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## **Russia's "New" Military Theory: Updating Classical and Asymmetric Techniques**

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## Introduction

A new understanding of warfare appears under development in Russia. Whether it is actually “new” is open for discussion, but ideas were advanced by Russia’s top leadership indicating that is the case. In June 2019 Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu stated that modern conflict requires new approaches and that developing a new theory of warfare is the main task of the Armed Forces. Shoygu offered that “conflicts of a **new generation involve a combination of classical and asymmetrical methods** of conducting armed combat, where hostilities are fleeting, and there is simply no time for correcting mistakes.”<sup>1</sup> He added that new reconnaissance assets, along with weapons based on hypersonic and laser energy technologies, are impacting the forms and methods of troop operations.<sup>2</sup>

Russian General Staff Chief Valery Gerasimov, in his 2019 presentation to the Academy of Military Science, stated that “Under these conditions our Armed Forces must be prepared to wage wars and armed conflicts of a **new-type using classical and asymmetric methods** of operations.”<sup>3</sup> So the focus on classical and asymmetric issues appears well-established among the top levels of Russia’s military leadership. Updating these classical and asymmetric methods with new technologies and especially their use in nonmilitary operations is to be expected.

Of interest is that Shoygu mentioned new-generation conflicts while Gerasimov noted conflicts of a new-type. Both concepts have been under discussion in Russian periodicals for several years. New generation was talked about extensively in Vladimir Slipchenko’s 2001 book *Noncontact War* as well as in a 2013 article in *Military Thought* by S. A. Bogdanov and S. G. Chekinov. Bogdanov actually had written on new-generation warfare even earlier in the same journal, in 2003. But after 2013, the new-generation concept all but disappeared from Russian writings, appearing again prominently only in Shoygu’s 2019 presentation. In the meantime, the term “new type” conflict served as its substitute, to include in the writings of Chekinov and Bogdanov and many others. Maybe this was because General Staff Chief Valery Gerasimov first mentioned the term in 2013 (and not new generation) and again, as noted above, in 2019. Russian authors perhaps wanted to be in lock step with the Chief. Chekinov and Bogdanov, in 2017, stated that new type warfare is not only unique but is “**threatening to become the pivot of historical life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**”<sup>4</sup> Not only have Russian theorists stressed the new-type concept over the past five years, but the Chinese military often utilizes the term as well.

When viewed from a distance, new-generation warfare appears to focus on weapons whereas new type warfare appears to focus on the application of a host of various military (blockade, show of force, etc.) and nonmilitary (diplomatic, economic, etc.) ways to control or deter conflict with new technologies. This flip-flopping of concepts between new-generation and new type indicates that Russia’s military is still not settled on a formal “naming” concept to describe its approach to the conduct of future war. Since the military chastises those involved in stereotyping, this should come as no surprise. Perhaps stating a case for classical and asymmetric

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<sup>1</sup> No author or title provided, *Interfax*, 18 June 2019.

<sup>2</sup> No author provided, “Shoygu Speaks on Modern-Day Military Conflicts,” *Rossiyskaya Gazeta Online (Russian Paper Online)*, 18 June 2019.

<sup>3</sup> V. V. Gerasimov, “The Development of Military Strategy under Contemporary Conditions. Tasks for Military Science,” *Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk (Journal of the Academy of Military Science)*, No. 2 2019, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> S. G. Chekinov and S. A. Bogdanov, “The Evolution of the Essence and Content of the Notion of War in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Voennaya Mysl’ (Military Thought)*, No. 1 2017, p. 43.

warfare is the closest Russia can come to a stereotype or a compromise on new generation and new type. Neither the term classic nor the term asymmetric can be considered as hardly “new.”

Regardless, Shoygu and Gerasimov’s statements mandate analysts to take a closer look at updates to classical and asymmetric concepts. This is not “much ado about nothing.” Russian classical thought considers its traditional military methods capable of confronting the West’s (as Russia terms them) hybrid actions. Such specifics are vitally important for analysts to understand, as they are more germane to the Russian preparation for and conduct of operations than the larger scale, hybrid- and gray zone-type concepts often stressed in the West. Since Russian leaders do not intend to stereotype, what they will call this new theory of warfare is not known and may never be formalized. Classical and asymmetric methods may represent the only open source, unclassified answer to Russia’s new theory that we will find. However, a study of both updated concepts might produce enough information to allow for calculated guesses as to how Russia intends to fight a future confrontation. The Russian goal may be to construct a plan to win a confrontation before an actual conflict begins using just nonmilitary methods or it may attempt to do so with a combination of both military and nonmilitary means.

This article will focus first on some brief examples of Russian classical methods, especially different ways they can be updated or integrated. That discussion is followed with a consideration of several elements that compose Russian asymmetrical thinking. The article concludes with an examination of a potential scenario involving the integration of classical and asymmetric methods that might be explored in Russian gaming exercises.

### **Classical Components**

Russia’s specific home-grown “classical” components (there is no definition of “classical methods” in the Russian military encyclopedia) that influence military operations are those with which many Russian specialists are familiar, to include the following:

- Forecasting, trends, correlation of forces, forms and methods, and operational design; deep strikes, maneuver, mass mobilization; system versus system;
- Military science, military art, disorganizing command and control, focus on the initial period of war and future war, deception, and deterrence; advancements in specific military equipment (for 20 years, electronic warfare, weapons based on new physical principles, reconnaissance-strike and -fire weapons, and aerospace developments have been at the forefront of Russian developments)
- No stereotyping; use of preemption; each conflict has a logic all its own; successive operations; and in the contemporary environment, being the first to obtain information superiority.

These traits often appear in discussions in contemporary military journals. Other applications of classical thought include the use of operational art in space, electronic warfare disorganization, and critical infrastructure destruction. Their integration and synergism in specific scenarios might allow for the attainment of intellectual-information superiority and be an effective way to win a conflict without shots being fired. Russia’s focus on these factors are very

different that the US focus on issues such as mission command, tactics, techniques, and procedures, multi-domain operations, kill chains, hybrid war, and gray zone matters. Russian thought utilizes a different set of templates in the assessment of a situation.

What follows are a few examples of how Russia's "classical" elements are used in the works of military authors. Four articles from 2019 are discussed initially and then one past article is considered for its relevance. Two officers, Korabel'nikov and Serzhantov, followed Gerasimov and Shoygu's focus closely and used the same language.

First, A. A. Korabel'nikov, writing in 2019 in the *Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk (Journal of the Academy of Military Science)*, stated that "types of warfare have broadened, and their content has changed substantially."<sup>5</sup> Further, and most important for this discussion, the Armed Forces must be prepared to "conduct **new-type warfare, using 'classical' and 'asymmetric' methods** of operation."<sup>6</sup> Thus, along with Shoygu and Gerasimov, he stresses the focus on classical and asymmetric concepts, but he also mentions new-type in agreement with Gerasimov's statement. Korabel'nikov added that the principal content of military strategy involves the development of forms and methods of strategic deterrence aimed at preempting the actions of an aggressor-state,<sup>7</sup> an important consideration for Western analysts to keep in mind when trying to unravel the essence of Russian strategy. He stated that the three most important military operations remain maneuver, fire, and strikes.<sup>8</sup> Korabel'nikov ended his article noting that the main thing for military science to study is the "possible nature of military conflicts, to develop a system of forms and methods of operations of both a military and nonmilitary nature, and to determine the developmental trends of weapon systems and military equipment."<sup>9</sup> While military forms and methods of operations have been under study for decades, nonmilitary forms and methods are only somewhat new to the field, since they were discussed in the not-so-distant past.

Second, Andrey Kokoshin, former Secretary of the Russian National Security Council and Deputy Defense Minister, wrote in 2019 in the *Journal of the Academy of Military Science* that trends in artificial technologies have been identified; planning must take account of the correlation of Russia and the US's economic potentials; and verified forecasts of political and military-strategic changes are required, also for planning purposes.<sup>10</sup> While not mentioning classical or asymmetric concepts directly, he did focus on elements (trends, correlation of forces, forecasts) of the classical template.

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<sup>5</sup> A. A. Korabel'nikov, "The Interrelation among Military Strategy, Operational Art, and Tactics under Contemporary Conditions," *Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk (Journal of the Academy of Military Science)*, No. 2 2019, p. 35.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>10</sup> A. A. Kokoshin, "Prospects for the development of the Military Technosphere and the Future of Warfare and Noncombat Employment of Military Force," *Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk (Journal of the Academy of Military Science)*, No. 2 2019, pp. 26-29. The author would like to thank Dr. Harold Orenstein for his translation of this article.

Third, Russian analyst V. I. Ostankov discussed in 2019 some standout characteristics of contemporary conflicts and their impact on strategy:

- effects can be felt to the entire depth of an opponent's territory;
- operational paradigms are temporally reduced;
- efforts to disorganize state administration and military command and control are underway; requirements for the development of interservice recce-strike and recce-fire complexes are being generated;
- new forms and methods of deterrence are under development (especially with the use of hypersonic weaponry and weapons based on new physical principles);
- and a strategy of forward presence is envisioned that includes expeditionary forces.<sup>11</sup>

Like Gerasimov and others, this author also supported the notion of Aleksander Svechin that each war is a “special case requiring the establishment of its own logic,” which again buttresses the thought that Russia sees no reason to stereotype conflict.<sup>12</sup>

Fourth, in October 2019 the Deputy Chief of Russia's Armed Forces Military Academy of the General Staff for Scientific Work, and Chief of the Center for Military Strategic Research, Aleksandr Vladimirovich Serzhantov, returned to the new way of fighting. He stated that Russia must be prepared for both large-scale and local wars. More importantly, he added the following:

Based on the strategy for achieving goals, this can be **classic** (the strategy of the destruction and attrition of the enemy), **asymmetric** (the strategy of indirect operations, and **hybrid** (the combination of all of the known techniques of the conduct of interstate confrontation).<sup>13</sup>

Serzhantov appears, then, to follow the lead of Gerasimov, except for the mention of hybrid. This is one of the first times that a Russian officer has indicated the use of the concept. However, later in the interview he describes it as purely a Western concept associated with flower revolutions. The concept, in his view, erodes borders between regular forces and terrorists and utilizes indiscriminate force and criminal actions.<sup>14</sup> Thus, his use of hybrid in the quote above more likely indicates the combination of classical and asymmetric methods.

Roles among the spheres of armed confrontation include not only traditional ones (land, sea, etc.) but new ones, such as social, digital, energy, and others. Gerasimov has directed research, Serzhantov notes, toward specific projects: determining the possible nature of military

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<sup>11</sup> V. I. Ostankov, “The Nature of Contemporary Military Conflicts and Its Influence on Military Strategy,” *Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk (Journal of the Academy of Military Science)*, 2019, No. 2, pp. 30-34. The author would like to thank Dr. Harold Orenstein for his translation of this article.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> A. G. Sokolov interview with Aleksandr Vladimirovich Serzhantov, “The Development Trends of Military Art. Doctor of Military Sciences Aleksandr Serzhantov on the Developments of the Center for Military-Strategic Research. Candidate of Military Sciences A. G. Sokolov Conducted the Interview,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta Online (Independent Paper Online)*, 4 October 2019.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

conflicts; developing a system of methods and techniques of military and nonmilitary operations; and defining the direction of weapon system and military equipment developments. Serzhantov states that the center of power struggles in the world have shifted to the aerospace, information, and economic administration spheres; and that military operations of the future are associated with the following issues:

- The constant threat of a surprise preemptive electronic-fire strike
- The use of new types of weapons
- The lack of front lines and the exposure of open flanks
- The struggle for the initiative
- And dramatic changes in the situation.<sup>15</sup>

Serzhantov added that the following changes in military art merit the attention of researchers:

- The concentration of men and equipment on the decisive axis will be determined by the massive employment of weapons, not through troop maneuvers.
- Strategic weapons can be used in support of mission at the operational and tactical levels.
- Offensive and defensive operations will converge with the combination of fire and electronic strikes in the future.
- Updates are required in the methods of transforming operations from contactless war into contact war.
- Acquiring special significance is the capability for disabling an opponent's political and economic management infrastructure facilities, communications, and electronic warfare systems.
- Air defense systems will have to be hardened and jam-proofed and become echeloned and multilevel.
- The need for ground troops continues.
- Fire destruction of an opponent prior to the moment of close contact will ensure the continuity of the offensive, surprise, and the momentum of the strikes.
- The fight for air supremacy will be an important characteristic of engagements.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, how might these classical thoughts be integrated or synergized so that they play off one another and strengthen their ability to enable victory before a conflict ever ensues? A strong proponent of synergy in 2003 was Major General (retired), V. D. Ryabchuk, a thoughtful theorist in Russia, who noted the following:

The commander is to be taught not just how to think but how to think in a system way with reliance on combat modeling. Practical application of the synergetic

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

approach is chiefly about helping the commander to control an engagement as a whole rather than bit by bit, to control it continuously rather than discretely...<sup>17</sup>

Ryabchuk added that the gist of synergistic thought is not to rely on a single weapon, a single method of military operation, or a single method of investigation.<sup>18</sup> A host of concepts need to be considered. Further, commanders must learn to attain intellectual superiority to control situations. They must preempt the enemy in his thinking, put himself in the enemy's place, and take decisions that the enemy cannot expect.<sup>19</sup> Conversely, if Western analysts don't put themselves in the Russian thought pattern, how will they ever be able to properly forecast Russian future war capabilities and preempt their thinking and actions?

### **Asymmetric Considerations**

I must say that our defense spending is a tiny one-twenty fifth of that in the United States. But we have given thought, of course, as to how to maintain our national security. Our responses will be highly effective and asymmetric—President Vladimir Putin, 2007<sup>20</sup>

The other half of Shoygu and Gerasimov's new theory of warfare centered around the development of asymmetric thought. The ability to generate asymmetric concepts relies on an adequate assessment and understanding of the vulnerabilities inherent in how an opponent thinks and formulates decisions; and in the inherent vulnerabilities in the organizational structure of a potential opponents economic, political, social, and information systems. Russia continues to focus on using its asymmetric potential to counter Western superiority. For example, in regard to operational art in space, it was reported on 31 January 2020 that Russia's Cosmos 2542 spacecraft started tailing a secret Pentagon space reconnaissance telescope.<sup>21</sup> This could be an asymmetric way to maintain Russia's national security by not only following but then moving close to and examining Western satellites. The concept is under study in Russia. For example, the Russian periodical *Military Thought* published the article "On Integrating the Means and Methods of Preparing an Asymmetric Response When Ensuring Military Security" in early 2020.

Asymmetric operations are defined in Russia as a strategy of the struggle of a weak side against a strong one, a strategy employed in conflicts between enemies' unequal with respect to economic development or their level of military force.<sup>22</sup> However, that is the soft side to the term's definition. Asymmetric means discussed in Russian publications include what is described as "nonstandard" forms and methods of operations and the use of prohibited means. Clearly, something nonstandard and prohibited (see the asymmetric explanation of Chekinov and

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<sup>17</sup> V. D. Ryabchuk, "Enhancing C&C Efficiency in Engagements and Operations," *Military Thought* (in English), Eastview Press, No. 4 2003, p. 140.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 143.

<sup>20</sup> No author or title provided, *ITAR-TASS* (in English), 1 February 2007.

<sup>21</sup> David Axe, "Why is this Mystery Russian Spacecraft Suddenly Stalking a Secret U.S. Spy Satellite?" *The Daily Beast*, downloaded 31 January 2020 at <https://www.thedailybeast.com/why-is-mystery-russian-...>

<sup>22</sup> N. N. Tyutyunnikov, *Military Thought in Terms and Definitions, Voennaya Mysl' (Military Thought)*, Volume One, Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, 2018, p. 29. This definition was translated by Dr. Harold Orenstein.

Bogdanov below) imply the use of illegal means as an asymmetric method, and such examples represent the hard side of the term's definition.

There are many indicators of what might be termed asymmetric approaches to warfare. Escalating information confrontations with weapon descriptions to deescalate an opponent's confidence in their own systems would be an asymmetric approach, one closely tied to deterrence. Social media can be an asymmetric way to foment chaos and dissatisfaction in the populace, private military companies and trolls can act as asymmetric armies (surrogates) for regular forces on the ground or during cyber operations, and nonlethal weaponry (NLW) can be used as an asymmetric method to generate surprise and even panic, since they can change behavior and influence crowd control. Deception techniques are asymmetric ways to surprise or fool an opponent and in Russia there are various types. They include *maskirovka*, reflexive control, active measures, and other methods that could be classified as asymmetric, since they all go after vulnerabilities of perception or understanding. Russia is expert at the use of plausible deniability and developing new narratives that attempt to affirm where "truth" lies (most often, this includes denying involvement in an action and formulating other, inaccurate, ways the action took place). Thus, many types of asymmetric operations are possible. The most important way to counter these asymmetric approaches is to further one's understanding of the concept in Russia and its numerous components.

On occasion Russian publications openly discuss and describe asymmetric concepts and operations. In 2010 on the pages of the journal *Military Thought*, authors S. G. Chekinov and S. A. Bogdanov stated that asymmetric operations in the military sphere may include the following:

- The implementation of measures that induce apprehension in the opposing side concerning the intentions and retaliatory steps of the Russian Federation;
- Demonstrations of the readiness and capabilities of a Russian Federation troop (force) grouping in a strategic sector to repel an invasion with consequences that are unacceptable for the aggressor;
- And operations by troops (forces) to deter a potential adversary that envisage the guaranteed engagement of his most vulnerable military and other strategically important and potentially dangerous facilities with the aim of convincing him of the futility of an attack.<sup>23</sup>

This concept of asymmetry appears closely tied to deterrence, as did the escalate to deescalate concept noted above. Asymmetric operations can be unpredictable since they can rely on the use of prohibited means. They can also project the inability of a stronger side to defend a position against a weaker yet innovative opponent.<sup>24</sup>

The authors ended their article on an ominous note about the use of prohibited means, describing the application of asymmetric operations based on precision-guided munitions along with the use of sabotage and reconnaissance teams to a European environment. Targets could include European economic facilities and other types of infrastructure important for the

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<sup>23</sup> S. G. Chekinov and S. A. Bogdanov, "Asymmetric Actions to Ensure Russia's Military Security," *Voennaya Mysl' (Military Thought)*, No. 3 2010, p. 21.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

population's survival. State or military command and control installations, industrial enterprises, the fuel and energy sectors, critically important communications facilities, and installations posing a significant hazard (dams, nuclear power stations, chemical plants, etc.) are all elements on the target list. This would create the prerequisites to compel an adversary to cease operations on terms favorable to Russia.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, in an extensive 2015 article outlining “new-type” warfare, then General Lieutenant Andrey Kartapolov, at the time the Chief of the Operations Directorate of the Russian General Staff, discussed asymmetric operations. He stated that nonstandard forms and methods are being developed for Armed Forces deployments. Each conflict requires a different set of asymmetric operations that fit the logic at hand.<sup>26</sup> Asymmetric operations are conducted with the aim of eliminating (neutralizing) enemy advantages while subjecting him to damage using minimal expenditures. He listed the principles of asymmetric operations as follows:

- Covertness of preparation for and conduct of operations;
- Persuasion of the weak side to use prohibited means to conduct military operations;
- Concentration of efforts against the enemy's most vulnerable locations (targets);
- Search for and exposure of the enemy's weak points;
- Imposition on the enemy of one's own variant (one's own will) for the course of the conflict;
- Low resources expenditure of asymmetric operations with respect to enemy actions.<sup>27</sup>

### **A Potential Scenario for “Noncontact” Warfare**

With this background in mind, what would an integrated concept that takes advantage of classical methods and attacks on asymmetric vulnerabilities in an opponent's way of thinking or in an opponent's equipment/systems look like? The following scenario offers one version of how the application of these classical and asymmetric factors might be used by Russian leaders contesting a potential opponent on the contemporary battlefield.

The development of a plan for a synergistic attack on another nation designed to win victory before an actual conflict begins would start with an assessment of the intellectual-information confrontation in the technosphere, a term that Kokoshin used to address the new battlefield context. Attention would be paid to ensuring that the proper correlation of forces (political, military, information, economic) were calculated and that the proper forms and methods for the conduct of a future war were in place. Information superiority in all realms would be sought and precise plans made about various scenarios that might develop, all before operations in the initial period of war were conducted. Cyber exploitation of vulnerabilities

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-22.

<sup>26</sup> A. V. Kartapolov, “Lessons of Military Conflicts and Prospects for the Development of Resources and Methods of Conducting Them. Direct and Indirect Actions in Contemporary International Conflicts,” *Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk (Journal of the Academy of Military Science)*, No. 2 2015, pp. 35-36. The author wishes to thank Dr. Harold Orenstein for his translation of this article from Russian to English.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 35.

would most likely turn the initial confrontation into a system on system confrontation. Critical infrastructures identified ahead of time would be targeted through the concept of special operations to destroy critical infrastructure targets (SODCIT). This process would utilize not only cyber means but would possibly include Global Positioning System (GPS) disruption and the use of Russian anti-satellite capabilities. GPS disruption would also cause disorganization in command and control issues of a targeted nation. Infused into the concept would be asymmetric uses of surprise, social media (to produce chaos in the population), surrogate and special forces use behind enemy lines or among the population, and the identification of other vulnerabilities that could be exploited in a timely manner. The escalation of a conflict to the point where systems are down, signals broken, and command and control (to include nuclear) disorganized would be so designed to lead to an opponent's decision to stand down, with Russia thereby de-escalating the conflict without a shot being fired. Asymmetric means inserted in the scenario would be centered around deception techniques to cause the opposing force to make incorrect decisions, the use of surprise and "nonstandard" forms and methods, and the use of prohibited means, implying that illegal means would be under consideration. Russian military academies would politically and militarily game such scenarios for potential use in support of advice offered by the General Staff.

For example, General Staff Chief Gerasimov noted at a meeting of the Academy of Military Science in 2019, in regard to classical and asymmetric forms, that the main thing for military science today is to determine the possible nature of military conflicts, develop a system of forms and methods of operation of both a military and nonmilitary nature, and determine trends for the development of weapons and military equipment systems.<sup>28</sup> He added that:

As before, the principle of achieving surprise, decisiveness, and continuous strategic operations is pertinent. Operating swiftly, we must preempt the enemy with our own preventive measures, identify in a timely fashion his vulnerable areas, and create threats of causing damage that are unacceptable to him. This will ensure that the strategic initiative is seized and maintained.<sup>29</sup>

Of these comments, the one that sticks out most prominently is preemption. Gerasimov used the concept six times in the 2019 presentation. The basis of Russia's "strategy of active defense," he noted, includes the preemptive neutralization of threats to national security.<sup>30</sup> Preempting the enemy before engaging in the initial period of war allows Russia to be "a step ahead." He tasked the Academy to construct a method for the holistic destruction of the enemy<sup>31</sup> (Gerasimov used the term "comprehensive destruction of the enemy" four times in his 2018 presentation). The implication of such a statement is the use of all strategic means available to conquer an opponent.

## Conclusions

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<sup>28</sup> V. V. Gerasimov, "The Development of Military Strategy....," p. 11.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

There are indicators that Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu and General Staff Chief Valery Gerasimov are considering updates of classical and asymmetric ways of conducting future wars of a new generation or new type. Despite Shoygu and Gerasimov's comments, and the numerous descriptions of the elements of Russian thought over the past few decades, many Western scholars continue to attribute US concepts, such as hybrid issues, as the way that Russia's military will conduct operations. Russian General Staff Chief Valery Gerasimov, as late as 2017, stated that it was too early to call Russian techniques "hybrid."<sup>32</sup> Instead, Russia states that it is the West who uses this US-developed concept against Russia.

Russia's focus on classical and asymmetric factors offer different concepts than the US focus on issues such as mission command, tactics, techniques, and procedures, multi-domain operations, kill chains, hybrid war, and gray zone matters. Russia utilizes a very different set of conditions in the assessment of a situation, as described in the classical and asymmetric sections above and in other articles on Russia's thought process. Russia's focus on actively avoiding stereotyping, for example, indicates their aversion to the use of specific constructs.

These are serious considerations for study if Western analysts hope to specifically detail how Russia intends to forecast and conduct both military and nonmilitary warfare. Future discussions between NATO and Russian commanders should address Western concerns over the offensive and preemptive character of some of these future war concepts, especially those offered by Gerasimov. Western analysts should give their full attention to Russia's classical, asymmetric, and even new-type and new generation methods of conceptualizing warfare. Otherwise, how will they be able, as Ryabchuk noted, to "preempt the enemy in his thinking, put themselves in the enemy's place, and take decisions that the enemy cannot expect."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Timothy Thomas and Dr. Harold Orenstein, "Contemporary Warfare and Current Issues for the Defense of the Country," *Military Review*, November-December 2017, pp. 22-27.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 143.