



THE NEW FORMS OF THE POWER STRUGGLE

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Abstract: *The strategists and the specialists in the military affairs have always been concerned with new forms of warfare and these will always remain a vivid interest. Given the disciplinary interdependence and the complexity of the security environment, the expression new forms of the power struggle serves to emphasize the non-military war character.*

The fundamental key on which must starts any analysis is that making war is through convergence rather than through permanent change. Hardly more we change, the songs remain the same, but the interesting thing is that the puzzle can be constituted of the same parts in different variants. The novelty comes from the global way in which such forms are used and from the upgrading applied.

Keywords: *hybrid warfare; power struggle; asimetric threats; security; future warfare.*

If capital opera "Politics among nations. The struggle for power and peace"¹ written by Hans J. Morgenthau, imposed international relations as a scientific discipline and created the general and theoretical framework after the Second World War, in this paper I want to emphasize that the current dynamics of concepts and especially of the practical aspects of relations between states and international scene as a whole, requires constant updating of how we must report on the realities that surround us.

The power struggle has been, is and will be a constant in international politics, a fight which is composed by a complex picture of new and old instruments, and which is dictated by a golden rule imposed by the current security context, so that power can be easily gained, but it is more difficult to be used and extremely easy to be lost.

As well as Ian Bremmer remarked, we are living in a world where no country or group of countries do not have the military, political or economic leverage, or even the will, to lead and monopolize the international agenda.²

"We need to start thinking about security in

¹ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948.

² Ian Bremmer, *Superpower: Three Choices for America's Role in the World*. New York: Penguin, 2015.

*a much more sophisticated and in a much more comprehensive way"*³, says Robin Niblett, director of Chatham House, indicating issues such as policies, citizenship, multinational corporations, energy markets and crime as new strategic boundaries. Such statements are exposed for almost two decades and are we still working on how to deal with, while security is in a continuous process of eroding and insecurity is gaining more and more ground. Noting this trend, a pertinent question is whether we are facing an era of insecurity?

Globalization has globalized, we now live in a world of hyper-competition, nonlinear conflicts, hybrid warfare, irregular warfare, asymmetric threats, of the concept of "Responsibility to protect", of the informational warfare, psychological warfare, cyber warfare, of humanitarian measures, etc. We are facing with a wide range of new concepts, new realities that require constantly to find new forms of deterrence applicable to new methods of conflict.

However, many of the forms contained under the umbrella of hybrid warfare there are not so new. "Half of the history of war is of this kind"⁴, said Anthony Cordesman, a former Pentagon intelligence director and director of strategy think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies from Washington. *The novelty comes from the*

³ Robin Niblett, "New power dynamics", Annual Review, The Royal Institute of International Affairs - Chatham House, London, 2013-2014.

⁴ Anthony Cordesman, "Russia in Syria: Hybrid Political Warfare", Center for Strategic and International Studies Publication, Washington D.C., 2015.

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global way in which such forms are used and from the upgrading applied.

“Hybrid warfare”, the new name of the future warfare?

Military strategist and specialists have always been concerned with new forms of warfare and will forever remain a lively interest for them. Given the disciplinary interdependence and the complexity of the security environment. I chose to shade “*new forms of struggle for power*” in order to emphasize the non-military character of war. The future does not necessarily increase the number of threats, but the convergence of existing in a hybrid form of war⁵ claims geopolitician Hoffman.

The transforming process of war through convergence rather than through permanent change, this is the fundamental key to any analysis that has to go on. Hardly more we change, the songs remain the same, but the interesting thing is that the puzzle can be constituted of the same parts in different variants.

Going on this line we automatically involve three basic elements: 1) the blurring boundaries and the increasing likelihood that unexpected situation to have a higher weight, 2) the combined methods of warfare, which involves permanently emerging a new kind of war, so the “antidote” prepared becomes irrelevant, claiming a template as a general measure to counteract that have a huge capacity of adaptability and 3) the idea that mutations produce leaps of evolution and to be capable to ensure security we must “be always on alert” in order to analyze, forecasts and counter. Worldwide, both states and security organizations are outweighed by extremely fast rhythm and interdependencies that came to be structural, and became difficult to be proactive in security field, although this is the main objective to be achieved.

Revisiting the hybrid warfare, returning to the discussion about it’s manifestation and the intervention of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, I want to highlight the need to revise the concept of hybrid warfare in a perpetuu manner. We note that, once the Russian Federation apply a new tool in its expansionist campaign there are new viewpoints that reinvents the concept. I believe that such an approach is wrong and Russian actions described

as “hybrid warfare” is a simplistic one. In this way we remain trapped in a game where the rules are imposed by the trigger actor, in other words, we do play his game. Hybrid warfare must be analyzed and operationalized in a holistic manner and correlated with the dynamics of the entire international security environment.

Indeed, the Russian Federation gives us a string of case studies from Kremlin control over Russian media (always strong), energy blackmail, humanitarian campaigns using ethnic element, the long history in obstructing trade in Lithuania and examples may continue. In the Baltic countries, Russia intensifies the political and social pressures, creating psychological enclaves⁶.

The term of “hybrid warfare” has existed since 2005 and was subsequently used to describe the strategy used by the terrorist group Hezbollah in the Lebanon war of 2006⁷. Since then, the phrase has dominated much of speeches about modern and future warfare, to the point where it was adopted by senior military leaders and promoted as the basis for modern military strategies.

In the last decade, the most important military and security organizations in the world, including NATO, have tried to address and counter the so-called hybrid threats. Rather than develop strategies based on the challenges of “hybrid warfare” (in the end, an elusive and comprehensive concept at the same time), policy makers should consider the classic definition of war: a complex set of interconnected threats and means of force used to achieve national interests, this constituting a summary definition agreed by all members of the scientific community in the field.

The core of the debate is that opponents are using modern forms of conventional / unconventional, regular / irregular, symmetrical / asymmetrical warfare and exploits all sizes in order to combat the opponent. There is no ambiguity regarding that opponents, past and present, have creatively used the whole spectrum of instruments of war, including conventional and unconventional tactics. All this can form a hybrid set of threats and military strategies, but does not justify the use of the term “hybrid” to define modern warfare, so its value is

⁵ Frank Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The rise of Hybrid Wars*, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Arlington-Virginia, 2007.

⁶ Michael Kofman and Matthew Rojansky, „A Closer look at Russia’s Hybrid War”, *Kennan Cable*, no.7, Wilson Center, 2015.

⁷ James N. Mattis and Frank Hoffman, *Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars*, U.S. Naval Institute, Proceedings Magazine, 2015.



only one descriptive.

In practice, any threat can be hybrid, as long as isn't limited to a single size and shape of the war. When any threat or use of force is defined as hybrid, the term loses its value and causes confusion rather than clarify the reality of modern warfare.

Why?

Because the details are so important in identifying ways to counteract these threats, that introducing a comprehensive and simplifying concept in addition to the general confusion that grasp both the scientific community and the decision making level, bring us unable to find a punctual and effective response, to eliminate that specific threat. For example, the economic warfare has other features to cyber warfare, but both are considered to be hybrid forms of warfare. We address each type or hybrid warfare as a whole? Division of these forms of struggle for power is useful in order to reveal the importance of specialization and identifying for each form strategies and countermeasures.

Hence the discussion extends to classic war that is a declared war on when these forms of power struggle, in his understanding of extended modern warfare manifests itself in an atypical way, hidden and permanent. Another reason that security sector reform is a process that cannot be postponed. For example, the North Atlantic Alliance has as treaty basic principle, the bases of its existence, collective security, so the shared commitment to mutual cooperation between Member States which stipulates the involvement of all allies where one of the Member States face the emergence of threats to its security. How are involving the allies in case of hybrid threats, not about armed conflict and even less of an aggression declared? In fact here is the challenge brought by modern warfare.

NATO leaders were faced with this problem, since the time of the NATO Summit in 2014 in Tallinn⁸, where, in front of the energy crisis triggered by the Russian Federation sabotage to Ukraine and Europe, it was proposed the activation of Article 5⁹, considering that was an aggression. This request was operationalized but there were no means for it. At the last NATO Summit in Wales¹⁰ was operationalized the term "cyber security" as

⁸ *Final Declaration*, NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting, April, 2010, Tallinn.

⁹ Art. 5, North Atlantic Treaty, Washington, April, 1949.

¹⁰ *Final Declaration*, NATO Summit, September, 2014, Wales.

a pillar assumed of security so that would require concrete measures of prevention and response.

Another problem caused by the word "hybrid" is that using a new term suggests that there is something new about modern warfare – but is not the case. In his book about the warfare of the future, the military strategist Colin Gray argues convincingly that in the future, and by extension, modern war is basically the same¹¹.

Most conflicts, if not all, in mankind history were defined by using asymmetries exploiting opponent's weaknesses, leading to complex situations involving conventional and unconventional tactics. Similarly, the emergence, for example, of cyber warfare has fundamentally changed the nature of war, but its use has expanded into a new dimension, a new form of power struggle.

Instead of conclusion

Therefore, *Where to draw the lines? We maintain the primordial generality of national interest which explains and justifies the actions of the states or we move on in considering new benchmarks?*

In such simplified and complex world in the same time, which is the role of international law and how it can respond to the new realities, given that, we do not secure the existence of an efficient international guardian for implementing the rules and thus to be able penalize infringements or violations of international law?

Prevention remains the best tool to fight the hybrid warfare and thus we are returning to an old problem and question, to security system reform and if we will be capable to ensure interoperability within a security community, in special on how it can cooperate globally.

We must keep in mind that international law are seriously violated, even if this is done with subtlety, otherwise admirable. In such circumstances, the foundation is unstable and the construction of a new security architecture, or reconfiguration and strengthening the current one cannot be achieved until they are completed and be set the ground rules.

We cannot forget the reality that there is no generally accepted definition of the term hybrid warfare agreed by NATO and not because allies cannot agree on a clear definition on a model of war that are facing, but because, as I detailed here,

¹¹ Colin S. Gray, „War - continuity in change, and change in continuity”, *Parameters*, no. 40 (Summer 201), 2010.



it is counterproductive.

War, whether antique or modern, hybrid or not, is always complex and can hardly be subsumed under a single word. Any effective strategy should take into account this complex environment and find ways to navigate without simplifying it.

Therefore, the future warfare is not a compact innovative formula, but becomes a concept and a dynamic reality, whose configuration will include old and new forms of struggle for power in a custom combination depending on the capabilities of each actor individually and on the national interest which it is pursues.

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