

# THE FINAL STATE OF WAR: HYBRID WAR\*

*Savaşın Son Hali: Hibrit Savaş*

**Nihat DUMLUPINAR\*\***  
**Mehmet Seyfettin EROL\*\*\***

## **Abstract**

*The term Hybrid War was started to be seen frequently in the literature after the Ukrainian Crisis. Although there are plenty of studies about it, there is not a commonly accepted definition. Another discussion about Hybrid War is whether it reflects a novelty. In this work, although we will discuss its definition and novelty, our purpose is not to define or to determine whether it is novel. Our claim is that Hybrid War is not a type of war but it is the final form of war because of the evolution of war. So, Hybrid War is the war itself.*

**Keywords:** Hybrid War, War, Warfare, Ukraine, Syria.

## **Öz**

*Hibrit Savaş terimi Ukrayna Krizi sonrasında literatürde sıkça görülmeye başlanmıştır. Üzerinde yapılan birçok çalışma olsa da kavrama ilişkin genel kabul gören bir tanım mevcut değildir. Bununla birlikte bir diğer tartışma konusu da Hibrit Savaş teriminin yeni bir olguyu yansıtmayı yansıtmadığıdır. Bu çalışmada tanım ve yenilik konularını inceleyecek olsak da amacımız Hibrit Savaş teriminin tanımını yapmak veya yeni bir olgu olup olmadığını ortaya koymak değildir. İddiamız Hibrit Savaşın bir savaş türü olmadığı, savaşın evrimleşmesi sonucu günümüzde aldığı nihai form olduğudur. Yani Hibrit Savaş, savaşın kendisidir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hibrit Savaş, Savaş, Muharebe, Ukrayna, Suriye.

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\*\* PhD Student, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Department of International Relations, e-mail: nihatudmlupinar@hotmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0003-4836-5749.

\*\*\* Prof. Dr., Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Department of International Relations, Head of Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM), e-mail: mserol@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-8358-7326.

## **INTRODUCTION**

After the Ukrainian Crisis the number of academic literature about Hybrid War has increased. As stated by Erol and Oğuz the tactics and tools used by Russia make the Ukrainian case a focal point in the discussions about Hybrid War.<sup>1</sup> However, there is not a commonly accepted definition of Hybrid War so far. We can see large amount of definitions of hybrid war. While some of the points of the definitions are identical, they are not completely the same. The main reason of this is attempting to define different objects. While some are trying to define warfare, others are choosing the war as the point of interest. The former type of the definitions are interested in the operational and tactical level of armed warfare, but the latter type of the definitions' focus is on the strategic level of confrontation.

Another problem about Hybrid War is its novelty. While some authors see Hybrid War as a very new phenomenon, others claim that it is just a new label for the old tactics. Deciding whether it is new or not depends on the point of view. If you just look at the armed warfare, it is true that some tools and tactics, which we are witnessing in the contemporary warfare, can also be seen in the past. But if you take the war as a point of interest, denying the change in the way of conducting war is impossible.

In this article we are not attempting to decide which definition is true or to answer whether hybrid war is novel or not. Our main aim is to show how the character and main elements of war has changed over time. We are not interested in the changes in the armed warfare but the general concept of war. So we will use the term Hybrid War as the general concept of the modern war.

We think that Hybrid War should not be categorized as a type of war. Throughout the literature of war we can see lots of different types

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of categorization of war and warfare. For example conventional war, asymmetric war, nuclear war, proxy war, compound warfare, cyber war are just a few of them. Hybrid War is not a type of war, it is the war itself at present.

In the article we will discuss the actors, the tools, the way of practice of the modern war, as well as the change on the character and the main elements of war. We will take the Clausewitz's trinities as a starting point to analyze the evolution of war to Hybrid War.

## THE CHANGING CHARACTER OF WAR

### THE SOURCES OF WAR

Conflict between human beings or between societies dates back to the beginning of life on the earth. As stated by Thomas Hobbes, conflict stems from human nature and it has three reasons which are "competition, diffidence and glory".<sup>2</sup> According to the realist theory these reasons are also in effect within the conflict between societies. When we read Thucydides, we can also see a similar trinity, which consists of fear, honor and interest, as the sources of war.<sup>3</sup>

One can ask the question that do all actors show the same reaction in the same conditions which stem from fear, honor and interest? According to the realist theory every actor behaves similar in the same condition, because it sees the states as identical rational units. However, as stated by Lebow, fear, honor and interest which are effective motivations in all level of human societies, act differently in

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2 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme&Power or Commenwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil*, London 1651, (The version Prepared for the McMaster University Archive of the History of Economic Thought, by Rod Hay), p. 77.

3 Robert B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to The Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley, Free Press, New York 1996, p. 43.

different cases.<sup>4</sup> These motivations are being shaped under the effects of identity, history, culture, capability and the geopolitic position of a society. Depending on the conditions in a specific time, the relative importance of the motivations may differ for a state. It is also true that they may be different state to state even in the same conditions. For example fear (or we can say security) is more important for Ukraine and Syria at the time being, while the interest is the main motivation for the U.S. For Lebow the status of a state in the international arena, which is related to honor, is more important than the other motivations as a cause of war.<sup>5</sup> However, this statement is not valid for all cases. If we correct the statement as “a motivation may be more important for a state than the other motivations in a definite time frame,” it will sound reasonably. For instance, in WWII, security is more important than the others for Russia, while honor or the state status is the main motivation for Putin’s Russia.

### **THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF WAR: TRINITY OF WAR**

War is one of the most important phenomenons of human life. Almost all of the social sciences have studied about war throughout the history. One of the most popular studies is “On War” by Carl Von Clausewitz. Clausewitz defined war as “a continuation of politics with other means.”<sup>6</sup> According to this definition Clausewitz sees war as a tool of politics. The definition implies that when the peace time tools of politics become ineffective, war starts to play role in order to reach the political goals. It also means that there is a clear difference between peace time and war time. We claim that the scope of war has expanded over time materially and psychologically and the line between peace and war has been blurred. In fact, the international sphere is in a continuous state of war.

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4 Richard Ned Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008, p. 5-6.

5 Richard Ned Lebow, “The Past and Future of War”, *International Relations*, 24(3), 2010, p. 13.

6 Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michale Howard-Peter Paret, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1984, p. 87.

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We prefer to name it as “Hybrid War” which has become a popular term in recent years. In other words, war has been evolved from a confrontation of states in a specific time frame to a continuous state of confrontation which includes all instruments of international relations.

The question is how and why has been the war changed? Before answering this question it is important to define the main elements of war. The Prussian General mentioned two sets of trinity of war. The first trinity includes emotion or passion, chance or opportunity and reason. The second one consists of people, military and government. Then he made a connection between two sets of trinity. According to him emotion or passion is related with people, chance or opportunity is related with military and reason is related with government.<sup>7</sup> While the first trinity represents the abstract elements of war, the second one represents the physical elements of war.

Today, some scholars claim that war has been changed fundamentally. One of them is Martin Van Creveld. He claims that war is being waged by different actors other than states, so the trinity of Clausewitz is not valid today.<sup>8</sup> But he missed the point that terrorist organizations and other non-state units, which are generally defined as warring parties today, are not the independent actors but just the tools of states.

We agree that the character of war has been changed over time even if its nature is still same.<sup>9</sup> The nature of war consists of danger, exertion, uncertainty and chance which are defined as the climate of war by Clausewitz.<sup>10</sup> These elements can be clearly observed in the modern

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7 Clausewitz, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

8 Martin Van Creveld, “The Transformation of War Revisited”, *Small Wars&Insurgencies*, 13(2), 2002, p. 7-8.

9 Colin S. Gray, “How Has War Changed Since the End of the Cold War?”, *Parameters*, Spring 2005, p. 17; Riana Teifukova-Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, “Russian Hybrid War from Theory to Practice”, *Journal of Crises and Political Research*, Hybrid Warfare Special Issue, 1(2), Ekim 2017, p. 34.

10 Clausewitz, *op.cit.*, p. 104.

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war as well as in the past wars. But there is another element of war which is the most important element of its nature. It is “change” itself.<sup>11</sup> It operates over the character and the main elements of war.

The character of war tells us how it is conducted at all levels which are tactical, operational and strategic. Because of advanced destruction capabilities of weapons, technological development and sociological changes, the way of conducting war has been changed over time. While the main elements of war remains valid, their scope and roles expanded and changed over time. Thus, war has destroyed all of its limits which are physical and cognitive boundries, time, tools, methods and the international law. This is what the world is observing and trying to define. This is Hybrid War which means a limitless and continuous war.

The first elements of both trinitities (emotion and people) are the igniting and supporting elements of war. Fear, feeling of insecurity, and interest are directly related with emotion which is indispensable part of human beings and also societies. While emotion of an individual is the main element for starting and maintaining a fight, people play the same role for a state in a war. As stated by Gray “War is a social institution and it is waged by societies, not only by states.”<sup>12</sup> First of all, states need material support of their societies to wage a war. Throughout history and even today taxing is an important material source of war.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, after the American and the French Revolutions people were started to be seen as citizens rather than subjects and defending the nation became the duty of the people.<sup>14</sup>

Secondly states need the approval of people to start or to continue

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11 Ove Pappila, “The Nature of War Today”, *Dikussion&Debatt*, Kungl Krigsvetenkapsakademiens Handlingar Och Tidskrift, 4, 2008, p. 69.

12 Colin S. Gray, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

13 Richard A. Gabriel-Karen S. Metz, “A Short History of War: The Evolution of Warfare and Weapons”, *Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College*, September 1992, p. 72.

14 Colin S. Gray, *War, Peace and International Relations: An Introduction to Strategic History*, Routledge, New York 2007, p. 55.

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waging a war. Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan wars are just some examples which show the importance of public support on the decision for war. In the past, because wars were being waged in a limited area with the guns which have limited destruction, people might not be aware of the existence of a war. But today with the help of globalization and the advanced communication technologies, it is impossible to hide even the intention of an armed conflict.

There are significant changes about the first element of the second trinity. In the past, states need to get support of just its own people. Today, states needs to justify a war decision not just for its own people but for the international community. Advanced technological developments and globalization have enormous contribution to this result. Moreover, the international conventions and the developed norms have forced the states to justify their actions even if they do not have to do so. The belief of illegality of war started to be accepted with Kellogg-Brian Pact-1928 which sees the war as a political instrument just in the case of self-defense.<sup>15</sup> At present the use of force is seen as illegal without a condition for self defence and/or without a decision by UN Security Council. And respect to sovereignty of states and to human rights have become an international norm which limits states to resort violence. Briefly, states feel themselves obliged to justify the use of force in the eyes of the international community. For example, as the president of the U.S., which is the hegemon of the international system, even Bush tried to justify the Iraq invasion of the U.S., by claiming it was a preemptive self-defense.<sup>16</sup>

The increased importance of the society for a state in a war effort makes the society a valuable target for external agressors. In other words, if a state can effectively dominate the minds of the people in the society

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15 Mary Kaldor, *New&Old Wars*, Polity Press, Third Edition, Kindle Version, United Kingdom 2012, p. 746.

16 Kaldor, *op. cit.*, p. 750-751.

of the target state, it becomes easier to reach the goals of war effort.<sup>17</sup> So the target society can be a tool of the agressor instead of a supporting element of the target state.

In contrast to the past, today the first element of the second trinity has three dimensions; state's own society-international community-target state's society. The success in contemporary war depends on controllig these three dimensions.

The second elements of Clausewitz's trinities are opportunity and military. First of all, at the time of Prussian General, during which he wrote "On War.," the only tool of war was military. We think that military means an instrument in the second trinity of him. So we can say that second elements of the trinities are opportunity and tool. They are interconnected each other as Clausewitz claimed and they have mutual effects on each other. Opportunity means appropriate conditions for a tool to exploit. On the other hand an instrument can be used to create an opportunity.

Throughout history the tools of war has been increased in number dramatically. At the beginning, army was the only tool of war. Then navy and air force attended to the toolbox of war. Anyway we can define all of them as military which constitutes the armed tool of war. Over time, with the help of the technolgical developments and sociological changes, new instruments statered to took their roles on the scene of war. Finally today there are many instruments of war such as economy, information and cyber other than military. Also it is important to note that diplomacy which was regarded as a peaceful act in the past, has become an important instrument of war.

The last elements of the trinities are reason and government. It is very clear that while government represents the brain of a state, reason is

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<sup>17</sup> Miroslav Banasik, "Russia's Hybrid War in Theory and Practice", *Journal on Baltic Security*, 2(1), 2016, p. 163.



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the rationality which is needed for conducting war. Throughout history the government took different forms such as principalities, kings, emperors, generals, presidents, parliaments, councils, leaders of communities and organizations etc. Government here does not mean a recognized unit by law. The capability to conduct a war is sufficient for a unit or a person to be the third element of the second trinity.

In sum war has been changed over time. But the changing part of war is its character but not its nature. Change is the most important element of its nature which is in permanent interaction with its character. The main elements of war, which can be found in the famous trinities of Clausewitz, are still relevant to the modern war. However they are also prone to change in terms of scope and their roles. Society (people), the first element, has three dimensions today. They are state's own society, international community and the society of target's state. Military, the second element, is not sufficient to apply to the modern war theory by its meaning at Clausewitz's time. Today we should understand the second element as the instruments of war. While the military was the only instrument war in the past, we can see a number of other instruments in the contemporary war. Finally the government, which has the same meaning as in the past, can took different forms like leaders, governments, councils etc.

### HYBRID WAR

The term "Hybrid War" has been frequently used in the literature of international relations in recent years. Especially after the spring of 2014 the term has caused an incredible interest among the academicians and the media. <sup>18</sup> The term, which was used for the first time in 1998 by

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18 К.Л. Сазонова, "«Гибридная война»: международно-правовое измерение" ("Hybrid War": The Dimension of International Law), Журнал Высшей школы экономики, 4, 2017, p. 178.

Robert G. Walker<sup>19</sup>, started to be seen in the literature in 2007. Especially the success of Hezbollah against Israel was identified with “Hybrid War.”<sup>20</sup> The term that mentioned often with non-state actors due to Hezbollah example, gained a new dimension after the Russia-Ukraine Crisis in 2014.

### **THE COMPLEXITY OF THE DEFINITION**

Eventough there are lots of articles, books and media news about “Hybrid War,” it is not possible to find a common definition on which a consensus has been reached. As stated by Patrick J. Cullen and Erik Reichborn-Kjennerud, “...no one understands it, but everyone, including NATO and the European Union, agrees it is a problem.”<sup>21</sup> One can find different types of definitions in the literature, though there are some similar points they have. For instance, while Peter Mansoor defined “Hybrid War” “as conflict involving a combination of conventional military forces and irregulars (guerrillas, insurgents, and terrorists), which could include both state and nonstate actors, aimed at achieving a common political purpose,”<sup>22</sup> Frank Hoffman and Russell W. Glenn included non-military tools to their definitions.<sup>23</sup> Another definition, which is similar to Mansoor’s, can be seen in the article issued by NATO Defence College in Rome. In this article it is stated that Hybrid War is not limited to warfield. However, it does not mention about the non-military instruments.<sup>24</sup> Ukrainian author

19 Frank Hoffman, “Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hibrid Wars”, *Potomac Institute for Policy Studies*, December 2007, p. 9.

20 Hoffman, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

21 Erik Reichborn-Kjennerud-Patrick Cullen, “Understanding Hybrid Warfare”, *A Multinational Capability Development Campaign Project*, January 2017, p. 3.

22 Peter R. Mansoor, “Introduction: Hybrid Warfare in History”, Williamson Murray-Peter R. Mansoor (eds.), *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2012, p. 2.

23 Frank Hoffman, “On Not-So-New Warfare: Political Warfare vs Hybrid Threats”, *War on the Rocks*, <http://warontherocks.com/2014/07/on-not-so-new-warfare-political-warfare-vs-hybrid-threats>, (Date of Accession: 14.12.2016), p. 3; Russell W. Glenn, “Thoughts on Hybrid Conflict”, *Small Wars Journal*, [www.smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/thoughts-on-hybrid-conflict](http://www.smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/thoughts-on-hybrid-conflict), (Date of Accession: 02.11.2016), p. 5.

24 Andreas Jacobs-Guillaume Lasconjarias, “NATO’s Hybrid Flanks: Handling Unconventional Warfare in the South and the East”, *Research Division-NATO Defense College*, No. 112, Rome-April 2015, [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/190786/rp\\_112.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/190786/rp_112.pdf), (Date of Accession: 01.11.2018.), p. 3.

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Evgeniy Dikiy (Евгений Дикий) defined the term as “an armed aggression implemented by a state on another under the mask of internal conflict.”<sup>25</sup> As for Russian author Komleva (Н. А. Комлева) Hybrid War “is a collective action which is directed on the whole geopolitic elements of target state with the purpose of destroying it totally.”<sup>26</sup> Here we see two different definitions (Evgeniy Dikiy) one of which was stated under the effects of Russian aggression against Ukraine and the other (Komleva) that is too general.

When we take into account of dictionary meaning of “hybrid”, all of the definitions seem to be true. The dictionary meaning of the term is “a thing made by combining two different elements.”<sup>27</sup> All the definitions of the term in the literature mention about the collective usage of different tools. Thus, all of them are consistent with the dictionary meaning of the term. However, the problem lies with the difference between war and warfare.

### WAR VERSUS WARFARE:

The main reason of the definition complexity is that everyone is trying to define different things with the same label. Some scholars are focusing on armed conflict, while other some are taking war as a general concept including all aspects.

There is confusion on the meanings of the terms war and warfare in the literature. The dictionary meaning of war is “a state of armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country.”<sup>28</sup>

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25 Евгений Дикий, “Гибридная Война России: Опыт Украины Для Стран Балтии (Hybrid War of Russia: Ukrainian Example for Baltic States)”, Литовская военная академия им. генерала Йонаса Жямайтиса, 2016, p. 11.

26 Н. А. Комлева, “Гибридная Война: Сущность и Специфика (Hybrid War: Foundation and Character)”, *Философия Политики и Политология*, 2017, p. 130.

27 *Oxford Dictionaries*, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/hybrid>, (Date of Accession: 10.11.2016).

28 *Oxford Dictionaries*, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/war>, (Date of Accession: 20.01.2019).

However, this definition reflects the past time wars. Today war is in a form that is far beyond the mere armed conflict. As for warfare, it is defined as “engagement in or the activities involved in war or conflict” in the dictionary.<sup>29</sup> So, warfare is a part of war according to this definition.

We think that armed confrontations between two sides whether they are states or non-state actors should be regarded as warfare since the war cannot be seen as a mere armed conflict. Thus one needs to use the term “Hybrid Warfare”, if he or she takes the military dimension of war as a point of interest. Here, the term “hybrid” denotes the use of conventional and non conventional military instruments. Moreover, one needs the use “warfare”, if he wants to indicate just one dimension of war such as “economic warfare,” “cyber warfare,” “information warfare,” “diplomatic warfare,” “conventional warfare” and “irregular warfare.” As for Hybrid War, it indicates the combination of these warfares.

### **ACTORS AND LEVELS OF HYBRID WAR**

It seems that most of the academicians have a consensus about the actors of “Hybrid War.” Non-state actors as well as states are accepted as the actors in hybrid war.<sup>30</sup> Because Hezbollah has a contribution to the emergence of the term, this tendency should be accepted as normal. We think that deciding who is actor or not depends on the point of view as in the definition issue. If one choose warfare as a point of interest or if one wants to limit his research with military confrontation, he/she has to take non-state organizations as actors. However, if one prefer to take war as a research case, it is not logical to include non-state organizations in the group of actors since they are lacking the other tools of Hybrid War such as economic and diplomatic. We do not mean that non-state actors cannot have these tools. However, if any of non-state actors has

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Jacobs-Lasconjarias, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

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the capacity to use all the tools beside military instruments, it becomes questionable to name it as a non-state actor.<sup>31</sup> We do not aim to decide whether Hezbollah or another similar organization has the capacity to conduct Hybrid War or not. This requires a detailed research on each of this type of organizations. But we want to take attention on the difference between Hybrid Warfare and Hybrid War. Even states, who has financial and diplomatic institutions, may not have the capacity to conduct an Hybrid War. They may be actors of Hybrid Warfare and also the tools of other states in their Hybrid Wars.

Thus, we claim that while actors which have the capacity to use all instruments are the actors of “hybrid war,” other actors (state or non-state) can be actors of “hybrid warfare.” One can ask the question that what if an actor who has the capacity to use all instruments is in a struggle with another actor who does not have the same capacity. Then we can add a familiar adjective to the term; “Asymmetric Hybrid War.” For instance, the example of Hezbollah-Israel confrontation can be named as “Asymmetric Hybrid War,” with the assumption that Hezbollah does not have the capacity to use the non-military instruments. And the same is true for inter state confrontations if one of them is lacking the capacity to use all the instruments.

Furthermore, we think that there are levels in the concept of “Hybrid War.” These are Hybrid War, Regional Hybrid War and Global Hybrid War. For example the war between Israel and Hezbollah is just an Hybrid War (or an Asymmetric Hybrid War) which is a part of Regional Hybrid War between Israel and Iran. Russian-Ukrainian War is also an Hybrid War which is a part of a Global Hybrid War between Russia and the West. Syrian War is an important example for a Global Hybrid War which consists of a number of Hybrid War between different actors.

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31 Andras Racz, “Russia’s Hybrid Warfare in Ukraine: Breaking the Enemy’s Ability to Resist”, FIIA Report 43, *The Finnish Institute of International Affairs*, <https://www.fiaa.fi/en/publication/russias-hybrid-war-in-ukraine>, (Date of Accession: 26.09.2018), p. 32.

**“NEW” OR “OLD” DEBATE**

Besides the complexity about the definition of “Hybrid War,” the timing of its emergence and the importance, attributed to it, are profoundly interesting. Especially after 2014, when it gained popularity, it seems as if a new war strategy has been invented. The term, which was used to indicate to the tactical and technical developments of non-state actors in the war field at the beginning<sup>32</sup>, was suddenly started to be stated as a new strategy used by states after the Russian intervention in Ukraine. As stated by Bettina Benz and Hanna Smith “the concept has been transformed from a military strategic concept into a quasi-theory of Russian foreign policy.”<sup>33</sup>

Regardless of the label, another question about “Hybrid War” is whether it is new or not. Some scholars such as Michael Kofman and Matthew Rojansky, argue that although “Hybrid War” seems to be a new concept, neither its tools nor the combined application of them in war field is a new phenomenon.<sup>34</sup> Jens Stoltenberg also pointed out the usage of hybrid tactics in history by stating “Trojan War” as a first Hybrid Warfare.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, Mansoor claims that the Arab riots used by England against Ottomans in WWI are the examples of Hybrid War.<sup>36</sup> And Andrei Demidov (Андрей Демидов) gave some examples from history such as the economic tools used by Napoleon against Russia in 1882, the propoganda used by Hitler substantially and the tactics of the U.S. at the time of the Cold War.<sup>37</sup>

32 Erik Reichborn-Kjennerud-Patrick Cullen, “What is Hybrid Warfare”, *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, Policy Brief 1, 2016, p. 1.

33 Bettina Renz-Hanna Smith, “Russia and Hybrid Warfare-Going Beyond the Label”, *Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki*, Finland 2016, p. 1.

34 Michael Kofman-Matthew Rojansky, “A Closer Look at Russia’s ‘Hybrid War’”, *Kennan Cable*, 7, April 2015, p. 2.

35 Jens Stoltenberg, “Zero-Sum? Russia, Power Politics, and the post-Cold War Era”, *Brussels Forum*, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_118347.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_118347.htm), (Date of Accession: 28.10.2018).

36 Mansoor, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

37 Андрей Демидов, “Национальная Безопасность: Гибридные Войны Как Проявление Межгосударственных Конфликтов В Современных Условиях (National Security: The Outlook of Interstate Conflicts in Contemporary Time: Hybrid War)”, *Экономические Стратегии*, 2, 2016, p. 56.

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The opposing view, which does not reject the use of hybrid war tools in history, argues that novelty lies with the way of usage the old tools.<sup>38</sup> It is claimed that the combined and simultaneous usage of the tools is a new thing in war.<sup>39</sup> According to this view, the most important characteristic of Hybrid War is the synergy created by different tools.<sup>40</sup>

We think that Hybrid War is the result of evolution of War itself. It is not a new type of War. It is the war itself. The label "Hybrid" stems from the shock in which the West found itself after the Ukrainian Crisis. The West needed something to take attention of international community in order to get an alarming position against rising Russian threat. Russians did not use a revolutionary tactic in 2014. They had been also used by the West especially by the U.S.

Thus the label is not important. The important thing is understanding war with its changing character and fundamental elements which we have discussed earlier in this work.

### THE CHARACTER OF HYBRID WAR

Although we are using the term "Hybrid War," it is not necessary to use the adjective "Hybrid." As we have already explained it is contemporary war that we are trying to explain regardless of the label. However, it seems to be more comfortable to use the term "Hybrid", in order to ensure the consistency in the text.

As stated before, war has been in a permanent changing process. Because of technological and sociological developments, war has evolved to the thing what we see today.

The creation and acceptance of international laws related to the illegality of war, respect for sovereignty of states and the norms such as

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38 Jacobs-Lasconjarias, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

39 Frank G. Hoffman, "Hybrid Warfare and Challenges", *Joint Forces Quarterly*, 52, 2009, p. 36.

40 Racz, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

respect for human rights and just war, cause a tendency for the actions which are deniable. In other words, states prefer peaceful actions such as diplomatic and economic or the actions, which it is impossible to find the actors behind them, such as cyber attacks, information warfare, using insurgency and terrorism. This character of Hybrid War can be called as plausible deniability.<sup>41</sup> If the aggressor can not reach its goals with peaceful or deniable actions, the chaos which is the natural result of these actions can be exploited as an excuse for a conventional military action. Bartosh called this method as creating “controlled chaos.”<sup>42</sup> In brief, states are trying to go around the law with the help of different tools and actions.<sup>43</sup> War, which must be declared in advance according to the international law, is conducted today without a notice. Secrecy has taken the place of openness.<sup>44</sup> Because of this, some scholars present information warfare as the most important tool of Hybrid War.<sup>45</sup>

Even if it can be possible to define the aggressor behind the secret actions such as information or cyber attack, it is controversial to respond its action by force in terms of self defence or by a security council resolution.<sup>46</sup>

Another factor that leads the tendency toward the Hybrid War is the cost of war. There two aspects of the cost; economic and politic.<sup>47</sup> The both World Wars caused huge costs and destruction for the warring

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41 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op. cit.*, p. 2

42 A.A. Бартош, “Гибридные Войны Как Проявление Глобальной Критичности Современного Мира (Hybrid War as the Global Critic of Contemporary World)”, *Геополитика и Безопасность*, 29(1), p. 72.

43 Сазонова, *op. cit.*, p. 180; Timur Andrievskii, “Гибридная Война: Сущность и Базовые Стратегии (Hybrid War: Its Core and Fundamental Strategy)”, Харьковского национального педагогического университета им. Г.С.Сковороды, Украина, 3(1), 2017, <http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-17b46a62-59c5-4123-88dc-003424acc549>, (Date of Accession: 30.10.2018), p. 162.

44 Andrievskii, *op. cit.*, p. 162-163.

45 Mihai Marcel Neag, “A New Typology of War-Hybrid War”, *Military Art and Science, Revista Academiei Forțelor Terestre*, 81(1), 2016, p. 17.

46 Сазонова, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

47 Nihat Dumlupinar, “Hybrid War: Iranian Armed Forces”, *Journal of Crises and Political Research, Hybrid Warfare Special Issue*, 1(2), October 2017, p. 77.



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parties including the winners. The increased destruction capability of weapons after WWII and the nuclear armament has increased the possible destruction level of a war to a level which is not imaginable. Because of this reason states do not prefer a direct conventional confrontation.<sup>48</sup> This does not mean that a conventional power is unimportant or secondary. On the contrary it is not possible to mention about Hybrid War without conventional power. Conventional power is in action continuously with its deterrent effect. Moreover, it has multiplier effect for the other tools when it is used. However, the costs of other tools of Hybrid War are less than the cost of the conventional power. Here we are not talking about the costs of having a military power, but the costs of using it and the costs of counteraction against it. Eventhough it is not conventional, it is logical to assess nuclear power within the same context since the usage of it means huge costs for all sides.

Another dimension of costs are related to the politics. The use of conventional force may cause an international pressure against the agressor, if an acceptable justification doe not exist. On the other hand economic problems and military losses due to the conventional military operations put the govenments (especially democratic regimes) in a difficult position in the domestic political affairs.<sup>49</sup> Thus, states prefer to use primarily the deniable tools of Hybrid War such as cyber attacks, information attacks, private military organizations (mercenaries), terrorist organizations.<sup>50</sup> Besides the less economic and political burdency of these deniable tools, their effectiveness is not less than the conventional military.

Furthermore, there is one more important characteristic of Hybrid War; the negative connotation. There is no state that claims it is using

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48 Miroslav Banasik, "Russia's Hybrid War", *Science and Military*, 2, 2016, p. 41.

49 Сазонова, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

50 *Ibid.*

hybrid war tools.<sup>51</sup> The main reason for this negative connotation is the unlawful tools of Hybrid War. Thus, the usage of Hybrid War tools are always attributed to adversaries and the actions of other side is often defined as “Hybrid Threat.” In this context states defined their action in Hybrid War with “Countering Hybrid Threat” or with similar terms which denote the meaning that excludes the use of unlawful tools.<sup>52</sup> While the Western World, especially the U.S., accuse Russia to implement Hybrid War, Russians argue that the U.S. has been implementing Hybrid War for years.<sup>53</sup> Because of his article<sup>54</sup> published in February 2013, the Head of Russian General Staff Valery Geresimov has been announced as the inventor of Hybrid War by the West. However, as pointed by Monaghan, in his article Gerasimov does not tell about Russian strategy but the changing war tools and tactics of the West.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, Russian side defines colour revolutions as Hybrid War of the West including the last overturn of the Ukrainian Government.<sup>56</sup> Even the creation of the term “Hybrid War” is seen as an action of propoganda.<sup>57</sup>

As we repeatedly stated that there is not an invention of new type of war. War has been changed overtime. And the changes did not happen overnight after the Ukrainian Crises. They had been visible for years.

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51 Демидов, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

52 “NATO’s Response to Hybrid Threats”, *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_156338.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm?selectedLocale=en), (Date of Accession: 19.11.2018); TC 7-100, “Hybrid Threat”, *Headquarters-Department of Army*, p.V; Комлева, *op. cit.*, p.134.

53 П.А. Цыганков, “Гибридная Война”: Политический Дискурс и Международная Практика (Hybrid War: Political Discourse and International Implementation)”, *Межуниверситетский Научный Семинар “Гибридные Войны”-“Гибридные Войны” В ХХI Веке: Социальные И Политические Аспекты*, 4, 2015, p. 257.

54 Валерий Герасимов, “Ценность Науки в Предвидении (The Value of Science in Anticipation)”, *Военно-Промышленный Курьер*, <https://vpk-news.ru/articles/14632>, (Date of Accession: 02.02.2017).

55 Andrew Monaghan, “The ‘War’ in Russia’s ‘Hybrid Warfare’”, *Parameters*, 45(4), Winter 2015-16, p. 68.

56 Сергей Александрович Марков, “«Гибридная Война» Против России, (Hybrid War Against Russia)”, *Алгоритм*, 2015, p. 6-9.

57 Павел Фельгенгауэр-Интервью (Interview), “Гибридная Война”-Новая Угроза или Пропагандистский Трюк? (Hybrid War-New Threat or a Trick of Propaganda?)”, *Deutsche Welle*, <https://www.dw.com/ru/гибридная-война-новая-угроза-или-пропагандистский-трюк/a-18278421>, (Date of Accession: 10.11.2018).

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Presenting these changes as a new type of war and relating them with Russian aggressions are just alarming reactions of the West against the rising Russian threat.

## THE WAY OF CONDUCTING HYBRID WAR

So far we have emphasized on the changing character of war and the scope of its fundamental elements. One can ask the question that so what? How are states conducting war today? In almost every study of hybrid war, the combined, coordinated and simultaneous use of the tools is stated as a prominent characteristic of Hybrid War.<sup>58</sup> We agree that today's war requires a combined and coordinated use of the tools. The synergy which can only be achieved by using the the tools in a coordinative way, is among the fundamentals of today's war. The cumulative effect of combined use of the tools is always more than the sum of the effects which are generated by using the tools seperately.<sup>59</sup> However, we can not define Hybrid War as simultaneous use of the tools, since the time and the sequence of using tools depends on the conditions for a specific case.<sup>60</sup> In different cases, the sequence, the scope and the way of using tools may be different. While some tools may be used intensively, some others may not be used at all.

The delusion in the litrature is taking the cases such as Ukranian, Syrian cases, which include the military tools, as a point of interest. However, we can add number of countries like Turkey, Iran, Baltic States, towards which hybrid war tools except conventional military, directed. Moreover even in the examples, in which military tools are used, the sequence of the tools differs from case to case. So trying to establish

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58 Glenn, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

59 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op.cit.*, p. 3; Бартош, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

60 Reichborn-Kjennerud- Cullen, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

a doctrine for Hybrid War is useless as well as contradictory with its character.<sup>61</sup> In Hybrid War creativity and ambiguity prevail.<sup>62</sup>

There are some important points in conducting Hybrid War or the contemporary war. First of all anonymity and deniability must be protected unless the need for an open military confrontation. Second, it is important to find out weaknesses, sensitive points and red lines of adversaries and other regional and global powers. The main attention must be on keeping adversary and international community unaware about the actions. For this reason crises that are created purposefully must be seem as if they are stemming from domestic reasons. Briefly, the scope and the intensity of the tools must be kept under the awareness threshold of adversaries in order not to trigger a counter action or third party interventions.<sup>63</sup>

The strategy for conducting Hybrid War explained by Erik Reichborn-Kjennerud and Patrick Cullen in a Multinational Capability Development Project. According to them, the strategy of Hybrid War consists of “vertical escalation” and “horizontal escalation” of the tools. Vertical escalation means increasing or decreasing the intensity of a tool depending on the situation. As for horizontal escalation, it means applying new tools in synchronization to create cumulative effects on the adversary.<sup>64</sup> The important points are not to pass the awareness threshold, applying right tools depending on the conditions and deciding sufficient intensity of the tools. As stated by Erik Reichborn-Kjennerud and Patrick Cullen the tools can be used as carrots as well as sticks.<sup>65</sup> For example, in a spesific case economic tool can be in a form of economic assistance, while it can be in a shape of economic ambargo in another case.

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61 Stephen M. Dayspring, *Toward A Theory of Hybrid Warfare: The Russian Conduct of War During Peace*, Naval Postgraduate School, 2015, (Published Master Thesis), p. 34.

62 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

63 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

64 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op.cit.*, p. 8-9.

65 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

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Another point which must be taken into account is the effects of the tools used in Hybrid War. The effects of an action should be understood as a change on the state of an entity (social, economic etc) of the target state. But the cause-effect relationship is not linear in Hybrid War.<sup>66</sup> For instance a cyber attack on state institutions may cause a social unrest. Or a terrorist attack on the target state's society may trigger an economic crisis. This non-linear cause-effect relation makes difficult the detection of the cause behind the effects for the target state. Also, the aggressor may lose the control of the events if it does not anticipate secondary effects of the actions.<sup>67</sup>

The need for synchronizing various tools, deciding the timing of vertical and horizontal escalation or de-escalation, the need for staying below the awareness threshold of the adversaries, and the need to foresee the secondary or third order effects and to take necessary steps for them require a high degree centralized governing body.<sup>68</sup> A centralized and authorized body also needed for taking and changing the decisions quickly which is necessary for Hybrid War environment. It can be said that the central governing body created by Russians is a very important factor for the success of Russia in Ukraine Crisis.<sup>69</sup>

Some scholars see anti-democratic regimes more advantageous on taking, changing and implementing decisions quickly which is a requirement of dynamic Hybrid War environment.<sup>70</sup> This conclusion makes Russia more advantageous than the West. The central governing body is not required just for the aggressors but also the defenders in Hybrid War. States need a central governing body to be successful against Hybrid aggressors.

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66 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

67 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op.cit.*, p. 14.

68 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

69 Tony Balasevicius, "Looking for Little Green Man, Understanding Russia's Employment of Hybrid Warfare", *Canadian Military Journal*, 17(3), Summer 2017, p. 26.

70 Reichborn-Kjennerud-Cullen, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

In sum, Hybrid War is the result of the changes on the character and the main elements of war. The label is not important. It is the war which we see today. The characteristics of the main elements of war, people (society), military (tools) and government, determine the the way of conducting war. Thus, Hybrid War requires to control the minds of society both national and international, to synconize various tools in order to create a cumulative effect and to take and change decisions quickly depending on the situation in which ambiguity prevails.

## **UKRANIAN AND SYRIAN CRISIS IN THE GLOBAL HYBRID WAR**

In this section our aim is not to present the details of Ukranian and Syrian Crisis. We want to demonstrate the relation of these crises with higher levels of Hybrid War which we defined before as Regional and Global Hybrid Wars. We took these two examples among numerous others because of their popularity.

First of all Ukranian Crisis is a Hybrid War which is a part of Global Hybrid War between the West and Russia. Thus, it has two sides one of which is between Ukraine and Russia and the other one is between Russia and the West. This war did not start in 2014 and it will not end in the near future. In fact it has started with the demolition of Soviet Russia. Moreover, the Hybrid War between the West and Russia is not limited to Ukranian case. It also shows itself on different part of the world such as Georgia, Middle Asia, Baltic and Middle East. In other words Russia has been conducting different Hybrid Wars at the same time.<sup>71</sup> Ukrainian crisis is just a visible sign of this continous war between two sides and it is also important for the West that it signals the rising Russian presence in the international affairs.

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71 Teifukova-Erol, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

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As for the Syrian case it is a part of regional war with multiple sides such as Russia, Iran, Israel, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. It is also a part of global war which includes the U.S., the E.U., Russia and China as well.<sup>72</sup> Accepting the Syrian case as a just civil war which stems from the unrest of society is a narrow-minded thinking. Regional and global powers are testing each other and trying to get a better situation in every case of Hybrid Wars. They are fighting each other with non-military and indirect military tools. Also the direct military tools are always in their tool box to be used when they are needed.

There may be also connection between the parts of Regional and Global Wars. An action or an Hybrid War as a whole may also secondary effects in another part of the higher levels of Hybrid War.

For example, Syrian and Ukrainian cases may be in relation with each other in the context of the Hybrid War between Russia and the U.S. Ukrainian Crisis stemmed from the overturn of legitimate Ukrainian Government by the West. As known by everyone in the world, Ukraine is a red line of Russia.<sup>73</sup> Even the enlargement of NATO has been seen a fateful error<sup>74</sup>, trying to make Ukraine a part of the Western world seems unreasonable. Moreover Georgia and Ukraine are more important for Russia than for the West.<sup>75</sup> Russia needs Ukraine for security reasons, economic reasons, status which are related the fundamental reasons for a war.

Thus the question is why did the West, in particular the U.S., make such an attempt that provoked Russia? There are two possible answers

72 Şafak Oğuz-Kadir Ertaç Çelik, "Conflict in Syria: Is It A Proxy Warfare?", *Uluslararası Kriz ve Siyaset Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(2), December 2018, p. 45.

73 John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukrainian Crisis is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin", *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2014, p. 6.

74 George F. Kennan, "A Fateful Error", *New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/02/05/opinion/a-fateful-error.html>, (Date of Accession: 10.02.2019).

75 Nihat Dumlupınar, "Avrupa Güvenliği Kapsamında Ukrayna Krizi", *ANKASAM Analiz*, 4, Ekim 2017, p. 20.

for this question. Firstly the West underestimated the capability and the intention of Russia. Secondly, the West provoked Russia intentionally to make busy her in order to distract her attention from Syria. We can not be sure which of the answers is true.

However, regardless of the answers, Russia seems to be the winner so far. Russia has got what she wanted from Ukrainian crises; the annexation of Crimea and a freezing conflict in the east of Ukraine. And also Russia prevents the U.S to overturn the regime of Syria until now.

Because Hybrid War is a continuous state of war, winning the War completely is not possible. It is possible to win the parts of Hybrid War but not as a whole. Thus the future will show us who will benefit from this permanent war. Our prediction is no one.

### CONCLUSION

After 2014 the term Hybrid War has become one of the most important themes in the literature. However, until now it has not been understood thoroughly. Different scholars have defined the term differently because they have been looking at the term from different points of view. In fact, Hybrid War is not a new type of war. It is the war itself. However, we see a novelty in the way of conducting war in the new century. This novelty does not stem from an invention of new type of war, but from the changing character and the scope of the fundamental elements of war which are people (society), military (tool) and government.

Hybrid War must not be thought just as a confrontation between two sides. There are three level of Hybrid War; Hybrid War, Regional Hybrid War and Global Hybrid War. Each case of Hybrid war belongs to an higher level of Hybrid War regional or global. For instance Georgian or Ukrainian Wars are parts of a global war between the West and Russia. Syrian War is a multiple-side war which has both regional and global characteristics.



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The parts of higher levels of Hybrid War can be also connected to each other. An action in one part or a war as a whole may affect the other Hybrid War.

The main characteristics of Hybrid War are; 1- It is important to control the minds of societies domestic and international. (the first element of the second trinity) 2- It is important to have the capacity to apply all kinds of tool in a synchronized manner. (the second element of the second trinity) 3-It is important to have a central authorized governing body consists of experts from all fields. (the third element of the second trinity). These are important not only for the agressors but also the defenders in Hybrid Warfare. It is also very diffucult to understand who is agressor and who is defender.

Russia has some adventageous in Hybrid War relatively to the West since it has more central decision taking mechanisms. Democratic western states and especially the NATO need a more dynamic and quick decision making and executive bodies in order to be successful against Hybrid threats especially against the autocratic ones.

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