



# Russian Navy strategy - *Jeune École* “the strategy of the weak”

Wednesday September 24, 2025 | Doors open 6:00pm

The Military Museums, 4520 Crowchild Trail SW, Calgary

Over the past two decades, the Russian Navy has experienced notable developments, including the introduction of long-range strike capabilities. At the same time, it has suffered significant losses in the Black Sea since 2022. This talk will argue that Russia is increasingly applying the naval strategy of the *Jeune École*—also known as the “strategy of the weak”—to compensate for its limited capacity to construct large surface combatants. Originally developed by French naval thinkers in the late 19th century, the *Jeune École* emerged as a response to economic constraints in a multipolar world dominated by Great Britain, Italy, and Imperial Germany. Much like France at that time, contemporary Russia faces similar structural and strategic limitations. This raises questions about NATO’s current focus on the GIUK (Greenland-Iceland-UK) gap, as Russia is likely to have only minimal capacity to project naval power into that area during a high-intensity conflict.

**Commander Johannes Riber** is a career officer in the Royal Danish Navy with more than 30 years of service, including the past ten at the Royal Danish Defence College. From 2015 to 2021, he served as Deputy Director at the Institute for Strategy. In 2021, he was admitted to the Ph.D. program at the University of Copenhagen. His doctoral research explores why Denmark, as a small state, chose to invest in frigate construction during the 1990s—despite the platform having been widely regarded as obsolete less than a decade earlier. He holds a Master’s degree in International Security Studies from the University of Leicester, United Kingdom. He is currently a Visiting Scholar with CMSS from July to October 2025.



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