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Culmination and Termination in the Russo-Japanese War: Implications for Future US Joint Doctrine

by

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The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 is an example of how developing a desired end state and termination conditions can facilitate war termination. It is also an example of the complex nature of peace negotiation. By studying the "textbook" process the Japanese followed, U.S. war planners can gain insight into termination. By studying the way the Russians reversed their military defeat into a political coup, war planners, can design more effective operational and strategic war plans.

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I. INTRO/OVERVIEW:

In the early months of 1991, the United States and coalition partners inflicted the worst military defeat upon an adversary in the history of modern warfare. For six weeks, allied airpower hammered the forces of Saddam Hussein to their knees. A 100 hour ground war brought a quick cease fire and peace treaty, then a worldwide celebration of the defeat of Saddam Hussein. Many people, including then-President Bush, pointed to the Gulf War as the future of US military employment, and hoped Saddam's military defeat would be followed quickly by his overthrow. However, six years later and three US-led strikes later, Saddam is still a thorn in the side of his neighbors, the CENTCOM Commander, and the President. How did Saddam turn a "crushing" military defeat into political victory at home? How did he turn the tables on the US generals who led the cease fire talks and the diplomats who negotiated the peace treaty--using their strengths against them?

The US leadership terminated hostilities before achieving all strategic and operational objectives because it thought it had reached the culminating point of victory--even though it had not. It "lost the peace" because it did not understand the convoluted process of termination, especially the culture and the mind of the enemy. This paper is about the operational art of discerning the culminating point of victory and properly terminating conflict. To explore those concepts, we shall examine another war where culmination and termination were complex-- the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905. In this war, the Japanese envisioned the "desired end state" before they even started the war. They used diplomats to enlist the aid of US President Theodore Roosevelt, and appealed to him to intervene -- but not until the time was right for them. However, their most significant achievement was that the military leaders recognized the culminating point of victory before they passed it. Even so, the Japanese won the war, but lost the peace settlement. How that happened is valuable to those studying the future use of US military power. It may help them prevent any future aggressors from enjoying the same victory as Saddam does today.

To examine the concepts of culmination and termination, we should study the theory and doctrine surrounding them. To do that, we will examine the writings of Carl Von Clausewitz to see what he has to say on culmination and termination. Next, we will analyze events in the Russo-Japanese War. Then, we will turn to the current US military doctrine embodied in service and joint documents. Finally, we will draw some lessons learned from the Russo-Japanese War and end with some general recommendations for the US in the future.

II. CLAUSEWITZ ON CULMINATING POINT AND TERMINATION:

To start, we will examine the theory of the culminating point of victory put forth by Carl Von Clausewitz in On War. In his book Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought, Michael Handel synthesizes a definition of the culminating point of attack in terms we can grasp. According to Handel, "Clausewitz states that as any attack continues to advance and succeed it also diminishes its strength. Moving progressively further from his own bases of supply, the attacker has to protect longer communications lines, his flanks become more exposed, his forces are less familiar with the terrain, the troops suffer from attrition in battle, and so on. With all other things being equal, the passage of time favors the defense.."[1]

Handel outlines Clausewitz's logic regarding culmination , quoting from On War , Book seven as follows.

> "There is no growth of intensity in an attack comparable to that of various types of defense... The attacker is pursuing advantages that may become valuable at the peace table, but he must pay for them on the spot with his fighting forces. If the superior strength of the attack-- which diminishes day by day-- leads to peace, the object will have been attained. There are strategic attacks that lead up to the point where their remaining strength is just enough to maintain a defense and wait for peace....Beyond that point, the scale turns and the reaction follows with a force that is much stronger than that of the original attack. ...What matters therefore is to detect the culminating point with discriminative judgment."

And, in Book eight Clausewitz writes: "The natural goal of all campaign plans therefore is the turning point at which the attack becomes defense. "[2] Handel cites Napoleon's ill-fated invasion of Russia as a strong example of the consequences of failing to "detect the culminating point with discriminative judgment"[3] In Chapter 22 of Book seven, Clausewitz discusses the culminating point of victory, versus the attack. In that chapter, he lists seven reasons why the attacker gets stronger as he advances-- all at the defender's expense-- and five reasons for loss of strength in an invading army. His most relevant discourse, however is on when the victorious attacker should stop.

> "At this point we are bound to ask: if this is all true, why does the winner persist in pursuing his victorious course, in advancing his offensive?...Would he not do better to stop before he begins to lose the upper hand? ...The obvious answer is that superior strength is not the end but only the means. The end is either to bring the enemy to his knees or at least to deprive him of some of his territory...Even if one tries to destroy the enemy completely, one must accept the fact that every step gained may weaken one's superiority...Thus the superiority one has ...must be risked for the sake of the end. But one must know the point to which it can be carried in order not to overshoot the target; otherwise instead of gaining new advantages, one will disgrace oneself"[4]

So, Clausewitz seems to be positing two thoughts. First, military superiority in battle is important only because it leads to achieving the end (or aim). Second, achieving the aim is so important that one should risk superiority to achieve the aim, but be careful not to go too far in pursuit of it. Truly, this is the purview of those skilled in operational art. But, how do we in the US military see this art in today's world? After examining the Russo-Japanese War, we will take a look at FMFM-1 Warfighting, FMFM 1-1 Campaigning , Army FM 100-5 Operations, and the Joint Publications.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

In several ways, the war was a portent of future warfare, but was largely ignored by the major world powers. Let's look at the concept of mass. For instance, the battle of Tsushima Straits was bigger and more decisive than the battle of Jutland, 12 years later. Also, this was the first time combatants used armored battleships with 12-inch guns. In addition, land actions were bigger and bloodier than Waterloo, Gettysburg, or Borodino--the Battle of Liaoyang in Aug 1904 was the second-biggest battle in history up to then, second only to Sedan. At the Battle of Mukden, Russia assembled the greatest force of any previous army-- 275,000 infantry, 16,000 cavalry, and 1200 artillery pieces. Technology also defined the nature of this war. On land, breech-loaded rifles, machine guns, and quick-firing artillery all made the scene. Additionally, torpedoes and mines were used at sea. Political involvement was unique as well. For example, Japanese money and agents fomented revolution in Russia. Also, the results of this war fired up a super Asian nationalism across the Asian continent. Finally, besides mass, technology, and politics, this war involved three nations who either have been or might soon be our adversaries, and it says much about their culture, and the similarities/differences with US culture.[5]

Another reason to study this war is that the Japanese "did their homework" before attacking. They analyzed the advantages and disadvantages--theirs and their enemy's. They also developed aims, a desired end state, and termination provisions all before the first shot was fired.

A final reason to study the war is because the aggressor (Japan) won the military victory, but lost the political peace. The Japanese decided to quit fighting shortly after their greatest victory-- the Battle of the Tsushima Straits. They realized they were rapidly approaching the culminating point of victory, and that the Russians would soon be getting stronger while they could only get weaker. So, as we shall see, they appealed to President Roosevelt to end the fighting and tried to force Russia to sign humiliating peace terms. However, Russia gained the upper hand during the peace negotiations and stonewalled the Japanese. Despite the gains wrought from the peace

table, the Japanese leaders failed to secure reparations. As a result the populace felt cheated and betrayed. So, Japan "won" the war but "lost" the peace.

How the Japanese Won the War

The Japanese felt cheated out of Port Arthur and the Kwantung Peninsula after the Major Powers intervened to stop the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. Russia moved into the area around 1897 and thereby displaced Japanese economic interests with Russian. In 1898, using a demonstration of force, Russia demanded that the Chinese lease Port Arthur to them. In addition, they wanted to extend their Trans Siberian Railway to connect from Siberia (Lake Baikal) into Manchuria, all the way to the Chinese Great Wall. As if that were not enough, the Russians expanded into Korea for timber. In addition to concerns about Russian expansion into China, Korea loomed large. Always viewed as a "dagger" pointing at Japan, Japan thought that it must control Korea for its (Japan's) security. [6] As Denis and Peggy Warner note in the book, *The Tide At Sunrise*, plans had been in the works for many years before the surprise attack. So, Japan decided to attack.

The Japanese went to war because they resented Russian extortion in China and feared Russian expansion into Korea. They saw a window of opportunity, however, that would allow them only a few years to challenge the Russians before they fortified their forces in the Pacific. The Tsar made this comment to Kaiser Wilhelm about the start of the war, "Only Russia can decide whether to go to war, the impudent, sub-human Japanese could never force me to war" [7] However, he was wrong. Shortly before midnight on Feb 8, 1904, the Japanese attacked the Russian fleet stationed at Port Arthur on the Kwangtung Peninsula. The Japanese looked at many factors when deciding the method and time of the attack. For instance, when looking at timing, they realized that Russian reinforcements would have to travel via the Trans-Siberian railway to Lake Baikal, disembark, cross the Lake, and reboard on a train of a different gauge.[8] The Russians, on the other hand, thought mobilization would be as easy as when they put down the Boxer Rebellion. The Japanese timed the attack so the Lake Baikal crossing would be the most difficult. They also analyzed the Tsar's attitude. They knew of Nicholas' contempt for and ignorance of the Japanese people. Through their diplomatic intelligence network, they also knew he had directed that Northern Manchuria was to be held at all costs. This meant he had to allocate many of his troops for protection of the Trans Siberian Railway. Finally, they observed Russia's intense need for timber on the Yalu River.[9]

The greatest amount of preparation went into sequencing attacks and selecting centers of gravity for the war. The objective of the Port Arthur attack was twofold. First, the Japanese needed to

preserve their own small number of ships to fight against the main Russian fleet that would inevitably sail East from the Black Sea. Second, they intended to strike the Russians before they had time to prepare for war. In short, on the water they were fighting a Mahanian Battle of Sea Control. [10]In addition, they focused on the LOCs of the major logistics point of Liaoyang and the major railway junction at Harbin.

At the beginning of February 1904, the active Russian Army consisted of 1,100,000 men and the Japanese 180,000. The Russian active reserve was 2,400,000, and the Japanese had a total of about 800,000 they could muster. This latter number was six times the Russian estimate.[11] Lt Gen Kodama Gentaro, the brilliant Von Moltke-tutored Vice Chief of the General Staff and Prime Minister in the making, believed that Japan's initial superiority in the theater would evaporate as Japan's strength dwindled through casualties and the Russian strength increased through mobilization and transportation of reserves. Therefore, he eyed a short war and two decisive victories, one at sea and one on land. His plan was brilliant, but risky. First, the Russian naval squadron at Port Arthur would be destroyed, . If Admiral Togo succeeded there, and was able to seize control of the water off the west coast of Korea, the Army could then land at Chemulpo (Inchon) to mount an attack on the Russian strongpoints in Korea. At the same time, Kodama planned to work his way up the Kwangtung Peninsula and threaten the LOCs linking Harbin to Port Arthur. At this time, no decision was made on the occupation of Port Arthur or the invasion of Sakhalin Islands.[12] Though Kodama's war plan met general approval in the Japanese Cabinet, there was no underestimation of Russia's capacity if the war dragged on too long. Therefore, before the first shot was even fired, the Cabinet decided to ask the US at some future moment to act as a mediator, and decided to send Baron Kaneko Kentaro, a Harvard graduate, to the US to build support with the populace, and to court the President's involvement. The mood in the Cabinet and from the Emperor in early February was gloomy. Japan dreaded going to war with Russia, but was prepared to do so and was convinced it was the only way to halt and roll back Russian expansion in the area[13]. So, the stage was set for the sneak attack on the Russian fleet.

The attack on Port Arthur was wildly successful, both militarily and politically. Although the Japanese failed to destroy the entire Russian fleet, they did manage to "bottle it up" and prevent it from attacking the Japanese Army, which successfully invaded Inchon. The fact that Japan violated Korean neutrality was lost on the Japanese people and the world. All the world saw was tiny little Japan, fighting for its survival and economic vitality against the Russian hegemon.[14] Furthermore, according to the Japanese, their army would be fighting Russia for their survival, while the Russian Army would be fighting for the Tsar's wealth. The Warner's put it best: "In Russia, they had no stomach for a war they did not understand against a people they did not

know. Manchuria was as remote as Mars and the Yalu only another river far across the steppes. The serf demanded food for his belly, but the samurai would forgo all for the emperor. To Japan the need to keep Korea free of Russian influence seemed of paramount importance to its own security."[15]

After the attack on Port Arthur and the successful surprise landing at Inchon, they attacked the key logistics point of Liaoyang,. There, the Japanese succeeded in wresting the city from the Russians but lost 5,537 killed and 18,063 wounded while the Russians lost 3,611 killed and 14,301 wounded. Even with heavy artillery, however, the Japanese infantry could not break through to Harbin-- the Russians retreated to make a stand at Mukden, while Port Arthur remained under siege.[16]

At the battle for Mukden, the Japanese used a combination of frontal assaults and maneuver since they were united with the Army that had landed at Korea and had by now crossed the Yalu. The Army of the Yalu stealthily slipped past the Russians' left flank and attacked the rear. However, the Japanese Armies failed to exploit the battle. stopping short of scoring a decisive defeat. The Army had once again culminated the attack--running out of ammunition for artillery. Besides, infantry was too exhausted to pursue the fleeing Russians. This failure to inflict a decisive defeat greatly affected the Army for many, many years-- not to mention feelings in Tokyo.[17] The Russians lost 30% of their troops at Mukden-- 20,000 killed/missing plus 20,000 POWs. Plus, 49,000 wounded. The Japanese lost almost 16,000 killed , 60,00 wounded, or more than 25% of the force they fielded.[18]

Later in the war, the siege of Port Arthur finally succeeded, but the city was conquered by the Army, not the Navy. Then, following the great land battles and the fall of Port Arthur, the Japanese Navy defeated the Russian Fleet at the Battle of Tsushima Straits; remembered by historians as a decisive defeat and destruction of the Russian fleet that sealed Russia's fate.

Japan's Strategic Dilemma

Mukden was a great victory, but it was costly and... it was not the Sedan Ozama envisioned. Furthermore, after Mukden, the Imperial GHQ estimated that it had, at best, 1.5 divisions to field as replacements. There was much disagreement about their employment. Although Ozama had won impressive victories against a foe superior in numbers and arms, the Japanese generals were worried that an excursion into Manchuria or Siberia would lead them to the same fate as Napoleon.

On 28 Mar 1905, Gen. Kodama, who planned and brilliantly executed the strategy of the war but without overwhelming success in Manchuria, came to Tokyo to address the Cabinet. His memorable quote was: "I have come to Tokyo for the express purpose of stopping the war. Don't you know that if you light a fire you must also know how to put it out?"[19] Four days after Kodama's arrival, Japan concluded negotiations for a third loan from the British: 30 Million Pounds at 4.5% interest. Total war debt was now 52 Million Pounds. Kodama knew Japan could not win the war if it continued. Even so, the entire nation, intoxicated with victory on the battlefield, was calling for a march across the Urals and on to St. Petersburg. However, after Kodama's address, his feelings about the war spread rapidly throughout the government. [20] The Cabinet debated Tsushima's impact and discussed where to go from the victory. They realized they had not yet invaded Russian territory, and to do so would be a gigantic step. So, they decided to instruct Kentaro to get Roosevelt to press the Russians for peace.

Russia's Strategic Situation

Here was the Russian population's attitude towards the war after Tsushima: "Those guilty of Russia's disgrace should be overwhelmed with shame ...Sevastopol struck the shackles from the serfs, and Port Arthur, Mukden, and Tsushima should free Russia from the slavery of the bureaucracy". In contrast, here is the feeling of the aristocracy: "A lost war is not a disgrace, but a misfortune. A spiritually undeveloped un-Christian nation such as the Japanese was bound to conquer, for among them is rife the principle of patriotism which is opposed to the principle of love of one's neighbor and therefore the opposition to war"[21] In addition, Nicholas' empire reeled from the defeat. On May 1, 1905, Poland revolted, and 100 people were killed in Warsaw alone. In addition, there was mutiny in the Black Sea fleet, and anti-war demonstrations in St. Petersburg which spread throughout the country. On 19 June, there was again rioting in Warsaw. Furthermore, Col Akashi, the Japanese envoy, exploited the unrest and provided the kindling for the fire that burned throughout Russia. "While Togo and Ozama were bent on destruction of the Russian armies, Akashi was striking at the heart of the Russian empire"[22] On 9 June Roosevelt made identical peace offers, Japan accepted 10 June and Russia on 12 June.

How the Japanese Lost the Peace

At the same time the Japanese accepted Roosevelt's entreaty, they made plans to invade Sakhalin Island to give the Russians something to ponder. On July 7, they commenced landing operations and a month later, Sakhalin was in Japanese hands. As Kodama had intended, this military operation had tremendous political significance, for it gave Russia her only territorial loss of the war and directly threatened the Russian port of Vladivostok. Kodama believed Japan's bargaining position was notably improved. And, it was... in the eyes of Nicholas and the Russians. However,

ever since Tsushima, Roosevelt and the rest of the Western World were concerned about Japan's aggressiveness. Many US business leaders realized America's hold on the Philippines and other territories in the Pacific was at Japan's mercy, and they feared an aggressive Japan dominating the Pacific Basin. That was the main reason Roosevelt called a conference. Obviously, the invasion of Sakhalin did not play well in the US. [23]

Another important development was the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance for another ten years. In this alliance, Japan gained a "free hand in Korea" from England. Also, supplanting the previous defensive alliance, the new alliance provided for military cooperation in the event of an attack by a third party. In addition, in a secret agreement with the US, Japan agreed to "harbor no designs" for the Philippines in exchange for control over Korea. [24]

Eventually, Serge Witte, the Russian Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Japanese Foreign Minister Komura arrived in Portsmouth, New Hampshire to begin peace discussions. Komura arrived on the West coast in August to cheers and celebrations, but by the time he reached Minnesota he began to sense a "yellow peril". He tried to pin the blame on Russia and Europe for concern about Japan's aggressiveness. The Sakhalin invasion did not help his case. In contrast, Witte was much less formal, speaking directly to reporters-- praising Roosevelt and talking about the "common Christian ties" between Russia and the US. He won instant acclaim from the media. [25] The journalists across the continent sent him telegrams like one sent by an editor from Philadelphia: "Seven tenths of the people of the Pacific Coast are with you in refusing Japanese impertinent territorial demands" -- referring of course to Sakhalin Island.

This point bring us to the objectives of each side. First the Japanese. They wanted the Russians out of Korea, possession of Sakhalin Island, control of Manchuria, control of Port Arthur and the Kwangtung Peninsula--including the railway from Port Arthur to Harbin, control of Korea, and an indemnity of sizable proportions. The two points the Russians could not cede were giving the Japanese control of Sakhalin and paying an indemnity. Nicholas was adamant on both points. However, neither side laid all cards out on the table at once.[26]

The Japanese Cabinet was hungry for an indemnity-- the war was costing a million dollars a day and Japan's credit reserves in London and New York had dwindled to 200 million dollars. In addition, the burden was huge. The war debt was costing the Japanese 53% of their budget. Komura, however, realized the delicacy of his demands and was determined not to be too brazen or bold, lest he adversely affect US public opinion. So, he struck a "secret" deal with Witte, delivering his terms only if Witte promised not to release them to the newspapers. Witte gave his

assurances, but then met with reporters and provided them enough information so that the Boston papers could detail Japanese demands the next day. The next day, Witte replied to the demands point by point-- agreeing to most demands but refusing to yield on the demand for indemnity and on Sakhalin. After that, the points were taken up one at a time and progress in the minor areas was smooth. But, on August 15, Sakhalin Island came up for discussion. The Japanese proposed to ransom it to the Russians for a sum between 120 million to 150 million Pounds. Then, two days later, the conference went sour over other stumbling blocks like interned ships' status and Japanese demands for limitations of Russian Far East naval forces.

At the same time Roosevelt heard of these troubles, he received word from St. Petersburg that Nicholas was still refusing to cede Sakhalin or pay an indemnity. So, he intervened. On 21 August, he urged the Tsar to accept a compromise solution whereby the Russians paid the Japanese for the Northern half of Sakhalin (which Japan still occupied), while they ceded the Southern half to Japan. In addition, he strongly advised Japan that he did not think their case for an indemnity was very strong.[27] Roosevelt's actions had no effect on Nicholas. In fact, on 27 August, Witte told Komura that the Tsar was prepared to suspend negotiations and resume fighting . Everyone felt that the 29 August meeting would end in deadlock.

In Tokyo, the mood was panic and dismay. Not only was the economic outlook bleak, the Army had been steadily deteriorating in readiness and morale since the end of the fighting. In addition, reports from the Manchurian lines indicated the Russians had been pouring fresh reserves into the battle lines-- two Russian Corps had made the Trans-Siberian railway journey from Europe while the negotiations were ongoing. The Japanese by contrast, could only field a division or so. Finally, the public was wondering when they would see their sons and husbands, and when the indemnity from Russia would arrive. So, on 28 August, the leaders met with the Emperor to detail their dilemma. That evening Komura was instructed to completely abandon the demand for an indemnity. In addition, the message also instructed him to give up the claim for Sakhalin if it threatened the chances of peace. The next day, 29 August, Komura asked for Witte's response to his demands of August 23. Witte flatly rejected the previous demands of indemnity and possession of Sakhalin. Then, Komura said "We make you another offer. To withdraw the money payment and give you half of Sakhalin" Witte's response? "I accept your offer". With that, the war was over. Japan won the war and Russia won the peace. [28]

IV. DOCTRINE ON THE CULMINATING POINT AND WAR TERMINATION

The Marine Corps and Army are the only services who address culmination and termination. It is notably absent from Air Force and Navy doctrine. In FMFM 1 Warfighting, the Marine Corps

outlines its doctrine on the culminating point, wrapped in a short but illuminating discourse on the offense and the defense. However, there is little in FMFM 1 on termination of war.

> "The offense contributes striking power... the defense, on the other hand contributes resisting power...The defense is inherently the stronger form of combat [but] ... the offense is the preferred form, for only through the offense can we truly pursue a positive aim. An effective defense must assume an offensive character. The truly decisive element of the defense is the counterattack....
>
> Similarly, the defense is an essential component of the offense...At some times and places it becomes necessary to halt the offense to replenish, and the defense automatically takes over. Furthermore, the requirement to concentrate forces at the focus of effort for the offense often necessitates assuming the defensive elsewhere. Therefore out of necessity we must include defensive considerations as part of our concept of the offense.
>
> This brings us to the concept of the culminating point...Not only can the offense not sustain itself indefinitely, it generally grows weaker as it advances. ...Eventually, the superiority that allowed us to attack and forced our enemy to defend in the first place dissipates and the balance tips in favor of the enemy. We have reached the culminating point, at which we can no longer sustain the attack and must revert to the defense. It is precisely at this point that the defensive element of the offense is most vulnerable to the offensive element of the defense, the counterattack."[29]

FMFM 1-1 Campaigning, also has something to say about another concept relevant to our discussion of the Russo-Japanese War-- designing a campaign around aims and strategy, albeit from a theater vs strategic level:

> The design should focus all the various efforts of the campaign resolutely on the established theater strategic aim. Economy is an essential ingredient in campaign design. Any activity or operation which does not contribute, directly or derivatively, in some necessary way to this aim is unjustifiable. Of course, the aim may shift over time, for a variety of reasons—including the success, failure, or cost of the unfolding campaign itself—and we must continuously adjust our design appropriately. This focus on the military strategic aim is the single overriding element of campaign design.
>
> Given the strategic aim as our destination, our next step is to determine the desired end state, the military conditions we must realize in order to reach that destination, those necessary conditions which we expect by their existence will provide us our established aim. Grant envisioned these conditions to be the

> destruction of Lee's army and the capture of Richmond. These conditions will vary with the nature of the conflict and need not always consist of the destruction of the enemy. In fact, the lethality of modern weapons may necessitate the adoption of limited aims, such as protecting a region, denying or capturing enemy war re-sources, curbing or limiting enemy influence, diverting enemy resources from more important theaters or areas, or deterring enemy aggression.
>
> From the envisioned end state, we can develop the operational objectives which, taken in combination, will achieve those conditions. In Grant's concept, the defeat of Joseph Johnston and the capture of Atlanta were important operational objectives. It is important to note that as the strategic aim shifts, so must our determination of the conditions of success and operational objectives shift as well.[30]

At this point, a short critique is in order. FMFM 1 does not echo Clausewitz's thoughts that the true worth of superiority is that it helps achieve the aim. Nor is there any discussion about how far one can proceed or **even if** one should proceed in pursuit of the aim. Instead, the transition from offense to defense is viewed as "fluid and continuous". Finally, although vague inferences can be made, FMFM 1 does not specifically address the "culminating point of victory". The same is true for FM 100-5 as we shall see.

In his article, "Culminating Points" Col George M. Hall, USAR, Ret'd posited a concise summary of FM 100-5's treatment of the culminating point:

> "Throughout history, some concepts have lain dormant for more than a century between their formulation and the time they gained acceptance as doctrine within the intended profession. The concept of culminating points is one of them. Clausewitz formulated the idea in his On War, published posthumously in 1832. It was recognized 150 years later as a "key concept of operational design" in the current US Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations. ... FM 100-5 starts the discussion on culminating points in clear terms that immediately convey both the meaning and the significance of the concept.
>
> 'Unless it is strategically decisive, every offensive operation will sooner or later reach a point where the strength of the attacker no longer significantly exceeds that of the defender, and beyond which continued offensive operations therefore risk overextension, counterattack, and defeat. In operational theory, this point is called the culminating point. The art of attack at all levels is to achieve decisive objectives before the culminating point is reached. Conversely, the art of defense is to hasten the culmination of the attack, recognize its advent, and be prepared to go over to the offense when it arrives.'
>
> "...FM 100-5 implies the offensive may continue after the culminating point is reached, albeit subject to defeat. Clausewitz was more pessimistic. He implied

> that once the culminating point was passed, the chance of victory was foreclosed unless the enemy yielded from fear without engaging in decisive combat. If the enemy chose to fight it out, he would prevail."[31]

So, here we see discussion of the culminating point of the attack, vague reference to the culminating point of victory, and little mention of termination. Thankfully, the Joint Publications do a more thorough job of addressing the holes. For instance, Joint Publication 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, pages III-24 and 25, discusses the culminating point and termination in much greater detail.

First is the measure of success:

> Success in the attack at all levels is to secure the objective before reaching culmination[32].

Next, a discussion on logistics, and its purpose:

> At both tactical and operational levels, theater logistic planners forecast the drain on resources associated with conducting operations over extended distance and time. They respond by generating enough military resources at the right times and places to enable their commanders to achieve strategic objectives before reaching their culminating points. If the commanders cannot do so, they should rethink their concept of operations.[33]

Then, an exhortation to JFCs:

> Before forces are committed, JFCs must know how the NCA intend to terminate the operation and ensure its outcomes endure, and then determine how to implement that strategic design at the operational level. [34]

Next, some thoughts on termination:

> Ideally, national and allied or coalition decisionmakers will seek the advice of senior military leaders concerning how and when to end combat operations. Passing the lead from the military to other agencies to achieve final strategic aims following conflict usually requires the participation of JFCs....Military operations typically conclude with attainment of the strategic ends for which the NCA committed forces. In some cases, these aims will be military strategic aims that, once achieved, allow transition to other instruments of national power and agencies as the means to achieve broader aims. ...When friendly

> forces can freely impose their will on the enemy, the opponent may have to accept defeat, terminate active hostilities, or revert to other types of conflict such as geopolitical actions or guerrilla warfare. Nonetheless, a hasty or ill-designed end to the operation may bring with it the possibility that related disputes will arise, leading to further conflict. There is a delicate balance between the desire for quick victory and termination on truly favorable terms.[35]

And, finally, the real measure of success for wars:

> Wars are fought for political aims. Wars are only successful when political aims are achieved and these aims endure.[36]

IV. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR OF 1904-05

How then can we tie the history of the Russo-Japanese War at the turn of this century with the future of US warfare in the next century? The message is cryptic. Although the service doctrine lacks the depth and breadth of discussion on culminating point of victory and termination, the Joint Publications fill the gaps nicely and have many of the right words. In fact, it seems that Joint Pub 3.0 and 5.0 were extensively revised after the DESERT STORM termination debacle, and now reflect "lessons learned"- if only in general terms. So,we must "read between the lines" and use historical cases like the Russo-Japanese War to illuminate the hidden lessons. Only then will we be able to experience the "discriminative judgment" referred to by Clausewitz on page 2.
In the next section, I will synthesize observations and lessons learned from the Russo-Japanese War and apply them to recent/future warfare. The initial observation is followed by my italicized thoughts on the relevance to US war planning--if any.

OBSERVATIONS:

- **The desired end state for Japan was a reduction in Russian influence--out of Korea, reduced in Manchuria, out of Kwangtung Peninsula.** *What was the desired end state for DESERT STORM? Ans: Iraq out of Kuwait.*

- **Before the war, no one asked whether a foothold in Manchuria was enough to bring the Russians to the table.** *Did anyone ask whether threatening attack/ actual attack was enough to get Saddam out? Ans: It was not left up to Saddam, the US/Coalition decided to forcibly eject his forces.*

- **When the Port Arthur naval attack failed to conquer the city, the Japanese should have thought twice about the termination-- prolonged war.** *The initial failure of the Navy to*

subdue Port Arthur was eclipsed by the realization that the fleet could no longer sortie out of Port Arthur. The Army's Korean landings would be secure. However, there was little effort to look at the effect on the Manchurian campaign later on. It is vital that we continually reassess our plan in light of reality/assumptions.

- **Japanese stopped in enough time to secure the victory, but were unable to maintain superiority.** *Reason was, they had extremely limited resources. By contrast, when the US goes to war, it applies overwhelming force. We should be wary of situations where we have limited public support and apply limited resources-- then face an escalating situation. Example: MOOTW situation changing from Peace Keeping to Peace Enforcement.*

- **Russians continued to posture during the negotiations-- mobilizing vast manpower reserves to influence the negotiations-- fighting while negotiating. This helped them in the end. In contrast, the Japanese invaded Sakhalin, further stretching their already stretched resources.** *We failed to learn this lesson in Korea and Vietnam.*

- **At Liaoyang and Mukden, the Japanese were in a battle of attrition and losing it. They substituted maneuver for brute force. Only control of the railroad enabled them to strangle Port Arthur and control Korea. Logistics played a key role in the capture of Mukden. If the troops were better rested or if the Army had more ammunition, they might have been able to rout the fleeing Russians.** *These battles were reminiscent of Civil War battles but could still happen in the future. This example could also be included in joint or service doctrine.*

- **Japanese faced the occupation problem and backed away from it because it was too hard.** *We should learn from this lesson.*

- **Military initiated the "halt" process-- reminded civilians objective had been reached.** *In contrast, usually the civilians are the ones to initiate US war termination while the military wants to exploit opportunity. A seemingly opportune Naval or Air strike to exploit success could have disastrous consequences during the peace process. Therefore, this point should be more fully explored in Joint/Service doctrine. Perhaps the Air Force should include it in its new AFDD1.*

- **Even though all was done correctly, Japanese still could not maintain morale in the field during cease fire.** *This was because they were exhausted. Logistics lines were way*

overextended, the mood was one of impatience. The US could face this situation in the future and again, joint/service doctrine needs to address it.

- **Sakhalin Island invasion was a military-sponsored operation-- added on as a codicil. Civilians had little say in it.** *Similarly, Gen Schwartzkopf's allowance of the Iraqis to fly their helicopters was a military decision. It had serious consequences after the war that could have been avoided by involving all agencies before permission was given. This point could be further expanded in joint doctrine.*

- **The Japanese were unaware of the pitfalls of negotiations, including cultural differences, language barriers, religious differences, effect of post cease fire military actions.** *We fell victim to this too-- in Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq. Another candidate for expansion in joint doctrine.*

- **If the indemnity was so important to the Japanese, they should have envisioned the military circumstances that would force Russia to pay ransom for valuable territory. Especially since Russia had never before paid an indemnity. Nicholas was prepared to cede all of Korea and most of Manchuria. They should have listened to Akashi the Russian envoy, who told them his intel pointed towards Nicholas refusing to pay an indemnity. As another option, Japan could have downplayed the indemnity with the populace and enhanced their standing in the world community.**

- **British could have run interference for Japanese at Portsmouth. (They were Christian, Western, and White)** *Other coalition partners may be better suited to lead negotiations-- or at least provide expertise in culture etc.*

- **Logistics shortfalls almost brought them to defeat through an inability to sustain post cease fire force deployments.** *Sustainment cannot be assured in the future if we outsource and privatize or contract out all our logistics. Obviously, the effort needs to be sustained in the face of tremendous pressure to downsize theater presence. Therefore, political success-- not military victory-- should dictate when redeployment begins.*

- **The civilian populace was misinformed about true goals and unforgiving of the lack of monetary reward. Therefore, despite impressive accomplishments in gaining a controlling hand throughout the region, the lack of an indemnity and the fact that the**

Emperor had to reverse his decisions left the Japanese feeling cheated. *It is vital we continue to have clearly defined, universally understandable objectives. We should never employ combat forces without the American public being told who, what, where, when, why, and how.*

CONCLUSION

This paper is an attempt to blend theory, history, experience, and existing doctrine to forge opportunities to improve that doctrine for future US warfighters. In 1972, faced with the loss of the Vietnam War, loss of public support, and a disheartened, defensive officer corps, the President of the Naval War College initiated a study of the Peloppenisian Wars to identify areas for improvement and reasons for failure. Perhaps our joint and service doctrine could be improved by studying the lessons learned from the Russo-Japanese War.

> "Knowing when to terminate military operations and how to preserve achieved advantages is a component of strategy and operational art. Before forces are committed, JFCs must know how the NCA intend to terminate the operation and ensure its outcomes endure, and then determine how to implement that strategic design at the operational level. In war, termination design is driven in part by the nature of the war itself. Wars over territorial disputes or economic advantage tend to be interest-based and lend themselves to negotiation, persuasion, and coercion. Wars fought in the name of ideology, ethnicity, or religious or cultural primacy tend to be value-based and reflect demands that are seldom negotiable."[37]

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ENDNOTES

[1] Michael I. Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought* (London: Frank Cass, 1996), 114.

[2] ibid. 114,115.

[3] ibid. 120,121.

[4] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret eds (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 566-571.

[5] Denis and Peggy Warner, *The Tide at Sunrise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905* (New York: Charterhouse, 1974), x-xii.

[6]ibid. 6

[7]ibid. 11

[8]ibid. 137

[9]ibid. 144,145.

[10]ibid. 18

[11]ibid. 167

[12]ibid. 170-173

[13]ibid. 173-174

[14]ibid. 180-190

[15]ibid. 175-176

[16]ibid. 353-374

[17]ibid. 479

[18]ibid. 479

[19]ibid. 525

[20]ibid. 525

[21]ibid. 520-521

[22]ibid. 520-525

[23]Eugene V. Trani, *The Treaty of Portsmouth* (Lexington:Univ of Kentucky Press, 1969), 80.

[24]Raymond A. Esthus, *Double Eagle and Rising Sun: The Russians and Japanese at Portsmouth in 1905* (Durham:Duke University Press, 1988), 132-145.

[25]ibid. 79.

[26] ibid. 84.

[27]Denis and Peggy Warner, *The Tide at Sunrise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905* (New York: Charterhouse, 1974), 530-533

[28]ibid. 530-534

[29] US Marine Corps, *FMFM 1 Warfighting*, 24-27.

[30] US Marine Corps, *FMFM 1-1 Campaigning*, 33-35.

[31] Col George M. Hall, USAR, Ret'd, "Culminating Points," *Military Review*, July 1989, 79-86.

[32]US Joint Staff, *Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, III-24*

[33]ibid. *III-24*

[34]ibid. *III-24*

[35]ibid. *III-25*

[36]ibid. *III-24*

[37] ibid. *III-24*