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Opinions Regarding the Principles, Characteristics and Approaches of the Hybrid Spectrum

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Abstract: Newly generated in the landscape of belligerence of the 21st century, hybrid confrontations are carriers of cognitive and polemological charges of deep substance, intended to differentiate them from the previous types of confrontation, symmetrical, dissymmetric and asymmetrical. The hybrid theory took over, integrated, synthesized and explained the complex approach to belligerence of these times, the possibilities of achieving the strategic goals of major international actors, initially produced through non-military efforts, later there making possible the intervention of well-known and destructive kinetic strikes. The main components are intended to validate the norms of conduct specific to the analyzed confrontation, the primary causes and the starting points in achieving the objectives of the belligerence. The characteristics must explain the specific predominant parameters of the confrontation in view, the aspects that particularize and differentiate it from established forms of military art from past wars. Obviously, the operational and non-operational approaches will decipher the possibilities of triggering the confrontation, intervened in space and time, a complex approach that will make it possible to achieve the strategic goals, objectives and the proposed final state.

Keywords: principles; strategies; coordination; synchronization; characteristics; complementarity; ambiguity; approaches; kinetic; nonkinetic; vulnerabilities; nonmilitary; destabilization; state of war; state of belligerence

1. Introduction

In human history, the projection of power has always contained the use of military effort. The defined aspect will be contained in the future as well, the involvement of the Force becoming reducible instruments at the disposal of the powerful, for the achievement of hegemonic goals. Military developments oblige international actors to visible and large-scale efforts, produced at different scales, under the conditions of the existence of numerous, deep and contradictory interdependencies. The economic-financial costs are extremely high, difficult to quantify precisely. Likewise, developments in force have been visible and criticized, with international law and progressive public opinion objecting to the failure to maintain world peace. For these reasons as well as for others, to promote interests and ensure dominance, the global powers of the current time

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wanted to identify “elegant”, noiseless ways of projecting power (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, p. 49).

The newly desired way was made possible and supported by unprecedented technological development, scientific research conquests, computer science advances and the extraordinary momentum of robotics. Thus, they have exponentially increased the possibilities of using non-military levers, reducing the presence of the much-criticized Combat effort.

2. Principle

From the nomological analytical angle, it can be stated that the hybrid threat fulfills a set of specific principles, provided in the following.

A separate framework of manifestation involves the creation of multiple instability (economic, political, financial, social), policy incoherence, massive corruption, the identification or establishment of critical vulnerabilities in the system. In the target space, multiple tensions and divisions will exist and be fueled, opposition forces emerge, able to destabilize the government, benefiting from massive external support (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, p. 48).

The causality is provided by the reality according to which an international actor considers in the vision of its own governing circles, that only the effort in a hybrid plan can satisfy the achievement of the proposed objectives, using a certain course of events, resources and possibilities.

The uniqueness derives from the singularity of the approach, the lack of similarities with possible manifestations of the confrontation. The production context, the trigger, the involvements, the path taken regarding the aggravation, the effects involved and the desired final state, will know particular ways (Rațiu, 2020, pp. 63-64).

Extended uses of the panoply of capabilities mean the use of both conventional and non-conventional capabilities. Capabilities involve the use of military or non-military equipment, technologies, techniques, methods and procedures.

Complementarity derives from the reduced weight in the physiognomy of the confrontation of conventional military capabilities. To achieve the strategic goal, the reduced level of military capabilities will be compensated and replaced by the use of alternative possibilities and forms, activated simultaneously or successively (but in a synchronized manner), to adjudicate the success of the belligerence (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, p. 49).

Ambiguity arises from the multiplicity and permanence of uncertainties regarding the aims, situations, involvements and purposes of the opponents. It must be emphasized that the form of adversary does not presuppose formal declarations of war by the parties. Uncertainty and fluidity will be fueled by the structures participating in the belligerence (without signs of belonging), the use of confrontation methods that are difficult to intuit (strategies, tactics, techniques, procedures and methods), persisting difficulties in designating the opposing elements in the identified hybrid foci.

Freedom of action signifies the permanent presence of the action autonomy of the parties in the confrontation, with defensive or offensive involvements, according to the intentions of the actors of the confrontation (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, pp. 48-49).

Ideological support derives from the state of mind proper to the production of the targeted form of actions. So, political, military, religious leaders, people of culture, opinion makers, will inoculate

concepts, ideas, ideas-force, notions to the target groups and combatants, will provide motivations and arguments to justify multiple actions and hostile hybrid efforts, directed towards the target entity.

Psychological damage is conferred by involvements, actions and methods, intended to psychologically destabilize the adversary, as well as the target population. In order to accentuate the production of harmful mutations on the psyche of the targeted entities, synchronized with the psychological operations, the media, propaganda, informational operations will be used, in a cumulative and synchronized effort of intentionally malignant communication (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, pp. 49-50).

3. Characteristics

The multiple characteristics of hybrid affect can take extremely diverse forms (Terrados, 2019, p. 45). Certainly, other listings may be subject to analysis in the future.

Extensive information is based on the critical requirement of detailed knowledge of the complex elements of existence and which ensure the strength (vulnerability) of systems, one's own and the opposite system. As a priority, the fundamental elements of the national adver system, the centers of gravity (strategic, operational and tactical/local, by domain), strengths, weaknesses and faults of the social environments, capacities and capabilities will be studied. All identifications will be speculated intelligently in the future to achieve the desired goals. The systemic approach to confrontation facilitates the critical importance of information in the confrontation equation and on the adjudication of success (Grigoraş, 2017, p. 97). Since all information and communications are processed digitally, Intel's effort will place the cyber dimension of its own and the adversary's potential at the forefront of analysis (Terrados, 2019, p. 49).

The expansion of the wide range of equipment is based on the reality that hybrid warfare presents itself as "infinitely complicated and unpredictable, like human nature" (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, pp. 51-52). As Van Mesel states, hybrid war can be considered as total war, absolute confrontation, defined from the point of view of Clausewitz. Plans, measures, efforts and actions oblige the mobilization of all power resources, in their fullness, to achieve the proposed strategic goal (Hoffman, 2007, p. 23). In the hybrid confrontation, extraordinary amounts of forces, means and resources are required. The initiation of the hybrid war constitutes the political-operational option of the powerful states, the countries with limited possibilities being obliged to be limitedly concerned only with countering the hybrid scourge (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, pp. 49-50).

Relatively imprecise features of the aggressors' plans stem from the multiple nature (political, informational, military, psychological, financial, unconventional), the possibilities of immediate movement of the strikes, in accordance with the evolution of events, the difficulty of locating the strikes (transnational, nomadic, deterritorialized), aiming to produce of destructive final effects on the environments addressed in the belligerence (Duţu, 2013, p. 52).

Coordination and synchronization is imposed by the complex ways of belligerence, which require the planning, organization and production in a unitary, integrative way of the estimated effects, results and ends. Since carrying out hybrid strikes can be possible from all cardinal points, it is absolutely necessary to have a clear and intelligent synchronization of the oppressive factors from the traditional environments (land, air, naval and cyber), with the aspects of involvement in the political, diplomatic, economic-financial, cultural fields and moral. Confrontations from all environments and spectrums of

belligerence will be put under firm command through the involvement of strategic leadership. The careful coordination of the events of the confrontation is materialized in an integrative concept, being carried out simultaneously or at different times, in order to make it possible to produce the estimated finalities (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, pp. 49-50).

The synchronized engagement of Forces in belligerence envisages the use of conventional and irregular forces with a rigorous focus on the achievement of designated objectives and targets. There can be two action options. The first variant may be specific to the type of composite war, with conventional forces being intended for the main effort, the concurrent actions of irregular structures being responsible for small-scale attacks. The second variant is typical of prolonged war, with conventional forces and irregular structures (with reduced capabilities) being used simultaneously for the development of insurgent actions and subversive practices (Terrados, 2019, p. 49).

Infusion with cutting-edge technologies, information supremacy and implications of globalization, realized simultaneously, robustly and profoundly. The synchronization of military and non-military power is achieved by physically and psychologically overwhelming the target state actors, increasing the consumption of resources and the efficiency of the actions of the hegemonic power (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, pp. 49-50).

The efficiency of actions is due to the ability of the Force and non-military involvements to produce effects of great complexity, cascading, indirect, unpredictable and difficult to counter. The military domain will use multi-role structures, structures able to perform a wide range of missions on the opponent (Stanciu, 2016, pp. 104-105).

Channeling strikes on adversary vulnerabilities intervenes on multiple levels to achieve the desired results. It is possible through the massive involvement of intelligence and the careful analysis of major impact information. Thus, the integrity of the opposing centers of gravity will be influenced, challenging the opposing device and the stability of the enemy's security system (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, pp. 53-54).

Failure to declare a state of war (Stanciu, 2016, p. 58), *exploiting the lability of the boundary between war and peace, as well as speculating the limits of detection and attribution*, presuppose the development of well-camouflaged presences, measures and actions. The aspect allows the notification of states of belligerence in the light of international law, for the media and public opinion. Thus, the hegemon's own efforts will be justified, as belonging to moments of normality (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, p. 50).

The synergistic combination of conventional and non-conventional efforts, asymmetric procedures and cyber attacks seek to surprise opponents and overcome the reaction capabilities of the target state. There will be continuous mutations in the application of strategies, tactics and methods for the impossibility of accurately intuiting the hegemon's plan and intentions, as well as the future opposing effort (Stanciu, 2016, pp. 57-58). The conduct of belligerence will take place in all 6 environments (land, air, sea, space, cyberspace and mental battlefield). The environment stated last, the mental, individual and collective battlefield, promotes the modification of the national, cultural and informational space, for the distortion of the national identity, in accordance with the options of the aggressor (Manolea, 2019, p. 47). While the regular forces will outline the main effort, the irregular structures will be responsible for actions in local foci, constituting themselves as bridges between the main lines of effort. Since the equipment, equipment and level of training of the irregular elements is lower, the advisory mission will be carried out by "green men" (secret service agents, operators from the Special Operations Forces, anti-terrorist structures, therefore specialists of the Elite Forces) (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, p. 50).

The materialization of a kinetic/non-kinetic ratio unfavorable to the kinetic implies the activation of highly technical ways, top approach, recording the performance of the actions. Thus, ample possibilities are allowed to reduce the weight of classic structures in engaging the adversary, allowing for wide possibilities for psychological, informational, media, cyber, civil-military, etc. operations. The kinetic component must generate high-level destructive effects and the non-kinetic component must ensure informational superiority during the confrontation between the parties (Stanciu, 2016, pp. 105-106).

The influence of the decision-makers (central and local, from the level of institutions) takes place by studying the vulnerability of the target factors, forcing efforts specific to the situations, in relation to the intended goal. For this, PSYOPS and Intel specialists will be massively involved, with the realization of diversified forms of manifestation in different ways (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, pp. 53-54).

Asymmetry and surprise refer to the establishment of the type of confrontation that does not resemble any previous conventional conflict (nature of the confrontation, forces involved, typology, rules and conduct of the confrontation, restrictions adopted). The activation of all aspects of belligerence will intervene, the violations of the norms of international law will be avoided, by moving away from the principles, rules and customs (customs) of the conduct of war (Messel, 2005).

Multidimensionality, modularization, increased mobility, high precision and protection, ensured in the system, denote the construction of structures able to act in at least two distinct environments. The requirement is made possible by the versatility of fulfilling a wide range of missions, the increased possibilities of horizontal and vertical movement, major operational autonomy. Although the forces are numerically reduced, they have special action possibilities, present a palette of measures and engagements that keep the combat potential intact, present extended possibilities for discovering, identifying, prioritizing the engagement, striking and destroying of opposing targets (Stanciu, 2016, pp. 106-109).

Pressures in the political, diplomatic and international relations plans are achieved by combining the efforts at the level of international forums and organizations, presenting positions and points of view to inform the international community, knowing and using the interests of the states for dialogue in the effort to promote their own cause (Bogdan, Mihalcea, & Sirbu, 2022, p. 50).

Multi-level destabilizing strategies (political, diplomatic, economic, financial, informational, etc.) that explain the difficult ways for the target state, such as economic, financial and commercial leverage, blockades, stopping access to strategic raw materials and energy resources, establishing measures that affect the standard of living of the collectivities, the collapse of well-being and the internal destabilization of the standards of the target populations (Stanciu, 2016, p. 58).

Wide range of subversive, terrorist and criminal activities that may be intended to destroy internal stability, collapse domestic security and generate internal tensions, break inter-ethnic understanding, produce religious disharmony and institute large-scale destabilization (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, pp. 54-55).

4. Innovative Operational Approaches

The implications are innovative because they are produced through the broad involvement of high-level technologies and high-yield action patterns used in confrontation. Drawing the line between assumed operations and clandestine efforts is extremely difficult (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, pp. 49-51). At the beginning of the confrontation, the opposing centers of gravity will be indirectly engaged,

eventually moving to the direct engagement of the adverse power factors (Bogdan & Bogdan, 2017, pp. 116-120).

The unfolding of the confrontation requires overcoming the limitations arising from the use of physical and temporal space, achieved especially through the extensive use of traditional and modern media capabilities. The isolation of target populations intervenes, with consequences regarding the reduction of the ability to understand the reality of the confrontation, without it being possible to decipher the complex and multiple subversive effects of communication from the psychological and informational war (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, pp. 50-51).

Recent practices confirm the reality that non-state belligerent actors (ethnic or criminal, secessionist or subversive groups) will be endowed with advanced and highly efficient military equipment and technologies, transferred from the arsenals of conventional military structures. Modern equipment favors the successful engagement of the government structures of the target state and the rhythmic achievement of the established objectives (Deep, 2015).

Hybrid military operations and associated engagements activate multiple *sui generis* action sequences, notified in the following:

- projecting the interests of the states and the force far outside the borders, by using expeditionary bodies at long distances, using air or naval routes, simultaneously with the activation of some areas of first strike;
- the production of involvements in the urban environment, industrial areas, fortified spaces and complex land surfaces, intervening to diminish the effect and reduce the performance of weapons, requiring large consumptions of ammunition, technologies, personnel and the resource time;
- special involvements in informational terms, proceeding to transform some incidents of insignificant impact, of tactical weight, into events of high international impact;
- complex relations between international actors, which admit and make possible the use of structures, a fact to be reflected as a matter of priority in the situation of coalitions or alliances;
- eliminating the invulnerability of some territories, whenever and wherever strikes are possible against critical facilities, strategic resources and communities;
- limitations on the freedom of action of the forces, decreasing the efficiency in the practical use of the capabilities;
- the outline of force protection measures and new employment rules, established as a result of the specifics of the area or partners;
- ambiguous operational framework, the existence of contradictory, illogical and immediately changing information;
- excessive live media coverage of the operations, intervened through transmissions from drones, satellites, through theater correspondents or volunteer broadcasters (Mihalcea, Sirbu & Bogdan, 2023, pp. 57-59);
- involvement from the cosmos, through the extensive use of satellites for monitoring spaces, supervising the movement of the Force, studying critical objectives in the territory, uncovering the parameters of camouflaged or hidden objectives (under water, on land, etc.);
- extended or limited combat resources, in relation to the degree of interest and the weight (quantification) in the equation of obtaining the hybrid finality;

- ongoing concerns and thorough engagements regarding force protection, the implementation of loss reduction measures and enhancing the survivability of operators in the confrontation space (Bogdan, Mihalcea & Sirbu, 2022, pp. 50-51).

Obviously, the future hybrid engagements will enormously amplify operational presences in the hybrid belligerence space, enabling action modalities that are hardly credible at this time. The desired can be achieved thanks to the technological explosion, robotics and miniaturization of the technique.

5. Conclusions

The hybrid war concept is innovative through the attempts to define the term and the contents presented. The strategy, the procedures, the tactics regarding the surprise of the opponent do not fully represent a current discovery. The two great powers, the Soviet Union and the USA, were present in the Cold War, avoiding their own positioning in a direct confrontation with the adversary in the belligerent space. The respective great powers projected their interests on the meridians, through the use of intermediaries. Direct confrontation would have led to the escalation of conflict to paroxysmal heights, possibly culminating in the destruction and pulverization of the planet, through nuclear involvement.

The hybrid concept represents a certain doctrinal deception, wrapping an old, well-known and blamed content of belligerence with maximum aggression, in a soothing package to public opinion and the vigilance of international law. In its essence, in real terms, hybrid war is absolute war, total confrontation between the opposing parties, being involved successively or simultaneously, the full range of possibilities, domains and sectors of the participating states.

The hybrid engagement does not primarily intend to destroy the opposing force, but to take control and power over the opponent. The main success factor consists in changing the mentality of the defeated nation, imposing the civilizational culture of the victor. The ultimate goal is to impose control over society and direct resources in the direction desired by the winner of the dispute. It is desired to subjugate the will of the opponent and establish a government favorable to the aggressor power. Thus, international law cannot accuse the winner, since the governing entity of the target state, through the “democratically” elected structures, makes known its will, regarding the future transfer to the winner of the confrontation, of the strategic resources available to the target state.

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