

# **The Concept of ‘Hybrid Warfare’ Undermines NATO’s Strategic Thinking- Insights from Interviews with NATO Officials**

Murat Caliskan & Michel Liégeois

*“This article has been accepted for publication in Small Wars & Insurgencies, published by Taylor & Francis on 20 December 2020. This is an Original Manuscript the Version of Record.”*

Hybrid warfare has been a popular concept/term that refers to contemporary warfare and modern challenges. Despite increasing number of critiques about its novelty and validity, NATO, which can be regarded as the representative of Western defence community has used the term in its strategic documents and summit declarations. Since concepts are important in shaping our understanding, capabilities and the way our forces fight, NATO’s use of a controversial concept has raised the question marks. In this context, this paper aims to explore the true meaning of the hybrid warfare concept from the viewpoint of NATO, based on in-depth interviews with NATO officials, who have sufficient expertise and experience about the concept. The research concluded that from the perspective of an operational concept, the ‘political warfare’ is a better term that represents contemporary warfare than the ‘hybrid warfare’. However, further analysis revealed that hybrid warfare is not an operational concept but rather a tool for strategic communication that NATO has used mainly for its internal purposes. This suggests deeper problems in existing mechanisms that eventually result in the misuse of an operational concept, which might be the focus of a future research.

Keywords: hybrid warfare; hybrid threats; NATO; military concept; political warfare; warfare; character of warfare; strategy

## **Introduction**

The term ‘hybrid warfare’<sup>1</sup> was first used in 2002 by Major William J. Nemeth in his master’s thesis which examines Chechen Insurgency as a case study to understand how irregular Chechen forces using modern technology produced a new form of warfare.<sup>2</sup> Three years later, in an article of US Naval Institute Magazine, Lieutenant General James N. Mattis and retired Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hoffman claimed that future wars will present a combination of emerging challengers-namely traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive rather than separate challengers represented by US 2005 National Defense Strategy (NDS). They preferred to name this ‘unprecedented’ synthesis as ‘Hybrid Warfare’.<sup>3</sup> Since then, the term has gained traction gradually in the defence community. It was Frank Hoffman who developed the hybrid warfare concept in a series of articles and books.<sup>4</sup> The term took on a life of its own after Hoffman.<sup>5</sup> Based on the lessons from Israel-Hezbollah war in 2006, which he found as the clearest example of a modern hybrid challenger, he explained the concept in detail in his 2007 seminal paper, ‘Conflict in 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars’.

In this paper, Hoffman projected that future wars will be a convergence of distinct challengers into multi-modal wars which blends the lethality of state conflict with the fanatical fervour of irregular warfare, both in terms of organizations and means.<sup>6</sup> He defined hybrid threats as ‘the full range of different modes of warfare including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts and criminal disorder.’ According to Hoffman, hybrid wars can be conducted by both states and a

variety of non-state actors, by separate units, or even by the same unit, but operationally and tactically directed within the main battlespace to achieve synergistic effects.<sup>7</sup> To Hoffman, what makes hybrid wars different from previous wars is its convergence even at lower levels. He acknowledges that many wars in the past had regular and irregular components, but they were coordinated at the strategic level and usually occurred in different theatres or in distinctly different formations. Hybrid wars by contrast, blend those forces into one force in the same battlespace, even at operational and tactical levels.<sup>8</sup>

Despite some early critiques, hybrid warfare found traction in US official policy circles and strategic defence documents as early as 2008. As Hoffman noted himself, the term was cited by serving US political and military leaders in their speeches.<sup>9</sup> In January 2009, Secretary of Defence Robert Gates used the term for the first time officially in public, in his testimony before the US Senate.<sup>10</sup> When it was 2010, the concept began to be recognised as the new orthodox military thinking in the defence community.<sup>11</sup> It was roughly at the same time that the concept made its way to NATO through Allied Command Transformation (ACT), a strategic command which is tasked to work on future forms of warfare.<sup>12</sup> ACT produced a capstone concept which analyses the parameters of hybrid threats facing NATO and identifies the future capabilities, although this research established nothing tangible at that time.<sup>13</sup>

Russia's annexation of Crimea had a huge impact both on the popularity and the content of the concept. Western countries almost unanimously referred to Russia's war as a model for hybrid warfare which had previously been associated with non-state actors. In the shocking atmosphere following Russia's operation, a perception of 'Russia employs a new kind of war' emerged out in the West.<sup>14</sup> The media's deep interest and its use in the strategic documents<sup>15</sup> dramatically increased the popularity of the term. Hoffman's military-dominant concept which was rather limited to the defence community has become widely known in international politics.

Although there is not an official definition, NATO members agreed in 2015 that 'hybrid warfare and its supporting tactics can include broad, complex, adaptive, opportunistic and often integrated combinations of conventional and unconventional methods. These activities could be overt or covert, involving military, paramilitary, organized criminal networks and civilian actors across all elements of power.'<sup>16</sup> The EU has broadly defined the hybrid threats as a 'mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and nonconventional methods (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, technological), which can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific objectives while remaining below the threshold of formally declared warfare'.<sup>17</sup>

Comparing to Hoffman's definition, one can easily figure out that the definition of the concept expanded. It was no longer limited to the convergence of different modes of warfare at operational/tactical levels but there was an increasing emphasis on the broader aspects. Following the annexation of Crimea, Hoffman himself noted that his theory fails to capture non-violent actions, such as economic, financial, subversive acts or information operations.<sup>18</sup> However, with this expansion in the meaning, 'hybrid warfare' transformed into the 'strategic potluck' where each member state or organization understood the term its own way. In the words of Tenenbaum, 'its meaning has been diluted to the point of absurdity, referring to matters as different as the rise of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, drug-related violence in Mexico or the political strategy of Russia in Ukraine.'<sup>19</sup> Few analysts use the actual concept of Hoffman, they rather loosely refer to the hybridity, but usually implying different meanings.<sup>20</sup>

Ideally, concepts illustrate how future forces may operate and describe the capabilities required to carry out the range of military operations against adversaries in

the expected operational environment.<sup>21</sup> Concepts define how to use the tools to achieve the political goals and they are vital in the process of defence planning since they generate conditions for the efficient use of military tools.<sup>22</sup> In other words, concepts shape our defence understanding, and thus our armed forces, doctrines and the way that armed forces fight. In this sense, Hoffman's hybrid warfare can be regarded as an attempt to conceptualize contemporary warfare even though the authors find much to criticize about it. However, expanded form of the concept, especially after 2014, does not seem to offer a better understanding of modern warfare but rather became a tool in internal manoeuvring for finance, public opinion and political power in Russia and the West, as well as a means of intimidation in relations between the two.<sup>23</sup>

Since the debut of the concept, the criticism has always accompanied to its popularity and there has been increasing number of critiques in recent years.<sup>24</sup> The concept has been mostly targeted for the broadness of its definition, its ambiguity and alleged novelty. However, despite these critiques, NATO continues to use the term in its strategic documents. Since the Wales Summit, which took place just aftermath the Ukrainian Crisis, NATO has reaffirmed its commitment to fight against the hybrid threats in every summit declaration, including the short declaration of latest London Summit in 2019.<sup>25</sup> This raises the question of why? Why does NATO continue to use the term despite increasing number of rightful critiques? What does the concept/term of hybrid warfare mean for NATO? Given the importance of a concept, these are significant questions still await answers.

There have been numerous books, articles, commentaries to date about hybrid warfare. However, few studies have examined above-mentioned questions and there is almost no empirical study that has been done so far. The purpose of this study is to explore the real meaning of hybrid warfare concept through the eyes of NATO officials. Based on in-depth interviews with NATO officials, it examines what hybrid warfare means for NATO both in terms of its manifest and latent meaning. To achieve this purpose, the paper is structured into four main parts. It begins with a brief overview of NATO's response against Russia's warfare since the annexation of Crimea. The next three parts present the key findings of interviews: that is to say, the second part explores the perceived definition of hybrid warfare from the perspective of an operational concept and discusses three different versions; the third part examines the two main themes that are most targeted by the critics, namely its novelty and the ambiguity; the fourth part focuses on the latent meaning of the concept to understand what hybrid warfare really means for NATO beyond its operational meaning. The final part analyses the findings and provides some implications.

## **The Research Design and Methodology**

This study can be best aligned with phenomenological approach, which aims to explore the universal essence of a phenomenon through individuals' experiences.<sup>26</sup> In line with this approach, the main purpose of this study is to explore the essence of 'hybrid warfare' phenomenon through the experiences of NATO officials, who witnessed the rise of the term at NATO during and aftermath of Ukrainian crisis. Authors believe that NATO is an ideal organization to understand a Western phenomenon 'hybrid warfare' as NATO constitutes the institutional expression of Western security community as well as it has always been involved in constructing the West.<sup>27</sup>

To explore the real meaning of hybrid warfare, the researchers conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with 18 NATO officials from July 2017 to March 2019. Since the concept was relatively new, it was needed to find officials who had sufficient

knowledge, expertise and experience. For this reason, a purposeful sampling was employed in the beginning. The authors directly contacted with the first four interviewees whose eligibility had already been known. For the rest of interviewees, a snowball sampling was employed because, given the classified nature of NATO, it was the only way to know the officials who were specialised on the concept. Without an inner reference, it would be hard to know eligible officials. The identities of interviewees are anonymised upon their request.

## **NATO's Response to Russian Warfare**

Five months after Russia's annexation of Crimea, in September 2014, the leaders of NATO members gathered at Wales Summit. They strongly condemned 'Russia's illegitimate annexation of Crimea' and 'illegal military intervention in Ukraine.' As a response to Russia's hybrid warfare threats, the leaders approved a 'Readiness Action Plan' which mainly consists of short-term assurance measures and long-term adaptation measures. The plan included a wide range of deterrence measures from establishing a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) to enhancing strategic communication capabilities. They also agreed on a Defence Investment Pledge, which aims that within a decade, all members would spend a minimum of 2% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defence.<sup>28</sup> Wales Summit can be regarded as the start of a comprehensive capability review and improvement process for NATO.

As a continuation of Wales Summit, NATO agreed on a strategy about countering hybrid threats at the end of 2015.<sup>29</sup> The strategy was based on three pillars, which were 'to prepare', 'to deter' and 'to defend.' Although Russia was obviously the primary concern, the strategy was rather generic. Not surprisingly, this generic format produced a comprehensive set of measures.<sup>30</sup> To be prepared; NATO was going to improve its situational awareness and intelligence, strengthen its resilience and increase its training and exercises. Particularly resilience was assumed to play a significant role in countering hybrid threats. To deter; NATO would mainly increase responsiveness of its forces and strengthen its command structure. To defend, NATO would respond militarily whenever deterrence fails.<sup>31</sup> In general, NATO's strategy posited an overall improvement in a wide range of capabilities rather than a strategy tailored against a specific adversary.

NATO's commitment to countering hybrid threats has been reaffirmed at the following meetings. At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, the Alliance announced its determination to address hybrid threats and the creation of a new Joint Intelligence and Security Division.<sup>32</sup> In July 2017, a Hybrid Analysis Branch was established in this Division.<sup>33</sup> At the Brussels Summit in 2018, the Council was authorized to invoke Article 5 against the attacks of hybrid threats as in the case of armed attack. This means that the Council can decide to invoke Article 5, even though there is no an armed attack. At the same summit, the establishment of Counter Hybrid Support Teams, which provide tailored, targeted assistance to member states was also announced.<sup>34</sup> In the short declaration that was released after London Summit in 2019, the Alliance once again stated its determination to strengthen its ability to prepare, deter, and defend against hybrid threats.<sup>35</sup>

Summit meetings can be considered as milestones in the evolution of NATO and provide strategic direction for its activities. The decisions taken at a summit meeting are issued in declarations and then translated into action by the relevant actors.<sup>36</sup> In the last four summit declarations, NATO has reaffirmed its commitment to fight against hybrid threats, which proves how much importance is placed on hybrid warfare. Besides, this also signals that NATO adopts the phrase as a sound concept despite severe criticism

made in the scholarship. In this respect, it has become much more important to understand the perceptions of NATO officials on the concept.

### **Definition of Hybrid Warfare as an Operational Concept**

When asked how they would define ‘hybrid warfare’ in their own words, three different groups and definitions emerged out of discussions. In the beginning, most interviewees (12/18) presented a definition in line with current scholarship. However, further discussions revealed that greater number of interviewees (14/18) suggest ‘political warfare’ and some interviewees (6/18) suggest ‘information warfare’ in expressing hybrid warfare. This also means that in most cases (12/18), one interviewee expressed more than one view.

#### ***Hybrid Warfare View***

First group see the concept as ‘the use of all the means available to reach the political objective’<sup>37</sup> or ‘the combination of unconventional and conventional, symmetric and asymmetric, overt and covert, military and non-military, legal-illegal means.’<sup>38</sup> As one policy officer noted, ‘it is everything from conventional as well as propaganda and economic coercion and cyber-attacks, so it’s really everything.’<sup>39</sup> A military advisor defines the concept as a comprehensive impact of all domains on a political competitor to make sure that our will is superior.<sup>40</sup> These broad definitions can be considered as compliant with the definitions provided by NATO and the EU.

Some interviewees used specific terminologies and abbreviations such as ‘full spectrum operations’<sup>41</sup>, ‘whole of a government approach’<sup>42</sup>, ‘full PMEC (political, military, economic and civilian) domain’<sup>43</sup>, ‘DIME’<sup>44</sup> (diplomacy, information, military and economic) and ‘comprehensive approach’<sup>45</sup> to define ‘hybrid warfare’. General Philip M. Breedlove, former SACEUR, also notes that hybrid warfare requires pursuing a comprehensive approach across the DIMEFIL (diplomatic/political, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, legal) spectrum.<sup>46</sup> In fact, these abbreviations had been in use in the defence community even before the emergence of the hybrid warfare concept. They seem to be different expressions of the same old thing, which is the ‘grand strategy.’ In the words of Galeotti, it is not different from the corollary of the Clausewitzian doctrine.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, this view posits the simultaneous use of all means available to achieve a policy goal, which is quite close to the Clausewitz’ famous definition of the strategy, that is ‘the use of the engagements for the purpose of the war’<sup>48</sup> or Corbett’s definition of major strategy, which is ‘dealing with the whole resources of the nation for war.’<sup>49</sup>

#### ***Political Warfare View***

For the second group, the main difference from the first group lies in the use of military. In this view, the use of military is rather limited. It is used for the purpose of intimidation and show of force at best, or it is used through proxies.<sup>50</sup> Hybrid warfare takes place in a grey zone, somewhere between peace and conflict<sup>51</sup> and below the threshold of an armed conflict.<sup>52</sup> It is a way to make war without leading to an open and conventional conflict<sup>53</sup> and it occurs on a day to day basis.<sup>54</sup> The second view can be regarded as a holistic approach to all non-conventional means.<sup>55</sup> It is the synchronisation and careful calibration of all of sub threshold of Article 5 activities together.<sup>56</sup> As one senior policy advisor noted, ‘it is a non-conventional warfare, using, applying whole set of different tools in

order to achieve their military objective, but ultimately political objective. Hybrid is everything else than military, below the threshold of war.<sup>57</sup>

In current scholarship, this view is best represented by the term ‘political warfare.’ While hybrid warfare suggests a combination of military and civilian tools, political warfare places more emphasis on the non-military and non-lethal elements.<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, despite its previous descriptions that is closer to the first view, NATO seems to ground its practice on the second view. For instance, a defence analyst from the Hybrid Analysis Branch expresses the indicators which NATO uses to determine the hybrid threats:

Here in NATO, we don’t have a great definition of hybrid warfare. However, we have areas or indicators, where you can observe hybrid activities. We have seven of those indicators. I already mentioned that energy security, itself, is one. Political pressure and influence is a second one. There are also hostile intelligence and slash sabotage activities, cyber activities, information operations, soft power elements – by soft power I mean NGOs, cultural and religious activities, minorities, compatriots – The last one is military posturing as a part of strategic messaging. Those together, when you observe activities from the third part and you see activities in different of those fields against one of the Allies or against NATO, it’s a signal for us that it is part of wider hybrid activities.<sup>59</sup>

Out of seven indicators which NATO uses to determine whether a threat is hybrid or not, only one indicator is related to military, and it is not about the kinetic use of forces but rather about the deployment of forces for the purpose of strategic messaging or show of force. This can be interpreted that NATO as well, contrary to its description of hybrid warfare, postulates a limited use of the military and it is more aligned with ‘political warfare’ than ‘hybrid warfare.’

### ***Information Warfare View***

There is a third group of interviewees (6/18) whose views can be regarded as ‘information warfare’. According to US Joint Publication, ‘information operations is the integrated employment, during military operations, of information-related capabilities (IRCs) in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own.’<sup>60</sup> In line with this definition, some interviewees described hybrid warfare as an integrated employment of tools to influence or to impact the will of adversary or the perception of the society<sup>61</sup>; to obfuscate, to deceive or to disrupt the decision-making process of the opponent.<sup>62</sup> Some compared hybrid warfare to Russia’s ‘maskirovka’, ‘disinformation’ or ‘Goebbels’ propaganda’<sup>63</sup>, which are the best historical examples of information warfare, while others use synonyms such as ‘psychological operations’ or directly state ‘informational operations.’<sup>64</sup>

Considering all the views expressed by the interviewees, it is possible to deduce that ‘political warfare’ better represents the common view of the participants; not only because the greatest number of participants (14/18) thinks as such but also because they provided this view often time in the further discussions when the concept was deeply discussed. In most of the cases, interviewees first provided a definition as in the literature, but then they emphasized the limited use of military means, the activities below the open armed conflict or grey zone environment. Therefore, it wouldn’t be wrong to say that great majority of the participants implies ‘political warfare’ when they say hybrid warfare.

## **Critiques of Hybrid Warfare Concept**

This section explores the perceptions of interviewees on the themes that has been frequently criticized. To a large extent, interviewees agree on the themes that are mainly criticized in the literature. That is to say, they do not see hybrid warfare as a new concept, and they find the concept too broad and ambiguous to be useful.

### ***Hybrid Warfare is not New***

There is also nearly a consensus among the NATO officials (16/18) that it is not a new concept. Most interviewees clearly stated that hybrid warfare is as old as war itself: 'War has always a hybrid component', 'It's no different to what people would be doing three centuries ago', 'War has been hybrid ever since the concept of war begun', 'Hybrid warfare is as old as war itself', 'It is as ancient as warfare itself', 'A state power using anything to achieve its goals. That clearly has never changed throughout the history.'<sup>65</sup>

Admitting that it is not new, some interviewees emphasized that hybrid warfare is a label that represents the new application of fundamental principles: 'It's not really new, but it didn't have a proper name in our modern times', 'It has been a useful thing to have it. But we have to be recognised that it's not a new form of warfare', 'It is not new, it has always existed maybe without this name, possibly', 'There is nothing new, maybe there are new tools, new means of combining these unconventional and nonlinear war which were labelled as hybrid', 'I don't think it is [new], it is only new in so far countries found new way to reflect the new technologies to apply it.'<sup>66</sup>

Interviewees gave a quite number of historical examples in criticizing the novelty of the concept: Peloponnesian War in the 5th century BC, Trojan War, Alexander the Great's Wars, French Revolution and Napoleon Wars, Spanish Heritage Wars, French-Britain Colonial Wars, Polish Rebellion against Lithuania 1920, Lithuanian Klaipeda (Memel) Revolt of 1923, Second World War, Vietnam War, Russian disinformation or maskirovka war, Soviets in Cold War, US regime change operations, US-Iraq War, Israel-Hezbollah War, Israel-Palestine Contemporary Conflict, Russia-Ukraine Conflict in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, ISIL's War in Syria, China's War in South Shina Sea are some examples.

These examples belong to different periods of history and they have so different characteristics. Both the Peloponnesian War in the 5th century BC and Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 are given as an example of hybrid warfare. This can be seen as an evidence for why the concept is not new. For another example, Second World War is usually known as a typical example of 'conventional war' in the military literature. However, it is indeed possible to categorize Second World War as a hybrid war given the fact that the psychological, unconventional and non-military methods used in combination with the conventional and military ones. This also signals that every war has a certain degree of hybridity; in fact, as Echevarria noted, 'historically, hybrid war has been the norm, whereas conventional war—which basically emerged after the Second World War—has been something of a fiction.'<sup>67</sup>

### ***A Concept: Too Broad and Ambiguous***

Majority of interviewees (13/18) thinks that the concept has a too broad definition that it becomes warfare itself. This causes the concept to lose its value as an analytical tool.<sup>68</sup> According to its definition, hybrid warfare is everything.<sup>69</sup> It is very difficult to build up a strategy against everything<sup>70</sup> or to agree on a definition about everything.<sup>71</sup> 'How can

you define the evolving character of warfare?’ asks a policy officer. Indeed, it is hard to define the warfare itself. A military officer describes how hybrid warfare becomes warfare itself:

When you're thinking of hybrid warfare, you end up, you would think of conventional warfare, you think of unconventional warfare, plus irregular, because I link subversion into that, I also think crucially the strategic communications piece of this. Part of that course is, psyops part of that, is propaganda, information operations. Big chunk of this comes into the cyber domain and for me, it's all about being a sub threshold of article 5 and it is the synchronisation of all of these activities together. But again, it comes back to the point, that's just warfare. Yeah, that's just using all the tools that you have available.<sup>72</sup>

Closely linked to the broadness, some interviewees (8/18) draw attention to the ambiguity of the concept. They find the concept ‘unclear’, ‘elusive’ and ‘kind of a liquid’<sup>73</sup> A staff officer who is actively involved in the implementation of NATO’s hybrid strategy finds the concept ‘tricky’ as it carries the risk of ascribing any threat to hybrid due to its broadness.<sup>74</sup> In the same vein, a military officer from SHAPE explains how every kind of threat becomes a hybrid threat:

You don’t know what the definition is. It is very hard to frame the problem. But within NATO strategy, NATO policy documents, there are descriptions, but not definitions of hybrid warfare. And there are some lists of hybrid threats but not definitive. And again, I really dislike, yeah, I see a lot of exercises, ‘oh that was a hybrid attack!’ and it is kind a ‘yeah’. It really depends, you know, just irregular type, it is a cyber-attack, it is irregular warfare. It is information operations. To me, it is not a hybrid attack, yeah anything can be hybrid attack. Even an armed assault can be hybrid attack depends on the context of the campaign that’s been waged.<sup>75</sup>

Consequently, in line with current scholarship, a great majority of NATO officials think that hybrid warfare is too broad and ambiguous to be useful.

### **Hybrid Warfare Beyond its Manifest Meaning**

Thus far, the concept has been discussed over its definition as an operational concept. However, as one of the main purposes of this study is to explore what the concept really means for NATO officials, from this point on, the findings beyond its manifest meaning will be presented. In this section, the authors seek an answer for the following question: if it is not a new concept or it is too broad and ambiguous to be analytically useful, ‘what does hybrid warfare concept mean for NATO officials?’

#### ***Hybrid Warfare: Useless as an Operational Concept***

The authors find the following conversation important, which was made with an analyst who works in a branch that is responsible for detecting hybrid threats at NATO HQ, in the sense that it reflects what hybrid warfare means for practitioners in their daily life.

**Interviewer:** Let’s think [imagine] that the same [international] events happen, and this branch and your position was created just for the intelligence purposes. What would change in your current mission and tasks if there is no concept like hybrid warfare concept?



**Interviewee:** I will tell you what would change because of the hybrid, *almost nothing*, in terms of my work. [emphasis added] As I said, I have been energy security expert, and during my all stay here I have been preparing, producing analytical report about Russian energy policy toward NATO countries, non-NATO countries etc. In those papers, 3 or 4 years ago, I already described the tools, leverages that the Russian use against NATO's countries. I mean blackmailing, political pressure, pricing – gas, oil cut-off etc -. I described all of it, without naming it as hybrid. I call it a part of Russian foreign policy. They use it as one tool to expend or to keep their influence in certain countries etc. Then, after they created our branch and after the all concept of hybrid appeared, the only thing that I changed was wording. I just adjust my wording. I say it's a hybrid, hybrid tool in the energy sector instead of Russian leverage in the energy sector. That's why I don't believe that there are changes. The concept was already there, just that we were not naming it.<sup>76</sup>

The concept does not create a significant change in practice, in other words, in *modus operandi* of NATO members. Only thing that has changed is wording, they started to use 'hybrid threats' instead of specific threats in energy sector, in cyber, etc. Similarly, a military officer states that 'we wouldn't lose a lot from the operational and tactical point of view' if there were not hybrid warfare concept. However, he finds it useful at the strategic and political levels as a reminder for changing the paradigm of conventional warfare.<sup>77</sup> A policy analyst defines the concept as 'just a guide in thinking' which is 'important to trigger a debate' but not a 'war strategy' that is 'operationally effective.'<sup>78</sup>

Another reason that rends the concept useless in operational terms is its depiction of the enemy. As Clausewitz stated, 'war is nothing but a duel on a larger scale.'<sup>79</sup> Without an enemy there can be no war, so there can be no strategy. However, the enemy in the hybrid warfare concept, namely hybrid threats are described in such a way that they can do almost everything. The idea that individual units can somehow simultaneously switch back and forth between conventional, irregular, and criminal activities elevates the enemy to a mystical status.<sup>80</sup> As one interviewee noted, 'it is very difficult to build a strategy against everything.'<sup>81</sup> For this reason, in line with the fundamentals of strategy-making, a defence analyst from SHAPE proposes a threat-based approach to counter the current challenges:

When you are considering current day security issues or foreign affairs issues, having a macro concept like hybrid warfare is not particularly useful. Because if you want to talk about Russia, the best thing to do is to analyse Russia, Russia's strategy, Russia's objectives, how it wants to achieve and think about how you might combat it and how you might want to go about having a toolbox or playbook to counter.

Like Van Puyvelde,<sup>82</sup> he further proposes forgetting the label of hybrid warfare: 'If you want to study Russia, you better off just forgetting the label of hybrid warfare, just starting with the strategy of Russia, and strategy of ISIL',<sup>83</sup> which signals that hybrid warfare is useless in operational terms.

### ***Hybrid Warfare is simply Modern Warfare or the Character of Warfare***

As one interviewee noted, referring to Clausewitz, 'war is a chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case.'<sup>84</sup> Regardless of its content, for the majority of interviewees (15/18), hybrid warfare represents the current character of warfare, or it is simply the modern warfare (5/18) in the current era. In other words, they see hybrid

warfare as a common term that represents the new application of long-standing ideas even though the interviewees differ in what the new applications are and how they are employed.

‘If there is one thing that’s never changed in warfare, it is the use of every single tool and method available in order to achieve your strategic objectives’ says a Brigadier General from SHAPE. In that sense, he states, ‘a lot of the time I think hybrid warfare is really just modern warfare’ whether it is Russia’s war in Ukraine or ISIL’s war in Syria.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, a four-star General notes that all wars have a common feature of achieving policy goals although they are conducted in different contexts. In this regard, Russia’s warfare in Ukraine, hence hybrid warfare, is the continuation of warfare adapted to the current circumstances:

So, I see this as a continuation of warfare adapted to the circumstances. You want to achieve a political goal in this case, it is, for ISIL it is to create a Chalipade, in the case of the Algerian War, it was the independence of Algeria. If you take Donbass, it is to create a fictive state. Where there's a good portion of mafia and a bit more because that's what... Let me just highlight the fact that many of the colonial empires were created through a type of hybrid warfare, see how the Brits conquered India and see how the French conquered North Africa. This is largely through hybrid warfare; now different context, different time, different ways of doing it. In this case, General Gerasimov who I know, at least I knew him I should say, he has developed a doctrine which reflects the strengths and weaknesses of Russia. And of course, makes best use of our weaknesses, results not attacking us frontally where we are the strongest.<sup>86</sup>

A policy officer argues that ‘the nature of warfare remains constant, it’s a competition, it’s generally a very tragic competition to ultimately end someone’s influence. But hybrid warfare reflects the changing character of warfare across many more domains.’<sup>87</sup> Another policy officer states that one could call it ‘ambiguous warfare’ instead of hybrid warfare as we are living now in a period that is more ambiguous. Therefore, independently of its content, for many interviewees, hybrid warfare just reflects current face of warfare.

### ***Hybrid Warfare is a Strategic Communication Tool***

Although interviewees find hybrid warfare useless as an operational concept, they find it useful on a number of issues. For instance, majority of interviewees (15/18) believe that the term increased awareness by starting a debate and providing a better understanding about the current threats and security environment, by drawing the attention of politicians and member nations and by improving a more holistic understanding. Some interviewees (6/18) pointed out that this awareness led to a comprehensive review of capabilities and an increase in the defence budget. However, this also suggests that interviewees regard the concept as a tool for ‘strategic communication’ rather than an operational concept.

Strategic communication can be defined as ‘the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfil its mission.’ By strategic communication, organizations aim to ‘create meaning’ in the minds of people and to alter their attitude through ‘persuasion’ in order to achieve their policies.<sup>88</sup> Interviewees described the concept as a ‘strapline to sell an idea’, a ‘reminder rather than a planning tool’ and a ‘trigger to start a capability review’, ‘just guide in thinking but not operationally effective’, a ‘convenient bumper sticker that labels a frightening phenomenon [Russia]’, a ‘tool to create awareness’, ‘not a concept or doctrine but an intellectual framework to create awareness about ambiguity’, ‘not a warfare but just a means to an end’ or a ‘banner for the first ideas in a great state

competition.’<sup>89</sup> These descriptions suggest that the term is used for internal communication rather than a concept or doctrine that is used for operational purposes.

Most interviewees believe that the concept at least ‘allows a debate’ and ‘confirms to us that the way we conducted activity has to evolve and change.’<sup>90</sup> Hybrid warfare is ‘waking the system up’<sup>91</sup> and ‘it is a good label that gives us more stuff to think about.’<sup>92</sup> A policy analyst stated, ‘quite honestly, I question the value of this strategy, with the only exception that it put a debate on the table.’<sup>93</sup> As one military officer noted, ‘hybrid warfare is primarily about awareness. It is merely a tool, I think, to create awareness that in order to achieve a political or military aim.’<sup>94</sup> In this sense, hybrid warfare concept can be understood as a tool used for the strategic communication practices of NATO to achieve its goals, but not necessarily its operational goals.

Besides creating an awareness, some interviewees pointed to its contribution to the capability review and development. As a senior policy analyst stated, ‘it encouraged nations to review whether everything that we do from civil emergency all the way to operational planning, from exercises all the way to resilience is still adequate, is still useful or needed to be enhanced or not. So, the term hybrid functions as a trigger for that process, it is a trigger.’<sup>95</sup> Similarly a defence analyst explained the central role played by hybrid warfare in strengthening the defence posture of NATO:

When we think about how we need to respond, how we adapted our alliance, how we strengthened our deterrence and defence posture from a NATO perspective: the notion of the hybrid environment and the hybrid threat is very front and centre.

A Brigadier General explains clearly that the term is used for totally different reasons such as ‘stimulating debate on the threats’, ‘justifying military expenditure’ and ‘protecting the budget’ other than operational purposes:

It is a tool to stimulate debate and discussion. So, they were right and of course, there a lot of people out there, in the military subdomain, who are desperate for an enemy to justify expenditure on the defence especially. If you don’t have an enemy, why do you have an army? You don’t need it. You can spend the money on schools, and I am with you. But what happened there, for this the people jumped onto hybrid. When Ukraine started, the British Army rejoiced because as far as they were concerned, it proved the utility of the army and the utility of force for the future and therefore our budget was protected. Because in the end, that there are a lot of people who that’s all they care about, that is making sure the budget is protected. I3

Consequently, one can deduce that the term hybrid warfare is a label or a tool that is used for internal purposes of NATO ‘to wake the system up’, ‘to put a debate on the table’, ‘to increase awareness’, ‘to review capabilities’ and ‘to secure the defence budget’ rather than a concept which postulates a framework of principles on how to fight a modern warfare. This makes it rather a tool for strategic communication than an operational concept.

## **Implications**

Hoffman’s hybrid warfare concept can be considered as an attempt to conceptualize modern warfare. Authors believe that there is much to criticize about this earlier version of the concept, which was built around the convergence of distinct modes of warfare at the operational/tactical levels. However, after the shock came with Russia’s annexation

of Crimea, the definition of the concept expanded in such a manner that often time it has been used for other purposes than its operational meaning. It has become difficult to define what hybrid warfare really is.

When assessed from an operational concept perspective, this paper has demonstrated that NATO officials suggest 'political warfare' when they mention 'hybrid warfare.' Three different views have emerged out of interview analyses. First view is named as 'hybrid warfare' as it is tantamount to the definitions in current scholarship, which can be summarized as 'the use of all means available to achieve policy goal.' In fact, the essence of this view is not different from the 'grand strategy.' The second view best fits to the definition of 'political warfare', which is also called as 'grey zone wars.' It posits a careful calibration of all non-conventional means to remain under the threshold of an armed conflict, where the use of military means is limited. Third view is named as the 'information warfare' as their descriptions were almost identical to the official definition of information warfare. Interview analysis revealed that 'political warfare' is a better term to represent NATO officials' perceptions on contemporary warfare.

Having said that, all of these definitions suggest deeper implications. For instance, the concepts associated with hybrid warfare suggest that there are few themes that have not been discussed in the literature. Whether interviewees imply grand strategy, political warfare or information warfare when they explain hybrid warfare, all of them have already been discussed in the history of war literature. The strategy was first systematically conceptualized by Clausewitz, while the grand strategy has been discussed by prominent theorists since the beginning of twentieth century.<sup>96</sup> 'Political warfare' was first defined by US Diplomat George Kennan in 1948 as 'the logical application of Clausewitz's doctrine in time of peace' in a memorandum produced for the US State Department.<sup>97</sup> Grey zone wars were widely discussed in the 1950s, again in relation to conflicts on the periphery of Russia, though it was called Soviet Union at the time.<sup>98</sup> Information warfare has been called as 'propaganda' for a long time before it was changed to psychological warfare, and then to information warfare due to the negative connotation they had.<sup>99</sup> Although each concept include right aspects and observations about the warfare in question, they are not necessarily new type of war, especially in conceptual terms.

Like many analysts, scholars and even the proponents of the concept, interviewees almost unanimously believe that hybrid warfare is not a new concept. However, hybrid, as an adjective which modifies warfare, inherently suggests a new kind of warfare. As Owen noted, the new words frame obvious and enduring observations in a new light, creating an aura of discovery rather than simple relearning.<sup>100</sup> One interviewee asks, 'war has always been here, and we always called it war. So, why are we now trying to give a terminology to what we are seeing?'<sup>101</sup> As an answer to this important question, Christ Tuck states that there is a common fallacy of generalizing from specifics of their own period and labelling these generalizations with a new term. First, Hoffman generalized from the specifics of the war between Israel-Hezbollah in 2006, then US generalized from the specifics of Afghanistan and Iraq Wars and recently defence community has generalized from the specifics of Russian activities in Crimea and Ukraine. It seems that warfare is renamed in relation to the characteristics of each conflict.<sup>102</sup> Gray names it as 'presentism', which means the tendency to see the current problems as unique and fail to see historical continuities.<sup>103</sup> Lonsdale draws attention to 'reductionism', which means concentrating on just one or two of the many dimensions of strategy and suggesting that success can be gained through this particular dimension.<sup>104</sup> According to Echevarria, labelling contemporary warfare became a habit rather than a conscious reflection.<sup>105</sup>

Indeed, a more cautious approach is urgently needed in conceptualizing modern warfare as it has severe consequences.

Similar terms that have undergone repeated modification throughout the history and have been used interchangeably create a 'definitional catastrophe', which eventually fails to provide a firm foundation for discussion and analysis. Infested with buzzwords and jargons, the defence community has difficulty to understand past and current conflicts.<sup>106</sup> For instance since Russia's the annexation of Crimea in 2014, 'political warfare' is the third term that has been coined to identify the same activities of Russia, China or ISIS, following the 'hybrid warfare' and 'grey-zone warfare'. However, this period, as one interviewee noted, might be just 'preparing the battlefield' phase that takes place in the 'initial period of every war',<sup>107</sup> which has already been called as 'phase zero' in the military publications.<sup>108</sup> Echevarria describes the same activities as 'an application of classic coercive strategies.'<sup>109</sup> One cannot help asking how can Western defence community address current challenges as long as they can't speak the same language?

More importantly, the debate over contemporary war actually demonstrates the need for a clear understanding of war's nature and strategy. Because our understanding of war's nature influences how we approach the conduct of war—how we develop military strategy, doctrine and concepts, and train and equip combat forces.<sup>110</sup> The nature of the warfare remains unchanged. War is still an organized violence applied to achieve a policy goal against an intelligent enemy. All wars start with a 'purpose' and they are sustained by the 'passions' such as hatred and courage. In all wars, these two human factors come up against 'chance or uncertainty.'<sup>111</sup> The nature of war rests on the fundamental cause-effect relationships of these three forces, namely the trinity that was formalized by Clausewitz.<sup>112</sup> Keeping them in balance gives one a better chance of maintaining political control. Technological advances don't change the fact that still only a group of people make critical decisions in the war. No matter whether a war is irregular, conventional or hybrid in the means and methods employed, it is always conducted by a statecraft for the politics. In all wars, the principal purpose of decision-makers is to convert a variety of tools into political influence.<sup>113</sup>

For those who are aware of war's nature and the fundamentals of strategy, the alleged 'further complexity' of hybrid wars or the 'unprecedented calibration' of non-military tools are not new nor meaningful. War has always been and will always be complex, due to the inherent uncertainty, danger and friction in its nature. Strategists have always used the innovative combinations of diverse tools to achieve the political purpose and they will do so. This doesn't mean that nothing changes in war. Warfare has been evolving in parallel with the changes in technology, social and political life. However, the defence community spends more time to put warfare into specific categories through conceptualizing and then labelling them, instead of focusing on these changes and their impact on warfare. Warfare is too complicated to be categorized neatly. What is required is to keep unchanging nature of war in mind, to identify the changes in different dimensions, to have holistic vision of the strategic context in all senses and to have the adaptability that is needed to meet unique challenges, through the use of all instruments of grand strategy.<sup>114</sup> For instance, in discussing the novelty of hybrid warfare, interviewees suggested three important lines of evolution in the current warfare: first, radical changes in the information technologies, particularly in cyber domain; second, societies' increasing involvement into the war due to the increasing interconnectivity; third, increasing impact of unconventional means. Authors believe that it is more important to discuss these changes and their effect on warfare than whether they constitute a new form of war.

Another important conclusion to be drawn from this study is that the term 'hybrid warfare' has been used as a tool for strategic communication. In the words of Ofer Fridman, it has been 'politicized' to be used as a 'tool in internal manoeuvring for finance, public opinion and political power'<sup>115</sup>. In the same vein, implying hybrid warfare concept, Tenenbaum argues, 'fashionable new concepts may be only distantly related to actual changes in warfare and be far more suited to building up arguments in view of domestic political or bureaucratic struggles.'<sup>116</sup> Indeed, most of interviewees find the concept useful for a number of reasons other than its operational purposes; they see the concept as a useful tool to increase awareness, to catalyse the development of military capabilities or to secure the defence budget. However, this raises a number of questions, which has not been much discussed in current scholarship. For instance, it signals severe problems in existing civil-military relations, threat detection capability, the structure and processing of organizations and defence planning/budgeting system. These issues might also be regarded as the root causes for the politicization of hybrid warfare which deserves more time and effort than discussing what type of warfare that we are fighting.

Nevertheless, it is symptoms that are discussed more than the root causes. Besides discussing the definition and novelty of hybrid warfare, we should ask more questions to reveal the root causes so that the durable solutions could be possible. For instance, we should ask, why does NATO, or a member nation need to use the term as a communication tool to draw the attention of politicians while there are existing civil-military mechanisms? Why is a term needed to facilitate the improvement of capabilities while there is a defence planning and budgeting system, which identifies the required capabilities and promotes their development and acquisition?<sup>117</sup> Why is an ambiguous concept needed to tackle the stove piping and the cumbersome functioning of the Alliance? These are important questions arising from this study to understand why the term hybrid warfare is politicized. Authors believe, each question is crucial for the Alliance and deserves further research.

As mentioned, strategic communication postulates the use of communication practices to enhance achieving goals of an organization. However, this doesn't necessarily require the use of operational concepts as a communication tool as it has serious consequences. On the one hand, the lack of definitional clarity creates confusion, clouds important matters that needs to be discussed and weaken our ability to understand the conflicts.<sup>118</sup> On the other hand, as the great majority of interviewees noted, there are some advantages of using the concept as a communication tool. The main argument boils down to making a wise selection between the two. Authors believe that the conceptual clarity should not be sacrificed for other purposes. As one interviewee noted, it might cause 'more harm than good.'<sup>119</sup>

## Notes

---

1. There is not an official or fixed definition for the terms ‘hybrid warfare’, ‘hybrid threat’ and ‘hybrid war’. They are often used interchangeably. In theory, hybrid threats denote the actor who employs the hybrid means. The use of ‘hybrid warfare’ or ‘hybrid war’ largely depends on the connotations attached to the ‘warfare’ or ‘war’. In practice, ‘hybrid threats’ is frequently used to suggest the ‘hybrid warfare’ rather than an actor. For instance, the EU, which deliberately refrains from using warfare, defines ‘hybrid threats’ in such a way that it describes the hybrid warfare. All in all, it is really hard to draw a clear line between these terms in practice. For this reason, authors will use ‘hybrid warfare’ in this paper as an overarching term, interchangeably with the other two terms.
2. Nemeth, “Future War and Chechnya”.
3. Mattis and Hoffman, “Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars”.
4. See the following articles for Hoffman’s concept: Hoffman, Frank G., “The Rise of Hybrid Wars”, 2007; “Hybrid Warfare and Challenges”, 2009; “Hybrid vs. Compound War”, 2009; “Neither Omnipotent Nor Unbeatable”, 2010; “On Not-So-New Warfare”, 2014.
5. Johnson, “Hybrid War and Its Countermeasures”, 141.
6. Hoffman, *The Rise of Hybrid Wars*, 14.
7. Ibid, 8.
8. Ibid, 29.
9. Hoffman, ““Hybrid Threats’: Neither Omnipotent Nor Unbeatable,” 441–442.
10. Lasconjarias and Larsen, “A New Way of Warfare”, in *NATO’s Response to Hybrid Warfare*, 4.
11. Poli, *An Asymmetrical Symmetry*, 7.
12. Tenenbaum, “Hybrid Warfare in the Strategic Spectrum”.
13. Lasconjarias and Larsen, “A New Way of Warfare”, 6.
14. Galeotti, “Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear?”, 283; Lasconjarias and Larsen, “A New Way of Warfare”, 2.
15. Giegerich, “Hybrid Warfare and the Changing Character of Conflict”, 15.
16. NATO, “White Paper. Next Steps NATO’s Transform. To Warsaw Summit Beyond”.
17. Maas, “Hybrid Threat and CSDP,” in *Handbook on CSDP*, 125.
18. Hoffman, “On Not-So-New Warfare”, 3; “Thinking About Future Conflict”, 12.
19. Tenenbaum, “Hybrid Warfare in the Strategic Spectrum”, 95-97.
20. Renz and Smith, “Russia and Hybrid Warfare”, 3.
21. TRADOC, Regulation 71-20, 9.
22. Ivo PIKNER et al., *Military Operating Concepts Development*, 13.
23. Fridman, *Russian Hybrid Warfare Resurgence and Politicisation*.
24. See the following critiques for earlier version; Glenn, “Thoughts on Hybrid Conflict”; Gray, *Categorical Confusion?*; Cox, Bruscano, and Ryan, “Why Hybrid Warfare is Tactics. See the following critiques for expanded version; Puyvelde, “Hybrid War - Does It Even Exist?”; Tenenbaum, “Hybrid Warfare in the Strategic Spectrum”; Biscop, “Hybrid Hysteria”; Charap, “The Ghost of Hybrid War”; Renz and Smith, “Russia and Hybrid Warfare”; Galeotti, “Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear?”; Kofman, “Russian Hybrid Warfare”; Fridman, “Hybrid Warfare or Gibrinaya Voyna?”; Johnson, “Hybrid War and Its Countermeasures”.

- 
25. NATO, "London Declaration", para. 3.
  26. Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design*, 121.
  27. Gheciu, "Nato, Liberal Internationalism, and the Politics", 33.
  28. NATO, "Wales Summit Declaration", para. 4-14.
  29. NATO, "Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs".
  30. Stoltenberg, "Press Conference by NATO Secretary General".
  31. NATO, "NATO's Response to Hybrid Threats".
  32. NATO, "Warsaw Summit Communiqué".
  33. Loringhoven, "Adapting NATO Intelligence in Support of 'One NATO'".
  34. NATO, "Brussels Summit Declaration".
  35. NATO, "London Declaration".
  36. NATO, "Summit Meetings".
  37. Authors' interview with 7 and 9.
  38. Authors' interview with 6, 15, 16.
  39. Authors' interview with 13.
  40. Authors' interview with 1.
  41. Authors' interview with 2, 6, 8, 9, 10.
  42. Authors' interview with 4, 12, 16, 17, 18.
  43. Authors' interview with 12.
  44. Authors' interview with 17.
  45. Authors' interview with 7.
  46. Breedlove, "Foreword", in *NATO's Response to Hybrid Threats*, XXV.
  47. Galeotti, "Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear?", 287.
  48. Clausewitz, *On War*, 177.
  49. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, 30.
  50. Authors' interview with 11,16.
  51. Authors' interview with 8,16.
  52. Authors' interview with 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 15.
  53. Authors' interview with 7, 15.
  54. Authors' interview with 8, 9, 10, 11.
  55. Authors' interview with 2.
  56. Authors' interview with 3, 10, 17.
  57. Authors' interview with 5.
  58. Robinson et al., *Modern Political Warfare*, xiv, 4.
  59. Authors' interview with 14.
  60. *JP 3-13, Information Operations*, I-1.
  61. Authors' interview with 1, 5, 7.
  62. Authors' interview with 4, 11, 12, 14.
  63. Authors' interview with 11.
  64. Authors' interview with 7, 14.
  65. Authors' interview with 1, 3, 13, 15, 16, 18 respectively.
  66. Authors' interview with 10, 11, 12, 14, 17 respectively.
  67. Echevarria, *Operating in the Gray Zone*, xi.
  68. Gray, *Categorical Confusion?*,16; Puyvelde, "Hybrid War", 17; Renz and Smith, "Russia and Hybrid Warfare", 11.
  69. Authors' interview with 3, 5, 7, 10, 13, 17.
  70. Authors' interview with 7.
  71. Authors' interview with 2, 8.
  72. Authors' interview with 3.
  73. Authors' interview with 14, 15, 1.



- 
74. Authors' interview with 13.
  75. Authors' interview with 17.
  76. Authors' interview with 14.
  77. Authors' interview with 7.
  78. Authors' interview with 6.
  79. Clausewitz, *On War*, 75.
  80. Cox, Brusolino and Ryan, "Why Hybrid Warfare is Tactics", 26.
  81. Authors' interview with 7.
  82. Puyvelde, "Hybrid War".
  83. Authors' interview with 18.
  84. Authors' interview with 15.
  85. Authors' interview with 3. Modern warfare was also used by 8, 10, 15, 16.
  86. Authors' interview with 2.
  87. Authors' interview with 8. The term character of warfare was also used by 4, 11, 15.
  88. Hallahan et al., "Defining Strategic Communication", 3, 23-24.
  89. Authors' interview with 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18 respectively.
  90. Authors' interview with 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18.
  91. Authors' interview with 17.
  92. Authors' interview with 9.
  93. Authors' interview with 6.
  94. Authors' interview with 10.
  95. Authors' interview with 5.
  96. Caliskan, "Hybrid Warfare through the Lens of Strategic Theory", 3-5.
  97. Robinson et al., *Modern Political Warfare*, 1.
  98. Stoker, "What's in a Name II", 23.
  99. Seppälä, "New Wars and Old Strategies".
  100. Owen, "The War of New Words".
  101. Authors' interview with 6.
  102. Tuck, "Hybrid War : The Perfect Enemy" .
  103. Puyvelde, "Hybrid War".
  104. Lonsdale, *The Nature of Warfare*, 182.
  105. Echevarria, *Operating in the Gray Zone*, 1.
  106. Stoker, "What's in a Name II", 21, 23.
  107. Authors' interview with 11, 14.
  108. *JP 3-0 Doctrine for Joint Operations*, V-13; *FM 3-0 Operations*, 3-2; Authors' interview with 3, 11.
  109. Echevarria, *Operating in the Gray Zone*, xi.
  110. Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*, 58.
  111. Coker, *Rebooting Clausewitz*, 46.
  112. Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*, 78.
  113. Gray, *Theory of Strategy*, 35.
  114. Gray, *Categorical Confusion?*, 33.
  115. Fridman, *Russian 'Hybrid Warfare'*, 1.
  116. Tenenbaum, "Hybrid Warfare in the Strategic Spectrum", 95.
  117. NATO, "NATO Defence Planning Process".
  118. Stoker, "What's in a Name II", 23.
  119. Authors' interview with 17.

---

## References

- Biscop, Sven. "Hybrid Hysteria - Policy Brief". *Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations*, 2015.
- Breedlove, Philip M. "Foreword". In *NATO's Response to Hybrid Threats*, edited by Guillaume Lasconjarias and Jeffrey A. Larsen. NATO Defence College, 2015.
- Caliskan, M. "Hybrid Warfare through the Lens of Strategic Theory". *Defense and Security Analysis*, (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14751798.2019.1565364>.
- Charap, Samuel. "The Ghost of Hybrid War". *Survival* 57, no. 6 (2015): 51–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2015.1116147>.
- Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War*. Edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. *English*. Vol. 49. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976.
- Coker, Christopher. *Rebooting Clausewitz: 'On War' in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Corbett, Julian. *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*. EricGrove. London: Annapolis, 1988.
- Cox, Dan G., Thomas Bruscano, and Alex Ryan. "Why Hybrid Warfare is Tactics Not Strategy: A Rejoinder to 'Future Threats and Strategic Thinking'". *Infinity Journal* 2, no. 2 (2012): 25–29.
- Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Fourth Edition. Sage Publications, 2018.
- Echevarria, Antulio J. *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*. Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Echevarria, Antulio J. *Operating in the Gray Zone: An Alternative Paradigm For U.S. Military Strategy*. Strategic Studies Institute U.S.A.W College Press, 2016.
- Fridman, Ofer. "Hybrid Warfare or Gibridnaya Voyna?: Similar, but Different". *RUSI Journal* 162, no. 1 (2017): 42–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2016.1253370>.
- Fridman, Ofer. *Russian 'Hybrid Warfare' Resurgence and Politicisation*. London: Hurst & Company, 2018.
- Galeotti, Mark. "Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear? How New is Russia's 'New Way of War'?" *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27, no. 2 (2016): 282–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2015.1129170>.
- Gheciu, Alexandra. "Nato, Liberal Internationalism, and the Politics of Imagining the Western Security Community". *International Journal* 74, no. 1 (2019): 32–46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702019834645>.
- Giegerich, Bastian. "Hybrid Warfare and the Changing Character of Conflict". *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 15, no. 2 (2016): 65–72. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.11610/Connections.15.2.05>.
- Glenn, Russell W. "Thoughts on 'Hybrid' Conflict". *Small Wars Journal* 31, no. April 2008 (2009): 107–13.
- Gray, Colin S. *Categorical Confusion? The Strategic Implications of Recognizing Challenges Either As Irregular or Traditional*. Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012.
- Gray, Colin S. *Theory of Strategy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Hallahan, Kirk, Derina Holtzhausen, Betteke van Ruler, Dejan Verčič, and Krishnamurthy Sriramesh. "Defining Strategic Communication". *International Journal of Strategic Communication* 1, no. 1 (2007): 3–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15531180701285244>.

- 
- Hoffman, Frank G. *Conflict in the 21 St Century : The Rise of Hybrid Wars*. Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007. <http://www.potomac institute.org/>.
- Hoffman, Frank G. “Hybrid Threats’: Neither Omnipotent Nor Unbeatable”. *Orbis* 54, no. 3 (2010): 441–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2010.04.009>.
- Hoffman, Frank G. “Hybrid vs. Compound War, The Janus Choice: Defining Today’s Multifaceted Conflicts”. *Armed Forces Journal*, no. October (2009).
- Hoffman, Frank G. “Hybrid Warfare and Challenges”. *Joint Force Quarterly* 1st quarter, no. 52 (2009): 34–39.
- Hoffman, Frank G. “On Not-So-New Warfare: Political Warfare vs Hybrid Threats”. *War on the Rocks*, 2014, 1–4.
- Hoffman, Frank G. “Thinking About Future Conflict”. *Marine Corps Gazette* 98, no. 11 (2014): 10–19.
- Johnson, Robert. “Hybrid War and Its Countermeasures: A Critique of the Literature”. *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 29, no. 1 (2018): 141–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2018.1404770>.
- Kofman, Michael. “Russian Hybrid Warfare and Other Dark Arts”. *War on the Rocks*, 2016, 1–9. <http://warontherocks.com/2016/03/russian-hybrid-warfare-and-other-dark-arts/>.
- Lasconjarias, Guillaume, and Jeffrey A Larsen. “Introduction: A New Way of Warfare”. In *NATO’s Response to Hybrid Warfare*. Rome: NATO Defence College, 2015. [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/195405/fp\\_24.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/195405/fp_24.pdf).
- Lonsdale, David J. *The Nature of Warfare in the Information Age*. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.
- Loringhoven, Arndt Freytag von. “Adapting NATO Intelligence in Support of ‘One NATO’”, 2017. <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2017/09/08/adapting-nato-intelligence-in-support-of-one-nato/index.html>.
- Maas, John. “Hybrid Threat and CSDP”. In *Handbook on CSDP- The Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union*, edited by Jochen Rehr, 125–30. Federal Ministry of Defence and Sports of the Republic of Austria, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2855/764888>.
- Mattis, James N., and Frank Hoffman. “Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars”. *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 131, no. 11 (2005): 18–19. [http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/aulimp/citations/gsa/2005\\_118877/123268.html](http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/aulimp/citations/gsa/2005_118877/123268.html).
- NATO. “Brussels Summit Declaration”. NATO Press Release, 2018. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_156624.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm).
- NATO. “London Declaration”, 2019. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_171584.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_171584.htm).
- NATO. “Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs”, 2015. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_125368.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_125368.htm).
- NATO. “NATO’s Response to Hybrid Threats”, 2019. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_156338.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm).
- NATO. “NATO Defence Planning Process”, 2018. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_49202.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49202.htm).
- NATO. “Summit Meetings”, 2018. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50115.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50115.htm).
- NATO. “Wales Summit Declaration”, 2014. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm).
- NATO. “Warsaw Summit Communiqué”, 2016. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm).
- NATO. “White Paper- Next Steps in NATO’S Transformation: To the Warsaw Summit

- 
- and Beyond”, 2015.
- Nemeth, William J. “Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare”. Naval Postgraduate School, 2002.
- Owen, William F. “The War of New Words Why Military History Trumps Buzzwords”. *Armed Forces Journal*, 2009. <http://armedforcesjournal.com/essay-the-war-of-new-words/>.
- PIKNER, Ivo, Pavel ZUNA, Jan SPISAK, and Vlastimil GALATIK. *Military Operating Concepts Development*. Shopmybook. Puurs, Belgium, 2012.
- Poli, Fulvio. “An Asymmetrical Symmetry: How Convention Has Become Innovative Military Thought”. U.S. Army War College, 2010.
- Puyvelde, Damien Van. “Hybrid War – Does It Even Exist?” *NATO Review Magazine*, 2015, 2015–17. <http://www.nato.int/docu/Review/2015/Also-in-2015/hybrid-modern-future-warfare-russia-ukraine/EN/index.htm>.
- Renz, Bettina, and Hanna Smith. “Russia and Hybrid Warfare - Going beyond the Label”. *Aleksanteri Papers*, 2016. [www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/publications/aleksanteri\\_papers.html](http://www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/publications/aleksanteri_papers.html).
- Robinson, Linda, Todd C Helmus, Raphael S Cohen, Alireza Nader, Andrew Radin, Madeline Magnuson, and Katya Migacheva. *Modern Political Warfare: Current Practices and Possible Responses*, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.7249/RR1772>.
- Seppälä, Tiina. “‘New Wars’ and Old Strategies: From Traditional Propaganda to Information Warfare and Psychological Operations”. In *23 Conference and General Assembly IAMCR/AIECS/AIERI International Association for Media and Communication Research, Barcelona*,. Barcelona, 2002.
- Stoker, Donald. “What’s in a Name II: ‘Total War’ and Other Terms That Mean Nothing”. *Infinity Journal* 5, no. 3 (2016): 21–23.
- Stoltenberg, Jens. “Press Conference by NATO Secretary General”, 2015. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_125362.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_125362.htm).
- Tenenbaum, Élie. “Hybrid Warfare in the Strategic Spectrum: An Historical Assessment”. In *NATO’s Response to Hybrid Threats*, edited by Guillaume Lasconjarias and Jeffrey A. Larsen. Rome: NATO Defence College, 2015.
- TRADOC. Regulation 71-20: Capabilities Determination, Development, and Integration, United States Army (2013).
- Tuck, Chris. “Hybrid War: The Perfect Enemy”, 2017. <https://defenceindepth.co/2017/04/25/hybrid-war-the-perfect-enemy/>.
- United States Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 3-0 Doctrine for Joint Operations*, 2018.
- United States Department of the Army. *FM 3-0 Operations*, 2017.
- United States Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 3-13 Information Operations*, 2014.