.lt* [published online in Russian 5 March 2015]. <http://ru.delfi.lt/news/politics/glavkom-vs-polshi-v-vilnyuse-my-gotovy-k-zelenym-chelovechkam.d?id=67353542>. Last accessed 22 February 2016. *RU.Delfi.lt* is the Russian language version of the *Delfi* Lithuanian news portal. *Delfi* operates additional portals in Estonian and Latvian (each with paired with a Russian language version) and is an important Baltic news portal. See also: "Pol'sha zayavila o gotovnosti k vtorzheniyu «zelenykh chelovechkov»." ("Poland declares its readiness to repel 'little green men'.") *Gazeta.ru* [published online in Russian 5 March 2015]. http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/news/2015/03/05/n_6986593.shtml. Last accessed 22 February 2016.

[35] *Hic sunt leones* or "Here, there be lions" is a phrase utilized in classical Roman cartography (one which survived into the Medieval period) to label unknown territories on maps, denoting them as unexplored, and potentially dangerous.

[36] Jane's Intelligence Review (2014). "The rising influence of Russian special forces." http://www.janes360.com/images/assets/299/46299/The_rising_influence_of_Russian_special_forces.pdf. Last accessed 29 February 2016.

[37] General Valery Gerasimov (2013). "Tsennost' Nauki v Predvidenii" ("The Predictive Value of Science"). *Voенно-promyshlenniy kur'er* ("The Military-Industrial Courier"). [published online in Russian 27 February 2013]. http://vpk-news.ru/sites/default/files/pdf/VPK_08_476.pdf. Last accessed 29 February 2016.

[38] Finish Defense Research Agency (2015). "On the concept of hybrid warfare." Research Bulletin 01-2015. http://www.puolustusvoimat.fi/wcm/a7115c0047a97c30802699a0e97874b0/150316+_DOS_J_hybridwarfare.pdf?MOD=AJPERES. Last accessed 29 February 2016.

[39] Here, the exception may prove the rule. The Nicaraguan Resistance of the 1980s and early 1990s succeeded (by some measures at least) as a nonlinear/hybrid campaign to destabilize the Sandinista Junta of National Reconstruction government in Nicaragua, and to check the expansion of Soviet (and their Cuban proxy) regionally. However, it provoked a domestic political backlash within the United States of such force and duration as to evince the incompatibility of nonlinear/hybrid warfare with American values, even within a longstanding sphere of American influence.

[40] These factors are developed in greater detail in Lanoszka (2016), *op cit.*, 180-186.

[41] *Ibid.*, 189.

[42] Professor Andrew S. Erickson of the United States Naval War College has written extensively on this subject. See for example: Andrew S. Erickson & Conor M. Kennedy (2015). "Tanmen Militia: China's 'Maritime Rights Protection' Vanguard." *The National Interest* [published online 6 May 2015]. <http://www.nationalinterest.org/feature/tanmen-militia-china's-maritime-rights-protection-vanguard-12816?page=3>. Last accessed 1 March 2016. See also: Andrew S. Erickson (2015). "Directing China's 'Little Blue Men': Uncovering the Maritime Militia Command Structure." *Andrewerickson.com* [published online 11 September 2015]. <http://www.andrewerickson.com/2015/09/directing-chinas-little-blue-men-uncovering-the-maritime-militia-command-structure/>. Last accessed 1 March 2016.

[43] Cited in Andrew S. Erickson & Conor M. Kennedy (2015). "Irregular Forces At Sea: 'Not Merely Fishermen — Shedding Light On China's Maritime Militia.'" *Center for International Maritime Security* [published online 2 November 2015]. <http://cimsec.org/new-cimsec-series-on-irregular-forces-at-sea-not-merely-fishermen-shedding-light-on-chinas-maritime-militia/19624>. Last accessed 2 March 2016.

[44] Andrew S. Erickson & Conor M. Kennedy (2015). "China's Daring Vanguard" *Introducing Sanya City's*

Maritime Militia." Center for International Maritime Security [published online 5 November 2015]. <http://cimsec.org/chinas-daring-vanguard-introducing-sanya-citys-maritime-militia/19753>. Last accessed 2 March 2016.

[45] Erickson & Kennedy (2015). "Irregular Forces At Sea: "Not Merely Fishermen — Shedding Light On China's Maritime Militia," *op cit*.

[46] James Kraska & Michael Monti (2015). "The Law of Naval Warfare and China's Maritime Militia." *International Law Studies*. 91: 452, 455. <http://stockton.usnwc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1406&context=ils>. Last accessed 2 March 2016.

[47] *Ibid.*, 465.

[48] See: "Directing China's 'Little Blue Men': Uncovering the Maritime Militia Command Structure." Andrewerickson.com [published online 11 September 2015]. <http://www.andrewerickson.com/2015/09/directing-chinas-little-blue-men-uncovering-the-maritime-militia-command-structure/>. Last accessed 2 March 2016.

[49] Kraska & Monti (2015), *op cit.*, 466.

[50] Merle Maigre (2015). "Nothing New in Hybrid Warfare: The Estonian Experience and Recommendations for NATO." The German Marshall Fund of the United States Policy Brief (February 2015), 2.

[51] Adapted from Ralph D. Thiele (2015). "The New Colour of War — Hybrid Warfare and Partnerships." *World Politics of Security*.. International Relations and Security Network Center for Security Studies, 383, 54. <http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/17294-1442-5-30.pdf>. Last accessed 2 March 2016.

[52] Juhan Kivirähk (2009). "Kuidas suhtuda Venemaa välispoliitika 'humanitaarsesse dimensiooni'?" ("How to address the 'humanitarian dimension' of Russian foreign policy?") *Diplomaatia*, nr. 74/75 [published online in Estonian November 2009]. <http://www.diplomaatia.ee/artikkel/kuidas-suhtuda-venemaa-valispoliitika-humanitaarsesse-dimensiooni-1/>. Last accessed 2 March 2016.

[53] The International Court of Justice in 1996 advised that must never make civilians the object of attack, and must consequently never use weapons that are incapable of distinguishing between civilian and military targets. See: Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, Advisory Opinion, 1996 I.C.J. 226, ¶ 78 (July 8).

[54] The CIDG mobile strike forces and reconnaissance companies were trained and led by the 5th Special Forces Group. They were comprised of Nung and ethnic minority tribes and groups from the mountain and border regions.

[55] United States Army War College (2015). *A U.S. Army War College Analysis of Russian Strategy in Eastern Europe, an Appropriate U.S. Response, and the Implications for U.S. Landpower*. (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College), 9-10. <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1274.pdf>. Last accessed 3 March 2016.

[56] *Ibid.*, 9.

[57] Thomas C. Schelling (1967). *Arms and Influence*. (New Haven: Yale University Press), 94. http://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=20165. Last accessed 3 March 2016.

[58] Polish Institute of International Affairs (2015). "Nuclear-Backed 'Little Green Men': Nuclear Messaging in the Ukraine Crisis," 16.

[59] Sam C. Sarkesian (1984). *America's Forgotten Wars: The Counterrevolutionary Past and Lessons for the Future*. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press), 245.

[60] See: *The 9/11 Commission Report*. (Washington: Government Printing Office), 415-416.

[61] Robert Bunker & Pamela Ligouri Bunker (2015). "Proxy Actors, Psyops & Irregular Forces: The Future of Modern Warfare?" workshop held by the Scottish Centre for War Studies, University of Glasgow, 22-23 June

2015. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/print/25189>. Last accessed 3 March 2016.