

The Impact of Modern Wars on Military-Doctrinal Documents

Вплив сучасних воєн на військово-доктринальні документи

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Purpose. To substantiate the impact of radical changes in the theory and practice of the use of military force on the transformation of military-doctrinal documents and to determine the conceptual framework for their adaptation to new geopolitical conditions.

Method. Comparative analysis, case study, systematic approach, and structural analysis.

Findings. Military power relations are undergoing continuous transformation. The concept of total war is gradually disappearing from scientific discourse, being replaced by short, rapid operations that rely heavily on non-kinetic factors in power projection. The expansion of modern combat domains due to non-kinetic capabilities and the shift away from classical concepts of force have become decisive in shaping contemporary military doctrinal documents. These changes are closely linked to the extraterritorial application of force, including active defense and nuclear deterrence, as reflected in the doctrines of major powers. At the same time, the battlefield is expanding, international norms of warfare are being challenged, and new precedents are emerging.

Theoretical implications. Unconventional tactics, information warfare, cyber operations, and economic sanctions have become integral elements of modern military thinking and doctrinal development. This is evident in the doctrinal approaches of the United States (deterrence and preemption), Russia (active defense, nuclear deterrence, and the so-called Gerasimov doctrine), and China (unrestricted warfare and “victory without war”), all of which prioritize new forms and means of conflict and outline theoretical foundations for future warfare.

Practical implications. Modernized doctrinal concepts have demonstrated their relevance in recent conflicts, including Crimea, the Second Karabakh War, India–Pakistan tensions, and Iran–Israel confrontations. In many cases, decisive outcomes were achieved through unconventional strategies. New means and forms of warfare have thus become key drivers of contemporary military transformation and the decline of classical military paradigms.

Value. The study highlights the interaction between theoretical developments and practical applications. Rapid changes in warfare necessitate doctrinal adaptation, while updated conceptual frameworks create new opportunities for the effective use of force in the evolving “post-Clausewitz” strategic environment.

Paper type. Theoretical.

Мета дослідження. Обґрунтувати вплив радикальних змін у теорії та практиці застосування військової сили на трансформацію військово-доктринальних документів і визначити концептуальні засади їх адаптації до нових геополітичних умов.

Метод дослідження. Порівняльний аналіз, кейс-стаді, системний підхід і структурний аналіз.

Результати дослідження. Відносини, пов’язані із застосуванням військової сили, зазнають постійної трансформації. Концепція тотальної війни поступово зникає з наукового дискурсу, поступаючись короткотривалим, але інтенсивним операціям, що значною мірою спираються на некінетичні чинники проекції сили. Розширення сучасних доменів ведення бойових дій завдяки некінетичним спроможностям і відхід від класичних уявлень про застосування сили стали визначальними чинниками формування сучасних військово-доктринальних документів. Ці зміни тісно пов’язані з екстериторіальним застосуванням сили, зокрема активною обороною та ядерним стримуванням, що відображено у доктринах провідних держав. Водночас поле бою розширюється, норми міжнародного права війни зазнають викликів, а також формуються нові прецеденти.

Теоретична цінність дослідження. Нетрадиційні тактики, інформаційна війна, кібероперації та економічні санкції стали невід’ємними елементами сучасного військового мислення та доктринального розвитку. Це простежується у доктринальних підходах США (стримування та превентивні дії), Росії (активна оборона, ядерне стримування та так звана доктрина Герасимова) і Китаю (необмежена війна та “перемога без війни”), які надають пріоритет новим формам і засобам боротьби та формують теоретичні засади воєн майбутнього.

Практична цінність дослідження. Оновлені доктринальні підходи продемонстрували свою актуальність у низці сучасних конфліктів, зокрема у Криму, під час Другої карабаської війни, у протистояннях Індія–Пакистан та Іран–Ізраїль. У багатьох випадках вирішальні результати досягалися завдяки нетрадиційним стратегіям. Нові засоби та форми боротьби стали ключовими чинниками трансформації сучасних воєн і занепаду класичних військових парадигм.

Цінність дослідження. Дослідження демонструє взаємодію теоретичних і практичних чинників. Стрімкі зміни характеру воєн зумовлюють необхідність адаптації доктрин, тоді як оновлені концептуальні підходи відкривають нові можливості для ефективного застосування сили в умовах “посткляузевіцького” стратегічного середовища.

Тип статті. Теоретичний.

Key words: Modern Wars, Military-Doctrinal Documents, Transformation, Military Strategy, Hybrid Warfare.

Ключові слова: сучасні війни, військово-доктринальні документи, трансформація, військова стратегія, гібридна війна.

Introduction

As wars develop, conceptual and doctrinal documents are constantly being corrected and improved. These circumstances give reason to say that the high dynamics of variability in the geopolitical situation, the imbalance in the military power of countries, the rapid development of means of armed struggle and methods of military operations, the emergence of new concepts of war and military conflicts have a significant impact on military development processes and create the basis for constant changes in plans and programs for the development of armed forces.

Radical changes in the military-political situation in the world, as well as the intensification of military-theoretical development and their fixation in the military planning documents of the leading states of the world community determine the need for an adequate perception of the changes taking place in the military sphere by the military-political leadership of the state and the military-scientific community. This is primarily due to the need to develop appropriate conceptual and doctrinal documents that determine the priority directions of modern military policy.

Theoretical Background

The main vectors of the theoretical foundations of the study are considered to be the following:

1. Modern military-doctrinal documents are enriched by theoretical and practical innovations in the application of force and accelerate the devaluation of classical approaches.
2. Modern military-doctrinal documents attach great importance to new methods and means of struggle.
3. New means and forms of struggle give impetus to the formation of new rules of the game for military skill.
4. The revolution in military work has intensified feedback in doctrinal documents.
5. Innovations in the military doctrinal documents of the great powers are considered as a recipe for leadership in the future world order.

Problem Statement

The impact of modern wars on military-doctrinal documents is considered to be more flexible today than during the “cold war” period. If during the “cold war” period, the bipolar global ideological confrontation did not allow innovations on the battlefield to have a deep impact on military doctrinal documents, today, in the conditions of multipolarity, the freedom of power from global deterrence mechanisms has led to the expansion of its application possibilities and its departure from the monopoly of states. Therefore, the increase in the possibilities of extraterritorial application of power in the new conditions creates the basis for military-doctrinal documents to reckon with the new reality.

Results

The transformation of conceptual and doctrinal documents is directly related to external threats and international processes, as well as internal structural changes, the socio-political situation, and management approaches (Hennen, L., Kopfmüller, J., Maia, M., Nierling, L., & Scherz, C. (2023).

Internal factors (i.e., reasons arising within the state or organization) affecting the transformation of conceptual and doctrinal documents (for example, strategic concepts, military doctrines, security documents, etc.) are multifaceted. This change and updating of documents is mainly due to changes occurring within national interests, management and the security environment. This is shown in more detail in Table below.

The following are estimated as the main internal factors:

1. Reshaping of national interests (as the global and regional role of the state changes, national interests are also updated);

2. New economic, political and military goals should be reflected in conceptual documents;
3. Change in political power and management model (the formation of a new government or a change in the political course affects doctrinal documents; Changes in ideological orientation and priorities can lead to significant differences in the content of documents);
4. Economic resources and capabilities (financial and economic potential affect the definition of new doctrinal goals; Some conceptual plans may be changed or simplified as a result of budget constraints);
5. Modernization of the armed forces and security agencies (restructuring of the army or security system, structural reforms require updating of documents; the introduction of new technologies and personnel reforms can change doctrinal approaches);
6. Public opinion and domestic socio-political pressures (the population's expectations and concerns about security affect the content of these documents; Social stability and internal security challenges may require new approaches);
7. Changes in the national security environment (internal risks such as separatism, terrorism, cyber threats play an important role in the transformation of documents; the conceptual expression of measures against these threats is reflected in the documents);
8. Development of science, education and strategic thinking institutions (recommendations from academic circles and "think tanks" may affect the formation of conceptual documents; the application of new theories and approaches may lead to changes);
9. Changes in the legal and regulatory framework (changes in the Constitution or other basic legislative acts necessitate the adaptation of doctrinal documents).

As for the external factors influencing the transformation of conceptual-doctrinal documents, they arise from the position of the state or organization in the system of international relations, the external security environment and geopolitical realities. These documents serve to protect national security and interests by adapting to changes in the external environment. External factors are characterized in the following areas:

1. Changes in the international security environment (new conflicts, terrorist threats, regional armed conflicts necessitate the renewal of doctrinal approaches. For example, the increase in international terrorism or the proliferation of cyberattacks gives rise to new threat perceptions and requires the formation of new countermeasure strategies);
2. Changes in the global balance of power (the relations of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, the policies of blocs such as NATO, the EU, the CSTO, the rise of new power centers for example, China, India) are reflected in doctrinal documents; As competition between superpowers intensifies, countries renew their defense strategies);
3. Regional security dynamism (political-military changes in bordering states, potential conflicts with neighboring countries, or alliances can change conceptual approaches. For example, the armament of a neighboring country, border incidents, or regime change change threat assessments);
4. Changes in international law and treaty systems (new international conventions, demilitarization treaties, sanctions, or legal mechanisms can affect the content of national conceptual documents. For example, arms control agreements such as START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) and CFE (Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) affect conceptual-military approaches);
5. Pressure or recommendations from coalitions and alliances (requirements or recommendations made by international organizations of which the state is a member (NATO, CSTO, EU, etc.) are taken into account in the documents);
6. Global economic trends and energy security (changes in the global energy market (oil prices, gas supply routes, etc.) may affect security policy; priorities related to trade routes and the protection of energy resources are reflected in doctrinal documents);

7. The international nature of cyber and information warfare (hybrid warfare tools of foreign actors (disinformation, hacker attacks, etc.) require new approaches in conceptual documents; cyber defense and information security are now assessed at the same level as classical military threats);

8. Global migration and refugee flows (mass migrations resulting from regional conflicts can affect the socio-political stability of the state and lead to conceptual changes);

9. Climate change and environmental risks (competition for natural resources, water problems, international measures related to climate change are now also accepted as part of security strategies).

In general, external factors are taken into account when shaping the content of conceptual-doctrinal documents, such as the assessment of external threats, the position in the system of international relations, alliances and global processes. Adequate response to the changing external environment ensures the flexibility and relevance of these documents.

Table: Comparative table of internal and external factors influencing conceptual-doctrinal documents

Factor category	Internal factors	External factors
Security environment	Internal stability, public threats, separatism, terrorism	Global and regional conflicts, international terrorist networks
Political governance	Change of power, change of political course	Political pressure from foreign states, international relations
Economic factors	National economic potential, budget opportunities	Global economic crises, changes in the energy market
Legal framework	Changes in the constitution and legislation	International treaties and legal obligations
Military capabilities	Modernization of the army, military-industrial potential	Strengthening of foreign armies, arms races
Social factors	Public opinion, internal protests or support	Global migration flows, international humanitarian crises
Technological development	Internal innovation and technological potential	Technological threats from abroad (cyberattacks, etc.)
Scientific and strategic thinking	Recommendations of national think tanks and academic circles	Influence of foreign research institutions, international experts
Regional situation	Ethnic and religious structure of the population, risk of internal conflicts	Behavior of neighboring countries, regional blocs and alliances
Natural resources and environment	Domestic environmental problems, water and energy security	Global climate change, transboundary environmental risks

Modern wars have a significant impact on strategic documents, forcing them to reconsider military doctrines, concepts and plans and adapt them to modern realities. This is due to the changing nature of wars, the emergence of high technologies and new forms of armed struggle.

The impact of modern wars on strategic-doctrinal documents is closely related to the following factors (Sergantov, A. V., Smolovyi, A. V., & Dolgopopov, A. V., 2021):

1. The changing nature of wars. Modern wars are characterized by the transformation of actors. In a classical war, the main and only participants in the war are sovereign states, since the basis of the war is the clash of interests of states. Until recently, only states could maintain regular armies, declare war and mobilization, and conclude peace. New types of military conflicts lack the characteristics of unified organized forces; They include numerous, diverse actors not affiliated with the state—protesting oppositionists, paramilitary formations not affiliated with the regular army,

bandit groups, private military companies, mercenaries, etc. The emergence of new actors creates the basis for the emergence of new war strategies aimed primarily at prolonging the conflict, inflicting moral or social damage on the enemy, demoralizing the enemy, and making the continuation of the conflict unbearable.

The transformation of the theater of military operations is also considered one of the new features. This, in turn, leads to a change in the object of application of efforts in war. In the case of classical warfare, its traditional space of conduct was physical. The main space of action of new wars is becoming the information sphere, and the object of application of efforts is aimed at the consciousness and mentality of society. It is no coincidence that in the concept of hybrid warfare, emphasis is placed on the conduct of military operations in parallel in the physical and cognitive space. The emergence of a new space is a departure from the classical rules of warfare. While the state is legally obliged to comply with a set of documents defining the law of war, such as the Geneva and Hague Conventions, non-state actors, on the contrary, do not adhere to these standards. However, state actors (for example, the United States) are increasingly moving away from generally accepted standards, citing the need to find new methods to neutralize these threats as a result of the emergence of new threats. In this regard, the distinguishing feature of hybrid warfare is its disregard for all moral norms and its greatest influence on people's consciousness through amoral means—spreading rumors, distorting facts, falsifying history.

In modern wars, the space-time model is undergoing a serious transformation. The use of hybrid methods in the conflict blurs the boundaries of the stages of war. For example, unlike the case of the use of armed struggle, there is no clearly defined initial stage. The confrontation of states in the interests of achieving political goals begins long before the armed struggle, using economic, information, diplomatic and other methods of struggle carried out under well-thought-out pretexts. This space-time area, which is no longer peace, but not yet war, is called the "gray zone".

The types of conflict in modern wars are experiencing a period of radical transformation. If earlier the main focus in the war was on regular armed forces, as well as the use of military-power combat methods, and other types of conflict remained in the background, now the role and importance of indirect methods of conflict based on the use of partisan, sabotage, as well as non-military (information, economic and other) actions are increasing. As an example, let us consider the actions of Hezbollah during the 2006 Lebanon War. During the conflict, Hezbollah effectively neutralized the efforts of the Israeli military by using hidden positions, underground passages (tunnel warfare), and guerrilla warfare.

Thus, modern wars are usually characterized not only by direct military confrontation, but also by hybrid forms, including cyberwarfare, information operations, economic pressure, and support for irregular formations. All this requires a rethinking of traditional approaches to war and the development of new strategies that take into account these new factors.

2. Changing goals of war. The goals of modern war have changed and become more complex than in the past. They are increasingly aimed not only at territorial or political goals, but also at changing the socio-political structure of the enemy, forcing it to accept its will, and undermining its economic and informational foundations. These conflicts are often characterized not only by military confrontation, but also by hybrid methods, including information warfare, cyberwarfare, economic pressure, and support for insurgents.

In modern wars, short-term alliances are created between state and non-state actors that are considered beneficial for a certain period of time. Thus, non-state actors can carry out activities that are not related to the state. The transparency of such alliances is usually vague and secretive, and is often officially denied at the state level.

In this case, the state, by hiding its participation in the war, puts all the dirty work on non-state actors. Such alliances challenge traditional classifications of military conflicts, undermine state accountability for the use of military force and mechanisms to deter non-state actors from using

military force. This requires a reexamination of the goals of war and the development of strategies that take these new goals into account.

3. Development of new technologies. New technologies such as drones, artificial intelligence, robotics, cryptography and communication systems have a significant impact on military operations and require the development of new strategies and tactics for their use. It is clear that the increasing role of information methods in modern conflicts has resulted in an increase in their impact on the population and personnel of the armed forces. Let us consider the 2006 Lebanon War as an example. In that conflict, Hezbollah hackers hacked into Israeli communication networks and soldiers' mobile phones, obtaining relevant information about the enemy, and also conducted a large-scale propaganda campaign around the world.

The use of such methods helps to change the mentality of society, the attitude towards the enemy (by presenting it from a favorable perspective), as well as the attitude towards one's own leadership, and to undermine or strengthen its authority. Strategic documents should take into account the capabilities and limitations of these technologies, as well as their impact on the balance of power.

4. Consideration of risks and threats. Modern wars are characterized by a high degree of uncertainty and risks, including the possibility of conflict escalation, the use of weapons of mass destruction, and the emergence of humanitarian crises. Strategic documents should take these risks into account and develop strategies to minimize them.

5. The need for adaptation. In a rapidly changing environment, strategic documents should be flexible and adaptive, quickly revised and adjusted in accordance with the developing situation.

When analyzing the impact of modern wars on conceptual and doctrinal documents, it can be concluded that most countries have begun to redistribute their scientific and military-economic resources to prepare for "unconventional wars". The leaders of these countries have allocated significant resources to solve problems that are not characteristic of the armed forces in classical wars.

In official documents (strategies, concepts, development plans), the essence of transformation, as a rule, covers the following problems:

- structural changes (reforms, mergers/separations of units),
- transition to new technologies (for example, digitalization, use of IT),
- adaptation to new types of conflicts (hybrid wars, cyber threats),
- improvement of command and control systems.

The conceptual documents of the Russian Federation state that "the transformation of the armed forces of the Russian Federation is aimed at increasing the mobility, efficiency and technological development of combat units ..." (Kofman, M., Fink, A., Gorenburg, D., Chesnut, M., Edmonds, J., & Waller, J., 2021). This one sentence covers most of the aspects listed above.

For NATO, "military transformation" is understood as the integration of allies in accordance with standards; the development of expeditionary forces; the introduction of modern information technology systems and preparation for asymmetric threats. In NATO doctrinal documents, transformation covers operational and headquarters documents and strategic military documents. In operational and headquarters documents, transformation is understood as:

- a change in the composition of forces in an operation (for example, a change in units, rotation);
- a transition from one phase of the operation to another;
- a change in tactical formations or methods of conducting combat.

In strategic military documents, transformation means:

- a reconsideration of the role of the army in society;
- the application of the principles of "network-centric warfare";
- compliance with international obligations (Hamilton, D. S. (Ed.), 2004).

The problems of developing and implementing military-theoretical ideas about war are relevant for most of the world's leading states. Although the United States and China have been at

the forefront of the development and practical application of modern concepts of wars and military conflicts since the beginning of the 21st century, scientific research, forecasting, and experimental-design work are being carried out rapidly in Great Britain, France, Germany, India, and a number of other countries. The goal of these activities is to create armed forces capable of withstanding new challenges and to improve their material and technical base.

USA. The modern US military structure and its fundamental conceptual and doctrinal documents are defined in accordance with the requirements of the National Security Strategy 2002. This doctrinal document formed the basis for the further development and implementation of two other conceptual documents, namely, the US National Defense Strategy and the US National Military Strategy. These documents include long-term forecasts and prospects for assessing global trends, define the direction and vision for military development, and call for the development of armed forces capable of adequately responding to uncertain threats and challenges to military security and national security in general (Bocharnikov I.V., Lemeshev S.V., Lyutkene G.V., 2013).

Modern warfare has had a significant impact on US military strategy, forcing it to reconsider scientific and theoretical ideas in this area and modernize military technology. Key changes include: the increasing role of indirect means of warfare, an emphasis on high-tech weapons and cyberwarfare, and increased attention to international cooperation.

Overall, the wars of the new century are forcing the United States to adapt its military strategy to new realities, focusing on technological advantages, international cooperation, and conflict prevention.

The radical changes affecting the Pentagon's military strategy generally include the following:

1. New characteristics of warfare. Modern conflicts are often asymmetrical, with a stronger side (e.g., the United States) facing an adversary using unconventional tactics and methods, such as guerrilla warfare and cyberattacks. Particular attention is being paid to training military specialists for guerrilla warfare. The development of new doctrines that take into account asymmetric threats and hybrid warfare is of particular importance.

2. Hybrid warfare, which combines military, political, economic, and informational forces, is becoming increasingly common. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have revealed the shortcomings of traditional military power in guerrilla warfare and the need to adapt to new conditions.

3. Technology development. The United States is increasingly focusing on the development and use of high-tech weapons, such as drones, cyberweapons, and missile defense systems. To this end, a decision was made to increase funding for cyber and drone programs.

4. A paradigm shift is underway. The traditional "blitzkrieg" doctrine is being replaced by a more flexible and long-term strategy, including preventive measures, peacekeeping operations, and counterterrorism.

5. There is an urgent need to strengthen the role of international cooperation. The United States, recognizing that no country can cope with modern challenges alone, is increasingly turning to allies to solve international problems.

6. Increasing attention is being paid to conflict prevention. Efforts are being made to strengthen stability in potentially unstable regions to prevent the spread of conflicts. Examples include the resolution of conflicts in Myanmar, India and Pakistan, Iran and Israel, and Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2025. The meeting held in Alaska in August 2025 to resolve the Russia-Ukraine war, although unsuccessful, is considered an important milestone.

Some of the general changes mentioned above are reflected in a number of US military doctrinal documents: the National Defense Strategy (NDS), "Winning in a Complex World: 2020-2040", and the Joint Competition Concept (JCC), among others. Let's first consider the concept document presented to the public in early July 2025. This document used the rise of China as a major competitor and the impact of emerging homeland security challenges as the basis for restructuring US military strategy in the era of global threats. At the same time, it identified the shortcomings of

previous strategies, including the lack of a clear balance between defense and power projection, as well as an overly narrow focus on nuclear missile and terrorist threats as the primary objective.

During his second term, Trump's approach to national defense has centered around five critical priorities: protecting the homeland, deterring strategic attacks on the United States with a robust and modernized deterrent, recognizing China as the primary global adversary, modernizing the U.S. military to conduct combined arms operations in the age of artificial intelligence, and ensuring military superiority in space (The White House, 2025, November).

Together, these five priorities form a comprehensive framework for protecting the lives, interests, and values of American citizens in an increasingly volatile world. In this sense, the next National Defense Strategy is more than just a policy document; it is an opportunity. A bold strategic vision must be supported by the resources and capabilities necessary to execute it. By clearly and purposefully addressing these priorities, the National Defense Strategy can ensure a defense capability that counters today's threats and secures the future of the United States.

The second document defining this transformation is the new US Army operational concept, "Winning in a Complex World: 2020-2040". This document predicts the continued transformation and evolution of interstate conflict, the ongoing shift in warfare, and a significant expansion in the scale of modern conflict. For the first time, not only traditional combat encounters with lethal weapons are officially recognized as domains of war, but also diplomatic conflicts, domestic political civil conflicts, information warfare, financial and economic warfare, technological conflicts, and behavioral warfare. The concept identifies five battlefields, or, as the Americans call them, conflict zones. These include land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace.

The concept emphasizes decentralized and distributed operations against potential adversaries capable of disrupting centralized command and control, and is designed to adapt to the rapidly changing operational environment driven by technological advances and changing warfare methods.

The key elements of the concept include (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2014):

1. Decentralized and distributed operations. The Army of 2040 will be organized into highly decentralized units capable of operating independently. This decentralized structure is designed to prevent potential attacks on centralized command and control systems. These distributed units will be able to proactively combine their efforts to effectively counter and defeat the enemy.

2. Multi-domain operations. The concept emphasizes the need to project power across multiple domains (land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace). This allows joint forces to maintain freedom of maneuver and confront the adversary with multiple dilemmas.

3. Continuous transformation. The "Army Warfare Concept 2040" is designed to ensure the continuous transformation of the Armed Forces. This transformation includes changes in doctrine, organization, training, logistics, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOMLF-P). The concept focuses on integrating new technologies and rapidly adapting to potential adversaries.

4. Focus on winning. The Army prioritizes developing the ability to win, not simply acquiring military platforms. This includes creating force groups capable of maneuvering in diverse locations and presenting multiple threats to adversaries.

5. Importance of partnerships. The concept emphasizes the need to combine efforts with joint, interagency, and multinational partners. This includes working with non-governmental organizations to increase strategic depth and resilience.

6. Technology integration. The Army recognizes the potential of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, and directed-energy weapons. The concept aims to integrate these technologies into the armed forces to enhance their capabilities and adapt to the changing nature of warfare.

7. Adapting to the future operating environment. The concept recognizes the need to adapt to the increasing instability and complex operational environment caused by the emergence of new technologies.

This includes developing new doctrines, training methods, and organizational structures to effectively utilize these technologies.

This concept recognizes for the first time that future violent conflicts will be fought in unknown environments, in undefined locations. At the same time, the Army will face unknown adversaries, part of unknown coalitions. One of the concept's developers, General D. Barno, former commander of US and allied forces in Afghanistan, noted, "We will have to operate in conditions where it will be impossible to determine either the precise moment a war begins or the precise moment it ends". In a recent article published on a leading Army website, he called future conflicts "shadow wars" (Korzhevsky, A. S. (Ed.), 2021).

The Joint Competition Concept (JC) is a framework developed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to guide the US military in strategic competition prior to armed conflict. The document notes that adversaries often use tactics and strategies to achieve their goals without full-scale war by exploiting weaknesses in the US military (Joint Concept for Competing, 26.02.2023).

The main thesis of this document is to examine the adversary's potential for "winning without fighting" by identifying weaknesses in the US military without initiating a full-scale war, as well as ways for the US government to counter this approach. In this regard, special attention is paid to the expanding role of joint forces, the importance of cooperation with partners and allies to enhance collective competitiveness, the effective integration of military and non-military efforts, and, most importantly, deterring the adversary from "winning without fighting" (Collins, J. J., 2025).

Russian Federation. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia's geopolitical situation underwent significant changes. Economic difficulties, political instability, and a downsizing of the armed forces led to a weakening of its military power in the 1990s. During this period, significant amounts of weapons and equipment were lost, and the army faced serious organizational and personnel problems. However, with the rise to power of Vladimir Putin at the beginning of the 21st century, the process of rebuilding and modernizing the Russian Armed Forces began.

Russia's first official Military Doctrine was approved in 1993, following the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, at that time, the focus was primarily on post-Soviet changes and Russia's adaptation to the new security environment. Since then, Russia's Military Doctrine has been updated several times, including in 2000, 2010, 2014, and 2024, reflecting changing geopolitical conditions and growing threats (Pietkiewicz, M. (n.d.)).

The following are considered priority areas for changes in Russia's conceptual and doctrinal documents in the military security sphere from 1993 to the present:

1. Shift from "deterrence" to active defense. While the 1993 Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation emphasized the prevention of aggression, subsequent amendments, particularly the 2000 and 2014 Military Doctrines, expanded the range of situations in which military force may be used. While the 1993 Doctrine defined military force as a means of deterring potential aggression, the 2000 Military Doctrine introduced provisions for the use of military force to protect Russia's interests abroad, implying a broader interpretation of threats and reasons for intervention.

The 2014 Military Doctrine established the concept of "active defense", which calls for more decisive action in the event of threats to national security, including preventing destabilization in neighboring states and protecting Russian citizens and compatriots abroad. It also notes the need to counter "color revolutions" and other forms of hybrid warfare.

A key element of the updated Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, which defines the principles and approaches to ensuring the country's military security in 2024, is nuclear deterrence, as well as readiness to counter threats in various domains, including cyberspace. Russia's commitment to a policy of nuclear deterrence, while maintaining sufficient nuclear forces to repel

aggression, is undoubtedly linked not to threats and threats that may arise on a global scale, but rather to the military-political and geo-economic processes occurring on the Ukrainian front.

Modern conflicts increasingly include unconventional and hybrid tactics, such as cyberattacks, information warfare, and the use of proxy forces. Russia integrated these elements into its doctrine between the Georgian and Crimean incidents (Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation (2014), Gerasimov Doctrine (2013) (although not an official doctrine).

The updated military doctrine places particular emphasis on non-military measures. This perspective emphasizes the priority of using political, diplomatic, economic, and informational means to protect the country's interests, while military measures are viewed as a last resort. Doctrine takes into account new threats, such as cyberattacks and information influence, and provides for preparedness to prevent them.

2. Nuclear weapons as a means of escalation management. The doctrine currently allows for the use of nuclear weapons in response to large-scale conventional aggression, as well as attacks with weapons of mass destruction in situations considered critical to Russia's national security.

To this end, on November 19, 2024, a decree of the President of the Russian Federation approved an updated version of the "Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Nuclear Deterrence". This document is considered closely linked to the radical changes that have occurred in the global security environment in the wake of the Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in February 2022. The serious deterioration of security in the Euro-Atlantic area as a result of the military intervention in Ukraine led to an update of the Russian nuclear doctrine adopted in 2020.

Four key points stand out in the updated document: first, Russia's concept of nuclear deterrence has been further developed. While this move is often attributed to current trends undermining international security, it was in fact intended to protect the West from the consequences of its expansionist policy toward Ukraine. This move makes more sense than nuclear deterrence, or the threat of a nuclear threat. In this document, Russia is concerned about NATO's eastward expansion and the development of pro-Western integration associations such as QUAD and AUKUS. The main emphasis of the new Russian nuclear doctrine is on strengthening a multi-centered world order (Odiboev, K. M., 2025)

Furthermore, statements by several Western leaders regarding the possible deployment of military forces in Ukraine, which in the long term could lead to a direct clash between nuclear powers, necessitated taking these factors into account in the updated concept.

Secondly, the main military threats are assessed as related to current activities aimed at completely isolating Russia. Russia knows that its military aggression against Ukraine will not go unanswered and therefore is attempting to hedge its bets in advance. NATO's policy of deploying military infrastructure and conducting military exercises in territories adjacent to Russia and its allies is a serious concern for Russia in the context of its national security. The possibility of strikes deep into Russian territory using unmanned aerial vehicles coordinated by Western (primarily American) satellite systems is also taken into account.

Thirdly, Russia is granted the right to deploy nuclear weapons outside its territory and maintain centralized control over their use.

Fourthly, the list of cases in which Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons has been expanded. The new nuclear concept states that in the event of an attack not only on Russia but also on Belarus using conventional weapons, Russia has the right to use nuclear weapons to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Union's member states. The latest innovation implies a violation of the principle of proportionality with regard to retaliatory strikes, which is contrary to Article 51 of the UN Charter.

3. Emphasis on internal conflicts and regional stability. The doctrine recognizes the possibility of using armed forces in internal conflicts and also emphasizes the importance of

maintaining stability in the “near abroad” (former Soviet republics). Modern conflicts, such as operations in Chechnya, Georgia, Syria, and Ukraine, have tested new elements of Russian military doctrine. During these conflicts, Russia adapted its military strategy to modern combat conditions. Hybrid warfare methods, combining traditional military operations with cyberattacks, information warfare, and economic pressure, have acquired particular importance. One of the key features of modern Russian military doctrine is the use of hybrid warfare methods. This approach involves combining various means of influence, from direct combat to covert influence on the enemy’s internal processes. Hybrid warfare includes the use of cyberattacks, information campaigns, and economic sanctions.

4. Recognizing the role of new technologies. The emerging doctrine recognizes the growing importance of space warfare and the need to develop countermeasures against commercial space systems, which are perceived as a military threat. Technological advances have led to significant changes in the nature of armed conflict. Russia is actively developing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) used for reconnaissance, fire control, and strikes. Various types of UAVs were tested during operations in Syria, allowing them to refine their design and incorporate new tactics. Modern Russian UAV systems, such as the Orion and Inokhodets, have already become important in the armed forces’ arsenal.

Particular attention is being paid to weapons modernization, which has led to the creation of high-precision missile systems such as the Kalibr and Iskander, as well as the development of modern air defense systems, including the S-400 and S-500 systems. At the same time, the country’s nuclear shield, which remains the primary element of strategic deterrence, is being strengthened.

An equally important area is the development of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. AI is used to analyze big data, control combat systems, and optimize logistics. For example, elements of AI are already being used in missile and air defense systems, significantly increasing their effectiveness. Modern Russian military doctrine continues to evolve in response to new challenges. Much attention is being paid to the development of hypersonic weapons capable of penetrating any missile defense system. Systems such as the Avangard and Zircon have already been adopted and are changing the balance of power globally. Furthermore, quantum communications and electronic technologies are being actively implemented to ensure reliable information protection. The concept of multi-layered defense, combining traditional means with new technologies, occupies a special place in modern doctrine. Russia continues to invest in the development of cyber defense, satellite systems, and electronic warfare systems. All this makes its armed forces among the most advanced in the world, capable of effectively responding to the challenges of the 21st century.

5. Particular attention is paid to information warfare. Information operations and cyberattacks have also become an important part of the strategy. Russia actively uses information technology to influence public opinion both domestically and internationally. One element of this strategy is the work of specialized media structures and cyber units engaged in disinformation, intelligence gathering, and the disruption of the enemy’s critical infrastructure. The Russian military concept places particular emphasis on information operations and military disinformation, including maskirovka, denial, and disinformation.

6. Priority of critical infrastructure protection. The primary focus of Russian military strategy is the protection of critical infrastructure and the ability to strike the enemy’s military and economic potential from afar.

Thus, the influence of “Modern Warfare” on Russian doctrinal documents over the past two decades has been particularly significant. Russian military doctrine has evolved in response to advances in military technology, hybrid warfare, and geopolitical changes. Changes in Russian military doctrine reflect an evolution in military strategy, a shift from passive deterrence to a more active response to emerging threats, as well as the protection of national interests in a broader geographic and conceptual context.

The transformation of Russian military doctrine has had a significant impact on international security, particularly in Europe and the post-Soviet space. Even in conflicts initiated by conventional weapons, the potential for escalation has become a serious concern. Information warfare and an emphasis on military maneuver add another layer of complexity to conflict dynamics.

China. The impact of modern warfare on China's doctrinal documents, particularly its military strategy and doctrine, is a complex and evolving topic. Over the past several decades, China has made significant changes to its military doctrine to adapt to the trends of modern warfare and the changing global security environment. These changes are driven by several factors, including technological advances, the growing role of hybrid warfare, and the integration of new forms of warfare such as cyber and space operations (State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, 2015).

Some of the key aspects of modern warfare's impact on China's military doctrine include (The Jamestown Foundation, 2016):

1. Information warfare and the shift to cyber operations. Modern warfare is increasingly based on information superiority and cyber capabilities. In this regard, China's military doctrine, particularly the "China Military Strategy" (2015) and the "National Defense White Paper" (2019), notes that China has invested heavily in its cyber capabilities, analyzing the gains and losses in the digital domain of modern conflicts. This includes everything from offensive cyberattacks to information control and strategic influence operations. Chinese strategists also believe that electronic warfare, aimed at disrupting enemy communications and intelligence systems, is crucial to success in modern military conflicts.

2. Integrating "unrestricted warfare". A key component of China's modern military doctrine is the concept of "unrestricted warfare", first formulated in 1999 by two Chinese colonels, Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui. According to them, the "battlespace", which represents the sphere of kinetic military conflicts, is shrinking, while the "warspace", encompassing the broader area of conflict, is expanding. "Unrestricted warfare" suggests that future conflicts will not be limited to traditional military clashes but may include economic, legal, media, and psychological warfare. The concept of "unrestricted warfare" aims to "transform the existing international system" and emphasizes a wide range of non-military actions, including trade warfare, financial warfare, the war on terrorism, environmental warfare, psychological warfare, drug warfare, cyberwarfare, technological warfare, fictional warfare, cultural warfare, and warfare within the framework of international law (Clouse, D. C., 2023, May 12). This comprehensive view of conflict is reflected in China's evolving strategy:

Hybrid Warfare. China's strategy emphasizes unconventional warfare alongside traditional military power. These methods include economic pressure, the strategic use of information, and political influence.

Psychological Operations: The integration of media and propaganda to shape public opinion and undermine enemy morale has become a key part of Chinese doctrine.

3. Precision Strikes and an Emphasis on Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD). Modern warfare has also brought technological advances in precision strikes, missile systems, and advanced defense technologies. In line with these developments, China is placing particular emphasis on the following aspects:

Precision strike capabilities: These include long-range missiles, advanced artillery, and other smart weapons that allow China to disrupt or destroy high-value targets while minimizing collateral damage.

Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD): This strategy aims to prevent an enemy from penetrating China's periphery or projecting power into key areas, particularly the South China Sea. China's doctrine includes the use of anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASMs), advanced radar systems, and integrated air defense networks to deter external intrusion.

4. Strategic Emphasis on “Local Warfare in the Information Environment”. The Chinese armed forces have shifted their focus to local warfare within the framework of the concept of informatization, a key element of Chinese doctrine. These include:

Informatization: Modern warfare increasingly prioritizes information superiority. China believes it is essential to control the flow of information on the battlefield, manage big data, and secure communications networks.

Joint Operations: This involves integrating various branches of the armed forces (army, navy, air force, and cyber forces) to wage war in a more coordinated and synchronized manner. This reflects the trend of modern armed forces toward joint, integrated operations in modern combat scenarios.

5. Expanding into New Areas: Space and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Modern warfare extends beyond traditional land, air, and naval operations:

Space Warfare: China is increasingly focusing on space operations, both in terms of satellite reconnaissance, navigation, and communications capabilities, and in developing anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons to deny adversaries access to space resources.

Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems: China recognizes the strategic importance of artificial intelligence and robotics in modern warfare. This includes the development of autonomous vehicles, drones, and AI-based analytical systems to gain both strategic and tactical advantages.

Thus, Chinese military doctrine prioritizes expanding classical battlefield capabilities through non-kinetic means, readiness for digital confrontation, dominance in unrestricted warfare, investment in new technologies.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the transformation of military-doctrinal documents is primarily driven by structural changes in the nature of warfare. Modern conflicts demonstrate a gradual shift from large-scale, industrial, state-centric wars toward multi-domain, hybrid, and technologically driven confrontations. This trend has been widely noted in contemporary strategic studies, where the increasing role of information, cyber, economic, and cognitive instruments of power has altered both the goals and methods of warfare.

The comparative analysis of doctrinal approaches of the United States, the Russian Federation, and the People’s Republic of China shows both convergence and divergence in their strategic thinking. All three powers recognize the growing importance of non-kinetic capabilities, multi-domain operations, and technological superiority. However, their doctrinal responses differ according to political systems, threat perceptions, and strategic cultures.

In the case of the United States, doctrinal transformation is largely driven by technological innovation, strategic competition with peer adversaries, and the need to maintain global military superiority. The emphasis is placed on joint and multi-domain operations, decentralized command structures, and integration of artificial intelligence and autonomous systems. These trends correspond to broader theoretical discussions on the transition from industrial to information-centric warfare.

Russia’s doctrinal evolution reflects a different strategic logic. Its military doctrine emphasizes hybrid methods, strategic deterrence, and the integration of non-military instruments of influence. The concept of “active defense” and the increased role of nuclear deterrence indicate a strategy aimed at compensating for asymmetries in conventional military power and preserving geopolitical influence in its near abroad.

China’s doctrinal transformation is characterized by a long-term strategic orientation and a strong emphasis on information dominance, cyber capabilities, and anti-access/area-denial strategies. The concept of “unrestricted warfare” illustrates a comprehensive approach that

combines military and non-military instruments of power within a single strategic framework.

Despite these differences, the analysis reveals several common patterns. First, all major powers are adapting their doctrines to the realities of hybrid and multi-domain warfare. Second, technological innovation, particularly in artificial intelligence, cyber capabilities, and autonomous systems, is becoming a central driver of doctrinal change. Third, the distinction between war and peace is increasingly blurred, as states employ a wide range of instruments to achieve strategic objectives without formal declarations of war.

These findings support the argument that the transformation of military-doctrinal documents is not merely a technical or organizational process but reflects deeper changes in the philosophy of the use of force. Contemporary strategic thinking is gradually moving away from classical Clausewitzian models based on decisive battles and territorial conquest toward more complex models centered on influence, disruption, and strategic competition below the threshold of open war.

At the same time, this transformation raises a number of theoretical and practical challenges. The expansion of the battlespace into cyber, informational, and cognitive domains complicates the application of international humanitarian law and traditional deterrence mechanisms. Furthermore, the increasing reliance on non-kinetic instruments of power may lead to prolonged, low-intensity conflicts that are difficult to regulate through existing legal and institutional frameworks.

Thus, the evolution of military-doctrinal documents reflects a broader systemic shift in the character of warfare, where technological, informational, and economic dimensions play a role comparable to that of conventional military force. Future research should focus on developing integrated models for assessing doctrinal adaptation and on identifying the long-term implications of hybrid and multi-domain warfare for international security.

Conclusion

The impact of modern wars on military-doctrinal documents is associated with the following results:

The growing influence of uncertainty in international politics has created the basis for the rapid transformation of military-conceptual documents.

Under the dictates of the requirements of the new era, a strategic departure from classical military thinking has taken place.

Technological progress and sovereignty and digital innovation have determined the development directions of the military sphere,

The centralized management of power on a global scale has completely collapsed. The principle of the indivisibility of security has been put to an end with unconventional tactics.

The preference for multi-domain operations has significantly increased the role and importance of joint forces in modern wars.

The process of ensuring national interests has involved extensive use of information and communication technologies.

Fierce armament has become intensive. Research and investments in this direction have increased significantly.

The increase in the desire for the extraterritorial application of force somewhat revives the ideas about the inactivity of international legal norms.

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