ARTÍCULO ORIGINAL

Image of war and hybrid warfare

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Image of war and hybrid warfare

Johann Schmid

"War is not only a true chameleon because it changes its nature somewhat in every concrete case, but it is also a strange trinity in terms of its overall appearance and in relation to the tendencies that prevail within it...".

Carl von Clausewitz: On War I, 28, p. 213 (1832).

War images

Hybrid warfare in and around Ukraine has confronted Europe with a security policy paradigm shift since 2014. The surprise takeover of Crimea by masked Russian soldiers without insignia in February/March 2014 and the Kremlin's initial denial of connection to it have shaped the image of a hybrid form of warfare worldwide. The subsequent military conflict in the east of Ukraine with separatism supported by neighboring states and the armed establishment and military security of newly created so-called people's republics (Donetsk, Luhansk), with recourse, among other things, to "Russian fighters on vacation" further reinforced this perception. For eight years, the pursuit of plausible deniability of Moscow's official involvement was the focus of Russia's actions in the hybrid trench warfare in Donbas.

With Russia's large-scale military attack on Ukraine on February 24, 2022, what Russia called a "special military operation", the Ukrainian war has entered a new, militarily escalating but no less hybrid phase. This attack triggered strong reactions from the West and led to the declaration of a...

Clausewitz, Carl von (1832): Vom Kriege. Hinterlassenes Werk des Generals Carl von Clausewitz, Bonn: 1980, Dümmler, S. 213.
[1] Vgl. dazu: Schmid, Johann (2021): Herausforderungen hybrider Kriegführung. In: Böckenförde, Stephan / Gareis Sven B. (Hrsg.): Deutsche Sicherheitspolitik. Herausforderungen, Akteure und Prozesse, Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich/UTB (2021), 978-3-8252-8799-3, 3. Auflage 2021, (S. 221-224).

[1] Vgl. dazu: Schmid, Johann (2022): Kampf um die Ukraine: Das Ende hybrider Kriegführung? In: ZMSBw, Mediathek, Ukraine-Dossier, Potsdam, 16.12.2022

Turning point" led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz. After the desired overthrow of the Ukrainian government failed in the hybrid "blitzkrieg mode", i.e. in a combination of psychological shock and subversive influence in advance, the expansion of the war on the timeline as well as the inability of both sides to decide the war in a conventional military manner are currently important to be able to be the main driving force of hybrid operations. Russia continues to use the full range of hybrid warfare across a wide range of domains and dimensions. In addition to propaganda, historical interpretation, measures in the economic and energy sector, mock referendums, territorial annexations, the staging of its own "defensive war" and nuclear threats, attacks on Ukraine's civilian energy and supply infrastructure and thus on Ukrainian society are currently the central vector of Russian action warfare has become.

Hybrid warfare is not a new phenomenon. It is as old as the history of war and conflict. Greetings from the battle for Troy and the legend of the wooden horse. However, the empirical manifestations of hybrid warfare are always new and can be particularly creatively designed: the horizontal delimitation of the battlefield, the use and connection of different domains and

dimensions for the purpose of war, operating in the gray areas of various interfaces as well as the unorthodox combination of a wide variety of means , methods, tactics and strategies open up almost endless combination possibilities. Hybrid warfare does not have to empirically look like it did in eastern Ukraine. Other manifestations from the recent past can be seen in the civil war in Syria that has been ongoing since 2011, in the actions of the so-called "Islamic State" in Syria and Iraq, in the actions of political Islamism in Europe, as well as in the operations of Hezbollah in the Lebanon War in 2006. As An "archetype" of hybrid warfare can be considered the actions of the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong in the Second Indochina War (1964-1975) – i.e. the American phase of the Vietnam War. This included, among other things, regular warfare, guerrilla warfare, terror but also agitation and propaganda, mock negotiations and strategic ones

Vgl. Schmid, Johann (2020): Der Archetypus hybrider Kriegführung. Hybride Kriegführung vs. Militärisch-zentrierte Kriegführung. In: Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift (ÖMZ), Heft 5/2020, ISSN 0048-1440, S. 570-579, Wien, 2020.

Communication creatively combined. Following an indirect strategic approach, the North Vietnamese succeeded in gradually shifting the center of gravity of the decision from the military battlefield in the rice fields and jungles of Vietnam to the US home front. Morality, legitimacy and the dwindling social and political will to continue the war thus became the centers of gravity of the decision. Even following a military-centric approach, the US was unable to understand the "hybrid strategy" of its Vietnamese opponents until the end. This subsequently led to the so-called "Vietnam trauma". A conversation from 1975 in Hanoi between Colonel Harry G. Summers, the leader of the US negotiating delegation, and his North Vietnamese interlocutor Colonel Tu makes this clear: Summers: "You know, you never defeated us on the battlefield. " Tu: "That may be so, but it is also irrelevant." Shortly before, North Vietnam had conquered Saigon in a major mechanized offensive and US President Gerald Ford had admitted the American defeat in the Vietnam War.

In order to avoid future "traumas" that result from incorrect perceptions of the image of war and to better understand the "chameleon war" (Clausewitz) in its hybrid forms and dimensions, it is necessary to take a look at the essence of this empirically extremely versatile phenomenon. This seems all the more necessary since the conceptual counterpart to hybrid warfare, namely military-centered warfare, has rarely been observed in its pure form in the recent past. The Falklands War in 1982, the Gulf War in 1991 or the Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020 are examples of this other form of warfare, sometimes referred to as "classic" or "conventional". This type of warfare - in the "Napoleonic style" - is waged primarily using military means and methods on a military battlefield and strives for an overall military decision in a military conflict. Although this form of warfare should by no means be viewed as a discontinued model, it can still be assumed that it is

Vgl. Schmid, Johann (2017): Hybride Kriegführung in Vietnam – Strategie und das Centre of Gravity der Entscheidung. In: Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik (ZFAS). Band 10, Heft 3 (2017), DOI 10.1007/s12399-017-0659-4, S. 373-390, Springer VS, 2017.
[1] Vgl. Summers, Harry G. (1982): On Strategy: A critical analysis of the Vietnam War. Presidio Press, New York: 1982.

that the future of war will be largely characterized by hybrid forms of warfare. The bias in one's own thinking, on the one hand in the military-centered patterns of the world wars and on the other hand in the primarily irregular threat scenarios from militarily far inferior opponents in the context of the peace and stabilization missions of the past two decades, equally obscures the view of the essence and the specific challenges posed by hybrid ones warfare. Recognizing and understanding the complex, often hidden parameters and mechanisms of hybrid methods of warfare represents, not least, an intellectual challenge. In addition to political decision-makers, military leaders and superiors also have to face this in order to identify implications for leadership, education, and training as early as possible to be able to derive one's own strengths. Therefore, the following will take a look at the nature of hybrid warfare in order to be able to derive initial implications and suggestions for the armed forces.

The approach is based on the understanding that an empirically derived conceptualization of hybrid warfare that is oriented towards the essence of the phenomenon can offer added value for the analysis and evaluation of current and future as well as past war and conflict situations. This is not about identifying a new form of the so-called "new wars", but rather about the conceptual disclosure of a specific, difficult to grasp, but by no means new form of warfare. Used as an analytical tool, the outlined concept can also contribute to an improved holistic understanding of war as a whole.

 Hybrid warfare

Hybrid warfare as a specific form of warfare can be described using three central character traits and their interaction. These relate to the area of action and decision-making, the type of operation and the use of resources/methods. Depending on the form

Based on these characteristics, the type and degree of hybridity of a dispute can be determined.

Action/decision space: Hybrid warfare expands and delimits the battlefield horizontally by combining different domains and dimensions as independent fields of action/battle. This includes domains such as politics, diplomacy, information, economics, finance, infrastructure, technology, military, society and culture. Soft dimensions such as legitimacy and morality also come into play here. It is important that the overall decision in the context of hybrid warfare is aimed primarily at non-military gravitational fields - i.e. focal points of targeted and decision-seeking action. The connection is established through cross-domain and multidimensional action. In this regard, one could also speak of multidimensional or mosaic warfare. Hybrid warfare is therefore much more than purely military combat. Armed forces can become a supporting element of an overall decision in non-military domains.

Operational conduct: Hybrid warfare is characterized by operating in gray areas of interfaces. These arise particularly in the elusive areas between war and peace, friend and enemy, internal and external security, civil and military areas of responsibility, truth and lies, legal and illegal methods of action as well as state and non-state actor categories. By operating at interfaces, hybrid warfare deliberately dissolves traditional categories of order and areas of responsibility and thus consciously creates ambiguity and uncertainty. Attribution of actions becomes more difficult and plausible deniability of one's own actions becomes a lived norm. The aim is to paralyze the enemy's situational awareness and decision-making and limit or paralyze his reaction options. Against this background, hybrid warfare could also be referred to as shadow warfare or gray zone warfare

[1] Die hier skizzierte Konzeptualisierung hybrider Kriegführung orientiert sich u.a. an: Schmid (2021). Schmid, Johann (2022): Was ist hybride Kriegführung? Krieg in der Grauzone von Schnittstellen. ZMSBw, Mediathek, Ukraine-Dossier, Potsdam, 30.09.2022. Was ist hybride Kriegführung? (bundeswehr.de). Schmid, Johann (2022): Hybride Kriegführung – Erklärstück. ZMSBw, Mediathek, Aktuelle Karte, Potsdam, 13.12.2022. Die Aktuelle Karte – Hybride Kriegführung – Erklärstück (bundeswehr.de)

Military-Centric Warfare
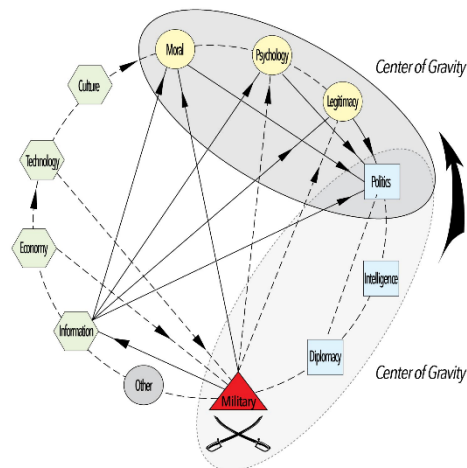Center of Gravity: focused on military decision

Hybrid Warfare
Center of Gravity: focused on
broad spectrum of civil & military domains

Center of Gravity

Center of Gravity

Center of Gravity
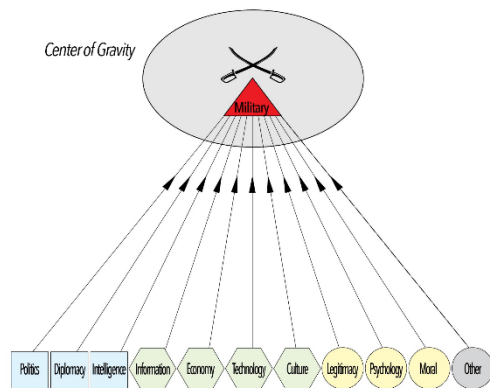
Center of Gravity

J.Schmid   Hierarchical Structure

Non-hierarchical / dynamic /flexible Structure
Multiple and shifting Centers of Gravity

Military-centered warfare (left graphic) - as the conceptual counterpart to hybrid warfare - primarily strives for a decision using military means and methods on a military battlefield. Other domains are put at the service of a military decision, which in turn is expected to result in overall political success. In contrast, hybrid warfare (right graphic) combines and integrates different domains and dimensions as discrete battlefields in a dynamic and flexible manner. A decision is primarily sought in non-military gravitational fields. The armed forces can thus become a supporting element of an overall decision in non-military areas of action. In contrast to the hierarchical structure of military-centered warfare, the internal connections in hybrid warfare have a flexible, non-hierarchical structure with changing and multiple centers of gravity for decision-making. © Johann Schmid.

Use of means/methods: Hybrid warfare combines a wide variety of means, methods, tactics and strategies, including civil and military, regular and irregular, symmetrical and asymmetrical, and overt and covert, in creative and unorthodox ways. Hybrid warfare combines elements that would otherwise be viewed separately. New hybrid forms are constantly emerging in which procedures and concepts are combined in an unorthodox manner, even across hierarchies and levels. Means

and methods of diplomacy, disinformation, propaganda, economic war, military confrontation or even the social culture war can be orchestrated together. Against this background, hybrid warfare could also be described as multi-vector warfare. In the military sector, this can mean, for example, the combination of conventional warfare, nuclear threats and asymmetrical guerrilla warfare.

From these conceptual considerations, the following short definition of hybrid warfare can be derived:
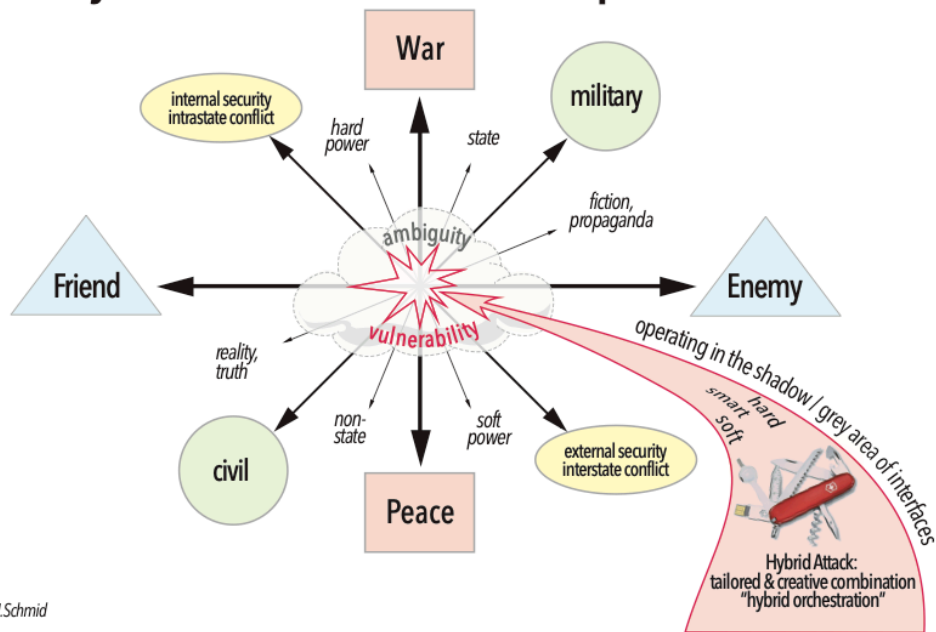
Hybrid warfare is a specific form of warfare that delimits the battlefield horizontally and aims to make decisions primarily in non-military fields of action, which operates particularly in the gray areas of interfaces and thus creates strategic ambiguity and which challenges the opponent through unorthodox combinations of means and methods.

Analysis tools developed on this basis can contribute to training judgments about hybrid warfare.

For example, the "Hybrid Warfare Matrix" can be used to determine the type and degree of "hybridity" of a confrontation.

Nicht jede Auseinandersetzung hybrider Art erreicht die Eskalationsstufe zum Krieg. Dieser gehen im Rahmen hybrider Kriegführung oftmals lange Vorbereitungsphasen unterhalb der Schwelle kriegerischer Gewaltanwendung voraus oder folgen auf eine solche. In diesen Fällen bietet es sich an, je nach Ausprägung, von hybriden Bedrohungen, Konfliktlagen oder Kampagnen zu sprechen. Man könnte im übertragenen Sinne auch von einem „Krieg/Hybridkrieg vor oder nach dem Krieg" sprechen. Der konzeptionelle Ansatz bleibt identisch. Hybride Kriegführung bietet sich als inklusive, alle – horizontalen wie vertikalen – Eskalationsstufen einschließende übergeordnete Gesamtkonzeption an

Hybrid Warfare and the Concept of Interfaces

War

internal security
intrastate conflict

hard
power

state

military

fiction,
propaganda

ambiguity

Friend

Enemy

vulnerability

reality,
truth

operating in the shadow / grey area of interfaces

non-
state

soft
power

smart
hard
soft

civil

external security
interstate conflict

Peace

Hybrid Attack:
tailored & creative combination
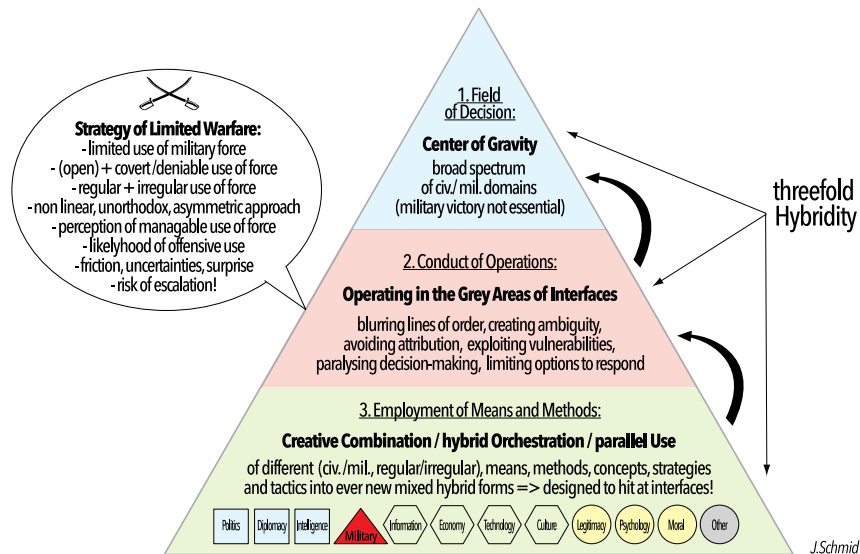"hybrid orchestration"

J.Schmid

Hybrid warfare is characterized by operating in the gray areas of interfaces. For this purpose, a wide variety of instruments, means and methods, tactics and strategies are combined in a precise, creative and unorthodox manner. Creating a hybrid campaign can in some ways be compared to constructing a Swiss Army knife. The blade of the knife then represents the military component within the context of a variety of other instruments, means and methods. In contrast to the Swiss army knife, the various instruments can also be used simultaneously or cumulatively in the context of hybrid warfare.

The "paradoxical" Trinity of Hybrid Warfare

Three key characteristics / tendencies & their hybrid interaction / orchestration

Strategy of Limited Warfare:
- limited use of military force
- (open) + covert / deniable use of force
- regular + irregular use of force
- non linear, unorthodox, asymmetric approach
- perception of managable use of force
- likelyhood of offensive use
- friction, uncertainties, surprise
- risk of escalation!

1. Field of Decision:
Center of Gravity
broad spectrum
of civ./ mil. domains
(military victory not essential)

2. Conduct of Operations:
Operating in the Grey Areas of Interfaces
blurring lines of order, creating ambiguity,
avoiding attribution, exploiting vulnerabilities,
paralysing decision-making, limiting options to respond

3. Employment of Means and Methods:
Creative Combination / hybrid Orchestration / parallel Use
of different (civ./mil., regular/irregular), means, methods, concepts, strategies
and tactics into ever new mixed hybrid forms => designed to hit at interfaces!

Politics | Diplomacy | Intelligence | Military | Information | Economy | Technology | Culture | Legitimacy | Psychology | Moral | Other

threefold Hybridity

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Interaction: The essential characteristics of hybrid warfare form a threefold hybridity and are closely interrelated with one another. The hybrid orchestration of the use of means and methods is aimed at enabling operations in different fields of action and along different action vectors in the gray area of interfaces. Operating in the gray area of interfaces, in turn, aims to create ambiguities, make attribution more difficult and thus paralyze the opponent's decision-making processes and undermine or paralyze his defense and counter-reaction. Hybrid operations are usually directed against the specific vulnerabilities of the enemy, as these can be found particularly at the unregulated interfaces of traditional order categories and areas of responsibility. Hybrid actors strive to expose these vulnerabilities and shift the overall conflict decision to a gravitational field in which one's own strength meets the opponent's weakness. Creating ambiguity becomes a means of paralyzing the opponent. This results in diversely networked and dynamic patterns of interaction between the different fields of action and vectors in which war and conflict can be fought.

armed forces

But what does hybrid warfare mean for the armed forces? What implications can be derived from the analysis and conceptualization of this specific form of warfare? How can armed forces be better prepared for the challenges of hybrid warfare? There are three contexts in particular that need to be taken into account: First of all, it is about mastering the main military mission in the best possible way. Building on this, it is important to develop the ability to act in the "shadow world" of the "hybrid". Finally, it is important to derive implications for practical action, education and upbringing.

Master the main task

Even in the context of hybrid warfare, it is important for the armed forces to master their main mission in the best possible way. This is the necessary basis for everything else. No compromises are possible here. For Germany and the Bundeswehr, this means being able to best fulfill the constitutionally enshrined defense mandate - "The federal government raises armed forces for defense." (Article 87a GG) - in the sense of national and alliance defense. This requires the ability to conduct conventional, militarily symmetrical warfare in all forms and at all escalation levels against an opponent who is equal or superior in certain points. This includes strong conventional armed forces, a functioning territorial defense, growth capability as well as human and material reserves including sufficient ammunition stocks. It includes preparation for nuclear scenarios and the use of weapons of mass destruction by potential adversaries. In the context of hybrid warfare, these connections are particularly relevant for four reasons:

– Firstly, because conventional, military-symmetrical warfare and the use of weapons of mass destruction, whether in fact or as a threat, can represent important elements of an overall hybrid strategy.

Vgl. dazu auch: Schmid, Johann (2017): Konfliktfeld Ukraine. Hybride Schattenkriegführung und das „Center of Gravity" der Entscheidung, in: Ehrhart, Hans-Georg (Hrsg.): Krieg im 21. Jahrhundert, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 141-162.

[1] Grundgesetz (1949/2022) für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland.

Secondly, because no other state actor can take over or compensate for the core tasks of the armed forces as part of their mission of national and alliance defense. This includes tasks of territorial defense against symmetrical and asymmetrical hybrid attacks from both inside and outside.

– Thirdly, because failure in the military field, even in the context of hybrid warfare, can quickly lead to failure in the context of a larger overall conflict. Ukraine's conventional military defense capability currently forms the basis for its overall hybrid defense.

– Fourth, because hybrid actors regularly specifically exploit the weaknesses of their victims and opponents. Anyone who is militarily weak or unprepared is therefore even more likely to be challenged in this very field. Conversely, if you want to avoid a military confrontation, you have to be militarily strong and communicate this accordingly. This is the only way to deter potential opponents from using military-warfare means, according to the motto "being able to fight so as not to have to fight". Apparently, in the run-up to the Russian attack on February 24, 2022, Ukraine failed to communicate clearly enough its ability and determination to defend itself. Ideology, misperceptions and wishful thinking on the Russian side did the rest.

But why does all of this need to be mentioned? Isn't it a given that armed forces must master their main mission in the best possible way? Yes, one would think, but the capacities for this were gradually reduced in Germany from the beginning of the 1990s and the main order was then consistently ignored for a quarter of a century. This explains why the country is now faced with a personnel, material and spiritual-mental "field of rubble" of its former ability to defend the country and alliances. The second reason why this needs to be mentioned is that hybrid warfare is sometimes reduced, following a common but shortened view, to a "threat" only below the threshold for the use of military force. Hybrid warfare is narrowed down to a mixture of

disinformation, propaganda, cyber attacks, sabotage and terrorism. It is then hastily concluded that strengthening military capacities is not necessary in order to achieve this

to meet the challenges of hybrid warfare. A review couldn't be more inaccurate!

Ability to operate in the "shadow world" of the "hybrid"

In addition to mastering the main mission as a basis, the challenge of hybrid warfare requires the armed forces to be able to act in the "shadow world" of the "hybrid", that is, on a horizontally delimited battlefield with multiple and changing centers of gravity for decision-making, in the gray zones of different interfaces as well as in the confrontation with opponents who use unorthodox combinations of means and methods. It is important to look at the three central characteristics of hybrid warfare to identify the specific challenges that this phenomenon poses to the armed forces and thus create the necessary prerequisites for the systematic derivation of the corresponding implications.

Action/decision space: With a view to acting on a horizontally delimited battlefield with changing and multiple, including non-military, centers of gravity on which a decision can be sought, the armed forces are particularly concerned with interaction with other domains such as politics, economics, Society or dimensions such as information, legitimacy and morality. The question arises as to how the armed forces can support an overall decision in non-military gravitational fields or how the enemy can prevent one from being made. This requires the ability to operate indirectly, even across domains. It is important to take into account the (direct and indirect) impact of military means on non-military domains and at the same time to avoid negative implications of one's own military actions on other domains and dimensions. Existing in a confrontation in which the military is fighting with the highest intensity, but the overall decision is sought in non-military fields, can become a special kind of challenge for the armed forces. The experience of

winning (almost) every single battle militarily in a war and yet losing the war as a whole politically, legitimately and morally led to the so-called "Vietnam trauma" in the USA from the end of the 1960s onwards and put a strain on American politics and the armed forces for decades.

Operational leadership: When it comes to operating in the gray areas of interfaces, the armed forces face the challenge of operating in an environment of dissolving traditional order categories and areas of responsibility and under a high degree of ambiguity. This ambiguity can also relate to very central order categories such as war and peace or friend and enemy. On the one hand, it is important to assume responsibility in one's own core area and at the same time to contribute to protecting vulnerable areas on the periphery, i.e. at the interfaces to other responsible parties. This affects, among other things, the interfaces between internal and external security, civil and military areas of responsibility as well as between state and non-state actor categories. It is important to cover the vulnerable interfaces of a lack of overall responsibility, leadership and authority and, if possible, to proactively counteract the emergence of gaps in responsibility. The latter can be done, for example, by clearly defining overall responsibility, leadership, responsibilities as well as by practicing appropriate gray zone scenarios with the participation of all relevant actors. Situations in which the external enemy is already in one's own country and acts from within, using military means and in close cooperation with local forces, while at the same time using a conventional and nuclear threat backdrop from outside, are examples of the type of hybrid challenges mentioned in the gray areas of interfaces. Ukraine faced exactly such a hybrid multiple challenge in 2014. At that time, they resorted to an improvised so-called anti-terror operation (ATO), which was led by the Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior and, among other things, involved the armed forces. Approximately 50% of the area then claimed by the pro-Russian separatists was recaptured.

Use of means/methods: Ultimately, it is about ensuring that armed forces can survive in a confrontation with an opponent who uses unorthodox combinations of means and methods. Regular and irregular, open and covert, legal and illegal, symmetrical and asymmetrical as well as direct and indirect approaches can be intertwined. With the orchestration and simultaneous application of means, methods, tactics and strategies that are otherwise viewed separately from one another, the complexity of the challenge multiplies. One

Concentration on individual scenarios, such as conventional defense, counterinsurgency or defense against terrorism and sabotage is then no longer possible. For the armed forces, this can mean confronting conventional warfare, nuclear threats, guerrilla warfare and subversive attacks from within at the same time. It is always important for the armed forces to remain "clean" in their choice of means and methods and not to allow themselves to be provoked into acting in the same way by an opponent who acts illegally or with excessive brutality. "Soft" attacks on the armed forces, for example through propaganda, disinformation, delegitimization, infiltration and disintegration, must also be taken into account. On the eve of the Russian Crimean operation in 2014, Ukraine's security forces were heavily infested with pro-Russian forces and were therefore largely paralyzed. Through a combination of propaganda, subversion, blackmail and bribery, the Russian side managed to persuade even the inner circle of the Ukrainian security apparatus to inaction or defect.

Implications

The connections shown make it clear that hybrid warfare also represents an intellectual challenge. In order to survive in hybrid conflict situations, it is important to recognize, understand and holistically classify the complex parameters and hidden mechanisms of action of this phenomenon. This challenge applies to policymakers as well as military leaders and superiors alike. In addition to raising awareness of the relevance of this challenge, the most important thing

is to promote a common basic understanding of hybrid warfare based on a scientifically sound conceptual basis. A common basic understanding can prove to be a catalyst for the necessary cooperation, coordination and holistic, stringent action by all relevant actors to defend against and manage hybrid warfare. This results in two first necessary requirements for military education and training:

– First: Broad and cross-level awareness of the relevance of hybrid warfare.

Second: judgment training to develop a common basic understanding of hybrid warfare.

To do this, it is important to develop and use appropriate educational offerings and products. What is important is a close connection between theory and practice, that is, to use a theoretical-philosophical basis derived from empirical evidence and constantly compared with it, which is oriented towards the essence of the phenomenon, and as a framework for analysis on current, historical and future issues to apply expected scenarios of hybrid warfare. In order to meet the educational requirements outlined and to ensure soldiers' education on hybrid warfare and its implications from a single source, to initiate and coordinate the necessary research and at the same time to act as an interface to other departments involved, a third suggestion for action arises:

– Third: Establishment of the position of a "hybrid ambassador" as a multiplier and "catalyst".

Hybrid warfare is essentially a phenomenon of a political-strategic nature. The associated challenges cannot therefore be "solved" primarily tactically or operationally, but require a holistic response at a political and strategic level. However, in the context of hybrid warfare, specific implications can arise for the operational and tactical areas as well as for procedures, fighting methods and areas of responsibility of the branches of the armed forces and the individual military branches. For example, in the context of hybrid warfare in Donbas from 2014 onwards, the military police of the Ukrainian Armed Forces were confronted with the challenge of having to

protect the civilian population in the contested regions and, in particular, of protecting the family members of their own security forces against asymmetrical attacks

to ensure attacks. This means that a new, unexpected main task arose, which had to be taken on flexibly in addition to the existing mission in the ongoing war. This required recognizing the need for adjustments, reacting openly and flexibly, making adjustments to one's own understanding of roles and expanding one's own range of tasks accordingly.

Although general answers are prohibited and the direct adoption of the experiences of other actors from external war/conflict situations does not necessarily have to make sense for one's own area, the question still arises as to how proactively the implications can also be for one's own tactical and operational area can be derived for branches of the armed forces and military branches in order to be better prepared for future challenges of hybrid warfare. A decentralized approach is recommended here, which is based on solid mastery of one's own area of responsibility, combines this with judgment training on hybrid warfare and, on this basis, systematically evaluates hybrid war experiences from relevant theaters of war in order to identify possible implications for one's own area of responsibility. A "hybrid ambassador" could also have a supportive/catalytic effect in this regard.

– Fourth: Development of a decentralized approach to derive operational, tactical, branch-specific and branch-specific implications.

Finally, the challenge of hybrid warfare needs to be addressed at a political and strategic level. To this end, three suggestions for action will be briefly outlined, derived from the three central characteristics of hybrid warfare. It is self-explanatory that implementation requires a broad interdepartmental approach in which the armed forces play a significant role, but cannot act alone. Since hybrid warfare horizontally delimits the battlefield by incorporating a wide variety of domains and dimensions, the timely recognition and holistic understanding of hybrid attacks and campaigns requires a multidimensional situational awareness. This is the only way to connect

events in different domains and to decipher their (possible) strategic connections and patterns. This is particularly important in phases of hybrid disputes where there has not yet been a violent escalation and hybrid challengers act indirectly, covertly or even below a direct perception threshold. It would be short-sighted and completely inappropriate to the nature of hybrid warfare to concentrate on situation assessment only on individual domains or only on the escalatory part of hybrid warfare. The downward escalation in the form of subversion, influence, infiltration and disintegration as part of a gradual, long-term process must also be taken into account. It is also important to explore new technological possibilities to support the creation of a multidimensional situation picture.

– Fifth: Contribution to building a cross-domain, multidimensional and holistic situation picture. Hybrid warfare operates particularly in the gray area of interfaces between traditional order categories and areas of responsibility. Here, overall responsibility, leadership and responsibilities are often (sometimes naturally) not or not clearly regulated and the interaction between the different actors is usually not well coordinated. This is where specific connectivity and thus entry points for hybrid attacks arise. Joint exercises with scenarios in the gray zone of various interfaces can help to identify gaps in responsibility, leadership and competence, to systematically reduce them and at the same time to improve the interaction between the sub-actors.

– Sixth: Contribution to the development of scenarios that address hybrid attacks in the gray areas of interfaces and the creation of corresponding exercises.

Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses as well as anticipating enemy behavior is essential for strategic decisions. It can be assumed that hybrid challengers will systematically model and simulate our weaknesses and, based on this, develop their multidimensional hybrid campaigns and attack vectors. The important thing here is not to fall behind intellectually. The systematic simulation of one's own vulnerabilities with the aim of improving resilience against hybrid attacks

should therefore become part of everyday practice. The same applies to the simulation and modeling of multidimensional attack vectors of hybrid challengers in order to anticipate and to be able to include them in strategic planning in a forward-looking manner. Here too, it is important to include new technological possibilities (e.g. "Model-Based Systems Engineering") in a supportive manner.

– Seventh: Contribution to modeling and simulation of own vulnerabilities and enemy hybrid attack vectors.

Overall, a "hybrid ambassador" with suggestion, inspiration and background could have a positive and catalytic effect on the implementation of all of the above-mentioned demands and conclusions.

Conclusion

Hybrid warfare in and around Ukraine has confronted Europe with a security policy paradigm shift since 2014. The escalation of the situation due to Russia's large-scale military attack on February 24, 2022 led to the Federal Chancellor proclaiming a "turning point" in Germany. It can be assumed that the future of war will also be largely characterized by hybrid forms of warfare. Understanding their parameters and mechanisms of action is therefore a necessary prerequisite for responsible political and military action.

Since the complex parameters and indirect, partly hidden mechanisms of action of hybrid warfare are sometimes difficult to recognize, classify and understand, hybrid warfare also represents an intellectual challenge. In addition to political decision-makers, military leaders and superiors also have to face this challenge.

In addition to raising awareness of the relevance of the challenge posed by hybrid warfare, what is particularly important is the development of a common basic understanding of this phenomenon. A common basic understanding can prove to be a catalyst for the necessary

cooperation, coordination and holistic, stringent action by all relevant actors to defend against and manage hybrid warfare. This requires a scientifically based, conceptual foundation.

The following short definition of hybrid warfare can serve as a suggestion: "Hybrid warfare is a specific form of warfare that...

The battlefield is horizontally delimited and, if possible, strives for a decision in non-military fields of action, which operates particularly in the gray areas of interfaces and thus creates strategic ambiguity and which challenges the opponent through unorthodox combinations of means and methods.

For the armed forces, confronting hybrid warfare means, firstly, mastering their main military mission in the best possible way, secondly, based on this, developing the ability to act in the "shadow world" of the "hybrid" and finally systematically having implications for their own actions, both internally and internationally Association with other actors.

The following seven suggestions for action arise for military education and training as well as for military action in an overall interdepartmental context:

– First: Broad and cross-level awareness of the relevance of hybrid warfare.

– Second: judgment training to develop a common basic understanding of hybrid warfare.

– Third: Establishment of the position of a "hybrid ambassador" as a multiplier and "catalyst".

– Fourth: Development of a decentralized approach to derive operational, tactical, branch-specific and branch-specific implications.

– Fifth: Contribution to building a cross-domain, multidimensional and holistic situation picture.

– Sixth: Contribution to the development of scenarios that address hybrid attacks in the gray areas of interfaces and the creation of corresponding exercises.

– Seventh: Contribution to modeling and simulation of own vulnerabilities and enemy hybrid attack vectors.

Analytical Framework: Hybrid Warfare Matrix

J. Schmid

Key characteristics related to:	Key characteristics of Hybrid Warfare / Specifics of the hybrid style of warfare	Sub-categorization	Assessing the nature of "Hybridity" in specific cases: "HW Checklist"
1. Field of Decision	• HW extends the battlespace and makes flexible use of a broad spectrum of domains & dimensions: • => e.g. politics, information, economy, technology, society, culture, psychology, legitimacy, morale. • Despite its use of force component) focuses the decision of a war as such primarily on a broad spectrum of multiple, integrated and shifting non-military centres of gravity (CoG).	• **HW = Mosaic-Warfare!** as it extends the battlespace • and combines/integrates different domains as "battlefields" • by multi- and cross-domain operations • **HW = Multi-Domain-Warfare!**	• Domains & dimensions involved? • Intensity of integration: multi-/cross-domain operations? • Where is the CoG? • Are there multiple CoG? • Is the CoG shifting? • Role of the use of force component?
2. Conduct of Operations	• HW operates in the shadows/grey areas of various interfaces, e.g.: war-peace, friend-foe, internal-external, civil-military, state-non-state, reality/truth-fiction/propaganda, virtual-real world • thus blurring traditional lines of order/responsibilities • creating ambiguity, making attribution difficult • paralysing the decision-making process of an opponent • limiting his options to respond • = creating "hybridity"!	• **HW = Shadow-Warfare!** as it operates in the grey zones of various interfaces. • **HW = Grey-Zone Warfare!**	• Interfaces involved? • Which traditional lines of order are blurred? • Level of ambiguity? • Level of deniability? • Level of attribution? • Paralyzation of decision making? • Options to respond?
3. Employment of Means & Methods	• HW creatively combines and makes parallel use of different civil/military, regular/irregular, open/covert, legal/illegal instruments, means, methods, tactics, strategies and concepts and modes of warfare. • It creates ever new mixed hybrid forms designed/tailored to hit at vulnerable interfaces! • => compare "Swiss-Pocket-Knive"! • Multiple attack vectors!	• **HW = Multi-Vector-Warfare!** as it creatively combines soft, hard and smart power means and methods as well as different strategies, concepts and modes of warfare • Hybrid orchestration • **HW = Multi-Mode Warfare!**	• Exploitation of HW-toolbox? • Instruments, means & methods used? • Tactics, strategies, operational concepts involved/blurred? • How are multiple vectors combined?

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