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The Complexities of Hybrid Warfare
A Study in Contemporary Military History

by

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Under the supervision of
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that no portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application of another degree, or qualification thereof, or for any other university or institute of learning.

I declare that this thesis is my own independent work. All the used material and literature has been duly referenced and quoted.

In Prague, 7th January 2016

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Abstract

Contemporary warfare poses significant and progressively difficult challenges for military planners. In this context, the increasing prevalence of conflicts classified as Hybrid Wars greatly contributes to the general growth of such complexities. This work will attempt to address Hybrid Warfare and the complexities it poses through first examining the most relevant Western and non-Western theoretical literature on the subject, based on which it will proceed to analyze two Hybrid Wars through a historical sociological paradigm offered by the theoretical framework of Siniša Malešević. This work will thus examine the sociological peculiarities that Hybrid Warfare encompassed in the Second Lebanon War and Russian incursions in Ukraine, in terms of two evolving historical processes of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization, as introduced by Malešević. Drawing on this analysis, this work will be able to observe significant differences between the two Hybrid Wars, and will argue that these are largely caused by the differences in the societal construction and the ideological landscapes prevalent in relevant conflict zones. In a further effort to analyze the reasons for the differences between these two Hybrid Wars, this work will argue for the need to increasingly refine the theory of Hybrid Warfare. It will present Hybrid Warfare as a historical continuation of warfare and will attempt to diversify the theory by proposing two new analytical categories of Hybrid Warfare: General Hybrid Warfare and Specific Hybrid Warfare.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Warfare has perplexed the minds of scholars since the inception of recorded history. The impact war has had on humanity can not be underestimated. After all, if one looks into the recorded history of the ancient world up until the last centuries then violence and conflict are the central theme and have to a large degree shaped and modeled the current world we live in.

In this context, how are we to understand the socio-historical changes in warfare? U.S. Lieutenant Colonel James Harp argues that although the historical nature of war is violence, the character and characteristics of war inevitably change over time. He believes that the future wars will include both change and continuity from the past and will inevitably reshape the character of war over time.¹ He further notes that this adaptive process has produced a trend in warfare where non-state actors have engaged in a type of warfare consistently limited in scale and in which asymmetric modes of war are employed against larger state actors. In the context of the contemporary world this is clearly illustrated by Lebanon Wars and Hezbollah, as well as the recent rise of the terrorist organization referred to as Daesh.

The increasing importance of non-state entities and the prevalence of asymmetric warfare is partly due to the fact that since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the conventional military strength of the United States is so great that it renders a traditional model of warfare or force attrition an undesired form of war for its potential adversaries. The weakness of the traditional modes of warfare is further exemplified by the debacles of Afghanistan and Iraq, where a tactical victory was achieved in the face of a victory on the battlefield, but as the U.S. Colonel John McCuen notes, the lack of understanding about how to fight against an enemy who seeks to protract the war by conducting it within the population while simultaneously attempting to erode confidence at home and abroad, ultimately resulted in a strategic failure.² Subsequently, alternative modes of warfare are sought abroad. Evidence of the changing mode of conduct of contemporary warfare is not

hard to come by. Relatively recently warfare entered the new digital realm and as a consequence spawned the theory of cyber warfare. But how are we to make sense of such changes? While there is a general consensus that the institution of warfare is experiencing significant changes, the causes and implications of these developments are not self-evident.

A renowned sociologist Siniša Malešević suggests that since our relationship with war is determined by our social character, one has to understand the social in order to understand war itself.³ With the rapid development of technologies, and societal change, warfare has now entered new realms and has extended its reach into our common lives. The social actors of the medieval times were nearly never engaged or in contact with the political decisions leading to the waging of war, whereas today's common people have become actively involved in the political decisions which lead up to armed conflict, insofar as they remain politically active. War has started to involve the common people more than ever before and our contact with it has been radically enhanced through the consumption of mass media which covers and to a large degree shapes our perception of the conflicts around the globe, as it has become our main source of information. The recent developments have given birth to various theories of warfare, but one of the latest trends is the concept of Hybrid Warfare. The New Wars paradigm has already been an interdisciplinary subject of study, but Hybrid War has posed problems for scholars and especially military planners, and even the stances toward whether it is a separate mode of conflict or not, vary.

Hybrid Warfare

The conflict which rooted from the aftermath of the political unrest in Ukraine and the geopolitical uncertainty caused by her possible alignment with the West escalated with the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and peaked with the ongoing War in Donbass. Along with the global uncertainty this conflict has inflicted, it has also provided ground for debate for the advocates of the theory of Hybrid Warfare. The discussion on the topic has reemerged into meaningful scholarly debate for the first time since the aftermath of the Second Lebanon War in 2006, which had evoked Frank Hoffman to adopt an analytical approach and properly define the qualities and phenomena of Hybrid Warfare and hybrid adversaries. Various analysts have subsequently adopted Hoffman's concept of Hybrid Warfare when examining the events that unfolded

in Lebanon in 2006.^{4 5 6} Its advocates define it as an area where conventional and irregular warfare converge into a new form of warfare. In such a conflict the participants use different techniques both from the field of irregular and regular warfare, and blend them into something novel.⁷ The importance of understanding this, a rather novel term, is crucial in making sense of the conflicts which have unfolded in the recent decade. To a degree, the current debate also concerns the novelty of the term. While parts of the techniques Hybrid Warfare covers are by definition not novel, the term itself has emerged relatively recently. And the success granted to those employing Hybrid Warfare proves the necessity to continue the study of warfare in its new emerging forms, as states have to adopt new strategies and methods to counter it.

The term Hybrid Warfare as such was proposed in the start of this century, but has developed in different directions due to the vagueness it initially encompassed and the changing environment we live in. It is clear that the interpretation often employed under which it is simply the fusion of conventional and irregular forces and activities, is too superficial and as pointed out by Mansoor and Murray is applicable for most of the conflicts over recorded human history.⁸ In fact such a definition is more descriptive of Compound Warfare, as defined by Thomas Huber.⁹ In addition, it is often unrecognized as a distinct form of warfare, but rather a type of warfare which is hybrid in nature, i.e it is not a form of war in itself, but simply the denoting term used to describe a conflict in which different modes of warfare are used, whether in unified direction or not. The implication of such an understanding is that there are already sufficient modes of warfare that cover the areas that Hybrid Warfare seeks to cover and therefore the term is deemed redundant. However, I believe that while such a perception is applicable for Compound Warfare, it is not the case with Hybrid Warfare. I would thus argue that the recent rapid developments in technologies intertwined with social change from the introduction of mass communications in the latter part of the 20th century to today's info-technological evolution, and the *Internetization*¹⁰ of our lives represent changes in the construction of our societies which have given birth to new areas of contestation in war, ultimately legitimizing the usage of the term Hybrid Warfare as a contemporary category of war.

I will examine the development of such changes by examining conflicts which can be defined as Hybrid Wars. By doing so, I hope to establish the social, ideological and technological changes that will be the underlying components for my own interpretation

of contemporary Hybrid Warfare. This thesis will therefore seek to tackle the vagueness of the term and attempt to distinctly set it apart as a separate form of contemporary warfare.

Methodology

I will attempt to do so, first by providing a comparative analysis of two chosen conflicts that exhibit phenomena associated with the concept of Hybrid Warfare, to see its development in the context of Malešević-defined historical sociological framework of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization.

Thus, firstly an operational definition of Hybrid Warfare is established for the purposes of the thesis. Such a definition is proposed after examining the theoretical literature relevant to the subject in Chapter Two. Secondly to gain an understanding of the term and its development, a mere militaristic observation of the conflicts falling under the definition of Hybrid Warfare is insufficient. It is thus necessary to examine the social and technological context of the time in question. To see such a context, an examination of the conflicts that exhibit the phenomena associated with Hybrid Warfare is conducted in such a way as to unveil the causal relationship between the changes in society and technology, and Hybrid Warfare. For this Malešević's work in „Sociology of War and Violence“ serves as a theoretical base. According to him, two historical processes have contributed to the developments in warfare: cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization. The former stands for the historically ever-increasing bureaucratic nature of our societies, their increasing coercive nature and the increasing bureaucratization of killing, while the latter stands for the increasing importance of ideologies emphasized and facilitated by particular social organizations or institutions. Both of these processes help facilitate and justify ever greater violence. The hybrid conflicts will be analyzed as to unveil these processes at work. This is necessary for the latter part of the thesis where aspects arising from this analysis are assessed and an elaborated account of Hybrid Warfare is presented by presenting two new analytical categories of Hybrid Warfare.

Authors such as Mansoor and Murray have pointed out that Hybrid Warfare in its traditional form is rather the norm than the exception of human history. Therefore the selection of conflicts to analyze is critical. Due to the nature and the scope of this thesis, the amount of conflicts chosen for analysis is limited. To see if there has been any

development of the concept of Hybrid Warfare, the conflicts chosen are from contemporary history. Drawing from this analysis, I will then continue by presenting my perception of contemporary Hybrid Warfare and establish how it differs from the more traditional account and other types of warfare. I will argue, following the insights of Russian theorists such as Gareev, Gerasimov, Checkinov and Bogdanov, that the societal and technological changes have led to a type of warfare where information and psychological war become central to the theory. As a result I will propose two new analytical categories of Hybrid Warfare. In addition, I will argue that due to its modern components, Hybrid Warfare is an evolutionary continuation of warfare, representing and reflecting the complicated societal, technological and ideological changes of the contemporary world.

Selection of sources and literature

There have been numerous authors and writers on the subject of Hybrid Warfare. Therefore a selection has to be made for the purposes of this thesis. Such a selection was carried out on the basis of the theoretical relevance to the subject. A number of authors are used to determine the definition of Hybrid Warfare and these authors are chosen for their theoretical contributions for the development of the concept of Hybrid Warfare and presented in a chronological fashion in chapter two of the thesis. Such a definition will thenceforth be referred to as operational Hybrid Warfare and will be coined solely for the purposes of this thesis and its application for the comparative analysis.

The theoretical base for the examination is the framework proposed by Siniša Malešević, as his theory provides a sociological examination of the historical development of warfare. A deeper insight into his theoretical framework is established in chapter two of the thesis.

Limitations and delimitations

During the course of my work I encountered four limitations to my research. I have specified these limitations in the following paragraphs and explained what actions I have taken to minimize the effect of these limitations. Firstly it became clear during my research that Hybrid Warfare is not a universally defined form of warfare. Some would even argue that the term is redundant, as the existing terminology is sufficient in

providing explanations to the recent developments and conflicts. However, the purpose of this thesis is not to engage in a debate of whether Hybrid Warfare exists or not. Concurrently to avoid being engaged in such a debate, I adopted two basic assumptions: (1) There exists a phenomenon that fits the description of Hybrid Warfare; (2) Phenomena referred to as Hybrid Warfare has evolved due to the societal and technological developments. Neither of these assumptions will be questioned throughout the course of this thesis.

The second limitation I encountered during conducting my research was linguistic in nature. Namely, it manifested itself in my incomplete Russian language proficiency. While conducting my research I examined literature published by Russian authors in the Russian language and due to my limited language proficiency I often had to rely on translations of Russian publications. The translations had to be precise, as the military terms need utmost clarity when used, and subtle differences in translation of military terms can occur due to translators who are not from a military background. However, this issue was not severe. In case several translations of the material did not already exist, or if I was unable to properly understand the literature due my incomplete Russian language proficiency, I was able to clarify such uncertainties with my Russian-speaking colleagues. Thus I managed to read various translations of the same texts to minimize the effect of any potential misunderstandings.

The third limitation I encountered concerned the military terms used in Russian literature. Namely they often have disparate meanings than their western counterparts. The meaning of the terms such as information warfare differ in the Russian and Western – particularly the US – literature. However, many of such differences are often subtle and occasionally insignificant, such as 'motorized' as opposed to western's 'mechanized'. To overcome the possibility of such misconceptions, I adopted concrete definitions for such terms which I have specified and concretely defined in Chapter Three.

Lastly, the fourth limitation is related to the the relatively contemporary nature of my research subjects, particularly those relating to the conflict in Ukraine. Namely, this limitation manifested itself in the limited amount of credible military and other sources when it comes to discussing the conflicts I analyzed, particularly the more recent War in Ukraine. The contemporary nature of the conflicts I researched provided that they were often clouded by military secrecy and thus I was often forced to rely on open, and more

often than not journalistic sources. Both of the conflicts I analyzed evidently proved that the Hybrid War phenomena exhibits the necessity to control the spread of information for operational and strategic success. Thus it was often extremely complicated to get standard quotations and documentary evidence directly from army sources. It is likely that they will become available after sufficient time has passed, together with more witness narratives of participants, but in the current situation they were not available. However the developments of the events I examined fully confirmed the quotes that I had obtained from using open journalistic sources. Additionally, due to the nature of such sources, I made every effort to avoid accepting any interpretations present in such sources and used them as thematic orientation points, merely to point out that some actors were somehow engaging in some sort of activity, the nature of which can naturally demand further examination. The debate over several aspects relevant to the phenomena of Hybrid War thereby often occur on the pages of respected media outlets and journals, such as the Armed Forces Journal, the Military Review and Military Thought, and I have thus attempted to adopt to this accordingly by relying on such reports in attempting to make sense of the military and non-military activities pertaining to the phenomena associated with Hybrid Warfare.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the current chapter, I will first examine the literature which will be used as the theoretical basis for the comparative analysis. For this, I will be providing an insight into Siniša Malešević's *Sociology of War and Violence* where he coins the two terms most relevant for the analysis: cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization. Secondly I will examine the most relevant literature and focus on the authors who have engaged in the discussion concerning Hybrid Warfare. The goal of this chapter is hence twofold. Firstly to create a theoretical base for the comparative analysis and secondly to provide an insight into the academic discussion over the term Hybrid Warfare and to create a solid theoretical ground for the definition later used for examining the subjects of the comparative analysis.

Malešević, Sociology of War and Violence

Malešević is first and foremost concerned with the sociological examination of violence and war and therefore argues that since much of our relationship with violence and war is determined by our social character, then it is essential for us to understand the social as a precondition for understanding war and violence and the encompassed changes.¹¹ Using his historical sociological theory allows this thesis to avoid falling into the trap of technical determinism, typical for many authors writing on the subject. He asserts that the reason why violence and war is so fascinating for us is because it is not common to our daily lives. In fact humans are proven to be bad at prolonged violence.¹² This is an especially profound realization in the face of the passing of the most violent and bloody century of recorded human history. He notes that modernity has created an ontological dissonance when it comes to war and violence. The modern ideas rooted in Enlightenment have more

than ever before nominally valued human life, yet modernity has also been the time of the bloodiest conflicts and seen technological advancements such as the invention of the electric chair, concentration camps, gas chambers and nuclear bombs, all perfecting the systematic slaughter of human life. As he puts it: „*There is an inherent discrepancy between a normative universe that cherishes human life and scorns war and violence while simultaneously practicing killing at an exceptional and unprecedented rate.*“¹³

In seeking a reason why this situation has come about he looks into the changes in society and argues that this ontological dissonance is rooted in the complex interplay between the increasing social organization of violence and the proliferation of modern secular ideologies. These are the two vital components which have to be in action in order for us to be in a position to conduct effective prolonged violence. He terms them cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization

Cumulative bureaucratization of coercion

First and foremost it is a historical process, as it increases over time. More specifically, it refers to the bureaucratic nature of society which has an essential role in supplementing and increasing coercion. Malešević argues that the bureaucratic nature of the society originates from the military sphere as it rests on discipline and demands obedience. And since there is no effective use or threat to use violence without developed social organization, he asserts, with a reference to Weber, that since the central component of bureaucratic rationality is discipline, and since the military gave birth to discipline, it is the original source of such vast coercive bureaucratic social organizations. In a sense, he argues that the character of the laws and the organizational principles that govern our lives are coercive in nature. In explaining this, he compares a factory worker or a nurse with the soldiers and the police and finds that in a general sense they are both governed by the same principles of bureaucratic organization: all of the organizational demands are based on legal codes that impose penalties or punishment for the refusal to adhere. This proves the coercive nature of the social organizations and he further argues that this is still an evolving historical process with the ever growing organizational capability for destruction.¹⁴ He then continues to examine the evolution of the bureaucratization of coercion.

According to Malešević, the increasingly bureaucratic nature of the military sphere

owes a great deal to the ideas of Enlightenment. He notes that the revolutionary ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity and the pursuit of happiness – in short the ideas of Enlightenment – were adopted less due to their ethical or logical appeal, but more owing to the violence conducted by the armies of the French and the Americans to install them. Hence, these ideas were adopted through violent uprisings and on a more broad scale through the use of violence. This not only rendered them immediately contradictory but also led to an even more brutal aftermath, as the revolutionaries took it to their own hands to spread these ideas worldwide through the use of warfare.¹⁵ The resistance to the armies attempting to impose such ideas – like the many despots of Europe opposing the idea of individual freedom and equality at the time – led the revolutionaries to believe that would the revolution fail to continue, it would wither and die out altogether. Thus the immediate support from the population was necessary not only in accepting these ideas, but also as a source of potential soldiers fighting for them. Malešević argues that in this context the right to bear arms became interpreted as a right of a free citizen, ultimately encouraging the formation of a citizen army supporting the cause.

The French revolutionary ideas drew on their ideological mass appeal and ultimately led to the establishment of a massive army, based on a principle that has now largely become common: deeming all suitable males fit for the service of the state. The *levée en masse* decree of 1793 meant that the French built an army of nearly a million men.¹⁶ Armies such as this were larger than ever before and demanded an increasing amount of co-ordination and control. The French achieved this by adopting a meritocratic hierarchical structure for the army in combination with a potent social organization created by the state.¹⁷ Following this, a model of a combination between centralized supreme command and adaptable decentralized regiment structure has become commonplace.

Another example of where bureaucratization of coercion was cumulative was the state of Prussia. Their remarkable ability to mobilize a very high number of soldiers despite being a small state relied firmly on their organizational might. Compulsory short-term military service was installed already in 1814 and by 1866 every citizen was liable for service of three years, followed by four years in reserve and five years in the *Landeswehr*.¹⁸ Prussian war-like nature is perhaps best illustrated by the way they embraced technological advancements such as the proliferation of railways. Namely, the railways network they

created was built around existing and potential front lines in anticipation of future conflicts. The Prussian military was also characterized by strict discipline and a precisely defined hierarchy. The Prussian model of short-term well trained conscript armies, supported by reservists and governed by an expert general staff soon became the norm for all continental militaries.¹⁹

An additional aspect worthy of mentioning is the rapidly growing role of the state. The state became principally responsible for the maintenance of armies. Everything including arming, training, feeding, clothing, supplying and housing the troops quickly became under the responsibility of the state. This necessitated the expansion of the state administration as the increase in the size of the army and its upkeep demanded increased funds and the need for more extensive fiscal systems which could enforce efficient taxation. Malešević is of the opinion that the modern bureaucratic nation-state emerged to a degree as a result of the costly and intensive war-making processes. In explaining this, he relies on Weber who observed that the administrative power of the modern nation-state originated from the rationalization and bureaucratization of the military sphere. Such disciplinary ethics of the military ended up as a rationalization giving birth to a new social order.²⁰

The disciplinary ethos caused numerous changes in the military sphere. The demand for anonymity for uniformed soldiers distanced from the civilians meant that extravagant and ritualistic features of warfare such as personal displays of bravery or heroism, individual warrior ethos and battles fought in duels became things of the past. They were replaced by the anonymous bureaucratic nature of killing where quality was surpassed by quantity, a world where the machine gun broke down the traditional military codes of fairness, empathy for fellow soldiers and stripped heroism on the battlefield from its traditional significance.²¹ For Malešević, the machine gun is a perfect metaphor for the bureaucratization of coercion in the modern age: A mass produced, highly efficient industrial weapon which reaps alienation together with dehumanization via emphasizing quantity over quality, sowing mass slaughter in the process.

The cumulative bureaucratization of coercion is then a historical process partly responsible for the ontological dissonance that modernity encompasses for Malešević. The strict hierarchical bureaucratic systems adopted in the military sphere together with their incorporation in the modern nation-states and the technological innovations have all

facilitated recent centuries of modernity as the bloodiest time ever recorded in the history of warfare. However, cumulative bureaucratization of coercion is not the only factor Malešević sees responsible for the ontological dissonance. It represents only the institutional bureaucratization of coercion, but a separate inquiry is required for the subjective perceptions, ideas, values and practices in the context of war and violence,²² for social organization alone would not be able to succeed without a just purpose. This is why he introduces another term of centrifugal ideologization, interconnected with the bureaucratic social order.

Centrifugal ideologization

Before proceeding to explain this term, ideology has to be defined first. For this, Malešević lies on Michael Freeden's perception according to which social facts and political events require interpretation, as they are not unambiguous.²³ Ideology is then the perceived network into which events and social facts are contextualized into. In Malešević's words, it is a „*complex social process through which actors articulate their actions and beliefs.*“²⁴ He believes that centrifugal ideologization is a mass phenomenon spreading via social organizations or movements to gradually encompass an increasingly numerous population.²⁵ It is also necessary to understand the process of the ideologization of violence, as the act of killing another human being is in great contradiction with most of the social orders and therefore requires believable mechanisms of justification. As Malešević puts it: „*To reconcile the modern view that all human beings are of equal moral worth, and that human life is precious, with the everyday practice of mass extermination, a person has to deny humanity to his or her enemy.*“²⁶

The changes Enlightenment ideas of equality and liberty created were immense, especially with regard to justifying violence and warfare. In earlier history, warfare was mostly conducted in the context of a hierarchical structure of the society where peasants considered themselves a lower species than the nobility or the town-folk, and where a special warrior/soldier class was present in this structure. Correspondingly, most of the earlier wars were fought between warrior nobles with certain ritualistic routines facilitating mutual respect, and more often than not it was not an affair of a peasant. All of this changed with the introduction of the notion of equality and the establishment of mass conscription based armies. Malešević argues that the nominal equality created by the

ideas of Enlightenment prove to be disadvantageous on modern battlefields. Modernity demands very elaborate explanations as to justify violence, unlike the ancient era where mythology and religion were used as proto-ideologies of justification.²⁷ In the modern era, for mass killings to take place at all, it is necessary to overcome the values which cherish and value human life.

Malešević sees the modern justification of violence in secular and secularizing ideologies. For him, the age of ideology was truly born once the urban poor started to perceive themselves as of equal moral worth to their superiors (bishops, aristocrats and the bourgeoisie). Enlightenment's central goal was the establishment of a better, more just and more rational society. Any opposition to this quickly became interpreted as irrational, consciously unjust and in the end, evil. Since there could be no compromise with evil, it had to be crushed. Thus, the revolutionaries were often inspired by the belief of a universal singular truth which once found, would provide a way to achieve happiness for all. This can clearly be observed in the post-revolutionary France, where the belief that one was fighting for the survival of the just, rational and a morally superior state against the forces of evil triggered numerous people to take up arms. Malešević notes the importance of ideology here, as the revolutionary soldiers were singing political anthems glorifying the revolution, wore explicitly republican uniforms, chanted anti-royalist rallying calls and hyped their revolutionary leaders.²⁸ The state also recognized the importance of ideology and distributed literature which endorsed the most radical political views among soldiers. The War Ministry even went as far as to buy as much as 1,800,000 copies of the newspapers of Marat and Hebert to educate the troops in this respect.²⁹

With further developments in science and political and social theory, the second half of 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century saw an increased impact of ideology on warfare. This combined with the growing popularity of Social Darwinism provided a much needed fertilizer for the ground on which mutually exclusive ideologies developed. It also fueled colonialism and influenced first the perception and then the treatment of the indigenous populations, always perceived through the prism of Social Darwinism. This ultimately culminated in the German massacre of Hereros and Namaqua in 1904-07 which qualified as the first ideologically driven genocide of the modern era.³⁰

In analyzing the First World War, Malešević notes that the changes it brought with itself were numerous and extensive. It was the first total war insofar as it forced entire

societies to work for the war effort. While there is no common ultimate purpose in times of peace due to the fact that social agents and individuals pursue their own goals, it is wartime that unites them under a common purpose: to contribute to the war effort. In times of war, contributing to the war effort shortly becomes the central goal for the whole society, and its members individual wills are rendered minuscule if not non-existent altogether. The First World War saw the rise of depicting the adversaries via increasingly negative stereotypes facilitated by the means of propaganda. The most common of such First World War images were the British and French presenting Germans as ruthless militant savages who were keen to destroy civilizational advancements. This was contrasted with the German images of the barbaric Slavs, the frivolous French and materialistic Brits.³¹ All of them were incorporated into the driving ideologies under which the Germans for instance were fighting for their unique culture. According to Malešević, the war intensified both centrifugal ideologization and nationalism, the latter of which was now becoming the dominant discursive framework for the majority of the population.³² The First World War ended inconclusively, created more problems than it solved and ultimately resulted in another total war.

The Second World War was perhaps the most prominent example of the battle between uncompromising ideologically constructed societies and ultimately between ideologies themselves. National socialism in combination with fascism and scientific racism was to see off liberal polyarchy and state socialism. The Second World War took the totality of the war to a whole new level. Whole cities were bombed down as it became increasingly clear that there was no significant distinction made between the combatants and the civil population, as all that seemed to matter was that the ones getting bombed were on the enemy side. But the Second World War will forever remain in the history books not only for its unprecedented lives lost on the battlefields, but for the ideologically motivated and bureaucratically engineered and executed Shoah. What made the Holocaust stand out was the ideological and organizational modernity used for its execution. The ideological aspect was that of a Reich based on an ethnically, physically and sexually pure society while the execution of the Shoah was simultaneously based on aspects of modern social organization - advanced division of labour, hierarchical delegation of tasks and instrumental rationality. One can consider the Holocaust a clear manifestation of bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization, insofar as it

came about due to ideological reasons and was efficient due to its bureaucratic hierarchical nature where the social actor's individual responsibility was diffused by the hierarchical bureaucratic structure, assigning responsibility for the individual's action to the Nazi party where the order ultimately came from.

In times of war it is an ideological necessity to portray not only the potential victims of such atrocities but also the enemy in general, as monsters and animals who have no regard for human moral principles and whose actions prove their intrinsic inhumanity. This acutely stands out in Second World War propaganda campaigns. Malešević notes that the Germans had to depict Jews both as subhuman and super-human for this:

„To make a small, politically insignificant and largely invisible segment of German society look dangerous, threatening and highly discernible it was essential to conceptualize Jews both as animals (parasites, vermin, etc.) and as exceptionally skillful plotters who were able to mastermind the takeover of the entire world (Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy). The fact that most Jews were so assimilated and integrated in the German society was taken as a further proof of their (superhuman and subhuman) devious, canny and un-human nature.“³³

Likewise, the image the Americans held about the Japanese was similarly sub-human. The Japanese were perceived as vicious apes. For the Americans, Germans were still perceived as humans, while the Japanese were cruel animals, *„like the beasts you never see until they are dead.“³⁴* The image of their sub-human character is perhaps best characterized by the fact that their bones and skulls were often sent home as souvenirs by the Americans in the early stages of their involvement. The treatment of the Japanese corpses as if they would be animals became so blatant that already as early as 1942, the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet gave out an order which stated: *„No part of the enemy's body may be used as a souvenir. Unit Commanders will take stern disciplinary action...“³⁵* Similar views were in fact prevalent in most of the camps, but while many of them might have led to smaller scale war crimes and mistreatment of the POWs, none of these ideologically motivated propagandist views led to a systematic genocide similar to the Holocaust.

For Malešević, the clear legacy of the two world wars was a further increase in the organizational and ideological powers of the modern state.³⁶ He notes that when it comes to successful mass murder, the modern nation-state has no historical equivalent, and the vast killing fields of modern battlefields, the efficiency of mass extermination through

genocidal policies and the unprecedented killing ratios of warfare in the last century all prove this.

Hybrid Warfare in theory

The following sub-chapter deals with the influential Western authors who have engaged in the discussion of Hybrid Warfare. I will seek to establish each of the following author's theoretical understanding of the concept of Hybrid Warfare with the intention of providing an applicable definition to be used later on for the purposes of this thesis. A similar overview is then presented of the Russian authors theorizing on the subject of New-Generation Warfare, which is to a degree interchangeable with the western notion of Hybrid Warfare and offers a crucial insight into components that might be lacking from the western concept.

Western discourse

The term emerged in Western military literature in the context of “New wars” theories. However, the peculiarity of Hybrid Warfare in Western literature is that it is more often than not presented in opposition to the Western militaries and societies. As such, the examination of Hybrid Warfare often occurs outside of the context of the Western civilization. That is to say, the examination is such as to render the West hesitant in employing Hybrid Warfare by their military planners. Ergo the United States Army command does not recognize Hybrid Warfare as a distinct form of warfare at all. Rather, the paradigm is presented through defining a hybrid threat as the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, criminal elements, or a combination of these forces and elements all unified to achieve mutually beneficial effects.³⁷ While the U.S. Military tends to speak about the topic in terms of a hybrid threat, academic literature speaks of Hybrid Warfare. What follows now is a brief overview of the Western academic literature on the subject.

Nemeth

William J. Nemeth's Master's thesis, published in 2002, represents the first scholarly study of the subject. In his thesis „Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare“ he first looks into the development of a „hybrid society“ as the base for the conduct of Hybrid Warfare. Nemeth's hybrid society is called such as it has elements of both modern society and *pre-state* society. He argues that the military structures and strategies employed are effectively a reflection of the construction and peculiarities of the society under the framework of which the military operates. Therefore a profound insight into the society itself is necessary to understand the military, its peculiarities and its operations. In his thesis, he provides an insight into what he understands as *pre-state* and *modern* societies and then proceeds to analyze the War in Chechnya, which he considers an example of Hybrid Warfare, conducted by a hybrid society. He defined hybrid societies as those operating within a gray zone between modern and *pre-state* societies while additionally employing modern bureaucratic systems in structuring themselves.³⁸ In addition, when observed through the perceptive of Western values, hybrid societies may appear unjust and anarchic, as „*war and a high level of inter-personal violence are accepted as normal in most hybrid societies.*”³⁹ The peculiarities of such a society thus transfer to the military sphere which reflects the prevalent societal norms.

Nemeth supposes that the strengths of the hybrid forces do not match with the conceptions of Western military strength, as the components which constitute hybrid strengths are: (1) ideas; (2) Individuals, the charismatic leader; (3) The fact that society and military can absorb tremendous punishment; (4) Strong belief in their cause; (5) Decentralized tactics.⁴⁰ As a result he argues on the basis of the case of Chechnya that their ability to employ both conventional methods and quickly transition to the use of guerrilla tactics relied on the societal and cultural layout of Chechnya. Their deep knowledge of adversary's weaknesses helped their case even further, although the tactics the Chechens employed often walked on a thin line between guerrilla warfare and terrorism. Nemeth's Hybrid Warfare then, is essentially a form of contemporary guerrilla warfare – asymmetric in nature – which has become more effective than *pre-state* warfare because it employs both modern technology and effective methods of mobilization.

Nemeth also predicted that Hybrid Warfare is increasingly likely to become the dominant form of warfare faced by the West, a prediction made just a year before the start

of the Iraqi war. He also notes that the Western conceptions which expect hybrid societies to eventually accept the prevailing Western norms will provoke further asymmetry, as hybrid norms are not rooted in modern society, but in pre-state era.⁴¹ He also notes that hybrid states are better in using technology in ways that greatly enhance their operational effectiveness, as they allow advances to drive new organizations and operational techniques, as opposed to the modern forces, which employ technology in a more evolutionary fashion, attempting to achieve greater efficiency, better command and control, and more detailed planning.⁴²

Nemeth's perception of Hybrid Warfare, where it is a result of the societal and cultural construction of the society employing it, is of relevance to the current thesis not only by being the first scholarly study of Hybrid Warfare, but including a sociological element in his theory, extending it beyond the military sphere as opposed to most of the theories of Hybrid Warfare I've encountered while researching the subject.

Huber

Thomas Huber is important in respect to the theories from which Hybrid Warfare ultimately grew out. Huber was the first to coin the term Compound warfare. For Huber, Compound Warfare is created by the simultaneous use of regular or main forces, and irregular, or guerrilla forces.⁴³ In essence, it is then simply a simultaneous use of conventional and unconventional forces. Huber's edited central book on the topic „Compound Warfare: That fatal knot.“ published in 2002, examines military history to find instances where the blending of regular and irregular tactics was used to gain an advantage over the opponent. The most prominent conflicts he deems fit to make a case for Compound Warfare are, among others – the American Revolution and Napoleon's Spanish War.

Compound warfare occurs when a stronger force has occupied most or all of the weaker counterpart's territories who then resorts to a combination of forces: regular and irregular. This creates a dilemma for the stronger force, as a difficult issue is now posed: not only does the stronger force now have to deal with the regular forces, but the sparsely dispersed irregular threat looms all over a large territory and creates complications that can become decisive.⁴⁴ The choice whether to fight the insurgency or the main force becomes critical. And although Huber's definition of Compound Warfare involves coordination

between the regular and irregular forces, he remains vague about the level of coordination as the historical examples he uses to support his case include conflicts with various degrees of coordination – from little coordination to command authority. In addition, the definition of Compound Warfare differs from that of Hybrid Warfare, as the latter involves elements of criminality and terrorism in addition to the fusion of conventional and unconventional forces. As such, Compound Warfare can be viewed as the precursor of Hybrid Warfare.

Hoffman

Frank G. Hoffman is a retired Lieutenant Colonel from the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and currently serves at the National Defense University as a Senior Research Fellow with the Institute for National Strategic Studies. He has also become one of the main advocates of Hybrid Warfare and his work on the subject represents a landmark in the study of the topic. His work has become a typical reference point for authors writing about the subject post-2006. Prior to his works the term was referred to simply as the fusion of different modes of war and did not stand for a distinct mode of war, often interchangeable with Huber's Compound Warfare.

Hoffman's theoretical perception of Hybrid Warfare is perhaps best established in his renowned paper „Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars“, published in 2007. In it, he first highlights the importance of understanding Hybrid Warfare, as he believes this is what future conflict will most likely look like. He builds his concept on the theory of Huber's Compound Warfare. In this sense, Hybrid Warfare is an evolutionary continuation of Compound Warfare, insofar as it involves similar elements, yet has become more sophisticated due to the addition of new elements. While Compound Warfare was a construct designed to highlight the potency and strength of unconventional forces and to demonstrate that the combination of regular and irregular forces shows the capacity for potentially productive and effective interdependence, in several aspects it stands in contrast with Hoffman's Hybrid Warfare.

The essence of Hoffman's Hybrid Warfare is „the blurring of modes of war, the blurring of who fights, and what technologies are brought to bear“⁴⁵ and he sets his concept apart from other similar „New Wars“ concepts by noting that while in most conflicts the irregular and regular components occurred in separate theaters of war, or in

distinctly different formations, in Hybrid Wars these forces become blurred into the same force in the same battle space. Unlike in Compound Wars, where the irregular forces and tactics are used as a supplement for the regular force, in Hybrid Wars they are operationally integrated and tactically fused so that the irregular component of force actually seeks to become operationally decisive, rather than simply protract the conflict or be a nuisance inflicting heavy defensive costs or seeking to provoke overreactions.⁴⁶ In addition, Hoffman's concept of Hybrid Warfare stands apart from the concept of Compound Warfare through the inclusion of criminal activity and terrorism. On the operational, tactical and strategic level, this type of warfare can be conducted either by a state or by a non-state. This leads to several complications.

Firstly it represents the loss of the state's monopoly of violence, as non-state entities become prominent actors in Hybrid Wars. Secondly, a substantial problem and simultaneously an advantage for the employers of hybrid tactics is that such entities do not fall under the conventional rules of war regulated by international rules and regulations as defined by a number of conventions, such as Law of Land Warfare, Geneva Convention, and Rules of Engagement. As Hoffman notes, the likeliest opponents of the future will accept no rules and will seek to wreak havoc not only on the battlefields but also through seeking their own degree of „*crude and awe*“ with barbaric actions as opposed to precision weaponry, all of which is amplified by modern communications, such as video.⁴⁷

His definition of Hybrid Warfare is then a synergistic fusion of conventional and irregular forces in combination with criminal behavior and terrorism. He believes that despite the fact that Hybrid Wars are on the rise, it does not represent the end of conventional warfare, but rather presents a complicating factor for defense planning in the 21st century.⁴⁸

McCuen

John McCuen, a retired US Colonel and a counterinsurgency expert published a noteworthy article in the Military Review in 2008 in which he examined the concept of Hybrid Warfare through a different theoretical perspective than Hoffman had done. Being a counterinsurgency expert, he believes that the most decisive battles will not be fought on the fronts, but rather on asymmetric battlefields within the „*population battlegrounds*“ of

the conflict zone, and the home and international populations.⁴⁹ His perception of modern warfare in general emphasizes that military victory alone is not sufficient for overall political victory and the west has for too long neglected this, exemplified by the characteristic failures in face of protracted conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He first defines Hybrid Wars as a combination of symmetric and asymmetric war in which the intervening forces conduct traditional military operations against enemy military forces, while simultaneously attempting to achieve control over the indigenous population of the conflict zone via stability operations to secure and stabilize the area.⁵⁰

His conception of Hybrid War therefore centralizes the importance of what he terms population battlegrounds. He classifies three such battlegrounds: the combat zone's indigenous population, home domestic population, and the international population and notes that the possibility of achieving the strategic objectives depends on our ability to succeed in all of these three battlegrounds.⁵¹ Without success in all of these battlegrounds, he considers the possibility of ultimate victory dubious, as the adversaries seek to protract the war by conducting it within the population while simultaneously attempting to erode confidence at home and abroad as a precursor to military victory.⁵² One of the most important operational and strategic problems Hybrid War poses, is how to prevent the enemy from filling up the governmental vacuum left behind after the advancement and success of the military.⁵³

McCuen's approach and definition of Hybrid Warfare places little importance on the aspect of non-state entities participating in it. Rather the theory is presented through a traditional state-vs-state paradigm. However, his account of Hybrid Warfare is essential in understanding that it is not classified as such not only by how a conflict is fought, but also where it is fought. The introduction of population battlegrounds also permits a sociological perspective in understanding the relevant populations and therefore reaching a more conceptualized understanding of these battlegrounds as the core elements of Hybrid Warfare. The importance of population battlegrounds as essential dimensions of Hybrid Warfare is further exemplified and developed by the latter part of this thesis when a contemporary definition is developed.

Murray and Mansoor

In „Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present“ published in 2012, the editors attempt to present a historical context for the concept of Hybrid Warfare. This is done in an attempt to neglect the notion that Hybrid Warfare is a novel concept. Murray claims that we are too often prone to marching into the future thinking that everything we encounter is new and „*thus fill body bags with dead soldiers rather than reaching back into the past for the lessons others have learned at such great cost.*“⁶⁴ The book provides analysis of nine conflicts from particular ages of human history to illustrate the main argument, which neglects the novelty of the concept of Hybrid Warfare. As there is no universally accepted definition of Hybrid Warfare, the authors took the liberty of establishing their own framework. They defined Hybrid Warfare as a conflict in which both conventional and irregular forces (guerrillas, insurgents and terrorists) are used by either states or non-states to achieve a common political purpose. In essence, Hybrid Warfare is given a rather broad definition of being a combination of regular and irregular forces, employed to negate the advantage of the opponent's potentially superior conventional strength. This definition does not entail that both irregular and regular forces need be present at the same time and place, nor does it make mention of central direction, criminal activity or terrorism proposed to be central by Hoffman. Rather, what is examined in the cases presented by authors other than Murray and Mansoor is characteristics corresponding to the concept of Compound Warfare. It is the very broad definition incorporated by the editors which allows them to present different conflicts over a historic narrative of nearly 2000 years, as conforming to their framework of Hybrid Warfare. As a result, the concept is presented as rather unuseful and allows Murray to conclude that „*the historical record suggests that Hybrid Warfare in one form or another may well be the norm for human conflict rather than the exception.*“⁶⁵

Non-Western discourse

While the Western literature speaks of Hybrid Warfare, the literature I am about to present in the following chapters conforms to the Western notion, however differs to a degree from it. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the military superiority of the US over

the rest of the world became an undebated reality. With such a recognition alternative means of conducting warfare became desirable for its potential adversaries, as opposing the superior conventional force of the US with a similar conventional force was not deemed cost-effective. As a result, the account of the phenomena pertaining to the Western concept Hybrid Warfare in literature such as the Russian literature, presented below, approaches the concept from a completely different perspective than the West. It is recognized as a viable option for a state to conduct, and in the case of Russia, is often explained as a defensive measure. The main difference then is the employer of this type of warfare. While in the western literature, it is given major significance through its employment by a non-state, in Russian literature it is the state.

New-Generation Warfare of Russia

Alongside the Western thinkers and theorists, the Russians have not sat idly by and have studied the nature of the changes in modern warfare and the new emerging forms of combat. The general consensus is that the Russian view of modern warfare is dominated by information and psychological warfare, where the war is won not on the field, but in the minds of the people. In the following section, a very broad overview is presented with regard to the theories of New-Generation Warfare of Russia which are theoretically relevant insofar as there is a degree of interchangeability with the Western notion of Hybrid Warfare. Such an overview is established by examining three theoretically relevant authors who have engaged in the debate in Russia during the last decades.

Gareev

While not proposing a general framework of “New Wars” or Hybrid Warfare, in his book *If War Comes Tomorrow*, published in 1995, a Russian General Makhmut Gareev argued for the changing nature of warfare, caused by the technological progress spawning not only an increased destructive effect of conventional weapons, but also completely new types of weaponry. Gareev explicitly pointed out the proliferation and sophistication of the means of information warfare. He argued that the „*systematic broadcasting of psychologically and ideologically biased materials of a provocative nature, mixing partially*

*truthful and false items of information ... can all result in a mass psychosis, despair and feelings of doom and undermine trust in the government and armed forces; and, in general, lead to the destabilization of the situation in those countries, which become objects of information warfare, creating a fruitful soil for actions of the enemy.*⁵⁶

Gareev, while predicting the increasing importance of information warfare in future conflict also noted that correctly foreseeing the nature of future armed conflict in its entirety has never been fully achieved.⁵⁷ However, as early as in 1995, information warfare was already considered a crucial element of future wars. In addition, Gareev suggested that such information warfare methods can transform warfare from a direct armed attack into a hidden, latent and undeclared war. Gareev's more recent publications have endorsed the view generally held by the rest of the military theorists of Russia: that the distinction between war and peace itself is blurring and even the conduct of military operations does not always signify the beginning of a war.^{58 59} Additionally he believes that cyber warfare poses significant difficulties in determining where such covert cyber operations and attacks originate from, thus making it unclear against whom a war should be declared.

Gareev thus calls for the science and defense industry not to work only on the newest means of armed warfare, but also concentrate their efforts on the application of developing modern technologies for waging successful information, cyber, psychological and other non-military kinds of warfare.⁶⁰

Gerasimov

Valery Gerasimov is a recently appointed Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation who in 2013 published a noteworthy article with regard to warfare in the 21st century. Gerasimov spoke of a new generation of warfare. In his article, titled „The Value of Science in Prediction“^{61 62} Gerasimov started by noting that the way in which warfare is conducted is changing, and that *„a perfectly thriving state can, in a matter of months and even days, be transformed into an arena of fierce armed conflict, become a victim of foreign intervention, and sink into a web of chaos, humanitarian catastrophe, and civil war.“*⁶³ This claim was made in the context of the Arab Spring revolutions and Gerasimov went a step further by noting that the rules of war themselves have changed. He continues the line of thought emphasized by Gareev, that the role of non-military means of achieving political

and strategic goals has increased and in many cases already exceeded the power of force of weapons in effectiveness. Purely from a military perspective, he notes that *„frontal engagements of large forces at the strategic and operational level are gradually becoming a thing of the past. Long-distance, contactless actions against the enemy are becoming the main means of achieving combat and operational goals.“* In addition, he believes that the differences between offensive and defensive operations are being erased⁶⁴.

Gerasimov also places great emphasis on the utility of asymmetrical actions such as *„the use of special operations forces and internal opposition to create a permanently operating front through the entire territory of the enemy state, as well as informational actions.“*⁶⁵ Subsequently he suggests meaningful ways in which to employ this knowledge. He proposes that these non-military means have to be applied in coordination with the protest potential of the target population and then supplemented by military means of a concealed character. This means that the open use of military forces – either in disguise of peacekeeping or crisis regulation – is resorted to primarily only to achieve final success in the conflict.⁶⁶ Of particular interest is the amount of attention paid on the informational aspect. For Gerasimov, the informational paradigm of war opens up a wide array of possibilities to reduce the fighting potential of the enemy. In noting the changing character of war, he quotes a former Soviet military theoretician Georgii Isserson, who predicted that *„war in general is not declared. ... mobilization and concentration is not part of the period after the onset of the state of war as was the case in 1914 but rather, unnoticed, proceeds long before that.“*⁶⁷

Gerasimov's account of New Wars is a rather short affair, yet highly influential not only in understanding the conflict which unfolded in Ukraine a year after his article was published, but also in developing the Russian understanding of the fusion of phenomena which in the West has increasingly been known and referred to as Hybrid Warfare. His theory of New Wars has become further elaborated since then.

Chekinov and Bogdanov

In an article *„The Nature and Content of a New-Generation War“*⁶⁸ published in the *Military Thought* in 2013, the authors Reserve Colonel Sergei Chekinov and retired General-Lieutenant Sergei Bogdanov develop Gerasimov's thoughts further. They put their main emphasis on asymmetric methods aimed at nullifying the adversary's

conventional superiority through the use of non-military means that include political, economic, technological, ecological and information campaigns.

They predict that New-Generation Wars will be dominated by psychological and information warfare, aimed at breaking the will of the enemy population and troops.⁶⁹ As a result, they place a particularly strong emphasis on the need to achieve information superiority over the target country. This is to be achieved through comprehensive propaganda and electronic warfare.⁷⁰

They also propose a very specific way in which a New-Generation War is to be conducted. It consists of the opening and the closing phase, where the opening phase describes the use of non-military means and the closing phase is a military invasion. They provide a detailed account of the former, but a rather simplified version of the latter, further facilitating the understanding that the New-Generation Warfare is first and foremost a non-military affair. The opening stage sees an exhaustive campaign that includes diplomatic, ideological, psychological, economic and information measures coupled with an intensive propaganda campaign with the aim to weaken the opposing government's authority, depress the enemy population and attempt to weaken the morale of its armed forces.⁷¹ A network of agents has to be established in the target state which during the campaign would conduct terrorism, provocations and attempt to create general instability. The agents would also conduct espionage to uncover the locations of enemy military units and key infrastructure. Bogdanov and Chekinov believe that after the successful application of the opening phase, the enemy should be rendered ungovernable due to the heavily damaged infrastructure and the destruction of the military and political centers, and the military invasion – the closing phase – would only start following an extensive electronic warfare campaign aimed to achieve that end: incapacitating the enemy's military and government.

Their concept puts informational superiority and anticipatory operations at the core of the concept and its successful application. However they do not believe that the conventional armed forces will become less relevant, but that they will be applied in coordination with the non-military means of attack and will be deployed based on the success of such means.

Reflection on literature

The Russian concept of New-Generation Warfare is to a degree interchangeable with the Western concept of Hybrid Warfare. However while in the West the irregular and non-military means are considered supplementary to the conventional force and basic military success, the concept proposed by the Russians uses the conventional force as a supplement for the irregular forces and non-military actions: the conventional military comes into play only in the final stages of the conflict, based on the success of the non-military means employed. Furthermore, the New-Generation Warfare concept does not entail centrality of non-state actors, as Hybrid Warfare does in the West. In the Russian New-Generation warfare the state retains its central role. I believe that this difference is largely caused by the general stance taken toward the concept: the West presents it in opposition to western militaries, often outside the context of contemporary Western civilization while the Russian counterpart does not.

In addition, it seemed to me that the concept is often used as ground for speculation about the robotic and often times what appears rather fictional or hypothetical, yet terrifying nature of future conflict. Both Gerasimov and Chekinov and Bogdanov engage in speculation about the currently developing robotic aspect of future conflict. Gerasimov speaks of „battlefields [...] filled with walking, crawling, jumping, and flying robots. In future it is possible a fully robotized unit will be created, capable of independently conducting military operations.”⁷² Chekinov and Bogdanov add that „untraditional forms of armed struggle will be used to cause earthquakes, typhoons, and heavy rainfall lasting for a time long enough to damage the economy and aggravate the sociopsychological climate in the warring countries.”⁷³

However, when comparing Hybrid Warfare and New-Generation Warfare of Russia, Jānis Bērziņš believes that it would be a conceptual mistake to try and fit Russian New-Generation Warfare on Western concepts, such as Hybrid Warfare. He argues that Hybrid Warfare, as defined by Hoffman, presupposes the application of kinetic force, while the Russian New-Generation Warfare does not.⁷⁴ However, as both types of warfare refer to a fusion of conventional, irregular and non-military means to achieve strategic goals – while they might not be synonymous – there is a great degree of interchangeability between the concepts of Hybrid Warfare and the Russian New-Generation Warfare. I

believe that they are related concepts, as they both describe the conditions and conduct of war in similar contemporary environment, and the differences between the concepts are largely caused by an attempt to approach the same complicated nature of contemporary warfare by applying different modes of thought. As Bērziņš noted, the Russian concept reflects „*another cultures way of thinking, and strategic understanding about the way to conduct warfare.*“⁷⁵ In similar vain, the Western understanding of Hybrid Warfare is presented from a different perspective than that of Russia. The Western authors have increasingly distanced themselves from potentially employing the concept in the sense that they consider it an inherently defensive mode of war, employed by a conventionally inferior force, as an alternative to conventional war. However, where the discussion with regard to Hybrid Warfare has been relatively quiet is its application by a strong state power, opening up a wide array of possibilities and extending the defensive concept to inherit an offensive value.

Lastly, I would like to point out the Aesopian notion of defense employed in the Russian literature on the subject.⁷⁶ While the articles like those written by Chekinov and Bodganov mainly suggest Russia to implement the proposed strategies for defensive purposes, these strategies are offensive in nature and the authors make no real attempt to propose measures that are defensive against them. On the contrary, Gerasimov suggested that the distinction between offensive and defensive actions is becoming increasingly meaningless. As such, it appears that defense is perceived through the lens of offense. The Aesopian nature of such publications is further facilitated by our knowledge of the events that unfolded in Ukraine with Russian involvement starting from 2014, as discussed later in the thesis.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The current chapter will serve two purposes: to clarify the definitions of terms used within this thesis, including Hybrid Warfare, and discuss the methodology employed for the comparative analysis. Firstly I will provide concrete definitions for the terms that might otherwise be understood in various ways depending on the context in which they are used. Such definitions are necessary since the nature of the phenomena these definitions refer to are not of immutable substance, but have developed over the course of history and are thus not unequivocally understood in different cultures. In addition such definitions are offered to avoid any possible misunderstandings caused by the geopolitical location of the reader, as these terms can have multiple meanings depending on such a position. Since the thesis is concerned with the contemporary state of affairs, the definitions introduced here are also of contemporary nature.

Firstly definitions of several military terms that are used throughout this thesis are established and secondly an operational definition is provided for the term Hybrid Warfare for the purposes of the comparative study undergone in the next chapter of the thesis. This chapter will conclude with the overview of the methodology of the thesis and explain as to how the comparative analysis was conducted.

Definitions

Conventional forces - Synonymous with regular armed forces. As defined by the International Committee of the Red Cross, they must satisfy four conditions as described by the Hague Conventions: (1) being commanded by a person responsible for his subordinates to a party of conflict; (2) having a fixed distinctive emblem recognizable at a distance; (3) carrying arms openly; (4) conducting operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war.

Irregular forces - Defined by exclusion, they encompass combat forces distinct from the regular army. Combat forces that do not satisfy the four criteria as described by the Hague Conventions are defined as irregular forces.

Irregular tactics - Tactics commonly employed by irregular military forces in which they avoid large-scale combat and instead place emphasis on numerous crafty small scale hit-and-run engagements.

Information warfare - The definition used in this thesis is a non-western one where it is defined as a struggle between two or more (non-)states in the information space with the goal to damage information systems, processes or resources, critical or other infrastructure, to undermine political, economic and social systems, to destabilize a society and a state by massive psychological influence on the population, and also putting pressure on a state to make decisions that are in the interest of the opponent. Such a definition is proposed by the Russian Ministry of Defense.⁷⁷

Internetization - The meaning used here is based on the term which was coined recently by Constantine Passaris, a professor at the University of New Brunswick, which describes the ubiquitous influence of the internet and the world wide web on all aspects of human endeavor.⁷⁸ Information technology and the Internet have had a direct impact on state bureaucracies, whereas public services are made digital by default. As a result, our lives, and more importantly the states themselves have a growing digital presence. In this context, countries such as Estonia where many basic services offered by the state have seen the traditional bureaucratic administrative machine increasingly replaced with services based on the internet – such as e-government (voting in the elections, tax filing, applying for health insurance, etc), e-business (electronic residence permits), e-school, etc – such systems become part of the state's digital infrastructure. A state where bureaucratic institutions are increasingly replaced by digital infrastructure based on the internet would in this context be described as an Internetized state.

Cyber warfare - Cyber warfare is a broad concept, hence a narrower definition is adopted for this thesis. In the context of Hybrid Warfare, cyber warfare is considered a means of information warfare. It describes cyber operations taken by a state or a non-state to penetrate the opponent's computers or computer networks for the purposes of damage or disruption.⁷⁹ Since many systems that private citizens and governments rely upon could successfully be targeted and quickly destroyed or made

inoperable, such operations have the potential for causing societal and economic disruption without inflicting direct physical damage.

Defining Hybrid Warfare

For the conduct of the comparative analysis, an operational definition of Hybrid Warfare is necessary. As examined in the previous chapter of the thesis, Hybrid Warfare is a term adopted relatively recently. While the type of conflict it refers to – whether historical or contemporary – differs per author, what all authors generally agree upon is that the contemporary world has posed conditions in which such warfare is becoming increasingly prevalent and complex. Since I believe that Hoffman's contributions to the theoretical debate and the analytical value of his writings are the highest, I will adhere to his conception of Hybrid Warfare when providing the operational definition. His work was a landmark in the study of the topic as it set Hybrid Warfare out as a distinct type of war. The operational definition used for the purposes of this thesis to determine Hybrid Wars is then as follows: Hybrid War is an asymmetric conflict in which one of the adversaries uses a fusion of conventional and irregular forces and tactics in coordination with terrorism and/or acts of criminality.

Additionally, in the context of a Hybrid War, the hybrid adversary attempts to diminish the advantage of a conventional and technologically advanced opponent by fighting not based on one's strengths but on the opponent's weaknesses, while simultaneously attempting to blur the distinction of who fights. However, a conflict does not qualify as a Hybrid War if it is a mere mix of conventional and irregular forces and tactics, since this is more evocative of compound warfare.⁸⁰ As such, these forces have to be present in the same theater of war and either terrorism or criminality have to be present in addition to the fusion of conventional and irregular forces and tactics to make a case for a Hybrid War. In essence this type of warfare seeks to blur together regular and irregular forms of warfare and thus often entails a distinct information warfare campaign. Such a definition will be used to locate particular Hybrid Wars from recent history for the purposes of the comparative analysis.

Methodology

Relating to the first goal of the thesis which is to understand the development of Hybrid Warfare over time, a comparative approach is adopted, encompassing two conflicts. These conflicts are the Second Lebanon War and the Russian incursions into Ukraine. The reason for choosing the Second Lebanon War is due to it being perhaps the most prominent example of Hybrid Warfare among scholars studying the subject. The successful approaches adopted by Hezbollah in this conflict acutely demonstrated the challenges „hybrid warriors“ pose to their adversaries. In addition, this conflict represents the point of rapid growth of scholarly interest in the subject of Hybrid Warfare.^{81 82 83 84} And lastly, the Russian interventions on the Ukrainian crisis and the subsequent War in Donbass are used as examples of what Hybrid Warfare has become in its most recent form. The conflict in Ukraine is also another landmark in the study of Hybrid Warfare, as it has reinvigorated the debate on the subject.^{85 86 87 88}

The theoretical base for the analysis is the framework proposed by Malešević. He argued that there have been two historical processes at work to influence the changes in warfare: cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization. The analysis of the conflicts will be conducted in such a way as to see how the Malešević-defined coercion and ideologization were achieved in the context of Hybrid Warfare. This is done in order to unveil whether and to what a degree have these two historical processes influenced Hybrid Warfare and whether such developments have to be incorporated into the understanding of contemporary Hybrid Warfare. To briefly summarize: cumulative bureaucratization of coercion describes the increasing capabilities of modern states – or non-states for this matter – and their increasing efficiency in enforcing coercion of those sub-ordinated by a bureaucratic structure, and centrifugal ideologization refers to the increasing importance of elaborate ideologies in both being able to facilitate and to justify coercion and violence. Malešević believes that the ideologization is centrifugal since it is radiated by a particular social institution or a social organization. The relevance of Malešević and his two concepts is crucial for my understanding of changes in warfare. For the comparative analysis, I created a structural construct based on Malešević's theoretical framework which will serve as the main framework through which both of the conflicts will be analyzed. In such a construct, there are four aspects examined in each conflict.

Firstly, I will establish what makes the chosen conflict or war a Hybrid War. For this I will refer back to the operational definition proposed in the earlier part of this chapter and examine whether the aspects of the conflict correspond to the aspects of the definition. That is, whether it was an asymmetric conflict in which one of the adversaries used a mix of conventional and irregular forces and tactics in coordination with terrorism and acts of criminality, etc.

Secondly I will examine the technological context of the conflict. The main technological advancements relevant to the organization of society and the military sphere are introduced and their impact considered. This is done in order to set a particular technological context that (1) sets its limits to the means with which to impose Maleševićian cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization; (2) explains the military capabilities of both sides with regard to their technological modernity.

Thirdly, I will examine the social organization of the hybrid adversary. This is done in an attempt to see how the Maleševićian bureaucratic coercion was achieved in the context of the conflict. For this I will examine which relevant social and military institutions were in place during the conflict and will attempt to see if there was an impact – and if yes then to what a degree – of societal and cultural norms and conditions on the military operations and the social coercion of the military forces. Additionally I will attempt to define particular peculiarities pertaining to a specific conflict and examine the context in which they came about.

Lastly, I will analyze the conflict in terms of Maleševićian centrifugal ideologization to see whether there were any particular social organizations in place that dealt with imposing and/or propagating an ideology relevant in and/or for the conflict. For this end I will examine which were the ideologies relevant for the conflict; what was their appeal on the relevant populations; and what was done to enforce such an ideology. Additionally I will examine what effect did information warfare have both on centrifugal ideologization of the adversaries as well as its general implications on the course of the conflict.

The comparative approach is taken to facilitate my first argument, that based on the two Maleševićian historical concepts of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization, Hybrid Warfare is an evolving form of war and the changes in

it are brought about to a large degree by these two processes which have in the contemporary world given birth to various state and non-state social institutions directly involved in perpetuating information and psychological warfare.

My account of contemporary Hybrid Warfare will then be a historical continuation of the concept and I will propose to establish two new analytical categories of Hybrid Warfare: General and Specific. The General Hybrid Warfare will be a concept where the importance of irregular forces and tactics is centralized to the successful application of this type of war and the Specific Hybrid Warfare will be a concept where non-military means will be centralized for its successful application. General Hybrid Warfare is ultimately a defensive concept and can be employed mainly by non-state entities, such as terrorist groups like Hezbollah, while the Specific Hybrid Warfare is offensive and directly linked with statehood, or generally with the powers traditionally associated with the state. Both concepts will more or less be based on the traditional understanding of Hybrid Warfare, as introduced earlier. Where they differ however, is their strategic goals and hence their conduct. I will argue that the difference in conduct is based on the societal, technological and ideological basis of the society of a state or a non-state capable of employing it.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONFLICT ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I will be providing a comparative analysis of the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and the Russian incursions into Ukraine starting from 2014. I will examine these conflicts based on the criteria set in the previous chapter. The chapter starts with the analysis of the Second Lebanon War, followed up with Russian incursions into Ukraine and concludes with the examination of the implications these conflicts have had on Hybrid Warfare and study where they differed and where they coincided. The purpose of this chapter is not to provide a historic overview of the conflicts as a chronologic string of military battles and engagements, nor to provide a comprehensive overview of the general course of the conflicts discussed – the reader is thus to a large degree expected to possess such an overview beforehand.

Second Lebanon War

The Second Lebanon War represents, now, a classic case of Hybrid Warfare for the Western military theorists engaging in the debate and has become the defining conflict for the term. Hoffman's theory of Hybrid Warfare uses this conflict as a prototype, and as such is largely the basis of his theory.⁸⁹ In addition, this war attracted major military-scholarly interest, and represents the start of for the growing interest to the theories of Hybrid Warfare.^{90 91 92 93}

The Lebanese region in question had seen many armed confrontations in the past decades preceding the Second Lebanon War in 2006. Increased tensions are a commonplace even during times of peace. In 2006, it first seemed like another provocation, when after several attempts to kidnap fighters of the Israeli Defense Force (henceforth referred to as the IDF), a Hezbollah team crossed the border to Israel on July 12th, 2006, and finally succeeded in kidnapping two soldiers, killing three and wounding

two additional soldiers in the process.^{94 95} The original plan was most probably to use the two captured IDF soldiers as hostages or exchange them for Hezbollah fighters held captive in Israel and considered terrorists by the Israeli military. However, the reaction of Israel was imminent. Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert declared that the abduction had been interpreted as a declaration of war and the battles commenced soon after. It was not just the start, but also the result of the following conflict that raised eyebrows all around the world, especially in the military sphere. Thirty four days is all it took for Hezbollah fighters to withstand the attacks of the most modern conventional army in the region before an internationally mediated ceasefire came into effect.

Hybridity of the conflict

Being the most prominent case study of Hybrid Warfare, the Second Lebanon War exhibits various phenomena associated with the concept. Firstly, it was an asymmetric conflict insofar as the conventional IDF faced an adversary who was highly trained and skilled in using irregular tactics and engaged in small-scale hit-and-run engagements inflicting heavy damage on the modern IDF and they were ready to pay a high cost of lives for inflicting such a damage. The amount of Hezbollah fighters actively operating during the war is estimated to have hovered between a thousand⁹⁶ to three thousand⁹⁷ while the IDF reportedly deployed tens of thousands of soldiers throughout the conflict⁹⁸.

Secondly, the fighters of Hezbollah were in possession of modern military equipment and employed it in unexpected ways. Decentralized tactics and usage of antitank guided missiles against Israeli armor and defensive positions were a surprise for the IDF. The uniqueness of the way in which Hezbollah fought was that they were the first resistance movement in possession of strategic weapons coupled with traditional army capabilities in combination with the use of guerrilla tactics in the framework of a guerrilla type war⁹⁹.

Thirdly, Hezbollah fighters were hard to spot due to the fact that many of them did not wear military uniforms¹⁰⁰ and are therefore considered irregular forces. The IDF soldiers called them „maddeningly elusive“¹⁰¹, as they had deliberately blended into the civilian population and infrastructure. This was especially troublesome for the IDF as the

operations were conducted in an urban environment, in close proximity to civilians. The Israelis were forced to admit that the forces they faced in that 34-day period were tenacious and skilled¹⁰². US Lieutenant Colonel Michael Snyder believes that even if a kill-or-capture operation was able to eliminate a military target, but in the process alienated the surrounding civilian population (or otherwise undermined political legitimacy) then the military operation, however technically successful, must be judged an overall failure.¹⁰³ This resonates the importance of maintaining support on the McCuen-defined population battlegrounds, as crucial for overall political victory. Civilian casualties in Lebanon caused by the Israeli attacks were a constant feature in the media and severely undercut the legitimacy of Israel's attacks^{104 105 106} despite the fact that Hezbollah kept on hurling thousands of missiles to civilian targets in Israel also causing civilian damage.¹⁰⁷

The bottom line remained that the most modern conventional army of the region could not break Hezbollah's carefully coordinated irregular forces and stop their numerous Katyusha rockets from hitting Israeli civilian targets. It has been estimated that 3970-4228 Hezbollah rockets were fired at Israeli civilian targets during the war.¹⁰⁸ 95% of these rockets were Katyusha artillery rockets with an estimated range of 30km. It was further estimated that about 23% of these rockets hit urban areas, while the rest ended up at open areas.¹⁰⁹ The conflict acutely demonstrated the deficiencies of modern conventional armies when facing a hybrid adversary in a complex operational environment.

It is known that the asymmetric nature of the conflict made the outcome of the war all the more impressive. Hezbollah's roughly a thousand active fighters were able to repel tens of thousands of IDF soldiers. In this context, Hezbollah's combatants impressed both the Israeli and the American analysts, especially in terms of their level of training and combat skills necessary to fight an opponent like the IDF. The forces IDF encountered in Southern Lebanon used both insurgent-like skills and more conventional operational and tactical skills.¹¹⁰ Their preparedness indicated a degree and type of training not traditionally associated with guerrilla forces, but rather that of a conventional force. In addition, they had access to newer weapons technologies and were very effective in covering, concealing and preparing its fighting positions, and its coordination with direct fire support.¹¹¹ Confrontations with the IDF were fought in small disperse units employing „hit-and-run“ tactics with the aim to deny easy targets for the Israeli Air Force

and undermine Israeli surveillance and reconnaissance. In every factor of fighting, their strategy reflected the central notion of Hezbollah's ideology: resistance. Hezbollah had calculated that inflicting heavy losses on the IDF would be crucial, as they believed IDF's unwillingness to absorb incessant losses to be their strategic weakness.¹¹² Thus, Hezbollah had prepared a clear strategy for the war which was simple: keep hurling rockets into Israel and survive by defending the well-prepared positions in southern Lebanon. Both of these objectives were fulfilled, as no IDF effort was able to stop rockets from being fired into Israel, and the result of the war was ultimately inconclusive.

While both sides declared they had won, it has to be noted that in a Hybrid War, the victory of the hybrid adversary is often simply its survival and protraction of the conflict, rather than military victory in battle. In explaining this, Michael Snyder refers to the David versus Goliath narrative, where Goliath – the conventionally superior force – is expected to win outright in any circumstance, and any deviation from this is perceived as a victory of David. As such, Hybrid Wars in the Western conception are often simply protractions of conflict rather than a succession of offensives conducted against the enemy; and in such a context Hezbollah emerged as a clear victor.

While the IDF did not suffer a military defeat per se, Hezbollah celebrated the indecisive result of the war as a „Divine Victory“ and IDF was forced back to the drawing board in order to devise strategies that could ultimately lead to victory in the subsequent wars.

Technological context

The importance of the evolution of modern mass communications and the international media is a key element describing the era of this war. A counterinsurgency expert David Kilcullen has noted that *"If bin Laden didn't have access to global media, satellite communications, and the Internet, he'd just be a cranky guy in a cave"*¹¹³ The global media has given grounds for contestation for the *population battlegrounds* as defined by McCuen earlier. Coupled with the Internet, global media has had a profound effect on the ability to influence people within these battlegrounds. The new technologies available to report on war became relevant for the militaries as well: as weapons of war. The journalists who

during the Second Lebanon War in doing their job reported from rooftops of buildings or hilltops in an attempt to cover troop movements, often unveiled sensitive information to the enemy with regard to troop placement and movement. Thus, not only did the journalists covering the war transform the gruesome images of the realities of warfare into influence on the public opinion and official diplomacy, they also became reconnaissance assets for both IDF and Hezbollah. The latter took full advantage of this. As a result, control over the media has become extremely relevant in contemporary wars.

In terms of military capabilities, there was a substantial division between the pre-war opinions held of Hezbollah's capabilities and the reality that presented itself during the war. It was not only that Hezbollah was resilient and willing to suffer casualties in order to protract the war and erode confidence and legitimacy of the IDF attacks, but also that they possessed a mixture of modern weapons necessary to execute their tactics for this end. Between 2000 and 2006, Hezbollah had formed several rocket artillery units which would control a vast arsenal of 122-mm Katyusha rockets and in order to avoid any preemptive airstrikes undermining this capacity, the missile launchers were located in hilltop civilian villages and towns of southern Lebanon.¹¹⁴ The supplies for forming such units had come from Syria and Iran and by 2006 an estimated 12 000 – 13 000 short-, medium-, and long-range ground-to-ground missiles had come under Hezbollah's possession.¹¹⁵ In addition to the supplies, the training necessary to operate these systems was carried out by the Iranians.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, the irregular units formed were armed with numerous sophisticated weaponry. Operationally, Hezbollah's main actions were taken against the highly mechanized IDF's tanks and armored vehicles, and the irregular units had a plentiful supply of not only anti-tank missiles but also mortars which were integrated into their defensive strategy whereby they pre-sighted certain avenues of suspected Israeli approach, spotted by forward observers who would then engage the tanks by indirect fire, with Hezbollah veteran fighters assigned for anti-tank ambushes.

By the summer of 2006, Hezbollah's war apparatus at the Israel's northern border had become a well-oiled machine highly motivated for battle. It consisted of a light infantry brigade, which was backed by a militia with strong veteran elements. The infantry brigade was a more or less conventional force of 3000 men trained by Iran, while the militia numbers were far greater, and about twice the size of the infantry brigade.¹¹⁷

Cumulative bureaucratization of coercion

*„Hezbollah has a set of persuasive tools—ranging from the mobilization of ethnic solidarity, to lying, to paying for support, to outright thuggish intimidation. These allow it to impose on Lebanese society a level of discipline that has no counterpart in a liberal and democratic society such as Israel.“*¹¹⁸ – U.S. Lieutenant Colonel Michael Snyder

Hezbollah has been classified as a Foreign Terrorist Group by the United States, a non-state entity for the purposes of this thesis. Established in 1982, it is a Shia Islamic militant political organization based in Lebanon. It has political representation in Lebanon, currently occupying 12 out of 128 seats in the Lebanese parliament. But it can not be understood as a mere political party with a jihadist military wing. Since its formation, it has grown into an organization with a radio station, a satellite TV station, large scale military formations within and outside of Lebanon, and it enjoys the capacity of providing a wide range of social services for the Shia population in Lebanon. As a result of possessing an institutional framework traditionally associated with state power, Hezbollah has often been described as a state within a state.

The perception of Hezbollah in the west has often been shadowed by its militant jihadist wing and its prevalent classification as a terrorist group. As a result of this, understanding of its social appeal is mainly presented through the prism of its ideological appeal both on Shia Muslims and those opposing Israel. Its capabilities traditionally associated with state power, such as the social service system are overshadowed by the systematic notion of "terror". However, I would argue that Hezbollah's model for providing social services deserves particular attention, as it provides Hezbollah with a clear source of legitimacy and popular support in Lebanon and further facilitates Hezbollah's military organization. Without the Social Service Section, Hezbollah would lack substantial political and social support from within Lebanon, and its military wing would become undermined in the long term. Hence it is essential to analyze its social structure, and the organizational model in order to understand the underlying social appeal of this organization

The peculiarity of Hezbollah is that it is not a mere political party or a terrorist group. It cannot be explained as a mere political party, as while it does operate within the

democratic political system of Lebanon, takes part of democratic elections and so forth, it does so mainly in order to exploit the system for its own benefit and is able to operate not only within the political system of Lebanon but also outside of it – its organizational structure overreaches that of a mere political party. The military wing of the organization provides it with strength to intimidate other political forces in Lebanon and the elections provide that they have become politically engaged with the power structures of the Lebanese state. As Penny Mellies puts it: *“Over the decades, Hezbollah has not only professionalized its military capabilities but joined Lebanon’s political process and enmeshed itself into the fabric of Lebanese society.”*¹¹⁹ [...] *Like Hamas, it has muscled itself in key posts across Lebanese society.*¹²⁰

In a similar vein it can not be considered a mere terrorist organization, as it works not only on the military and political scene, but also on the social scene of Lebanon. As such, it should first and foremost be considered a Jihadi movement engaging in politics, whereas terror is simply an extension of its external ideological policy. In the following section, I will attempt to break down its structure in order to understand to what a degree is the institutional and social layout of the organization providing Hezbollah grounds to achieve cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and how is it able to not only remain an operational military force, but also a politically and a socially appealing force in Lebanon. For this end I will first provide an overview of its social structure and the peculiarities it embodies, followed by analyzing how and to what a degree does this structure translate into bureaucratic coerciveness.

Social Structure

Hezbollah is governed by a sophisticated organizational and leadership structure. To break it down, there are a number of Councils that govern the organization of Hezbollah. First and most important is the Shura Council, which wields all the decision making powers and directs a number of subordinate councils, each with their own area of responsibility. The Shura Council is the main executive institution, which since 1992 has been led by its Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah. The Shura Council oversees all the political activity, the Jihad activity and the cultural and social activities. According to Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary-General Naim Qassem:

„If the military wing were separated from the political wing, this would have repercussions,

*and it would reflect on the political scene. But Hezbollah has one single leadership, and its name is the Decision-Making Shura Council. It manages the political activity, the Jihad activity, the cultural and social activities [...] Hezbollah's Secretary General is the head of the Shura Council and also the head of the Jihad Council, and this means that we have one leadership, with one administration.*¹²¹

The Shura Council is governed by nine members, seven of which are Lebanese and two are Iranian representing Iran's interests within the organization. Iranian influence and finances are an integral part of Hezbollah as it depends to a large degree on Iranian funds.¹²² The subordinate councils of the Shura Council are responsible for governing the underlying military, political and social aspects of Hezbollah's activities. These councils are the Executive Council, the Political Council, the Parliamentary Council and the Jihad Council. What follows is a general overview of how the social, political and military structures are managed within this framework which is done in order to determine their influence on social coercion pertaining to the Second Lebanon War of 2006.

Social Service Sector

When examining the structure of Hezbollah, it is evident that the Social Service Sector is one of the most important factions, as proven by its funding, as 2007 saw an estimated half of the Hezbollah budget allocated to the Social Service Sector.¹²³ The original goal of the Social Service Section was to provide all necessary social services for the oppressed population. However it also functions as an ideologically defensive measure in explaining the necessity for Hezbollah. This is why, while it can be argued that a well defined social system is a requirement of Islam itself, the leaders of Hezbollah refer to it as „party duty“.

The Social Service Section also serves to increase Hezbollah's political influence over other competing Shia organizations in the region – such as Amal – or the Lebanese government itself. The effectiveness of this sector is best explained by its comprehensive bureaucratic structure. It consists of six subgroups, each of which has its own set of tasks and an area of responsibility: The Jihad al-Binaa Development Group, Islamic Health Organization, the Martyrs Foundation, the Women's Association, the Imam al-Mahdi Scouts, and the education division.¹²⁴

The Jihad al-Binaa Development group is responsible for repairing buildings

damaged by war in Shia areas and exclusively employs Shias as the workforce. In the aftermath of the Second Lebanon War in 2006, Hezbollah took advantage of the slow reaction time of the Lebanese government and provided immediate help in the face of repairing the infrastructural damage caused by the war for the whole population – regardless of their political or religious affiliations.

The Islamic Health Organization is responsible for providing medical services and immediate help in the face of evacuation of the wounded, running clinics, providing medication and distributing food.¹²⁵ With the cost of health care in mind, this is an especially expensive operation and demands foreign financial support, which is achieved with funding from Iran and Syria.

The Martyr Foundation and the Women's Association have a shared primary function of treating the wounded, killed or martyred people fighting Israel.

The Imam Al-Mahdi Scouts is a youth movement aimed at indoctrinating the younger generations in terms of radical Shiite Islam as interpreted by Hezbollah, to increase Hezbollah's future support base.

And lastly, the educational branch serves to undermine the Lebanese Department of Education, and provides that Hezbollah-developed curriculum is implemented right from kindergarten up to collage level, with the aim to indoctrinate the population for popular support. Furthermore, the educational branch is responsible for staffing the schools, constructing of schools and covering the costs related to the publishing costs of the materials necessary under the Hezbollah dictated curriculum.¹²⁶ For a more detailed account of all the branches of Social Services Sector refer to James Love's account.¹²⁷

The discussed social structure is essential not only for religious-ideological and social reasons, but also crucial in maintaining the military side of the organization, as it not only provides the whole organization and thus the military wing of it with legitimacy within the Lebanese Shia population, but also directly indoctrinates future fighters and provides them with social security in return for their loyalty to Hezbollah. Due to this social structure, Hezbollah is able to recruit and train fighters for the conflict against Israel with relative ease, as the social structures in place enforce such coercion very effectively.

Military sector

The military sector of Hezbollah is first and foremost governed by the Jihad Council, under the executive supervision of the Shura Council. Jihad Council's main responsibility is the coordination of „resistance activity“ and therefore all military and security operations conducted by Hezbollah within and outside of Lebanon fall under the responsibility of the Jihad Council and as a result Hezbollah's militia, terrorist wing, and security organ all report to the Jihad Council.¹²⁸ However, apart from its vague organizational structure, there is little known of Hezbollah's military wing, as the majority of party's elected parliamentary members are left unaware of Hezbollah's covert military and terrorist activities. According to the US government, these are exclusively decided upon by the senior leadership of the party and overseen by Secretary-General Nasrallah, and carried out by the leadership of the Islamic Resistance movement and the Islamic Jihad Organization Neither of these is an independent organization, but both merged into Hezbollah and have become part of the organizational structure under the command of the Jihad Council and conduct operations within the framework of the military and terrorism sub-branch of the Jihad Council. The Islamic Resistance movement conducts its operations on the Lebanese domestic scene, while the Islamic Jihad Organization is responsible for Hezbollah's global military reach. The second sub-branch of the Jihad Council is the security branch, which essentially deals with party security and external security in the form of counterintelligence and the responsibility to prevent threats of external penetration of the organization. Hezbollah's military wing is therefore run through a sophisticated bureaucratic system under which the ultimate decision-making power lies on the Secretary-General Nasrallah, but the execution of the decisions is carried out through the organizational mechanisms discussed here.

Political sector

The political sector of Hezbollah is connected to the executive sector and consists of the Political Council – also known as the Politburo – and the Information Council – also referred to as the Informational unit. The Political Council essentially deals with the everyday political campaign, political strategy and advises the Shura Council on issues related to this. However in terms of this thesis, the Information Council demands further examination. This council controls Hezbollah's media outlets and is the sole information

provider with regards to the images Hezbollah perpetrates through these media channels. It operates the Hezbollah owned television station, four radio stations and five newspapers. Despite the fact that some of these outlets have not received an official license from the Lebanese government, they have become well established. The television channel Al-Manar (The Lighthouse, in translation) is a satellite television channel which offers traditional programming, yet dances in the rhythm of the necessary rhetorical and ideological lines of Hezbollah. Despite being operated by the Information unit of Hezbollah, it has an audience far wider than that of Lebanon and reaches millions of people internationally. As a result, it became integral to the information warfare campaign during the 2006 war. During the earlier conflicts, it broadcasted messages in Hebrew, claiming that Israeli advances will trigger Katyusha rockets being launched into Israel. Al-Manar also became known for its famous „Who's Next?“ campaign screened both in Hebrew and Arabic during the Israeli occupation, aimed at demoralizing the soldiers of the IDF – it featured a constantly updated photo gallery of the latest Israeli casualties with the subsequent question mark emerging on the screen and rhetorically asking which Israeli soldier will be next.¹²⁹

During the 2006 conflict, Al-Manar remained integral to the information warfare campaign as it broadcasted messages and images from the war to demoralize the Israeli home population and undermine the legitimacy of the Israeli attack in the eyes of the international community. The main emphasis was put on broadcasting images showing damaged Israeli vehicles, and civilian buildings wrecked by the Israeli air raids. In terms of information warfare, the Information Council is therefore essential in imposing Hezbollah's narrative and ideology on the population *vis-à-vis* the effectiveness of the media it cultivates. The aspect of information warfare will be further discussed when analyzing the centrifugal ideologization during the conflict.

Structural implications

The discussed social structure of Hezbollah can be viewed as a clear manifestation of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion. Such a structure is aimed at facilitating conflict with Israel and its layout is directly responsible for facilitating military struggle through coercing those falling under this structure. While the justification of such a structure lies in the ideological views Hezbollah perpetrates – which is further discussed in

the next section – the structural layout of Hezbollah is a clear manifestation of institutionalized violence as the bureaucratic structures in place are involved with the facilitation of violence. Ultimate decision-making happens in a centralized manner: all under the supervision and direction of the Shura council. Thus the military wing of the organization is responsible for perpetrating violence directly through a strongly centralized hierarchical command structure where even the political sector is often times left unaware of the detailed account of the military operations Hezbollah aims to conduct. Furthermore, the political sector is used to facilitate information warfare through the Informational unit and has thus become central to the informational campaigns aimed against the Israelis, also present during the Second Lebanon War. The comprehensive structure of the social service sector provides the whole organization an ideological appeal through the conduct of social services, primarily aimed at Lebanon's Shia population and its sub-branches which are directly involved in institutionally indoctrinating their pupils via youth and general education.

Hezbollah's institutional layout thus contributes greatly to its ability to conduct effective warfare, especially Hybrid Warfare, as witnessed in 2006. However, the institutional bureaucratization of coercion was not the only factor at work in providing Hezbollah its hybrid might in 2006. A separate view is necessary for the process intertwined with cumulative bureaucratization of coercion: centrifugal ideologization.

Centrifugal ideologization

While Malešević believes that most of modern conflict and its unmatched death tolls are a consequence of justifications facilitated by secular ideologies, this does not seem to conform to the countries in the Middle East, particularly Islamic Arab countries in general. In such regions the dominant ideologies are almost exclusively of religious nature, especially in the case of Hezbollah. As such, the justification of warfare does not lie in complex secular ideologies and there is a lessened need to enforce violence through denying humanity to the adversary, as the ideological justification is achieved through the framework of religion and a particular extremist interpretation of Islam.

The cause of this can be that the Arab Islamic cultures in the region have not gone

through the European type “Enlightenment” movement, and as such, the ideas Enlightenment cherishes have not become dominant in the region. Some scholars specializing in Islamic studies such as Murad Wilfried Hofmann argue that Islam should not be asking Muslims to repeat the mistakes of the Enlightenment and thereby subscribe to “*an already outdated modernism*”,¹³⁰ but rather it should ask the West to consider the results of its scientific revolutions and see its failures.¹³¹ The understanding that Islam is yet to go through an intellectual movement similar to the Enlightenment movement was also resonated by Muqtedar Khan who argued for an Islamic notion of Enlightenment and its possible future application.¹³² Thus it is reasonable to argue that the ideologies of organizations such as Hezbollah have to be understood in the religious context of Islam rather than Enlightenment provided secular ideologies as Malešević had suggested.

Ideology of Hezbollah

Categorized as radical Shiite Islamism, the agenda of Hezbollah was set in stone by the 1985 manifesto called „The Hezbollah Program“. Their ideology operates on the notion of „resistance“, and „defensive jihad“, particularly against Israel and the United States. Due to this central rationale, confrontation or conflict with these adversaries is to a degree a desired status quo, as it is through conflict that Hezbollah is able to maintain external legitimacy and a wide base of support. This base support is additionally facilitated by the bureaucratic social system as discussed earlier.

The central ideological objectives of Hezbollah are then the establishment of a Shiite theocracy in Lebanon, elimination of western influence in the Middle East and annihilation of Israel. In this context, any reconciliation with the state of Israel is a lost cause and not considered possible, and the only solution to the conflict is the destruction of Israel. This struggle against Israel is the central ideological reason for Hezbollah's existence and under its ideology, violence conducted against Israel is justified on two grounds: Israel is an illegitimate state; Israel is occupying the territories of Lebanon. Furthermore, Israel is seen as the personification of state terrorism and Western imperialism and the very creation of Israel is considered an act of terrorism.¹³³ In addition, the actions against Israel are enforced by Hezbollah's religious ideology, whereby it employs the term „defensive jihad“. In order to understand this, one has to understand the interpretation of jihad within Hezbollah's ideology.

According to Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary-General Naim Qassem, Hezbollah identifies two types of jihad: the „greater jihad“ and the „lesser jihad“. „Greater jihad“ is the daily spiritual struggle within one's soul to resist and overcome vices and temptations of human life in order to achieve divine knowledge, love and spiritual harmony, while the „lesser jihad“ - also known as the „military jihad“ - is the material struggle, and for Hezbollah, falls into two categories: „offensive jihad“ and „defensive jihad“. The „offensive jihad“ allows Muslims to invade or wage war against other countries and societies on the basis that Islam is the one true religion, however, Hezbollah considers „offensive jihad“ inapplicable until the return of the „awaited imam“ - a true Caliph, or the rightful successor of Muhammad. Hezbollah's central actions against Israel are however explained in the context of a „defensive jihad“ which stipulates not only the right but an obligation to defend Muslim lands and communities from aggression and occupation.¹³⁴ As Hezbollah considers Israel an occupant of the territories of Lebanon, „defensive jihad“ becomes an obligation for each of its Muslim members. Such an obligation reflects the coercive nature of its religious ideology, as true believers can not easily avoid such an obligation.

As such, Hezbollah commends that all acts of resistance against the Jewish state are legitimate already on the ideological level and considering it terrorism is nonsensical. In such a context, it bares no relevance whatsoever whether these acts are directed against civilians or soldiers – under the rationale that they are „occupiers“, everything is considered lawful. While some of Hezbollah's officials have claimed that they are not against Jews or Judaism per se, actions speak louder than words and such words have little credibility in the wake of blatant Holocaust denial and spreading of anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.¹³⁵ In addition, Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah has stated that *„If we searched the entire world for a person more cowardly, despicable, weak and feeble in psyche, mind, ideology and religion, we would not find anyone like the Jew. Notice I do not say the Israeli.“*¹³⁶

Religious ideology is thus the main framework facilitating battles against Israel. Such an ideology is indoctrinated through social institutions and education provided to children from a young age. Under the institutional framework of the Social Service Sector, the educational branch and the Imam Al-Mahdi Scouts youth movement both enforce this. In the educational sphere, it is achieved by imposition of Hezbollah' developed

curriculum which is effectively able to indoctrinate children into men who are willing to fight the „defensive jihad“. The curriculum comes into effect already in kindergarten and persists to collage and vocational levels. Hezbollah's ideological program therefore fully supports armed struggle against Israel, starts indoctrinating people from a young age, strives on the notion of „resistance“ and is realized through extensive bureaucratic machinery maintained by the organization.

Hezbollah is thus in a very strong position to enforce centrifugal ideologization. The whole organizational structure of Hezbollah is built to control the central ideological narratives – based on their interpretation of the Qur'an – through the media, and education that is based on a specialized curriculum. In addition, the social services provide them with a large base of legitimacy within the Shia population. The centrifugal ideologization achieved through the indoctrination of its pupils is aimed at the ideologization of violence against the Israelis and the Americans. In comparison with Ukraine, Hezbollah is in a much better situation with regard to centrifugal ideologization, as the basis of the social actors who fight for Hezbollah is ideologically homogeneous, as opposed to corresponding heterogeneous ideological landscape of Ukraine. Such a position granted Hezbollah an ideal environment for conducting information warfare against Israel during the Second Lebanon War.

Hezbollah's information warfare

„When they attack Humvees, they're not doing that to reduce the number of Humvees. They're doing it because they want spectacular media footage of a burning Humvee“¹³⁷
– counterinsurgency expert David Kilcullen

Hezbollah, along with al-Qaeda and Hamas have all highly sophisticated propaganda organizations and media channels and systems that support them. As discussed earlier, Hezbollah operates television stations, broadcasting a variety of shows, including children programs, and reaches audiences beyond the territory under its political control. These are perfect tools to enforce particular narratives upon its consumers in the context of information warfare.

One of the main shortcomings of the Israelis in the Second Lebanon War was the lack of effective strategies to counter Hezbollah's information warfare. In addition, the Israelis believed in the existence of a negative bias in the Western media. A hybrid belligerent often fights based on the opponent's weaknesses rather than its own strengths, and in the case of Hezbollah and Israel, this is exactly what happened in the context of information warfare. What follows now is first an analysis of what constituted the Israeli weakness, followed by the examination of informational strategies employed by Hezbollah which proved effective and prevalent in the context of the Second Lebanon War.

International media and the IDF

The Israeli weakness lies in its communication with the media. This has handicapped the IDF in terms of how the international media covers conflicts in this region. International coverage is to a large degree crucial for how these conflicts are perceived outside the region, and have the potential to shift not only international public opinion, but also diplomacy of its allies. There are several problematic menaces in the Western media that have caused a certain deadlock, and as a result Israel argues that the coverage appears biased against Israel and more often than not neutral toward Hezbollah, as witnessed during the Second Lebanon War. While this is a direct result of the information strategies employed by Hezbollah, these strategies are simply taking an advantage of problems the roots of which run elsewhere.

Prior to his resignation, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair, identified problematic ways in which the contemporary media has changed for the worse. He claimed that (1) there is a blurring of lines between opinion and news, as factual reporting is routinely packed with political commentary; (2) commentary always receives more space than actual news; (3) more attention is devoted to stories producing an immediate emotional response, rather than to those providing deep insight, and as such, scandal and controversy will always be preferred to a story intended to inform and engage the public's intellect; (4) the stories are always presented as black and white, whereas the life's gray is almost entirely lost.¹³⁸ Such international media coverage is thus inclined to chew up controversial stories and spit them out in the form of black-and-white easily understood narratives. This is especially relevant for the political-military sphere, as reporting from the battlefields often entails images of civilian suffering and death which

can severely undermine public legitimacy of military campaigns. The IDF was unable to adequately adjust to this, and the relationship between the international media and the IDF has seen the Israeli counterpart argue for the existence of a negative bias, especially in European media coverage of the conflicts they engage in.

Snyder identified three instances which have enforced such a belief,¹³⁹ which I will briefly examine in the following paragraphs. First was the coverage of the alleged massacre during the battle of Jenin in 2002 in the context of the Second Intifada. The UN reported that 52 Palestinians, half of whom might have been civilians and 23 IDF soldiers had died in the conflict.¹⁴⁰ While the near equality of fighter casualties indicated a house-to-house urban warfare type of conflict, where the Israelis refrained from using indiscriminate air attacks, the European press had previously reported about alleged massacres of the Palestinians¹⁴¹ and claimed that whole families had been crushed by the rubble of buildings hit by airstrikes.¹⁴² In particular, The Times (of London) went as far as to compare these attacks to the wars in Bosnia, Chechnya and Kosovo, where the indiscriminate killing left many thousands dead.¹⁴³ Such disproportionate comparisons only aggravated the Israeli perceived bias.

Additional anti-Israeli propaganda is fabricated through stories of individual civilian suffering and death, such as the second instance Snyder identified: the case of Muhammad al-Durrah, a child who allegedly died in Gaza through Israeli fire on 30th September 2000. The images of suffering children are especially effective in spreading and attracting attention of the international media. The death of this child was used as an iconic figure in the Arab world, symbolizing the brutality of Israel. However Richard Landes has argued that the video footage captured by a French journalist showing the last moments of this child is a hoax.¹⁴⁴ He went on to coin the term “Pollywood” referring to staged productions of Palestinian civil casualties with the intent of being filmed and ending up in international press.¹⁴⁵ A French web site owner Philippe Karsenty was sued by the French 2 television station for accusing them of using the images capturing the alleged scenes of al-Durrah's death filmed by their cameraman for propaganda purposes.¹⁴⁶ While he was initially found guilty, he appealed and an appeal court found him not guilty, indeed affirming that the video was not genuine and that the bullets had likely come from Palestinian positions.¹⁴⁷ While the Israeli spokespersons initially admitted that the bullets that killed al-Durrah came from Israeli positions¹⁴⁸ – providing this propaganda its initial

effect – following an investigation, the Israelis distanced themselves from the event and affirmed that Israel was likely not responsible for his death.¹⁴⁹

Third instance of this was the case of Huda Ghaliya, whose family was killed in an explosion on one of the beaches at Gaza. She was filmed mourning over the body of his father, images of which quickly became popular in the international media. Questions were quickly raised about the source of the shell that had killed the family. Israelis were again quick to admit guilt, but soon after the IDF investigation was carried out, it was claimed that no Israeli shell fired that day could have caused the incident.¹⁵⁰ Despite such a claim, the Human Rights Watch – an independent NGO – contradicted these claims and asserted that the Israeli investigation was biased and the Israelis were to blame.¹⁵¹ This contradiction was largely prominent in the European media.¹⁵²

As a result of these prominent, and a number of other incidents, the Israelis are prone to thinking that the European press and NGOs pursue a policy of opposition to Israel. Whether this is true or not, it is clear that many NGOs often criticize the IDF and cast doubt on its motives and as a result undermine the credibility of the IDF and its investigations and statements.

Controlling the media: Hezbollah vs. Israel

An additional Israeli weakness and Hezbollah's strength can be observed in the differences in their ability to exert control over the media. Maintenance of war activities necessitates a certain degree of control over the media, as its depiction of the conflict has the potential to influence public opinion in ways that are not desirable by the belligerents. However, the organizational structures and political ideologies in action during the 2006 war provided that the media access differed greatly in the territories under either Hezbollah's or Israeli control. This was partly due to the societal difference, as one is an democratic society with freedom of speech and press respected, while the other is an example of a closed society with firm ideological grip over its members maintained by the power institutions. The difference in control is reflected in the access the journalists were provided to the conflict zones under either of the belligerent's control. In their attempts to control the media the belligerents thus differed greatly and I argue that this was due to their societal construction.

Societies cherishing liberal democracy, particularly ones making clear attempts to

protect the freedom of speech and press, such as Israel, find it far more difficult to muzzle the media than closed societies such as Hezbollah do. Hezbollah had a firm institutional and ideological grip over their media due to the very fact that such control was institutionalized into their societal construction. The closed nature of such a society provides that they are in a clearly advantageous position in comparison to liberal democratic, open societies, when it comes to conducting effective centrifugal ideologization. The liberal democratic societies, keen on protecting the freedom of speech and press, provide a ground for scattering ideological beliefs and thus sabotage universal centralized narratives which the military ideally aims to achieve centrifugal ideologization. The fact that journalists are to a large degree left to their own devices when providing an interpretation of the events they cover, provides an easy ground for hindering the effectiveness of centrifugal ideologization. A prime historic example of the vulnerability of open societies to this phenomena was the Vietnamese War. It has prevalently been argued that the relative freedom of US journalists to report on the Vietnamese War turned public opinion against the administration and while the Americans were coming close to winning the war, they were still forced to retreat due to the the popular public pressure and anti-war protests at home. This had been instigated by the nearly unrestricted reporting from the battles and the fact that it was the first “Television War”¹⁵³ bringing images of the horrific realities of warfare into common American living rooms and thereby provoking an anti-war popular response. This sobered up the military establishment and was not to be repeated.¹⁵⁴ It is for this very reason that the US has subsequently adopted a common practice of censorship during the times of war, as not to hinder the conduct of effective centrifugal ideologization both on the level of military and in terms of the domestic “population battleground”. Thus the keen maintenance of an “open character” of Western-like societies during the times of war can potentially hinder their ability to conduct effective centrifugal ideologization in comparison to societies of a closed nature, such as Hezbollah, who are able to control their media and project an image of order and discipline.

What one could observe during the Second Lebanon War was that societies keen on protecting the freedom of speech and press, such as Israel, find themselves in a significant disadvantage in comparison to closed societies when it comes to imposing their own narrative on the media and hence on their ability to conduct effective centrifugal

ideologization. While closed societies such as Hezbollah are able to project an impression of order and discipline, open societies such as Israel, project the opposite: rumors spread rapidly, leaders feel obliged to comment and issue statements without complete understanding of the issues on which they comment, and the strong professional competition drives journalists to publish and broadcast information which can prove to have no substance.¹⁵⁵ This was gravely reflected in the conflict of 2006, when Hezbollah was able to project a distinctly clear narrative, while the Israeli response was relatively chaotic. Thus often times open societies become the victim of their own openness, as their inability to coordinate their media and society adequately with the war effort can undermine their military efficiency. What follows is an overview of this control with regard to both sides of the conflict.

Hezbollah was able to exert a rigid control over the media by providing information to the foreign and other media by providing “tours” through their regions. Such tours were governed by a rigid set of rules and routes, prohibiting the journalists from deviating from set paths, additionally prohibiting contact with the inhabitants of the regions they went through. The regions in question were always exclusively those civilian areas which had been heavily damaged by Israeli air raids. In addition, pictures were only allowed to be taken of Hezbollah' approved sites and any violation of this was met with confiscation of equipment.¹⁵⁶ Despite these restrictions, journalists attempted to bypass them by arriving at the scene and operating unofficially. They still met restrictions, as whenever they saw an opportunity to take footage of the guerrillas, they were warned not to do so, or else they would „run into trouble when returning to Beirut“. The result was such, that the main imagery that surfaced in the western media was the devastation of the civilian infrastructure of Southern Lebanon, with pictures of civilians trying to survive in the war scenery. The rarest picture of them all was one depicting a Hezbollah guerrilla. Interviews with Hezbollah officials or soldiers were thus practically non-existent on the media scene. All of this served the information strategy of Hezbollah who only provided limited access to the battlefield and encouraged the visiting journalists to use their own television network – Al-Manar – as their source.

Despite the complaints from a large number of foreign journalists about the lack of access on the Israeli side, the Israelis were not particularly successful in their control over the media. The attempts at censorship were largely unsuccessful, as they were unable to

stop the reporters from bypassing the restrictions and using modern technologies to cover the conflict. In addition, they did not have a clear informational strategy when it came to restricting access, as interviews were conducted with IDF soldiers baffled by Hezbollah's resistance and with the Israeli officials alike.

The result of these restrictions and methods employed by Hezbollah and Israel to shape the international media coverage was the emergence of a distinct set of narratives clearly beneficial for Hezbollah and its strategic informational objectives. What follows is a brief examination of two basic strategies and their effect on the war.

„Disproportionate“ attacks

Hezbollah had a clear informational strategy during the Second Lebanon War. The campaign's first aim was to remove its fighters from the media scene. In doing so, they prohibited their press from publishing photos of their fighters who gave little or no interviews. The structural discipline to avoid images or reports picturing Hezbollah's fighters from appearing was key to achieving this goal. Hezbollah as the main political force at the region, was able to coerce the press to comply with these bans and as a result, the Israeli air raids on civilian zones were the main imagery of the war that appeared in the media. The goal of such coercion was to enforce a narrative in which the Israelis were reacting disproportionately to Hezbollah's provocations. Snyder identified three ways in which this strategy influenced the perception of the war: (1) It fostered the impression that on one side, stood a modern army and on the other only civilians; (2) It subtly undercut the Israel's claim that Hezbollah used civilians as human shields – if there are no pictures of fighters then there can be no proof of fighters exploiting helpless civilians; (3) It removed the Syrian and Iranian influence from the scene.¹⁵⁷

In addition, Marvin Kalb finds it beyond doubt that the theme of disproportionality was emphasized by the media everywhere starting from day one.¹⁵⁸ It was not only the disproportionality of the Israeli attack that was focused on, but the disproportionality surfaced in the depiction of casualties as well. Despite the fact that there were casualties on both sides – the flow of Katyusha rockets fired into Israel by Hezbollah did not stop throughout the conflict – the media disproportionality reported on the casualties on the Lebanese side. This was to be expected from Arabic-language newspapers, such as Asharq Al-Awsat who provided 24 headline photographs of the war:

22 photographs of the destruction caused by Israel in Lebanon, and just 1 of the destruction caused by Hezbollah in Israel.¹⁵⁹

When it came to western media, such as the BBC, then while 38% of the stories they ran pointed out Israel as the aggressor, Hezbollah was depicted as the aggressor only in 4% of the stories.¹⁶⁰ In addition, Kalb referred to the research of Media Tenor – a media research organization in Germany – according to which both Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya favored the view that Israel was the “aggressor”, as 78% of the stories Al-Jazeera ran on the war referred to Israel as the aggressor, while in case of Al-Arabiya the corresponding number was 94%.¹⁶¹

This strategy was thus extremely successful. The main theme that emerged in Arab and European reporting of the conflict was the repeated assertion that Israel responded disproportionately to Hezbollah's initial provocation. This mounted pressure on the IDF, as such reporting was the basis of the increasing diplomatic pressure from its allies – particularly from the United States – calling Israel to limit or to halt its operation altogether. This severely limited IDF's capabilities, as military success required intensifying attacks, yet their intensity correlated with the mounting diplomatic pressure on Israel.

Civilian-victim narrative

Wartime propaganda provided by Hezbollah was the constant use of the Civilian-Victim narrative. The central claim of this narrative is *"You (Israelis, Americans or any adversary) are killing innocent women and children or supporting someone who is."*¹⁶² According to Snyder this was the core of their information strategy. Such an approach grants universal appeal, as people are naturally inclined to sympathize with the civilian suffering caused by war. It is then especially paramount for terrorist groups like Hezbollah to play on these universal sympathies, as their ideological appeal is largely limited to the ranks of the already indoctrinated.

The IDF had already prior to the war been struggling with the civilian-victim narrative. In all of the cases, their military operations would spark claims about civilian suffering and casualties; the media and the internet will provide that these claims spread globally; third parties such as NGOs will validate these claims and as a result, the legitimacy of the operation becomes severely undermined in all of the McCuen's population battlegrounds. In addition, Hezbollah's Civilian-Victim narrative was enforced

not only by the international media, but also by the NGOs in the region such as the Human Rights Watch, who reported on "*serious violations of international humanitarian law*" in which they suggested that the IDF had purposefully targeted civilians with no connection to military activity, while simultaneously admitting that Hezbollah had occasionally stored weapons in or near civilian homes.¹⁶³

Concluding remarks

The Second Lebanon War acutely demonstrated the necessity for modern conventional armies to adjust their approaches when facing a possible hybrid adversary. The Western scholars have responded to this conflict by emphasizing and prioritizing the theories of Hybrid Warfare in order to properly understand such conflicts. My argument with regard to the war was that Hezbollah was able to achieve success largely due to their progress in producing effective centrifugal ideologization, as their fighters were ideologically homogeneous and highly motivated to fight and Hezbollah was thus ready to pay in heavy casualties in order to inflict a continuous loss of life on the IDF.

Secondly I argue that the organizational and institutional layout and structure of Hezbollah are clear manifestations of bureaucratization of coercion. Their structure facilitates institutionalized violence, and the ideology of Hezbollah grants it a greater degree of coerciveness. The institutional layout where the Hezbollah-adopted curriculum in schools and the maintenance of extensive youth organizations ease the process of future coercion through indoctrination and facilitation of an anti-Israeli state of mind from a very young age, ultimately coercing them to participate in the "defensive jihad" against the state of Israel. Thus cumulative bureaucratization of coercion was achieved through Hezbollah's complex organizational structure which was able to indoctrinate its fighters from a young age, provided them with social security in turn for loyalty, ultimately securing that the military function effectively during times of war.'

Thirdly I argue that centrifugal ideologization was institutionalized into the very structure of Hezbollah. It's ability to conduct effective centrifugal ideologization depended on the social institutions established within the institutional framework of Hezbollah. Thus, I consider sub-divisions of the Social Service Sector, such as the Imam

Al-Mahdi Scouts movement and the educational branch along with the Information Council – a sub-division of the Political Council – clear institutional manifestations of centrifugal ideologization. These institutions are explicitly responsible for radiating the ideology of Hezbollah and help indoctrinate the populations under their influence to become fighters of the “lesser jihad”. Hezbollah would likely suffer significant difficulties in conducting effective centrifugal ideologization would these institutions become undermined or removed altogether.

Additionally, I argue that the military effectiveness of non-standard hybrid actors is often a result of a closed societies' – or hybrid societies' as defined by Nemeth¹⁶⁴ – ability to perform effective centrifugal ideologization. Closed societies are able to exert control over the media – and thus the narratives featured in the media – far more effectively than open societies who remain keen on protecting the freedom of speech and press. As a result of this, open societies find it far more complex to impose centralized narratives which could effectively enforce centrifugal ideologization than closed societies do. It thus follows that closed societies, such as Hezbollah are in a clearly advantageous situation when it comes to imposing narratives on the media necessary for achieving effective centrifugal ideologization. Additionally, the open societies which will keenly attempt to protect the freedom of speech and press provide an ideal ground for scattering ideological beliefs, and its belligerents can take advantage of this by providing its media with narratives that undermine the conduct of effective centrifugal ideologization. Following the debacle of the Vietnamese War, the US learned it the hard way, and it became common that reporters and journalists found themselves restricted and censored when covering the subsequent wars. The war efforts of liberal open societies, anxious to protect the freedom of speech and press, thus often suffer from this very openness. This was clearly witnessed also during the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict where Israeli military establishment not only already perceived a negative bias in the international media, but failed to control their media effectively and reassert the legitimacy of their campaign on the level of relevant “population battlegrounds”. The inability of the Israeli state to battle the narratives of civilian victims and disproportionality illustrate this problem very well, and provided that Hezbollah's information warfare proved a major success, as external diplomatic pressure on Israel soon forced an internationally mediated ceasefire into effect.

Russian incursions into Ukraine

The most recent conflict in question is the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Despite the fact that the conflict is still unresolved, there has been invigorated debate and scholarly interest on the subject, both from military and civilian institutions.^{165 166 167 168} The content of the conflict examined in the following sections is the annexation of Crimea and the subsequent Hybrid War waged in Eastern Ukraine, henceforth referred to as the War in Donbass. Since the Russian intervention in Ukraine was preceded by an exhaustive information warfare campaign, I will assume that both the operations in Crimea and the subsequent involvement in Eastern Ukraine are a result of the application of a comprehensive strategy developed beforehand, and the operations conducted under the framework of these strategies ought to be considered a single continuous conflict. This is a logical realization in the context of Russian military theorists and generals who have repeatedly stressed the importance of non-military means and the consequent formulation that contemporary warfare blurs both the distinction between war and peace and who actually fights.^{169 170 171}

Russian involvement in the battles of Eastern Ukraine has to be understood in terms of the political goals Kremlin aims to achieve with such an involvement. Since the whole crisis was triggered by Ukraine's leadership warming up toward the EU and the West, the obvious goal for Kremlin has been and is to avoid that. Ukraine is to a degree considered a part of Russia, a close ally, or neutral at best. As Henry Kissinger puts it:

“To Russia, Ukraine can never be a foreign country. Russian history began in what was called Kievan-Rus. The Russian religion spread from there. Ukraine has been part of Russia for centuries, and their histories were intertwined before then. [...] Even such famed dissidents as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Joseph Brodsky insisted that Ukraine was an integral part of Russian history and, indeed, of Russia.”¹⁷²

The standpoint of Russia on this matter is complex and Andrew Wilson believes that Russian leadership is psychologically unable to cope with the idea of an equal relationship with Ukraine, as a separate sovereign entity.¹⁷³ However, Ukraine becoming completely foreign in the face of closer relations with the EU and NATO represents a red line for the Kremlin and has proven that they will take actions would this state of affairs be shaken up. Indeed, the leading Russian officials including president Vladimir Putin had repeatedly

stressed the possible severe implications, would Ukraine's warming up toward the West materialize into specific contracts and actions. In 2008, amidst the speculations about Georgia and Ukraine potentially joining NATO, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated that Moscow will do everything it can to prevent the two countries from becoming NATO members.¹⁷⁴ His statement was backed by the Russian Chief of Staff General Yuri Baluyevsky who declared that steps taken aimed at ensuring its interests at the border *“will not only be military steps, but also steps of a different nature.”*¹⁷⁵ Splitting up Ukraine as a consequence of meddling with EU and NATO was allegedly mentioned by president Putin already as early as in 2008.¹⁷⁶ And the radical aftermath of Euromaidan acted as a toreador for the bull that then ran for Crimea.

I believe that taking any action had to be preceded by a clear realization of the strategic goals. While the West and Ukraine have spoken of a full occupation narrative,¹⁷⁷ occupying the whole of Ukraine clearly was not a goal. Rather, a more realistic strategic goal would be to keep Ukraine in its "sphere of influence": keep it a compliant buffer zone between the West and Russia. However, complete secession of both Crimea and Eastern Ukraine into the Russian Federation would not be able to fulfill this goal, as the Western and Central part of current Ukraine would stay out of reach and would likely be pro-EU and pro-NATO, based on their historical affiliations with Europe, manifested by the Euromaidan itself. In addition, such an incorporation would demand that the state-building necessary for the normal functioning of post-war Eastern Ukraine fall under the responsibility of Russia and its finances. In the face of the fact that Russia already invested heavily in Crimea,¹⁷⁸ a much larger region of Eastern Ukraine would demand far greater financial support and covering these costs – which would now also include repairing large war damages – should seem largely undesirable. Therefore, to achieve Ukrainian compliance in terms of it being a buffer zone, Kremlin's main goal should in fact be to maintain Ukrainian territorial integrity, and in this sense the Oblasts of Luhansk and Donetsk would have to remain part of Ukraine, as a proposed federative counterweight to Western Ukrainian affiliations. In this context it is clear why Putin has refused to incorporate Donetsk and Luhansk into the Russian Federation.

Lastly, it is important to note here that while largely engineered by the Kremlin and its involvement, the leaders of Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic (henceforth referred to as DPR and LPR respectively) have not always endorsed

Kremlin's goals. This is clear from the statements of both entities' leaders during the signing of the first Minsk agreement in September 2014. Igor Plotnitsky – the head of LPR – claimed that *"sooner or later, we will become part of the Russian Federation"*¹⁷⁹ while the leader of DPR, Alexander Zakharchenko considered being forced to sign the agreement an act of betrayal.¹⁸⁰ Both of them had repeatedly asked Putin to incorporate DPR and LPR into the Russian Federation.

Hybridity of Crimea and Donbass

First aspect of what made this a Hybrid War was the irregular forces present throughout the conflict. In Crimea, the *little green men*¹⁸¹ fit the definition of irregular military insofar as they were unmarked and no recognizable emblems that would provide grounds for identification as part of a particular organization of armed forces. Western media depicted them as Russian, based on analysis of their weaponry and equipment, while the pro-Russian media responded by presenting them – based on Putin's words – as local spontaneous self-defense units, who might have come in possession of their Russian uniforms and weaponry from shops. These forces blockaded crucial Ukrainian administrative institutions, such as the parliament in Simferopol, the International Airport of Simferopol and most of the military bases in Crimea. The irregular military forces that presented themselves in Ukraine in late February of 2014 had an essential role in orchestrating the swift and successful takeover of Ukrainian territory by the Russian Federation.

The lack of declaration of war by any side rendered the Ukrainian counterpart stunned as they lacked any proper strategy to counter the "little green men". In reality it is now known that the little green men were in fact those Russian soldiers stationed in Crimean military bases operated by Russia aided by its special operations forces.^{182 183} But the initial denial of their Russian origin and the maintenance of their irregular nature was crucial in rendering the Ukrainian and international community helpless in countering them.

Similar denial has been present throughout the War in Donbass, where the Russians are backing the separatist movements in Eastern Ukraine by sending

humanitarian and military reinforcements over the border. The latter is a well documented fact, however one that is continuously denied by the Russian officials and their controlled media. United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine has repeatedly issued reports in which this is discussed. The leader of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic Alexander Zakharchenko stated on 27th August of 2014, that 3000-4000 Russians were fighting alongside the armed groups, including both former and serving Russian soldiers; and the Ukrainian forces reported being bombarded with advanced weaponry.¹⁸⁴ The monitoring mission claimed that *„an increasing number of foreign fighters were reported to be participating in the fighting, including citizens of the Russian Federation: „former servicemen“ or active duty personnel „on leave“.*¹⁸⁵ In the latest fully available report – during the writing of this thesis – of the United Nations regarding the period from 16th February to 15th May of 2015, it was noted that *„reports of sophisticated heavy weaponry and fighters being supplied from the Russian Federation persisted.*^{186 187} In addition, the reports indicate that various Ukrainian soldiers were kept in captivity on the territory of the Russian Federation.¹⁸⁸ However, the Russian officials have denied any official intervention and president Putin has unequivocally claimed that there are no Russian troops in Ukraine.¹⁸⁹ In addition, Putin has claimed that the Russian soldiers in eastern Ukraine were merely volunteers and could not be called mercenaries as they were not paid.¹⁹⁰ This conforms with the official narrative adopted by the Kremlin, emphasizing that those Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine are volunteers or on official vacations. This narrative was also partly supported by Zakharchenko who claimed through Rossiya-24 that *„a lot of soldiers come to us from Russia, soldiers who prefer to spend their vacation not on seashores but in the same ranks with their brothers as they battle for freedom in Donbass.*¹⁹¹

The denial of any official involvement is firstly necessary for the success of the operation, as was the case in the earlier Crimean part of the operation and secondly, this rhetoric allows the Kremlin to shrug off any official or direct responsibility for the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. As long as these forces remain unrecognized as officially in Russian service, they ought to be considered irregular, and as such, the Ukrainians are facing both separatist and irregular forces in their attempts to remain in control of their territory. The irregular forces are the first aspect of what made both the Crimean crisis and the early

stages of the War in Donbass a Hybrid War. In addition, the lack of international recognition for DPR and LPR renders them non-state entities, a further aspect descriptive of western Hybrid Warfare. With the initial hybrid tactics providing little success in Donbass, the later increased Russian involvement added an increasingly conventional element to the conflict.

I would also argue that the self-proclaimed republics of Eastern Ukraine are to be considered to a degree an extension of Russian foreign politics, insofar as they were proclaimed by Russians and remained loyal and largely dependent on Russia throughout the conflict. This will be addressed in the following sections. In essence I will argue that the War in Donbass saw Ukrainian government forces fighting a Hybrid War against two pseudo-states – or non-states – both backed by and largely dependent on the Kremlin.

However, making an effort to define the whole of War in Donbass by presenting it merely through the lens of Western Hybrid Warfare can prove insufficient for understanding the subtleties of the crisis. Instead one can observe that the conduct of Russia during the crisis of Ukraine largely follows the path of New-Generation Warfare as discussed by Chekinov and Bogdanov.¹⁹² The opening phase Chekinov and Bogdanov discussed was set in motion long prior to the actual military engagement. They spoke of an exhaustive campaign including diplomatic, ideological, psychological, economic and information measures coupled with an intensive propaganda campaign. In the aftermath of the takeover of the interim government in Kyiv, one can clearly observe nearly all of these measures taken by the Kremlin against Ukraine, particularly prior to the annexation of Crimea. Diplomatic pressure was seen in renouncing the legitimacy of the interim government and undermining that of the current government; ideological pressure in constant enforcement of a narrative in which the interim government was fascist and corrupt¹⁹³; economic pressure by the sharp increase of gas prices offered to Ukraine and the halting of a loan program; all of which was coupled with an exhaustive propaganda campaign in terms of information war, discussed later on. The closing part saw military action in the face of taking over key strategic facilities by the Russian military in Crimea and its support for the insurgents and their self-proclaimed republics in Eastern Ukraine. All of this will be further examined in the following sections.

Technological context

There were several technological aspects outside the military sphere worth noting that pertain to the conflict. In the whole of the Ukrainian crisis, social media has been of central importance. The rise of social media as a means employed for conducting mass protests and uprisings was evident already from the Arab Spring revolutions. Social media – as integral as it would seem to our lives currently – is an extremely recent phenomena, and as such, was not present on a large social scale in 2006 during the Second Lebanon War. As its global reach grew, so did its potency as an informational weapon, and a mere four years later it proved central for organizing civilian revolts and uprisings in the Arab nations, as well as organizing Ukrainian Euromaidan protests in 2013-2014. It is after all an environment where individual opinions sprouted out in an appealing linguistic form can grow into influential ideological slogans in a matter of hours, as any appealing message can spread to any other part of the connected world within milliseconds. Euromaidan activists used the social media mainly for mobilization, and according to Olga Onuch, it was the second most influential channel for providing information about where and when to take part in Euromaidan protest events in Ukraine.¹⁹⁴ She notes that the social media was more important for early joiners of the protests – those who joined between 21st and 29th November – while those who joined later – after 30th November – were slightly more likely to rely on mainstream media when it came to getting information about where and when the protests take place.¹⁹⁵ This suggests that social media was crucial during the inception stage of the protests when the media coverage was minimal, and people had to rely on social media for information about the protests. In addition, she noted that while social media provides ground for „*individual ownership over the mobilization process*“, it also limits activist's control and management of the protests.¹⁹⁶ That is, despite the fact that it gives ordinary citizens a central role in the mobilization process, it can allow radicals to take control, as witnessed during the Euromaidan protests where it resulted in the 18-19 February massacre.¹⁹⁷

In addition the conventional and internet media have been the ground for information warfare conducted prior to the military involvement. Russian state media had a strong ground in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, therefore it became a tool facilitating the image of chaos and anarchy in Ukraine, manifested in the alleged threat to the Russian-

speaking populations.

In a military sense the armies fighting in Eastern Ukraine were far from being considered modern at the start. The basis of Ukrainian Armed Forces (henceforth referred to as UAF) military equipment was Soviet. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Ukraine inherited all the military equipment and formations stationed in their territory. This inheritance was remarkable. Ukraine came into possession of the world's fourth most powerful military, only behind the US, China and Russia, and in some cases their weapons systems were even more advanced than that of Russia.¹⁹⁸ But what was on paper an extremely capable force was left without proper maintenance. The army was constantly downsized and underfunded and as a result became largely outdated and physically not ready for combat. By 2010, only 6000 ground troops were being maintained for constant battle readiness.¹⁹⁹ Same problems haunted the air and naval forces, the former of which had only 31 fighters and 10 bombers and 8 ground-attack aircraft deemed operational while the latter had only 4 ships combat ready.²⁰⁰ The problem with the ill-ready army became clear when Yanukovich attempted to deploy military against the Euromaidan protests, but no other part than Immediate Reaction Force could be used. In addition, some of its brigades could not be utilized, as they were sympathetic with the protest movement. In the end only about 500-600 paratroopers along with several tanks from Zhytomyr were deployed along with 350 marines and the special units forces who were in fact naval commandos, combat swimmers²⁰¹ – not an ideal force for inland special operations.

Along with the outmoded and ill for battle UAF, a large number of paramilitaries have been formed to fight the insurgent groups in Eastern Ukraine. Among the most prominent are the Donbass, Azov and Kharkiv battalions, now all in allegiance with separate ministries of Ukraine and therefore possessing largely the same type of equipment.

The initial basis of Luhansk and Donetsk armies was similar. The military equipment available to the separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk was largely that of the Ukrainian army and therefore the Ukrainian military was aware what kind and quantity of equipment had been lost to the separatists after the takeover of Donetsk and Luhansk territories. In addition, it was announced that a number of military and security personnel

had joined the separatists and about 15 000 policemen in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions had defected. Furthermore, the separatists received military equipment from Russia, such as the the weapons captured by Russians in Crimea. This has been proven by various authorities, but one can clearly see the importance of this equipment and manpower when looking into the course of the war itself. The separatists were haunted by a lack of success in the early stages of the war in Donbass, as Ukrainian forces were able to re-take territory and slowly but steadily advance. Following major setbacks, Igor Girkin, the insurgent commander of DPR blamed the inexperience of his irregular troops and the problems with mobilizing people to cover for the losses and called for immediate help from the Russian Federation.²⁰² By the 3rd of August, the UAF reported that nearly 3/4 of the territory the insurgents had previously seized had been re-captured by the Ukrainian forces. With both the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk seeing battles inside them, the situation became critical for the insurgents. As a result, the sending of military aid in the form of a Russian incursion occurred.^{203 204 205} The aid of a more coherent conventional force soon halted the advances of the Ukrainians and a counter-offensive was carried out instead. The Russian incursions to Ukraine and their military and humanitarian help provided to DPR and LPR appears to have had a severe effect on the outcome of the battles, as the initial failures were replaced by an effective counter-offensive. On 15th of August, DPR's leader Alexander Zakharchenko stated that the reinforcement that came from Russia played a decisive role in organization of the counter-offensive.²⁰⁶ The military equipment employed during the following part of the conflict was suddenly more modern than that of Ukraine and saw the separatists use modern Russian tanks, such as the Russian T-72B3 which was the latest T-72 model in Russian service, introduced only in 2013 and is not known to have been exported.²⁰⁷ For a comprehensive overview of other such arms and munitions employed during the first months of the conflict, refer to Ferguson and Jenzen-Jones report.²⁰⁸ The Kremlin however denounced its involvement with claims that the Russian soldiers – such as the paratroopers spotted on 25th of August 20 km in Ukraine – had crossed the border "*by accident*",²⁰⁹ or that the troops were in Ukraine voluntarily.

Fighting two opponents aided by a superior force proved too much for the UAF and as a result they began to lose territory. The “anti-terrorist” campaign quickly transformed into a defensive operation. The counter-offensive was to a degree disrupted

by the agreement of the first Minsk ceasefire on the 5th of September, though fighting continued, albeit on a smaller scale.

Cumulative bureaucratization of coercion

The degree to which bureaucratization of coercion is achieved depends largely on the structural integrity and organizational might of the adversary. In order to properly understand the military operations conducted by the self-proclaimed republics of Luhansk and Donetsk and their initial failures it is thus paramount to examine the nature of the institutions established, responsible for their military organization. Thus in the following sections I will first examine the social structures of DPR and LPR in order to uncover any peculiarities the social organization of the rebellious Eastern Ukraine embodied during the initial stages of conflict. Secondly, I will follow up by analyzing the implications of these structural peculiarities and seek to establish if there was an effect, and if yes then to what a degree, on the conduct and results of the battles fought in Eastern Ukraine.

While much of Western emphasis has gone on the attempts to label DPR and LPR as similar terrorist organizations, as claimed by Ukraine, I will attempt to go beyond such labeling and examine the social structures responsible for the governing of the political and military entities they encompass. There are striking differences between the emerged entities and it is certainly worth examining these structural differences, as I argue that they directly influenced the outcome of the battles conducted during the conflict. In addition, the first months after their creation, both DPR's and LPR's respective militias operated in separate theaters or war, both controlling their own regions and lacking both in coordination between themselves and the political leadership of their self-proclaimed republics. I will examine the development of the structures of the respective entities in a chronological fashion in the next paragraphs and follow up with analyzing the implications these structural peculiarities had in terms of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and whether or not the cumulative nature of bureaucratization indeed increased the effectiveness of their forces.

Donetsk and Donbass People's Militia

First to be formed was the Donbass People's Militia, which was originally involved in capturing the government and strategic buildings in the Donetsk Oblast, led by Pavel Gubarev, who after capturing a regional government building in Donetsk had declared himself the People's Governor of the Donetsk region. However, following this declaration he was arrested by the Secret Service of Ukraine (henceforth referred to as SBU) on 6th of March and faced charges of up to 10 years in prison.²¹⁰ The organization of the rebels became more coherent as Igor Girkin declared the creation of the Donetsk People's Republic after militants under his control had seized the Regional Administration and the City Hall of Donetsk.²¹¹

Igor Girkin is a controversial figure. He does not originate from Donbass nor is he Ukrainian. Girkin is an ethnic Russian born in Moscow who served as a colonel of the Russian army, having served both in Bosnian and Chechen Wars, as well as taken part in the orchestration of the takeover of Crimea.²¹² His role has been cited as proof of direct Russian involvement in Eastern Ukraine and he was accused of being a Russian agent²¹³ and he indeed later admitted to being a colonel of the FSB.²¹⁴ After the declaration of the republic, the occupation of local government buildings followed and on 12th April a group of militants led by Girkin seized strategic buildings in Slovyansk for the declared Donetsk People's Republic. This group of militants became known as the Donbass People's Militia. However, since the original leader of the militia had been arrested by the SBU, the militant structure was not coherent, with members of it identifying with different leaders, depending on the region of the Oblast they fought in. While some claimed to be fighting under the command of Girkin, others identified themselves under Gubarev's leadership. Such initial organizational confusion was common to both self-proclaimed republics, largely due to the lack of coordination between the political and military leadership. Girkin remained in control of the rebel forces as the Defense Minister of DPR until 14th of August 2014. He did not expect that Russia's involvement would not follow the scenario of Crimea and that both the DPR and LPR would to a large degree be left to their own devices. He claimed that the separatist groups had not contemplated building functional states and instead hoped to be incorporated into Russia and when the realization that this will not occur hit them, they were shocked.²¹⁵

As one could observe, DPR's initial political arena was turbulent, with no clear

authority emerging prior to the first ceasefire. Alleged assassination attempts within the DPR' leadership were experienced by various people, including Gubarev who had been released in a prison-swapping operation in May.²¹⁶ However, the political rivalry between different rebel factions saw Gubarov lose most of his influence. He was pushed on the background as businessman Denis Pushilin took over for a short while, only to be replaced by a Moscow political strategist Alexander Borodai who in August announced that he will return to Moscow. In explaining his resignation Borodai later said that

„I myself became a fierce advocate of Strelkov's²¹⁷ departure from the DPR, since I realized that a period would ensue when the fragile appearance of peace would emerge and such people as Strelkov or myself would not longer be necessary. Imagine how it would look if I put my signature on the "Minsk" agreements, as a native of the city of Moscow. Such a political construction cannot exist for long. We did our duty, we helped the DPR and in the end, we left it.“²¹⁸

Borodai was succeeded by one of the prominent DPR's military leaders: Alexander Zakharchenko. He has remained the political leader ever since. The appointment of Zakharchenko was crucial, as he provided stability for the relations between the political and military spheres, with an obvious bias for the latter. The early DPR was hence an environment with incoherent leadership, where the military and political actors remained in strong contention for the legitimate power which would be the source of their ability to enforce their agenda on the local population.

The military operations have to be understood in this context. The initial operations starting in late spring 2014 were mostly defensive, attempting to keep back the Ukrainian "anti-terrorist" offensives. However they were largely unsuccessful. The loss of the city of Slovyansk and the continuous successes of the UAF and the Ukrainian forces led the offensive on the doorstep of Donetsk. The government forces were able to capture the airport of Donetsk, and in the south continued the advance toward Mariupol. In the context of the failures, Igor Girkin found it convenient to resign as Defense Minister on 14th of August and was replaced by a Ukrainian-born Vladimir Kononov. Despite his resignation, Girkin asserts that he was „pulled out of the game“ without elaborating what he meant but said that it „would be destructive“ for him to stay, as he did not support the political goals that the Kremlin was aiming for.²¹⁹ He returned to Moscow and has been there ever since. After the initial turbulent relations between the military and political

sphere phased off, and larger Russian incursions occurred, the militias were able to become more successful in combating the governmental forces.

Luhansk and the Army of the South-East

Luhansk People's Republic was announced by Valery Botov – a Russian born "People's Governor" – after the seizure of strategic buildings by the Luhansk People's Militia, also known as the Army of the South-East. While Botov became the political leader, the military formation under it was far less institutionalized than its Donetsk counterpart. In fact, it soon became clear that the political leadership of LPR had little authority over the emerged militia formations. The authorities which claimed to be in control of LPR actually only controlled Luhansk and its vicinity, while the rest of the territories were under the control of autonomous armed formations, styled as Russian Cossacks and ruled by their „atamans“. ²²⁰ These militia formations appeared to be de facto rulers of the portions of LPR under their control. Each of these rulers were field commanders who had to a certain extent take commands from the political leadership of LPR and their Russian sponsors, but retained control only over a certain territory and had little cooperation with the neighboring commanders. ²²¹ In addition, such commanders acted as de facto rulers of the territory under their control. They were able to fill the vacuum of state power by functioning as local judges, police chiefs, tax collectors, requisition authorities and other social actors necessary for filling the vacuum. Such a pattern of governance was not present in the DPR.

As a result of this, each such brigade or battalion fought against the UAF in its own region, and rarely conducted joint operations against the UAF – such commanders rarely ventured out of their controlled territory.

The relationship between the military and central political sphere was thus best characterized as distrustful. How did this contribute to the War itself? Adding to the initial technological inferiority of both militias, this only aggravated the situation. The lack of coordination between the two republics and especially within the Luhansk People's Militia contributed to the successes of the early Ukrainian "anti-terrorist" offensives. Luhansk Militia was particularly weak and vulnerable. Until late August of 2014, they had only conceded territory. On 14th of August, Bolotov resigned and was replaced by Igor Plotnitsky, however, the immediate appointment of Plotnitsky did not significantly

improve the situation between the military and political leadership.

Novorossiya and the United Armed Forces of Novorossiya

In an attempt to seek further political and military unity, talk had emerged between the leaders of both DPR and LPR about the creation of Novorossiya, a confederation between the two entities. Among other things, this meant the incorporation of the two militias into a United Armed Forces of Novorossiya. Despite the announcement of the Novorossiya project on 22nd of May 2014, the armies under their command remained separate and regional, corresponding to respective territories under their control and the announcement of the creation of the United Forces of Novorossiya did not occur until after the first Minsk ceasefire was signed on 5th of September. Despite the first ceasefire being largely ignored, the elections of Ukrainian parliament took place, with the Donbass region excluded as they held their own elections. The Donetsk People's Militia and Luhansk People's Militia converged into the United Armies of Novorossiya and this military union persisted despite the idea of Novorossiya being abandoned in May next year.²²² As such, both DPR and LPR remain separate entities, described as terrorist groups by the Ukrainian government and as a result, despite the usage of the umbrella term United Armies of Novorossiya, the militias in question have also remained separate entities and largely regional with their own peculiarities.

The signing of the first Minsk agreement did nothing but further agitate the distrust between the militia and political leaders, as it had been signed at a time of a successful counter-offensive. The lack of political control provided that the ceasefire went largely ignored by the militias and the fighting continued – albeit on a smaller scale – after the signing of the first and the second Minsk agreements.

Structural implications

With the loose structure of DPR and LPR their initial capabilities to achieve bureaucratization of coercion were very limited. This was partly due to their expectation to be incorporated into Russia, as had happened in Crimea and thus they did not initially perceive the necessity to create any bureaucratic structure of the state, other than the establishment of a political-military leadership necessary for a facade of legitimacy for requesting incorporation into Russia. But this strategy collapsed and in the aftermath it

can clearly be observed that the bureaucratization of coercion has been cumulative, contributing to their following successful military campaigns and operations. I interpret the initial military failures during the summer of 2014 as a direct result of the lack of bureaucratization of coercion. Local warlords fought in their own dispersed regions with little bureaucratic order surfacing capable of governing the whole regions supposedly under DPR and LPR's control. In fact, both of the political leaderships had their own central militias stationed in Luhansk and Donetsk, and the lack of their bureaucratic coerciveness is well illustrated by the confusion between the military and political establishments in DPR, whose soldiers were not sure as to who was their leader – Girkin or Gubarev – and in LPR, where the local warlords who had acquired their own territories during the takeover of the region often defied the orders arriving from Luhansk. However, attempts to establish cumulative bureaucratization of coercion became evident once the central political powers had been consolidated in DPR and LPR after the appointment of Alexander Zakharchenko and Igor Plotnitsky respectively, following the simultaneous resignations of ethnic Russians Igor Girkin and Valery Bolotov on 14th of August. The following period saw the consolidation of political power as the elections in Donbass were used as a facade of legitimacy in justifying the following announcement of a mobilization in the territories of DPR and LPR²²³ under the umbrella of United Armed Forces of Novorossiia. The mobilization meant the establishment of a force of 100 000 conscript soldiers and increased bureaucratic order was clearly necessary for this. However, it has remained unclear as to what numbers the mobilization actually reached.

The United Armed Forces of Novorossiia, established on 16th September of 2014²²⁴ had been the first attempt at bureaucratization of coercion in the military sphere, however it had been so in name only. There was no unifying central leadership, and both the Donbass People's Militia and its Luhansk counterpart retained leadership pertaining to the structure under their control and despite this announcement, there was little cooperation between the two militias. I would thus argue that this union only had relevance in terms of its symbolic value, represented in its name. In addition, this was simply the union of militias, rather than introduction of a regular army. Therefore the rate and degree to which cumulative bureaucratization of coercion was achieved in DPR and LPR varied depending on the region. I will analyze what constituted these variant peculiarities in the following passages.

LPR faced the problem of decentralization from the very start of its proclamation. Again, as it was expected to be incorporated into Russia, this initial confusion is to be expected, however clarity did not fall upon Luhansk once the realization came that Russia would not follow suit. Instead, the local leaders – dispersed around the Luhansk Oblast – grew increasingly dissatisfied as time passed. The tension between the autonomous factions and LPR's central authorities grew even greater after the combat stopped on 9th December of 2014. The atamans had a number of problems with the central leadership, first of which was that they considered it illegitimate. Concurrently, they did not recognize the validity of the Minsk agreement and hence did not find it binding for them. Instead they called for seizing the rest of Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts from Ukraine to complete the Novorossiia project. In their indignation of the Luhansk regime they resisted any attempts of centralization within LPR. This severely undermined any attempts made at achieving centralized bureaucratization of coercion. In an attempt to achieve bureaucratic coercion, LPR political leadership announced the creation of a regular military through re-enlistment of the autonomous factions. The atamans insisted on preserving their formations and instead of being subordinated to the central authorities of LPR they called for cooperation with them.²²⁵ LPR's central leadership refused and established that those armed groups which did not join this central military force by 4th of April were declared illegal.²²⁶ Thus, while LPR had attempted to achieve coercion of the ataman factions at first by moderate means – in which the political leadership of LPR attempted to exert a certain level of control over the military formations through economic means by retaining control over the distribution of arms provided for the leadership for redistribution to its military formations – they soon resorted to more radical methods. Those resisting centralization were first simply asked to leave if they decide not to comply. One of the most prominent Don Cossack fighters in eastern Ukraine, nicknamed Babai, claimed in an interview to Komsomolskaya Pravda that

„They asked us to leave; they said: 'If you want to live, leave.' [...] Being there became very dangerous; they were driving out the Cossacks. [...] We were forced to leave.“^{227 228}

The latest method of centralization of control has been to simply assassinate the ataman leaders. One of the most prominent leaders Aleksei Mozgovoy was assassinated in May of 2015 and following his assassination, the remaining Don Cossack battalions in Eastern Ukraine were integrated into the Luhansk People's Republic Army,²²⁹ or returned to

Russia. The Cossacks merging with the People's Military provided the centrality necessary for cumulative bureaucratization of coercion.

DPR faced less problems in institutionalizing their military sphere. After the Donbass elections in October and the subsequent announcement of mobilization, the militant forces became united under the centralized command structure controlled by the Defense Minister of DPR, and all other militant groups that did not join this centralized structure were announced as illegitimate and ordered to surrender arms.²³⁰ As a result, the bureaucratization of coercion has been cumulative in both cases, with increasing bureaucratic control over the militant structures under DPR and LPR's command, ultimately reflected on increasing success on the battlefields, in comparison to the initial phases of the war.

Centrifugal ideologization

In the ideological department it is firstly important to identify the ideological positions of the counterparts of the war. Thus I will first examine the ideological views and the general problems with ideology in Ukraine. I will then proceed to examine the relevance of centrifugal ideologization for DPR and LPR and attempt to unveil whether they were able to achieve effective centrifugal ideologization and if yes, then through what means and to what a degree was this achieved. I will proceed by arguing for the crucial nature of Kremlin's information warfare when it comes first to the Crimean takeover and then the War in Donbass. I will argue that it had a crucial role in ensuring centrifugal ideologization of LRP and DPR, while simultaneously aiming to undermine the capacity of the Ukrainian state to achieve centrifugal ideologization. I will conclude this section by exploring how the Ukrainian state has responded to Kremlin's information warfare and how it has attempted to regain its initiative in enforcing effective centrifugal ideologization upon its soldiers and citizens.

Ideology in contemporary Ukraine

When examining the ideological landscape of Ukraine, one is bound to conclude that Ukraine is by no stretch of imagination an ideologically united state. The history of the territories of Ukraine is complex, as the Eastern and Western parts of the territory have seen different rulers, both eastern and western, and as a result, contemporary Ukraine has remained very divided in terms of ideology.

The Western part of Ukraine has retained its historical referability with Europe and the West and is to a large degree nationalist, however the southern and eastern part of Ukraine have strong affiliations with Russia and the culture and history of Russia. In fact opinion polls have determined that those living in eastern territories of Ukraine – such as Donbass – would often reject being called a Ukrainian citizen, but rather prefer the label "*Russian-speaking residents of Ukraine*" or simply "*residents of Donbass*" instead.²³¹ Ukrainian nationalism is most prevalent in Western Ukraine and additionally Kyiv. Centuries of Polish-Lithuanian and Austrian submission have clearly left its mark, as Western Ukrainians perceive Ukraine as an European state. This is an obvious sentiment, since majority of Western Ukraine has never been part of the Russian Empire, as opposed to the rest of Ukraine.

Even Ukrainian nationalism is not homogeneous. Denis Kiryukhin identifies three major narratives present under the term.²³² First of these narratives is based on the central idea of revival of Ukraine and its language's social role. Ukraine is perceived as a breakaway part Russia, but while Russia is perceived as the 'Other', it is not an enemy. The second narrative which has become to predominate, is essentially stressing that Ukraine was an Eastern European country enslaved by Russia, and that the culture, religion, and language of Ukraine were perceived as victims of a totalitarian regime. This narrative is guided by the opposition to Russia and identification with Europe, and its collective tragedy is used as basis for national integration and identity. The third narrative which according to Kiryukhin appeared during the 2000's is the most radical, one that focuses on fighting the against the enemy. This radical wing opposes both post-modernism and democracy and „reflects the social problems and social struggles in terms of nationalist ideology, hence the cult of national heroes and the idea of ethnocracy“.²³³

As a result, the Ukrainian society is to be seen as historically divided between Western and Eastern Ukraine.²³⁴ The divisions have prevailed up until modern day and

the Euromaidan and anti-Maidan protests were a clear expression of the continuation of this division in Ukrainian thought, history and society. This has had a profound effect on the political life since the 1990's and manifested itself in the Orange Revolution of 2004, as well as in the Euromaidan protests of 2014 and ultimately the current situation in Ukraine. Competing ideological views are in this context reflected by domestic and foreign policy conducted by the president and the government in power. Ukraine has traditionally avoided giving out unequivocal signals about how it sees itself in the world.²³⁵ This was especially true during the presidency of Kuchma, under whom the first nationalist narrative was present. However, the prevailing Ukrainian nationalist position reflected itself in Ukrainian foreign and defense policy after the Orange Revolution and was clearly pro-European. Nevertheless, Ukrainian Russian community along with a substantial support from ethnic Ukrainians does not share the nationalist vision and sees Russia and Ukraine strongly linked and interconnected by their common history. Both the Euromaidan protests and the Orange Revolution saw main support from Western Ukraine in opposition to the pro-Russian politicians originating and drawing their support mostly from Eastern Ukraine.

While in 2004, the revolution led to the empowerment of Western-minded Yushchenko, both the domestic and foreign policy shifted from a previous unambiguous stance toward increasing cooperation with the West, particularly with EU and NATO. This became coupled with an increased diplomatic and economic pressure applied by the Kremlin. Ukrainian economy, being largely dependent on Russia was the main means of exerting such pressure and Yushchenko found himself replaced by Donetsk-oriented pro-Russian Yanukovich in 2010. Yanukovich however found himself in a typical Ukrainian political conundrum. While there was growing popular support for further assimilation with the West in Western Ukraine, such a support correlated with increased hostility against such a development in Eastern Ukraine, as well as saw increased pressure from the Kremlin against such an assimilation. Faced with a choice, Yanukovich decided to respect the latter in late 2014 and the government suspended preparations for the signing of the European Association Agreement. Starting from 23rd November 2013, this triggered protests first in Kyiv and later in other Western Ukrainian cities. These protests were strongest in Western and Central Ukraine with Kyiv and Lviv being the main hubs of protest, while anti-Maidan protests became a commonplace in Eastern and Southern

Ukraine, and the two movements began to collide. It is perhaps interesting a comparison that both the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Euromaidan protests of 2014 saw Yanukovich as the main antagonist, with the only difference that due to the latter, he was forced to flee the country. In an attempt to end the protests, Yanukovich eventually signed an agreement accepting the reversal of constitution to its 2004 form, amnesty for protesters arrested since 17th February, new electoral laws and launching an investigation into government violence conducted by the opposition government and the Council of Europe, among other things. However this did not save him, as the opposition continued to push for his resignation, and when Yanukovich disappeared, an emergency session was called in the parliament, during which they hastily formed a new coalition, passed a bill regarding the impeachment of Yanukovich and appointed a new interim president. The removal of the pro-Russian Yanukovich and an appointment of a nationalist pro-European Turchynov as interim president eventually triggered Russian intervention. It is hence clear that the importance of the collision of Western and Eastern ideologies is a central theme of Ukrainian politics.

Such an analysis was necessary in order to understand that achieving effective centrifugal ideologization in the context of Ukraine as a unitary state is extremely difficult and that the political leadership has struggled in this context throughout the history of independent Ukraine. The lack of an ideology which would be uniform for the whole of Ukraine has provided that the political leaders constantly find themselves in a deadlock whereby endorsing either eastern or western Ukrainian views too significantly would end up undermining their own political power. This was clearly the case with Yushchenko, who stood for often radical Ukrainian nationalism, as he attempted to posthumously award „Hero of Ukraine“ award to the historically controversial Stepan Bandera²³⁶ or declared in 2007 that he wants to establish a new law criminalizing Holodomor²³⁷ denial. His pro-western and anti-Donbass views that granted him support during the Orange Revolution of 2004 ultimately led to an increasing isolation throughout his presidency. His support rates plummeted in the years following the revolution and never recovered to previous levels.²³⁸ His pro-Western presidency saw increased tension with Russia, as gas-related arguments between Gazprom and Ukraine led Gazprom to halt its gas supply to Ukraine, a decision which also had a direct effect on Europe, as the main transit pipeline

from Russia to Europe ran through Ukraine. In the next elections strongly pro-European Yushchenko faded away with a mere 5% of the vote. He was replaced by a strongly pro-Russian Yanukovich originating from Donbass, whose politics were conducted on the other end of the spectrum: with emphasis on further cooperation with Russia and lesser with Europe and the West. Ultimately, the Euromaidan protests in Western and Central Ukraine saw him overthrown. The clear resistance of eastern Ukrainians to this development provided that the War in Donbass became possible and it is exactly these ideological differences which facilitated the narratives used for centrifugal ideologization during the War in Donbass. Consequently, the fighting power of the Ukrainian state has been ideologically crippled from the very start.

Centrifugal ideologization of DPR and LPR

In order to facilitate large scale successful warfare, the maintenance of ideological narratives is crucial. In the initial stages after their proclamation, both DPR and LPR depended to a large degree on Russian ideological narratives perpetrated by the Russian state media. There was no perceived need to create systems enforcing centrifugal ideologization, as they expected to be incorporated into the Russian Federation. As Girkin stated, they did not initially have any plans for state-building for this very reason. However, everything changed with the realization that Kremlin is not planning to incorporate the Donbass area into the Russian Federation.

While the Russian state media has remained prevalent as the main source of information for Donbass residents, the self-proclaimed republics have opened their own sources of information. In an attempt to create centrifugal ideologization both DPR and LPR have established censorship, with no Ukrainian newspapers or publications available not on paper form nor in the Internet, though means to bypass the Internet censorship are still possible. The main paper newspapers sold in DPR include Russian „Komsomolskaya Pravda“ and DPR's newspaper „Donetsk Republic“ and „Novorossiia“.^{239 240}

In addition, the English-language news outlet Novorossiia Today has been established. While the Russian state media emphasizes a pro-Russian stance with rebels used as a means to achieve this end, Novorossiia Today is mainly used by the rebels as a means of spreading typical war propaganda with articles such as „Our Great Leader's Message To The Kiev Junta Representatives“²⁴¹, „Kiev Junta Forces Have Redeployed 277

Tanks And Heavy Artillery In Front Lines²⁴², or „War Crimes! Nazi Elements From Kiev Junta Not Allowing Work On Power Lines“²⁴³ openly attempting to enforce a narrative under which they are fighting a noble war in defense of the Donetsk Oblast territories that they consider the border of their state²⁴⁴ against the aggression from Kiev's Junta Nazis and fascists. Novorossiya Today is evidently a pro-rebel news outlet, publishing stories mainly from DPR and using its leadership as the main sources.²⁴⁵ However, it is not a publication aimed at the DPR's domestic population, as Ukraine in general was recorded to have a rather low English proficiency, one of the lowest in Europe.²⁴⁶ It is thus primarily aimed at the international community. However, I would argue that by adopting a linguistic rhetoric whereby strict offensive labeling and demonization of the Ukrainian state authorities is employed as the main means of conveying a message, the publication will not adequately deliver its messages as the majority of the foreign English-speaking audience does not identify with such terms. As such, it suffers from its own ideology which might have an appeal in the context of the ongoing war on its domestic population for recruitment purposes, but in general, fails on the international scene. The use of such a rhetoric might only prove to be appealing for potential foreign fighters who ponder over joining the forces of Novorossiya in fighting the Ukrainian state. There are already numerous foreign volunteer fighters among the ranks of rebels, including from France, Spain, Serbia and a number of other countries.²⁴⁷ Maintenance of such a narratives in English is thus strictly relevant to the military sphere in order to attract and achieve centrifugal ideologization on sympathetic foreign fighters in their ranks.

Despite the establishment of their own media outlets, the popular opinions about the future of DPR vary within their population and in the context of only 2% of the population being satisfied with the powers in their region²⁴⁸ different scenarios are supported. 35% of the respondents to the survey wish the separation of Donbass from Ukraine, while 58% of the respondents would like Donbass to remain part of Ukraine, whether as an autonomous region or as a part of federative Ukraine.²⁴⁹

Another substantial problem with achieving centrifugal ideologization is that DPR lacks a certain nationalist identity to enforce it in nationalist terms. The lack of Ukrainian nationalism is supported by the aforementioned survey which determined that in the south-east of Ukraine (Luhansk excluded) only 38% of the respondents believed that they are first of all Ukrainian citizens, while 35% identified themselves as Donbass citizens and

10% as residents of their cities. However there is no history of this region that can be separated from Russian history and culture, and with Kremlin having abandoned any plans to incorporate this territory, identity of Donbass remains an identification with a territory without a clearly evident historic substance. As such, only a degree of centrifugal ideologization seems to be achieved by the political-military leadership who has identified its ideology in terms of exclusion from Ukraine and its opposition to the „Nazi Kiev Junta“ and its pro-Russian affiliations. This narrative is maintained by the Russian state media readily available in the region, and the media outlets established within DPR.

I would thus further argue that most of the centrifugal ideologization is a result of the Russian state media and its prevalence in the region. As such, it is the institutional framework set up by the Kremlin in order to support its media agencies and the global reach of their message that ensures the centrifugal ideologization of the region of Donbass. Would Russian state media withdraw their support for the self-proclaimed republics and obtain a neutral or negative narrative with regard to the rebels, it is likely that the centrifugal ideologization of the region would suffer very greatly, especially because the new media of the region is still relatively underdeveloped, and the residents of the region have their own traditional patterns of Russian-media consumption which might prove difficult to shift. Thus I believe that Kremlin possesses a non-military toolkit necessary to end the fighting in Ukraine in quick fashion, as its state-run media institutions and their ideological support for the rebels is crucial for their ideological survival. But the very fact Kremlin has chosen not to do so, predicts that the fight in Eastern Ukraine will persist as long as Kremlin's objectives are fulfilled. And since they are not interested in incorporating the region into Russia, nor in allowing the Ukrainians to militarily advance, the objective is likely federalized Ukraine and protraction the name of the game.

I will follow up this analysis by examining how Russian military theory and the practice of information warfare has taken advantage of the discussed Ukrainian ideological divide, followed by an account of how the Ukrainian state has responded in order to achieve effective centrifugal ideologization.

Russian information warfare

*"If you ask an ordinary Russian if we are in a war with Ukraine, he won't understand it. In his or her mind we are liberating our Ukrainian brothers from the Nazi regime in Kiev installed by Americans. We are on a sacred mission. We are a great nation."*²⁵⁰

—President of Free Russia association, Natalia Arno.

The unrest in Kyiv and the confusion related to the interim government were a perfect ground for agitating the populations of Crimea, Eastern Ukraine and Russia in order to generate fear. And since most of the population of Crimea and eastern Ukraine mainly rely on TV and the web – especially that financed by Russia – for information,²⁵¹ it is necessary to examine the information put out by these channels. Since the majority of media is state-run in Russia, the content of such media is to be considered a weapon, as in line with official military doctrine of Russia, as discussed in the following section.

in theory

Information and psychological warfare conducted throughout the conflict are the key to understanding how the geopolitical uncertainty regarding Ukraine caused by the Euromaidan protests was exploited by the Kremlin. To understand this, a Russian view of information warfare is introduced. This subject was thoroughly examined by Ulrik Franke, a senior researcher at the Swedish Institute of Computer Science who focuses his research among other things on cyber security. In his "War by non-military means: Understanding Russian Information Warfare," he analyzed Russian literature and official documents with regard to their interpretation of information warfare.

Franke believes that for the Kremlin, information warfare is a highly politicized and a strategic matter which demands coordination from various government agencies. The "*Strategy for the national security of the Russian Federation up to 2020*", an official Russian doctrine published in 2009, sets the cornerstones of the theory of information warfare. Information in this context is considered a tool to enhance national security.²⁵² This strategy also considers the culture and history a matter of national security that ought to be dealt with not only within Russia through the creation of a systematic and patriotic education of Russian citizens, but also abroad via the creation of a common information and telecommunications environment for the Commonwealth of Independent States and

its neighboring regions.²⁵³

In military theory and in terms of the Ministry of Defense, information warfare is defined as the *"use of information and communication technologies for military-political purposes in order to act, against international law, against the sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity of states and to threaten international peace, security, and global and regional stability."*²⁵⁴ It is also exclusively pointed out how these ends are to be achieved. It is to be done through the *"combined use of military force and political, economic, information, and other non-military means that are realized by extensive use of the protest potential of the population and special forces."*²⁵⁵

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has identified the threats within the informational sphere with the potential to disrupt international peace and stability, which among others include *"actions in the information space aimed at undermining the political, economic, and social system of another government, and psychological campaigns carried out against the population of a State with the intent of destabilizing society,"*²⁵⁶ *"the use of an information infrastructure to disseminate information intended to inflame national, ethnic, or religious conflict, racist and xenophobic written materials, images or any other type of presenting ideas or theories that promote, enable, or incite hatred, discrimination, or violence against any individual or group, if the supporting reasons are based on race, skin colour, national or ethnic origin, or religion;"*²⁵⁷

While Franke's examination of the Russian official documents paints a generally defensive picture of the literature, he notes a lot can be read between the lines.²⁵⁸ After his examination of Russian military literature related to the subject – also examined to a degree in the earlier parts of this thesis²⁵⁹ ²⁶⁰ – Franke finds it startling that Gerasimov as the chief of general staff acknowledges that non-military means outweigh military means four-to-one, yet does not attempt to remedy this by reinforcing the position of the military.

Perhaps one of the most important conclusions that Franke drew out of his observations was that since most theorists perceive information warfare as something continuous with no regard for the distinction of whether it is conducted during war or times of peace, it is thus evident that we are at the receiving end of Russian information warfare at this moment and time.²⁶¹ In addition, such a perception of information warfare can clearly be linked to McCuen's population battlegrounds, where such information and

psychological warfare are crucial in facilitating and maintaining popular support on the domestic, indigenous and international populations. In terms of Malešević and centrifugal ideologization, it is clear that the Russian state apparatus is the source that radiates ideology via state-funded domestic and international media agencies such as RT.

in Crimea

With this framework in mind, we can examine the information passed on by the Russian media with regard to the Ukrainian crisis. The media in Russia has gone through extraordinary lengths to accompany, legitimize, and support Russian intervention in Ukraine: manipulating with the opinions of the indigenous population of Crimea, of the Russian home public and the international community, the last of which Russian state media could infest a significantly lower degree of influence over.

It can be observed that the biased media coverage was strictly relevant and necessary for the successful annexation of Crimea, as the vast majority of the peninsula lives in the information zone of the Kremlin and according to the census of 2001 60% of the population are ethnic Russians, while an even larger percentage are Russian-speaking. The media and propaganda were also important tools for legitimizing Russian intervention to its domestic population. The information passed on by the state is likely to be commonly accepted as truthful in the target audience in Russia. A Gallup survey published in July 2014 revealed that Russians rely heavily on their state media and lack any substantial trust for any other type of media when it comes to finding information about the events in Ukraine.²⁶² Thus it is reasonable to believe that these claims are often trusted despite their lack of validity, simply because the sources are widely recognized as trustworthy. As British historian Timothy Garthorn Ash described it, Putin *"used television to impose his own narrative of a socially conservative, proud Russia threatened by fascists in Kiev, an expansionist NATO and a decadent EU."*²⁶³ and Pomerantsev added that *"The Kremlin has reinvented the conflict in Ukraine as a genocide against the Russians. People believe that the fascists are coming to get them, because that's what they have seen on TV, or that the CIA is behind massacres in Ukraine."*²⁶⁴

According to Franke, Russian actions in Crimea followed the officially introduced characteristics of information warfare, whereby it directly conformed to the three following aspects:

- The early use of information warfare to achieve political goals without using military force, and its later use to create a positive reaction within the international community to the use of military force
- to undermine political, economic and social systems, to destabilize a society and a state by massive psychological influence on the population, and also putting pressure on a state to make decisions that are in the interest of the opponent.
- Mass media use by foreign special services, operating on the territory of the Russian Federation, to decrease the defense capabilities of the country and the security of the state, and the spreading of disinformation.²⁶⁵

Firstly, such media went about creating a just cause for the annexation of Crimea. The goal of the successful operation in Crimea was firstly diminishing the Ukrainian will to resist, and the informational environment played a key role here. Achieving control over the infrastructure of transmission in Crimea was essential. This is why the “little green men” first established control over such infrastructure, including TV and radio stations along with control over mobile phone operators.²⁶⁶ A specific narrative was created to counter the Ukrainian narrative. The content of the subsequently imposed information was uniform. Oleksander Sherba identified three ideological views that the Russian media fed its users: (1) Ukraine is a failed state; (2) accusing anyone who disagrees with the Kremlin propaganda as 'fascist'; (3) Russia is legitimately trying to regain the territories of its former historical empire.²⁶⁷ All of this was accompanied with the image that injustice had been inflicted upon the Russian ethnic minority in Ukraine and among other things that the Crimean peninsula is historically Russian, given away only as a result of a historical mistake of Khrushchev in the fifties when this transfer had little significance.

The attempt to dehumanize the Ukrainian state and their actions was clear from the off. Both the Euromaidan movement and the Ukrainian government were demonized through the fabrication of official material, such as the supposedly leaked official e-mails which suggested that the nationalist leaders were puppets of the West.²⁶⁸ Additional Fabricated stories mainly concerned pogroms which were allegedly being conducted by the Ukrainian government officials against the Jews as well as the ethnic Russians,²⁶⁹ despite the fact that the local communities in question denied that any of such atrocities

ever took place.²⁷⁰ The Jewish community even went so far as to send an open letter to Putin to complain about the seemingly ridiculous claims that the Russian media had made about the alleged crimes in Eastern Ukraine.²⁷¹

However, where the Russian information warfare seems to have failed is the international scene. The main media perpetrator of the Russian views internationally have been Russia Today (RT) and The Voice of Russia, the latter of which became Sputnik news in late 2014. Both have seen increased funding from Russia and grown their global reach in the years preceding the Ukrainian crisis. While the lack of support from the West is perhaps to be expected in these circumstances, in terms of the CIS and the neighboring states a certain degree of success was certainly expected. However, Russia seems to have to a large degree failed to convince “the near abroad” of the legality of its actions. Even the nearby authoritarian leaders such as Lukashenko remained hesitant in supporting Kremlin's actions in Ukraine. The support from the international community has remained low and has led to sanctions and international isolation of Russia. However, the measures taken by the Kremlin within Russia, Ukraine, and the international community are compatible with the concept of information warfare under the context of Hybrid Warfare.

in Donbass

Media remained a mouthpiece of the Kremlin all throughout the war in Donbass as well. However, the tone taken there was that of typical wartime propaganda. This type of propaganda always has one goal: to facilitate warfare. There are various ways of doing so, but generally speaking it is a systematic effort to dehumanize the enemy and create strong negative emotions and hatred toward a supposed enemy. Wartime propaganda is first and foremost about providing a narrative in which one is fighting for a just cause. A large degree of the propaganda in wars – especially that used in the First and the Second World Wars – aimed to condition the target audience to feel as if the enemy had inflicted injustice toward them, or their nationality, which would henceforth condition them to believe in their cause as just. Moreover, rationalizing the injustice inflicted by the enemy was more often than not done by “type-casting”: creating an image of a vicious, cruel, or animal-like nature of the enemy. This can be observed in how the Allies depicted the Japanese during the Second World War. They were depicted as extremely cruel. Fussell

mentions a rumor of a mother who received a letter from a Japanese POW camp. The prisoner writes that he is okay and tells not to worry about him. Then he casually mentions that she might want to soak off the stamp from the envelope to give it to a friend who is a stamp collector. After doing so, the mother finds written under the stamp „*they have cut off my tongue.*“²⁷² The rumor caught on as it was seen as nothing special given the image of cruelty bestowed upon the Japanese, even though the letters from captured soldiers did not bear postage stamps. Once a large number of similar stories starts to circulate, they become accepted as truthful – the method at work here is proof by repeated assertion.

In general terms, such propaganda and rumors all serve to create an emotional response ultimately generating an image in the mind that is false but pertains to the goals of war and decreases the likeliness of soldiers exposed to such propaganda to hesitate when facing the enemy. In such a context, whether these stories are fictional or true becomes irrelevant. It is all about sending a message.

Such propaganda was common to Russian state-run media throughout the War in Donbass. Several examples of this included a report in late September of 2014, when claims were made about the finding of unmarked graves of hundreds of civilians executed by the Ukrainian army and that this had been verified by the OSCE monitors, despite the fact that OSCE debunked such claims.²⁷³ Such stories often ran with the footage from the MH17 crash site rolling on the background as proof. Other top stories included a three-year-old boy crucified by the UAF in front of her mother²⁷⁴ and a continuous general claim about pogroms directed at churches and synagogues in Eastern and Southern Ukraine, supposedly resulting in a humanitarian catastrophe and anarchy. The Ukrainian government was ruthlessly demonized in the process. The prominent stories used for this end include among others, one claiming that Ukrainian PM Arseniy Yatsenyuk took part of Chechen war and tortured and executed Russians in 1995,²⁷⁵ while in reality he was a law student in Ukraine at the time; or that according to Lavrov the Ukrainian government had adopted a law of glorification of the Nazis,²⁷⁶ while the law in question explicitly prohibits both Communist and Nazi symbolism and declares them both criminal and totalitarian.²⁷⁷ All of this conforms to a pattern of extensive information warfare aimed to facilitate fighting in Eastern Ukraine.

Centrifugal ideologization of Ukraine

The application of the strategies of information warfare by the Kremlin have largely undermined the credibility of Ukrainian state authorities within the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine. The following chapter will discuss several actions of the leadership of Ukraine in its attempts to regain the initiative in creating centrifugal ideologization. The Ukrainian state has fought its information war in the form of a battle of narratives thereby emphasizing her own narrative of the conflict, under which Ukrainians are fighting ruthless uneducated terrorists fundamentally dependent on Russia.

The Ukrainian authorities have also devised a very specific tool to counter information warfare and its narratives: Ministry of Information Policy. The officially introduced aim of this governmental institution established on 14th January of 2014 is to oversee the information policy in Ukraine and to stop the spreading of biased information about Ukraine.²⁷⁸ The creation of such an institution was justified by an attempt to directly counter the Russian informational campaign within Ukraine.²⁷⁹ Idea of such an institution is far from novel. Ministry of Information was already established by the United Kingdom in the aftermath of the First and during the Second World War, with the prime responsibility of publicity and propaganda²⁸⁰ and it can be understood in terms of common war-time institution building and that it is primarily an institution appearing during the times of war responsible for wartime propaganda. However, I would argue that the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine is an institutional manifestation of centrifugal ideologization. While it does not directly enforce violence, it provides that a certain ideological narrative is maintained, necessary for the social coercion of the soldiers sent to Eastern Ukraine to fight those who just about a year ago were considered common citizens of Ukraine. Rather than providing a unified narrative pertaining to all of Ukrainians, the state has formulated a narrative dominated by the ideology of the Ukrainian nationalist position, and have provided that this narrative become institutionally supported by the state apparatus.

Unsurprisingly, the establishment of this institution has received widespread international criticism. It has been compared to the Orwellian Ministry of Truth and the announcement of the ministry sprouted protests from various Ukrainian journalists.²⁸¹ It has been argued that it can be a basis for the establishment of censorship. But very much like in Russia, the Ukrainian media is known to be harassed and in fact has never been

recognized as “free” by Freedom House.²⁸² While the internet has remained relatively free in Ukraine, the media is still largely controlled by the central government. In this context the establishment of the Ministry of Information Policy should not strike one as very surprising. The Ukrainian government sees it as the guard of its strategic and national interests as it conducts operations against Russia. In addition, the Ministry of Information Policy called upon Ukrainians to join the “information forces” to counter Russia, the pro-Russian media and counter the *troll-army* of Russia.²⁸³ This provides for an interesting debate about the correlation between real public opinion and the increasing amount of paid troll commentators. However, what it clearly demonstrates is that warfare will not leave our basic developing technologies untouched and information warfare as such has the potential to become all-encompassing.

In order to achieve effective centrifugal ideologization, Ukrainian government has decided battle the Russian narratives and for achieving this end, most of the prominent Russian cable networks have found themselves banned in Ukraine. In addition Poroshenko introduced a ban on nearly 400 international journalists and 90 legal entities citing “security threats” or “promoting terrorism” in September 2015. The list was mainly comprised of Russian state channels and their reporters and correspondents, however also featured international figures such as prominent BBC reporters, albeit some of them found the ban lifted some days later.^{284 285}

While the utility of such institutions as the Ministry of Information Policy has traditionally been limited to wartime practices, in Ukraine – recognizing that the informational campaign of the Kremlin is one of continuous nature with no regard to war or peace – the Ukrainian government is prone to consider this institution vital in preserving its national interests and it is thus likely to endure and outlive the War in Donbass.

Concluding remarks

The Ukrainian Crisis was a conflict which could have been predicted years in advance, as already during Yushchenko's pro-Western presidency, the Kremlin had grown increasingly concerned with the possibility of potential Georgian and Ukrainian NATO membership. Warning signals given out in April 2008 were not to be ignored, as Georgia found itself in

war with Russia a mere 4 months after. Russian officials and generals who had vowed to protect their interests in the region by both military and non-military means – corresponding to the theories of warfare adopted during the Russo-Georgian war in 2008 and perfected by theorists like Chekinov, Bodganov and general Gerasimov – demonstrated that their warnings had substance.

The War in Donbass has truly been a „hybrid“ war in the sense of having exhibited a mixture of phenomena both from the field of Western Hybrid Warfare, as well as Russian New-Generation Warfare. To understand these peculiarities, I thus adopted the theoretical framework of Malešević to examine the conflict and came to several interesting conclusions.

My first argument with regard to cumulative bureaucratization of coercion was that it was the initial lack of DPR's and LPR's ability to achieve centralized political and military control over the territory which translated itself into military failures against the Ukrainian governmental forces. However, observing the organizational level of the rebels over time, it became clear that once their leadership began to accept that an incorporation of these territories into the Russian Federation will not materialize, the degree of social and military organization started to rise and was thus of a cumulative nature. Ultimately I consider that the cumulative nature of bureaucratization of coercion was one of the crucial elements allowing the rebels to effectively counter the Ukrainian governmental forces. The attempts to establish a more centralized army through general mobilization and fighting the elements within LPR aiming to resist centralism are clear manifestations of this process.

My argument with regard to centrifugal ideologization was that there were two main reasons as to why achieving effective centrifugal ideologization within Ukraine was problematic. Firstly it was due to the inherent ideological and historical divisions within Ukraine, which the Ukrainian nationalism has translated into the implicit conflict between pro-western and pro-Russian narratives. Ukrainian nationalism is inherently conflicted by this division and the sense of nationalism has been relatively weak. Secondly I argued that achieving centrifugal ideologization was additionally problematic due to the Russian information warfare which played its strategy on exploiting and deepening this division. Thus I argue that the information warfare campaign need be understood in the framework of Hybrid Warfare, as a distinct strategy aimed at undermining the

effectiveness of Ukrainian state power and its ability to conduct effective centrifugal ideologization. As such, I would argue that most of the ideologically driven labels employed in wartime propaganda – such as 'fascist' or 'illegitimate' – are not a manifestation of some common Russian sentiment of hatred toward the Ukrainians, but the explicit strategy of information warfare conducted in the context of Hybrid Warfare. In a way, it is similar to Hezbollah's information warfare strategy employed during the Second Lebanon War, where they successfully imposed a civilian-victim narrative. In both cases, the strategy was to emphasize a certain pattern that has emerged and present it as something widespread or commonplace. Such demonization of the enemy is a common theme of wartime propaganda and should be considered as such, rather than take these stereotypes which have been amplified by contemporary social media and other means, as reflective of socially majorative reality.

Additionally, I found that the problems LPR and DPR encountered in achieving centrifugal ideologization were due to similar divisions, as secessionism lacked a majorative support and indeed a large degree of the residents of Donbass have become to prefer larger autonomy within the state of Ukraine as the most desirable future of the region.²⁸⁶ I thus argued that the initial lack of effective centrifugal ideologization and inadequate bureaucratization of coercion in the regions of LPR and DPR provided that the initial engagements with the Ukrainian governmental forces proved fruitless. It was only after a more substantial military aid received from Russia and the cumulative bureaucratization of DPR' and LPR's militias, were they able to effectively battle an ill-for battle UAF and the governmental forces.

I adopted the framework of Malešević in order to analyze the Ukrainian conflict from a sociological, rather than a geopolitical perspective and my findings reflected the explanatory power of his concepts. I believe that the theoretical framework introduced by Malešević is a powerful tool for social analysis of contemporary conflicts, as it offers a great conceptual understanding when it comes to examining the social structures and importance of centrifugal ideologization in affecting the course of war outside of typical analytical frameworks adopted for analyzing war, where success can be measured with victories in battles and frontal engagements, further analyzed in terms of lives lost or territory gained or seceded. The theoretical framework of Malešević allows to penetrate further and analyze the underlying social components influencing the results of the

modern and contemporary battlefields.

Reflection on the analysis

I will conclude the comparative analysis with comparing my findings with regards to the two wars. While both the Second Lebanon War and the Russian involvement in Ukraine have been described as forms of Hybrid Warfare and share many similarities, significant differences could be observed between them. Both hybrid conflicts saw the application of information warfare as integral to the conflict, however the goals which the information warfare sought to accomplish were of a different nature. Hezbollah utilized information warfare seeking to end the conflict in the region by playing on the narratives of disproportionality and civilian casualties. The goal of such an information campaign was to undermine the legitimacy of the Israeli attack and influence diplomacy of Israeli allies to coerce Israel into ending the conflict. However, the Crimean crisis saw the employment of information warfare with the goal to undermine the Ukrainian state authorities and their credibility in the indigenous populations of Crimea and Donbass, with a clear strategic aim to create a positive environment necessary for the conduct an effective takeover of the territory.

The information warfare campaign conducted by Kremlin-backed media also served to undermine the centrifugal ideologization of the Ukrainian forces. With its media able to penetrate Ukrainian media scene rather effectively, this strategy worked effectively until the Ukrainian government sought to establish censorship and ban such media outlets and access to them within Ukraine.

In terms of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion, there were essential differences when it comes to comparing Hezbollah and the insurgents of Eastern Ukraine backed by the Kremlin. Hezbollah had a complex bureaucratic structure facilitating fighting and its military wing very effectively and it was their organizational might which provided that they be able to face off one of the most modern conventional armies of the region. The structural nature of Hezbollah was able to both provide ideological justifications for warfare, as well as ideologically coerce its soldiers to fight for its objectives. However, the level of bureaucratization of coercion was low in the case of the

rebels of Eastern Ukraine. As I argued previously, there was no initial need to conduct effective bureaucratization of coercion, as the original goal had been to be incorporated into the Russian Federation. Ukraine would likely not have responded by attempting to regain Eastern Ukraine, would the Kremlin indeed have incorporated DPR and LPR into the Russian Federation.

It was only in the aftermath of the realization that incorporation is not going to occur, did the rebels attempt to achieve bureaucratization of coercion. In comparison with Hezbollah, the level of bureaucratization of coercion they have been able to achieve is rather low. Hezbollah structure had been fomented over decades, while DPR and LPR have only had about a year and a half. However, several factors pertaining to the Ukrainian army, its ill-for-battle state and structure, and the fact that the rebels receive strong support from Russia in terms of economy and military „irregulars“ have aided them to conduct effective warfare against a weak conventional Ukrainian army.

In terms of centrifugal ideologization it has to be noted that while ideologies played a central role in both conflicts, they differed greatly in terms of their nature. Hezbollah made use of a religious ideology which provided direct legitimacy for Hezbollah and its „defensive jihad“, while Russian-backed separatists in Eastern Ukraine had to rely on a complex secular ideology which necessitates the justification of killing surpassing the mere dogmatic facade of a religion. The weakness of the ideological scene of Ukraine and the lack of a strong national identity were largely preconditions for the whole conflict. The lack of effective centrifugal ideologization in the whole of Ukraine was clear from the fact that Yanukovich was barely able to summon military forces to the streets during the Euromaidan protests, as a large amount of the force available was sympathetic with the movement. However, as this was realized the government established what I argued to be a manifestation of centrifugal ideologization: the Ministry of Information Policy.

This led me to another substantial reflection: the growing institutionalization of centrifugal ideologization. The attempts to achieve effective centrifugal ideologization have resulted in increasing institutional manifestations of the concept, the primary example of which is the establishment of the Ministry of Information Policy in Ukraine. I believe that it is the increasing relevance of ideology and ideologization of one's troops which has necessitated the direct institutionalization of centrifugal ideologization. Such

institutions do not directly perpetuate violence, but nurture particular ideological narratives under which violence and war can become justified. This could be observed clearly during the Second Lebanon War as well as the conflict in Ukraine. Thus, as centrifugal ideologization has become increasingly relevant over the last centuries it is likely that such institutionalization continues and institutions such as the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine can potentially become commonplace in the future societies perpetuating warfare.

Additionally I argued that the centrifugal ideologization of the rebels has to a large degree depended on the Kremlin and its controlled media. The importance of the Russian media can not be underestimated in its ability to conduct centrifugal ideologization in LPR and DPR. This can be further illustrated with the example of the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17. The rebels of Eastern Ukraine found themselves under scrutiny of the international community, as a result of the catastrophe. Accepting blame would result in a direct blow on the credibility of its military forces and thus gravely undermine centrifugal ideologization of the rebels. The downing of MH-17 has been a source of controversy and ground for battle between ideological narratives, with the representatives of the rebel forces finding themselves as the alleged downers of the plane. These allegations struck a substantial blow on the already negative image of LPR and DPR in the West and provided that the Western media coverage adopted a fairly negative image of them. Nicu Popescu argued, that while the UAF's assault on rebel areas with heavy weaponry – as opposed to surgical urban warfare – caused a large number of civilian casualties, and would it not have been for the downing of MH-17, the international community would likely have been more focused on the conduct of war by Kyiv.²⁸⁷ Thus, despite the fact that Ukrainian governmental forces caused civilian suffering in Eastern Ukraine, it did not penetrate the western media on a large scale, as the rebels lacked informational strategies similar to Hezbollah in 2006 – they lacked centrifugal ideologization to conduct such operations. While Hezbollah was able to turn the international media against Israel, by informational strategies involving disproportionality and civilian-victim narratives, the rebels in Eastern Ukraine found themselves compromised due to their alleged downing of MH-17 and their structures have been unable to shift public opinion held abroad. Neither DPR nor LPR were able to sow doubt on the allegations against them on the international scene. Instead, the role of defending

the rebels has fallen on the Russian state media. Such media became very active in discrediting the allegations against the rebels by the continuous use of disinformation. Such media coverage attempted to undermine the allegations by proposing a number of conspiracy scenarios – all of which suggested blame on Ukraine or the West – such as that the plane was downed by a Ukrainian SU-25 fighter jet,^{288 289 290} or that it was brought down by an on board bomb planted by the CIA,²⁹¹ or that the Ukrainian government had used a BUK missile system to down the plane.^{292 293} In addition, Igor Girkin had initially suspected a theory involving the plane taking off with already dead people on board.²⁹⁴ While all of these theories have become discredited and have largely been unable to influence international opinion in any meaningful way, the strategy of airing numerous conspiracy theories was primarily aimed at the audiences of Russia and the rebel areas dependent on Russian media – only 5% of the Russians surveyed blamed LPR or DPR, while 82% blamed Kyiv for the accident.²⁹⁵ Such public opinion polls suggest that media had a central role in providing centrifugal ideologization for the potential “volunteers” joining the DPR and LPR as well as for those already in the area. Increased centrifugal ideologization and bureaucratization of coercion are among the main reasons I consider that the forces of DPR and LPR have subsequently been able to effectively battle off the Ukrainian governmental forces.

Additionally I would like to remark that both of the conflicts reflected not only the clever use of tactics and relevance of social organizations and ideological narratives, but also the fact that Hybrid Warfare is a result of extensive understanding and exploitation of the adversary's weaknesses. In both cases, the hybrid adversaries constructed their strategies based on the weaknesses of their opponent as opposed to their own strengths, be that the perceived IDF's inability to suffer continuous losses, or the exploitation of the deep ideological divide within Ukraine: both strategies exclusively aimed to exploit the perceived enemy's weaknesses. Subsequently, one should not seek the reasons of one's defeat only in the use of innovative technologies or employment of novel tactical formations by the adversary, but rather attempt to understand their own weaknesses and attempt to remedy them accordingly. It is much easier to see the reasons for defeat in the superior conduct of the enemy than recognizing one's own weaknesses potentially contributing greatly to such a debacle.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTEMPORARY DEFINITIONS

Malešević argued that there is a substantial relationship between society and warfare. He believes that warfare was not only influenced by society, but could also potentially cause change in the society. That is to say, while society sets limits as to what kind of warfare is employable, the developments in warfare itself can cause changes in such a society. One of his examples of this were women's rights campaigns that he argued originated largely from the First and Second World War practices of large scale employment of women, caused by the lack of male labour²⁹⁶ since the majority of men had been sent to the fronts. After the war it became very hard to maintain the previous nature of patriarchal relationships, as women had achieved economic independence and the demand for their labour still persisted. Additionally, the necessity to mobilize millions of men to wage successful wars necessitated universal conscription, which caused the expansion of citizenship and some welfare rights on the urban poor and peasantry, neither of which could easily be revoked after the war.²⁹⁷ Thus it was warfare which was the cause of such long-term social changes.

If one observes the recent technological developments in the sphere of warfare one can clearly link it with Maleševićian theoretical framework of the cumulative nature of the bureaucratization of coercion. The currently discussed robotic or even automated nature of future battlefields is becoming increasingly likely. I would argue that the fact that current military theorists speak of future warfare as one conducted by robots,²⁹⁸ ²⁹⁹ automated decision-making,³⁰⁰ or cognitive modeling of the opponent,³⁰¹ ³⁰² proves the theory of Malešević in terms of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion, as the robotic and automated nature of future conflict not only signifies that such automated weaponry or soldiers need not be coerced or ideologically indoctrinated in a way humans currently do, but also provides emotional distance for the perpetrators of violence. The existence of a notable emotional distance for the perpetrators of large scale violence was already noted by Erich Fromm, who argued that nuclear and traditional wars were inherently different, as the latter featured a face-to-face experience providing that one could be in direct

contact with the consequences of one's actions, while the former featured someone who by the simple push of a button could launch intercontinental warheads while not being in any emotional contact with the death and suffering he is about to unleash³⁰³ – as a result, killing became increasingly bureaucratized and void of the perception of its actual evil character. While it has been argued that the robotic or even automated nature of future warfare essentially makes the war safer for the common soldiers, as they are removed from the fronts by attempting to avoid loss of life,³⁰⁴ the very nature of such warfare allows an emotional distance, potentially facilitating greater suffering of the adversary or in the case of automated weaponry almost removes such an emotional aspect altogether. It is thus reasonable to argue based on the theoretical framework of Malešević, that future warfare, including Hybrid Warfare, will exhibit a decreasing direct emotional contact with the consequences of one's actions and provide that killing results in a lessened individual emotional struggle, a perceived evil, or wickedness normally associated in nearly all societies and cultures with such actions.

The changing nature of society and technology thus constitute dramatic changes in the nature of Malešević's analytical categories in relation to warfare and also necessitate a need to examine the changes in warfare and the contemporary theories and practices of warfare. Hybrid Warfare is no exception in this regard. Nemeth argued that a Hybrid War largely reflects the social construction of societies conducting such a type of warfare³⁰⁵ and is hence conducted by what he termed „hybrid societies“. David Barno also seconds the belief that today's warfare is changing. He claims that today's clashes have increasingly exhibited irregular troops employing asymmetrical means in an attempt to prevail. He believes that these features in combination with high-tech weaponry, subversion and covert backing from well-resourced nation states present unresolvable challenges to the legacy of 20th century models and norms of international conflict and behavior.³⁰⁶ I would thus raise the question: to what a degree has Hybrid Warfare evolved over time?

While both of the conflicts I analyzed have been categorized as Hybrid Wars by various authors, I was able to observe some significant differences between them. As I explained earlier, these changes were partly due to the fact that the societies perpetuating Hybrid Warfare differed in terms of their societal construction and thus their ability to achieve bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization, as well as in terms of the technologies available to them. However I would additionally argue that such

differences were also to a large degree caused by the evolvement of the concept of Hybrid Warfare.

While the two conflicts I previously analyzed unfolded a mere eight years apart from each other, these intermediate years have seen technological advancements influencing the practices of contemporary warfare. The most significant example of this is the evolvement of cyber warfare. Cyber warfare is not only an increasingly relevant concept with regard to the future but is already a problem of today, as major cyber attacks have been perpetrated by Russia against Estonia³⁰⁷ and Georgia³⁰⁸ in 2007 and 2008; and most recently, major cyber attacks have also allegedly been carried out by the Chinese against the US throughout 2015.^{309 310 311} Cyber warfare is thus becoming more common in the context of increasing influence of technology on our daily lives.³¹²

Indeed, while the Second Lebanon War of 2006 did not exhibit major cyber operations, the conflict in Ukraine already did. Three days before the Ukrainian presidential elections, a pro-Russian hacking collective CyberBerkut conducted an attack on the systems responsible for distributing results and voter turnout throughout the election day.³¹³ The attack was devastating and resulted in the system being rendered inoperable, though computer scientists were able to restore the system just before the elections. The aim of such an attack was not random or spontaneous, as if the election commission could not offer its usual real-time online results, doubts would easily be raised with regard to the legitimacy of the election. Other coordinated attacks against the Ukrainian military and law enforcement agencies have been recorded throughout the conflict.³¹⁴ Developments such as this can potentially transform the conduct of warfare, and cyber warfare in particular further resonates the increasing importance of non-military means in contemporary warfare.

Furthermore, the recent developments in the field of information technologies have seen a drastic increase in the importance of information and psychological warfare, as the grounds for the conduct of such warfare are becoming increasingly common to our daily lives. In this sense, the rising importance of social media reigns supreme. It's potential for organizing possible protests has been clear ever since the Arab Spring and subsequently proven by the Euromaidan protests. Social media is however not only relevant in terms of potentially facilitating protests, it is also a weapon in the context of information warfare during kinetic conflict. Rand Waltzman exemplified the power of

social media in influencing public opinion during kinetic conflicts by examining an incident dating back to 2006, when a routine successful military engagement in Iraq became a subject of an information campaign:

„The U.S. soldiers killed 16 or 17, captured 17, destroyed a weapons cache and rescued a badly beaten hostage. This sounds like a successful operation, except for the fact that in the time it took for the soldiers to get back to their base—less than one hour—the death squad soldiers had returned to the scene, cleaned up the mess, and rearranged the bodies of the their fallen comrades to make it look like they were unarmed in the middle of prayer when they were murdered by American soldiers. They put out pictures and press releases in Arabic and English showing the alleged atrocity.“⁶¹⁵

Despite the fact that the whole incident had been filmed by the unit, the U.S. military did not attempt to tell its side of the story before three days had passed, and damage had already been done. In this way, military victories can easily and quickly be transformed into influential damage on the public opinion and social media simply aggravates the issues that militaries might have in communicating with the public. Social media provides that such set-ups spread rapidly, as it can potentially influence public opinion in a matter of hours. The increasing prevalence of such psychological and informational warfare is thus one of the main components of contemporary warfare and I argue – based on my previous examination of information warfare employed in Second Lebanon War, the Crimean crisis and the War in Donbass – that fighting on this front has become of central importance for the contemporary hybrid adversaries.

Western scholars have increasingly distanced themselves from the possibility that the West should conduct Hybrid Warfare, claiming it a defensive type of warfare aimed at protraction, perpetuated by "hybrid societies" or "non-states". Subsequently, the face value of Hybrid Warfare is almost exclusively seen in terms of defense of a weaker opponent. However, I would argue that Hybrid Warfare has grown to acquire an offensive value, if aided by significant non-military means and conducted by a strong centralized power structure – ideally a state power – as an alternative to conventional warfare. As I discussed in the literature section of this thesis, the Russian theorists have engaged in this debate and I believe that they have indeed put their theories to the test in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. The Crimean operation was a clear success, and it seems to be working out largely as planned in Eastern Ukraine as well. While much emphasis has been put on the

military side of the concept of Hybrid Warfare, I will make an effort to sail against such a Western wind and in doing so will attempt to explain the non-military side of the conflict in a greater extent. I will further consider new technologies – particularly information technologies – and their application in the concept, and thereby propose two new analytical categories of Hybrid Warfare: General Hybrid Warfare and Specific Hybrid Warfare. The former retains its more western military-centered role, while the latter emphasizes the importance of non-military means.

Basis for categorization

To understand Hybrid Warfare, I will have to examine military and non-military actions alike, therefore the framework I will use to explain these categories reflects that. Modern and contemporary military theory has divided war into strategic, operational and tactical levels.³¹⁶

The strategic level reflects the desired outcomes of the war and focuses on defining a belligerent's general policies conducted to attain such goals. The operational level is directly concerned with concrete military operations in a theater of war or theater of operations and is aimed at gaining an advantage over an opponent beneficial for the strategic goals via the design and organization of the military forces, as well as the conduct of campaigns and major operations. The tactical level is a subdivision of the operational level insofar as operational campaigns are made up of maneuvers, engagements and battles. In theory, both the tactical and operational level reflect the goals and decisions on the strategic level and are conducted in accordance with the defined strategic goals.

To avoid sliding into a detailed discussion about very specific theoretical distinctions, I will simplify my framework to reflect the differences of the proposed two analytical categories of Hybrid Warfare on the strategic and on the operational level. The non-military side of the conflict relevant to Hybrid Warfare was well defined by John McCuen, as he claimed that the most decisive battles of Hybrid Wars are fought on asymmetric „*population battlegrounds*.“³¹⁷ Success on these battlegrounds is crucial for achieving effective centrifugal ideologization. That is to say, in order to achieve political victory it is paramount that popular support be achieved in the three population

battlegrounds – the indigenous population of the conflict zone, the domestic population and the international community. The population battlegrounds which McCuen identified have become a crucial part of contemporary warfare, imposing the necessity to consider the implications military action has on these population battlegrounds already on the strategic level. While McCuen's perception of these battlegrounds is presented from the U.S. Perspective – that is from the perspective of a belligerent fighting a hybrid adversary – the necessity to count with the effects of military and especially non-military actions on the possible success or failure on these battlegrounds is reflected on the strategic conduct of the hybrid adversary as well.

My analytical framework will thus be composed of discussing the problem from the perspective of the hybrid adversary on three interconnected levels: the strategic, the operational and the communal. Through this analytical framework I will thus be able to examine the differences between the two categories of Hybrid Warfare firstly in their strategic conduct: the strategic goals and policies taken with regard to these goals on the political and military level; secondly the operational dimension: the nature of the concrete military and non-military campaigns and their necessary organization; and lastly see what kind of strategies are employed to achieve success on the three population battlegrounds – both on strategic and operational level – as I consider these strategies instances of the non-military means employed during or preceding kinetic conflict.

General Hybrid Warfare

The genesis of this category of Hybrid Warfare lies on Hoffman who believes that contemporary and future conflict will be increasingly complex, but the rise of Hybrid Warfare does not necessarily signify the end of conventional warfare.³¹⁸ This category retains the central role of the military operations both on the strategic and operational level, while using the notion of population battlegrounds, and the success of strategies employed to gain victory on these communities, as a supplement to the fusion of irregular forces and tactics on the operational level.

While McCuen argued that victory on these battlegrounds is relevant and necessary only following a military success or to augment the progress of military campaigns on the

operational level, his analysis pertains to those facing a hybrid adversary. However, from the perspective of the hybrid adversary, this category pertains to defense both on the strategic and operational level and as a result, population battlegrounds are also less relevant, as the waging of successful General Hybrid Warfare (henceforth referred to as GHW) only demands maintenance of support on one of these population battlegrounds – the indigenous population of the conflict zone – while success on the international community is of course beneficial and as seen in Lebanon could prove to be decisive, but is not mandatory for achieving operational success.³¹⁹ However, support from the domestic population is indeed mandatory. As a result, a hybrid adversary possesses a significant advantage in terms of population battlegrounds, as the defensive nature of this category only necessitates maintenance of strong domestic support, while the belligerent conducting an attack against the hybrid adversary will likely need not only success on the domestic scene to support its aggression, but need support from the international community in order to legitimize itself and avoid international isolation; and also need success on the indigenous population of the conflict zone in order to achieve ultimate political victory and to avoid manifestations of insurgency.

Strategic conduct

Employed as a defensive measure, the strategic level reflects defensive strategies and goals. While employable both by a state and a non-state, it remains a type of alternative warfare for those who are facing a conventionally superior force and would very likely lose a conventional war. As such, it is employed mostly by non-states, „hybrid societies“ and guerrillas. On the strategic level, it deals with developing defensive strategies and fortifications that will aim to protract the war rather than achieve military victory.

A typical example of the strategic goals of GHW are those set by Hezbollah during the Second Lebanon War. Their strategy reflected their ideological notion of „resistance“ and the goals were to always defend the territories under their control. The only strategic-ideologically offensive action was to hurl rockets into Israeli civilian zones throughout the war. Their strategy became implemented during the years preceding the war, as defensive fortifications and sophisticated underground tunnels were constructed during peace time³²⁰ in order to enable small scale hit-and-run tactics aimed at protraction and survival rather than operational military victory.

Operational dimension

On the operational level, the military operations are conducted in the spirit of Hoffman's Hybrid Warfare where the operational force is a mixture of irregular and regular troops in possession of modern weapons, and act as a fused force on the same theater of war, rather than on separate theaters of war as in Compound Warfare. In addition, while Hoffman argued that Hybrid Warfare sees the use of terrorism and criminality as integral to the concept, I would argue that the possibility of using terrorism and criminality depends on the ideological nature of the society perpetuating Hybrid Warfare. That is to say, it depends on the social and ideological possibilities of legitimizing terrorism and criminality within the framework of Hybrid Warfare. Hezbollah for instance was able to avoid this conundrum by incorporating violence against the Israelis into their official ideology, and were thus able to avoid the perceived injustice of their behavior, considered terrorism and criminality by the Israeli state institutions and other international actors. GHW can hence see the use of terrorism and criminality in addition to the activities of irregular and regular forces, however, it is important to note that if a society engaging in this type of warfare is unable to legitimize terrorism and criminality it can undermine the legitimacy of its actions.

In the Second Lebanon War terrorism manifested itself in the constant hurling of missiles aimed exclusively at civilian areas in Israel with little direct value on the operational level as such. Additionally, Hezbollah has been categorized as a terrorist organization by the US, Canada, France, Netherlands and Israel, while the EU, New Zealand and the UK categorize merely its military wing as a terrorist organization, as opposed to the whole organization. It has to be noted that the perceived terrorism conducted by a hybrid adversary can potentially be used to undermine its campaign and serve as an ideological weapon for the belligerent, but this implies that a distinct and strong information strategies are employed to achieve this end.

Additionally, hybrid adversaries can pose ethical issues for the belligerents by becoming fused with civilians or fight in close proximity to civilians. Hezbollah proved the efficiency of this behavior, as the Israeli attacks caused continuous civilian casualties, a fact which is ideal for propaganda campaigns within the framework of information warfare. For the belligerents of the hybrid adversaries, it is thus central to adopt strong informational campaigns to counter the information warfare conducted by the hybrid

actors.

Communal level

It is an evolutionary continuation of Hoffman's Hybrid Warfare insofar as the operational level sees the fusion of irregular and regular forces and tactics in combination with actions mostly understood as terrorism and criminality by the adversaries, but also incorporates a distinct information war campaign aimed not only at the domestic population, but also at the foreign populations in order to erode the communal confidence in the belligerent's abilities or to undermine the legitimacy of its actions. In order to fight on the population battlegrounds, the hybrid adversary therefore seeks to employ means of information warfare. However where the information warfare conducted in the context of GHW differs from Specific Hybrid Warfare is in the strategic goals it aims to achieve. In GHW the hybrid adversary employs information warfare primarily for the purposes of defense and the goals of the informational campaign are thus to undermine the belligerent's ability to conduct effective centrifugal ideologization, as well as attempt to undermine the legitimacy of its attacks.

While states are in a clearly advantageous position when it comes to conducting information warfare – as large states more often than not possess mass communication networks with a global reach – non-states are also able to conduct information warfare, though their emphasis is put on creating the message, rather than directly spreading it, and as such depend largely on more influential or international media being able or willing to pick up on their message. An example of this was the Second Lebanon War, where Hezbollah was able to successfully convey the message they had created by their actions, and the outcome of the war would likely have been very different would the „civilian-victim“ and „disproportionality“ narratives not have been able to penetrate the international media. However, the prevalence of social media has alleviated this problem and provided that non-state entities can spread their message very effectively even without it being picked up by major news outlets of the international media. Thus social media provides non-states an alternative platform to conduct their information warfare campaigns and spreading their message is becoming increasingly easier as the prevalence of social media as the source of information considered ideologically legitimate rises.

Furthermore, the struggles on the population battlegrounds in the context of

information warfare reflect an attempt to diminish the belligerent's ability to conduct effective centrifugal ideologization by attempting to sow doubt and despair on the enemy soldiers ranks, albeit it is not exclusively aimed at military forces, but also on the ideological views held by the societies supporting such soldiers.

Summary

GHW is therefore a strategically defensive concept, more often than not employed in response to an aggression by a conventionally superior adversary. The strategic notion of defense manifests itself on the operational level through the fusion of conventional and irregular forces and tactics aimed at protracting the war and defending the territory. These tactics include terrorism and criminal activity and can be aided by electronic warfare. A hybrid adversary of this category fights to defend territory and simultaneously employs information warfare to undermine the effective centrifugal ideologization of the belligerent and its legitimacy on the international community.

Specific Hybrid Warfare

The reason for my attempt to diversify the theory of Hybrid Warfare lies mainly in the current theoretical underestimation of Hybrid Warfare as an offensive concept. I would therefore like to propose a new category of Hybrid Warfare called *Specific Hybrid Warfare*. I will argue that when employed by a state power and aided by several factors not previously classified as phenomena exclusively associated with Hybrid Warfare, the concept inherits a strategically offensive value. It is for this very reason I coined the concept of Specific Hybrid Warfare (henceforth referred to as SHW)– as an analytical category signifying its offensive potential. It is a very specific type of Hybrid Warfare – hence the name – which exclusively involves a state power – or a strongly centralized entity possessing the powers traditionally associated with a state – as the main hybrid threat and while being mainly defensive on the operational level, remains strictly offensive on the strategic level. This is also reflected by the realization of Gerasimov, who is of the opinion that future conflicts blur the distinction between offensive and defensive actions.³²¹

Strategic conduct

While the GHW signifies strategically defensive goals, the current category seeks to pursue offensive strategic goals under the cover of a concurrent defensive nature of the operational level. Thus, this category describes such a concept of Hybrid Warfare which seeks to blur the distinction between offensive and defensive actions: the strategic goal of this type of warfare is essentially takeover of territory and concurrent defense, if necessary. The peculiarity of SHW is that the takeover of territory precedes military confrontation and is a result of the preceding strategic employment of non-military means aimed to facilitate a coup de'état to be conducted either by a loyal domestic or foreign political-military elite, backed by either an irregular militia or special operations units of concealed nature. Such a takeover is preceded by the employment of non-military means aimed at its facilitation. The strategic conduct is therefore offensive, as the whole strategic goal is to gain control over certain territory. Such a takeover can not explicitly be classified as a conquest, as major military force comes into play only as means of intimidation or as a subsequent potential defensive measure, rather than a decisive factor in the takeover of territory.

SHW serves as a clear alternative to conventional warfare for state actors, as it avoids the deployment of large-scale conventional forces for operational success, and is thus economically cost-effective. With the inclusion of the non-declaration of war it is also legally pleasant for the hidden character of the hybrid adversary. However its non-military initial offensive strategic nature demands certain preconditions on the level of population battlegrounds for the takeover to be successful.

Communal level

Any coup de'état without substantial domestic support is likely a failure from the offset. As potential military confrontation is preceded by a coup de'état, it is desirable that the takeover of power is efficient and transpires as swiftly as possible. Would the coup de'état fail, the whole concept becomes worthless as employing Hybrid tactics becomes complicated on the operational level if control over the territory is not maintained. Thus the successful takeover demands a predating struggle on the population battlegrounds.

In comparison with GHW, the communal level poses a much greater challenge for the hybrid adversary of this category, as one has to retain legitimacy of the campaign not

only on its domestic population battleground, but also on the indigenous population of the conflict zone. International community can however be neglected to a degree.

While McCuen argued the international community to be one of the population battlegrounds where success is necessary for ultimate political victory, he argued this from the perspective of a belligerent facing a hybrid adversary. SHW does not necessitate such a need, due to the potential concealed nature of the hybrid adversary. Therefore facing and defeating a hybrid adversary poses crucial problems for military planners. When conducted by a concealed, yet a powerful structural organization – ideally a state power – the relevance of the international community has proven to be limp. The takeover of Crimea proves this adequately. Despite the nearly uniform international condemnation of the takeover of Crimea, the international community has not taken any meaningful steps with the potential to reverse the takeover. The sanctions imposed have generally served a symbolic purpose, as Crimea has become de facto accepted as a part of Russia, and I believe the EU sanctions are likely to be lifted in the following years as their irrelevance to potentially reverse the situation in Crimea becomes accepted. Thus it is likely that the international community is rendered irrelevant, insofar as it refuses to appreciate the ramifications of SHW. Furthermore, the non-declaration of war allows some states to remain indifferent to the situation and as a consequence of this, the international political community can be rendered fragile and divided, thus effectively countering a strong centralized hybrid adversary becomes an unlikely diplomatic scenario.

Information warfare

While the international community becomes increasingly irrelevant in terms of SHW, the rest of the population battlegrounds are relevant only in the context of information warfare, as it often seeks to influence the opinions of all the three battlegrounds defined by McCuen. I argue that to facilitate an operational environment fertile for a coup de'état the main instrument used to achieve this end in the context of SHW is information warfare. It seeks to undermine the centrifugal ideologization of the potential adversary through attempting to destabilize its society and ruling state power by putting psychological pressure on the population and undermining its social, political and economic systems. Such a strategy is aimed at the indigenous population of the future conflict zone and perpetrated through the use of media and modern information

technologies including social networking sites and social media.

Since such a definition was proposed by the Russian Ministry of Defense, it is perhaps most relevant to compare this theoretical view with the similar practices used by the Kremlin during the Ukrainian crisis, prior to the direct military-political engagement in Crimea and Donbass. The Kremlin-backed media frequently aimed to undermine the political, social and economic systems in the eyes of Crimeans and populations of South-Eastern Ukraine in order to facilitate a narrative under which the government in Kyiv was illegitimate and fascist, the state of Ukraine in social upheaval and in a state of anarchy, and that the Crimeans would be economically better off under Russia, as opposed to Ukraine. Such narratives exclusively aimed to undermine Ukrainian political, social and economic systems and the narrative of a fascist Ukraine as an alternative to friendly Russia became widespread in the informational zone of the Kremlin, and is perhaps best depicted by the advertisement campaign of the Crimean referendum.³²² The attempts to undermine the power of the Ukrainian governmental control and its ability to perform centrifugal ideologization in Crimea proved to be very effective. Rącz observes that the propaganda and bogus media reports worked efficiently to undermine the morale of the Ukrainian forces stationed in the region.³²³ Thus it directly undermined the centrifugal ideologization of the Ukrainian forces at the region, as they found themselves cut off from other information sources and often decided to surrender under the pressure of Kremlin's information warfare. This is further illustrated by the defections which took place in the Ukrainian navy during the conflict, the most prominent of which was the case of the head of the Ukrainian navy, Admiral Berezovsky.³²⁴

The main difference between the information warfare employed in the context of SHW and GHW thus lies in the strategic goals information warfare seeks to accomplish. While in the context of GHW, information warfare is used as a supplement to kinetic force employed to undermine the adversary and its centrifugal ideologization in order to bring an end to the military conflict – strategically a defensive action – in SHW the goal of information warfare is to undermine the adversary and its centrifugal ideologization in order to facilitate takeover of territory and thereby aid the conduct of effective conflict with an attempt to undermine the adversary, its political, social and economic systems – all of which serves an offensive strategy.

Cyber warfare

I argue that cyberwarfare is not only becoming increasingly socially relevant in the future – due to the concept of Internetization – but is already within us, and can occur either during the times of peace, or as strategically coordinated with the war effort. Internetization already has a strong effect on the bureaucracies maintained by contemporary states. Countries with an increasing digital infrastructure based on the internet are becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberwarfare. The vulnerability to such attacks projects an element of weakness on the authorities incapable of deflecting such attacks, thereby in terms of SHW, cyberwarfare can be considered as means of information warfare, since the general aim of such a campaign is to penetrate the digital infrastructure for the purposes of damage or disruption.³²⁵ Cyberwarfare can also be used to demoralize the enemy as an attempt to undermine effective centrifugal ideologization of the target military or society, as it allows the penetration of foreign internet media and other information sources for the purposes of spreading propaganda and disinformation.

In the context of SHW it can additionally be used to facilitate the „fog of war“ through the penetration and incapacitation of the conflict zone's digital infrastructure, as well as infrastructure related to the military of the adversary.

Operational dimension

The operational dimension of Specific Hybrid Warfare conforms to the realization that contemporary warfare blurs the distinction between offensive and defensive actions, as major military operations are defensive, but non-militarily or minor military actions are offensive. The operational dimension reflects the strategic offensive nature of the concept: major non-military means are used to facilitate the coup, while military forces are concerned with maintaining control over territory acquired as a result of the coup. This demands operational involvement of organized „irregular“ forces. Due to these complications I have separated the operational level into two stages: takeover and defense.

Takeover

The potential success of a takeover primarily depends on the success achieved in the context of the indigenous population battleground of the region. Offensive information warfare is utilized to achieve success in the context of this battleground, as

discussed earlier. Gerasimov spoke of asymmetrical actions perpetrated by special operations forces and the internal opposition able to create a permanently operating front through the entire territory of the enemy state, in addition to informational actions.³²⁶ Thus the takeover should be preceded by creation or intensification of internal opposition – supportive of the cause – within the target state. The takeover is materialized through the use of organized militant groups capable of overtaking the administrative buildings and resisting possible retaliation and it has to be coordinated throughout the territory for maximum psychological effect. Prime successful examples of the such successful recent takeovers of territory include Crimea and the Donbass region, both of which were materialized through the use of pro-Russian or exclusively Russian military commanders – such as Igor Girkin – in coordination with the capacity of internal opposition within Crimea and the Donbass regions. Additionally, Electronic Warfare can be utilized to undermine the adversary's bureaucratization of coercion, as Electronic Warfare has a psychological effect on the soldiers whose equipment is targeted.

Defense

After the successful takeover of territory, it is assumed that the response from the belligerent is an attempt to regain control of the territory and it is here where the operationally defensive nature of SHW manifests itself. Thereby, SHW does not centralize the military side of the conflict, as its success depends largely on the indigenous population's acceptance of the takeover. The very fact that there is no preceding declaration of war by the hybrid adversary allows it to designate attempts of the previous administrator to regain its territory via military means an act of aggression. In case defense is necessary, the hybrid adversary will attempt to maintain a concealed nature, and the potential military standoff occurs within the realms of the previously mentioned „internal opposition“, that is to say, irregular forces are formed within the territory taken over with the support of the hybrid adversary's regular forces concealed as irregulars. While in Crimea, there was no attempt made by the Ukrainian state to regain territory, as it had been explicitly incorporated into the Russian Federation and would mean an open war with Russia, the Donbass area remained a secessionist region and an attempt to regain this territory provided that effective defense was necessary to guard the strategic interests of the Kremlin. While the mere irregular militias of DPR and LPR proved to be insufficient –

for reasons discussed earlier – Russian regulars concealed as irregulars intervened and provided that Ukrainian conventional force faced a fusion – albeit an incoherent one at times – of regular and irregular forces which the Ukrainian governmental forces have been unable to succeed against.

Summary

Specific Hybrid Warfare is thus a category I have adopted for the sake of advancing the theory of Hybrid Warfare and highlighting its offensive potency when employed in coordination with substantial non-military means and by a concealed, yet powerful state or other strongly centralized structure or organization. However, the practice of this type of warfare is largely limited due to special conditions necessary for takeover and maintenance of territory. That is to say it is to a large degree unemployable for taking over large and ideologically heterogeneous territories. In practice, it has succeeded only in an operational environment where there exists popular support for the hybrid adversary. Lack of uniform support constitutes a sufficient enough difficulty in achieving centrifugal ideologization and bureaucratization of coercion to undermine its successful application. However, it remains an option for overtaking small territories or regions that exhibit a greater degree of ideological homogeneity and protest potential in comparison with the rest of the state it is a part of. In addition, such an ideological homogeneity should be facilitated prior to the conflict – its successful application demands pre-conflict success on the population battlegrounds. This is mainly achieved through the realm of information warfare.

While General Hybrid Warfare is generally a defensive strategy of a weaker opponent against a conventionally superior one, Specific Hybrid Warfare is an ideal potential offensive strategy conducted against a specific weaker opponent and its allure stems from the non-declaration of war, its cost-effectiveness and the potential de facto acceptance by the international community, as I believe reaching an international consensus on joint military action is very unlikely, as conformity would prevail over the risk of large-scale open military confrontation for seemingly small and ideologically insignificant territories.

Concluding remarks

In the current debate all authors I have come across still employ the general term of Hybrid Warfare, and often do so by using it simply as a denoting term for the vague mixture of irregular, regular and non-military means, whether aided by actions presented as terrorism and criminality or not. I however argue that Hybrid Warfare embodies not only the fusion of regular, irregular and non-military means but the concept has also inherited an offensive value and thus developed further. Therefore it is my opinion that the term Hybrid Warfare needs to become more nuanced, as in the world of today, we can observe two largely distinct forms of warfare under the umbrella of this term differing in many ways. This chapter thus attempted to identify these two distinct forms of warfare by classifying them as General Hybrid Warfare and Specific Hybrid Warfare and elaborating on this classification.

While General Hybrid Warfare remains a strategically defensive concept, where strategic defense manifests itself on the operational level by the fusion of conventional and irregular forces and tactics aimed at protracting the war and defending territory through such means, I adopted the concept of Specific Hybrid Warfare to highlight the offensive potency of Hybrid Warfare, as it is a strategically offensive concept manifest in the goal to take command over a certain territory followed by the subsequent operational defense of the territory, would this be necessitated.

Additionally, while General Hybrid Warfare can be coupled with perceived terrorism and criminality, the hybrid adversary also simultaneously uses information warfare with the purpose of both undermining the effective centrifugal ideologization of the adversary, and battling against the legitimacy of its adversary's attack on the international community. However, Specific Hybrid Warfare centralizes information warfare from the start: it is used to undermine the centrifugal ideologization of the targeted territory and facilitate its internal opposition in order to promote an effective coup de'état. Information warfare therefore serves an offensive strategy and is not aimed at ending the conflict as is often the case with General Hybrid Warfare, but simply aims to facilitate conflict.

While GHW was thus a defensive strategy of a weaker opponent against a superior conventional opponent as an alternative to a likely lost-from-the-start conventional kinetic

conflict, Specific Hybrid Warfare is an alternative offensive strategy for a conventionally superior opponent against a specific weaker opponent as the non-declaration of war gives such a hybrid adversary a concealed nature, thus alleviating the need to take responsibility and helps avoid covering for the losses caused by the conflict making it a cost-effective affair both economically and legally when compared to conventional kinetic conflict. Additionally I believe the response from the international community to such a conflict is likely to not be effective enough to have the potential of reversing its results.

Thus I would argue that future warfare will not only feature the vague general Hybrid Warfare, but very specific and elaborated types of Hybrid Warfare, as the technological advancements and societal change will likely facilitate the further morphing of the concept and a further elaboration on the subject becomes necessary. While Hoffman argued that the rise of Hybrid Wars will not likely mean the end of conventional or traditional warfare,³²⁷ I would argue that traditional warfare can become increasingly peripheral, as employing it against a hybrid adversary can mean placing oneself in a disadvantageous position from the start with regard to population battlegrounds – an aspect becoming increasingly relevant in terms of ultimate political victory. The increasing prevalence of Hybrid Warfare which can effectively counter and neutralize conventional and traditional warfare – and already replace it in terms of effective offense in terms of specific smaller territories, as discussed in this chapter – can undermine the effective use of both conventional and traditional warfare and such forms of warfare can thus become less likely to be employed in the future – a realization that currently conventionally superior entities will be reluctant to admit or adopt to, potentially rendering the problems arising from countering this type of warfare with traditional or conventional means even more acute and increase the desirability of employing Hybrid Warfare even further.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis set out to fulfill a twofold goal: firstly to analyze two contemporary Hybrid Wars through a historical sociological framework of Siniša Malešević in order to unveil sociological peculiarities pertaining to the phenomena associated with Hybrid Warfare and secondly to use this analysis as the base for the attempt to further elaborate on the definition of contemporary Hybrid Warfare. This work thus set out to examine the current concepts present in available literature with regard to Hybrid Warfare, in order to establish a more or less uniform definition which was then applied on the comparative analysis. By doing so, I was able to determine that the conflicts I analyzed were in fact representative of the phenomena associated with the conceptual understanding I had established. Additionally, I adopted the theoretical framework of Siniša Malešević for such analysis, as he argued that there have be two historical process at work in order to guarantee successful waging of warfare: cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization. The former refers to the increasing bureaucratic nature of killing both with regard to rigid hierarchical institutions in place to effectively coerce soldiers, as well as the increasing bureaucratic nature of the methods of killing through the use of which the emotional contact with the suffering caused on the adversary is bypassed with increasing efficiency. The latter refers to the particular social institutions capable of radiating ideology and justifying both the existence of such institutions, as well as indirectly facilitating warfare by providing it with a just cause through the imposition of a particular ideology or ideological narratives. Through adopting the framework of Malešević, I was able to examine the two hybrid conflicts from a historical sociological perspective in order to see if I can determine any significant similarities and differences in terms of social and technological factors between the two Hybrid Wars. I was subsequently able to draw several interesting conclusions from my analysis.

Firstly, with regard to the Second Lebanon War I was able to establish that the success of the hybrid adversary – Hezbollah – was largely due to their ability to conduct

effective centrifugal ideologization and bureaucratization of coercion. The institutional and organizational layout and structure of Hezbollah were clear manifestations of bureaucratization of coercion, insofar as the members of Hezbollah were rigidly commanded by a centralized bureaucratic structure, the constitution of which was directly aimed at perpetuating warfare and conflict against Israel.

I was additionally able to determine that bureaucratization of coercion was intertwined with effective centrifugal ideologization as the latter was also institutionalized into the very structure of Hezbollah. Particularly, the Social Service Sector contained movements and organizations – maintained by the central command of Hezbollah – which were directly responsible for indoctrinating members of Hezbollah as well as attempt to convert Shia Muslims of Lebanon into fighters of the „defensive jihad“.

Lastly, following these observations I also came to a peculiar conclusion with regard to the levels of effectiveness between the different societies involved in perpetuating warfare. Namely, I argued that liberal democratic and generally open societies are in a disadvantageous position in terms of military efficiency insofar as they remain keen on attempting to preserve freedom of speech and press. When facing a hybrid adversary this becomes a substantial problem, as the hybrid adversaries are generally closed societies with the ability to exert rigid control over the information flow within the domestic scene and are thus able to conduct centrifugal ideologization far more efficiently than open societies. Additionally, they can exploit the open nature of the adversary's society through the means of information warfare, attempting to undermine the effective centrifugal ideologization of the open-natured adversary.

With regard to the conflict in Ukraine, I was able to draw several peculiar social conclusions as well.

Firstly, I argued that Ukraine had a hard time achieving centrifugal ideologization for two reasons: 1) the inherent ideological and historic divisions within Ukraine: the West and Southern-Eastern Ukraine constitute fundamentally different ideological landscapes where one is prone to hold pro-Western views, while the second firmly holds pro-Russian views. Ukrainian nationalism is additionally crippled through this division and provides that Ukraine was by no means an ideologically homogeneous state, but rather constituted a diverse landscape, comprised of various regions dominated by contrasting majorative ideologies; 2) Information warfare conducted by the Kremlin: the

aforementioned divisions were an ideal ground on which particular mutually exclusive propagandist narratives could be nurtured. The strategies of information warfare employed throughout the conflict aimed to deepen these divisions and aid the „internal opposition“ within Ukraine, as in line with official Russian doctrines with regard to information warfare.

Secondly I argued that the Ukrainian state attempted to conduct effective centrifugal ideologization by establishing the Ministry of Information Policy which I considered an institutional manifestation of centrifugal ideologization. While it does not directly enforce violent behavior, it provides that certain ideological narratives are maintained, necessary for the social coercion of the soldiers sent to fight in Eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian state has hence adopted a particular ideological narrative dominated by the Ukrainian nationalist position and have institutionalized the maintenance of this narrative with the state apparatus.

Thirdly I argued that the both DPR and LPR lacked an ideological or nationalist substance when excluded both from possible incorporation with Russia, or return into Ukraine. As a result, they remained largely dependent on Russian ideological narratives perpetrated by Russian state media. Subsequently, I argued that it was the initial lack of both bureaucratization of coercion as well as centrifugal ideologization that facilitated their initial military failures. Having expected to be incorporated into Russia, no substantial state-building operations that could enforce either of these processes took place, as nothing else but a facade of legitimacy necessary to request incorporation into Russia had initially been established.

Through this analysis, I was able to determine that the insight provided by the theoretical framework of Siniša Malešević can be used as a crucial tool for explaining and understanding the peculiarities of hybrid conflicts as well as contemporary warfare in general. I was able to confirm that his framework is a powerful tool for social analysis of not only historic but also contemporary conflicts, as it offers great conceptual perception of the aim of particular social structures and institutions established and maintained for the sake of successful warring, providing either cumulative bureaucratization of coercion or centrifugal ideologization.

After having observed a number of differences between the two Hybrid Wars, I continued by arguing for the changing nature of contemporary warfare. The social and

technological developments have provided grounds for new areas of contestation in warfare and such developments need to become incorporated into the theories regarding contemporary warfare. Thus I argued for the need to advance and nuance the theories of Hybrid Warfare. Based on the observed differences in the two conflicts that I analyzed, I argued for the potentially offensive nature of Hybrid Warfare and thus proceeded by proposing two new analytical categories of Hybrid Warfare: General and Specific.

General Hybrid Warfare retained most of the characteristics traditionally associated with Hybrid Warfare in the examined western discourse. Thus, General Hybrid Warfare signifies a defensive strategy where the strategic objectives are defensive, achieved in the operational environment through the fusion of regular and irregular forces employing irregular tactics often aimed at protraction rather than tactical military victory. This category engages the population battlegrounds into the conflict by making use of information warfare. The strategic goal of such information warfare is to undermine the adversary and the legitimacy of the adversary's attacks in the context necessary population battlegrounds. However, information warfare and other non-military means are a supplement to kinetic conflict, and ultimately support the successful application of the fusion of regular and irregular forces. I argue that such a form of warfare is ideally employed by non-states, or smaller states as a clear alternative to large scale conventional warfare, a conflict in which such entities are huge underdogs from the offset.

My Specific Hybrid Warfare is a category signifying the offensive potential of Hybrid Warfare and is generally inspired by the Russian New-Generation Warfare. Specific Hybrid Warfare thus signifies an offensive strategy, the central component of which is information warfare. In this category, information warfare serves the strategically offensive goal to facilitate and nurture the „internal opposition“ of a target territory to such a degree as to render a coup de'état possible. Once this is achieved, the coup is materialized with support from the hybrid adversary of a concealed nature and engaged militarily once the power that had lost this territory decides to retaliate. Thus the operational level – as the hybrid adversary seeks to maintain a concealed nature – can become concerned with defensive operations, achieved through the fusion of an irregular and a regular force of a concealed nature. Such a force is capable of employing a fusion of both conventional forces and irregular forces and tactics. However, since its application depends on a variety of factors necessary to facilitate a fertile ground for a coup, it remains

a very specific type of warfare ideal for takeover of small ideologically homogeneous territories. I argue that such an offensive strategy is ideally conducted against a specific weaker opponent as a clear alternative to conventional warfare, as it involves non-declaration of war, is economically beneficial due to the concealed nature of the hybrid adversary and has the potential of being de facto accepted by the international community.

My contribution to the debate concerning Hybrid Warfare thus centralizes non-military actions and particular attention is paid to the aspect of information warfare which clearly extends beyond the military sphere, and thus poses significant threats to conventional opponents disregarding the importance of such campaigns when assessing their campaigns merely from the perspective of kinetic military campaigns. I believe that future Hybrid Warfare will thus pose significant, if not insurmountable problems for those who attempt to maintain strictly kinetic types of responses to hybrid adversaries and their tactics without centralizing the necessity to battle on the informational arena as well as on the newly emerged and emerging digital areas of contestation in warfare.

Recommendations for future research

Technologies and societies will undoubtedly continue to evolve and thus an increasing amount of research is necessary for examining potential implications of these advancements on the military sphere and contemporary warfare.

As examined, Hybrid Warfare has come acquainted with the centrality of information warfare under which the contemporary cyber warfare flourishes. While I did not centralize cyber warfare – as I believe it has not yet reached even its mildest potency – I do believe that as the society and technology evolves, cyber warfare will become increasingly relevant in the context of Hybrid Warfare, and further research is necessary on its impact and possible applications in the framework of Hybrid Warfare.

Additionally, the contemporary nature of the War in Donbass was a major obstacle when attempting to gain full comprehension of the conflict. I was unable to provide an in-depth analysis of the social side of the conflict due to a lack of additional sources as well as the lack of material in the English language with regard to LPR and DPR. Thus when

such material becomes available, future research should be aimed at examining and analyzing the specific social organization of the rebel areas as well as evaluate the domestic public perceptions held in the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk on the subject of the pseudo-states amidst which the previously Ukrainian citizens suddenly found themselves in 2014

Lastly, future research can also be aimed at examining the complications that future automated or robotic warfare can pose on Malešević's theoretical framework used in this thesis. Automated machinery and weaponry as well as robots need not be bureaucratically coerced nor ideologized the way humans do and thus it would be necessary to examine the effects of this on cumulative bureaucratization of coercion as well as centrifugal ideologization of future warriors and populations.

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- 10 Internetization – a term coined recently by Constantine Passaris, a professor at the University of New Bruinswick – which describes the ubiquitous influence of the internet and the world wide web on all aspects of human endeavour (Passaris 2015). Hardly a day goes by when our individual and collective lives are not influenced by some means of information technology. As a result, our lives, and more importantly the states themselves have a growing digital presence. And in a country where many basic services which in a traditional sense required a bureaucratic administrative machine to be in place, are increasingly being replaced by services based on the internet – such as e-banking, e-government (tax filing, applying for health insurance, voting in the elections, etc), e-business (electronic residence permits), e-school, etc – such systems become part of the state's (digital) infrastructure. Such an Internetized state which has part of the state administration in the Internet is especially vulnerable to cyber attacks. And in the context of these services being considered as part of the state's digital infrastructure, as much as roads and railways are part of regular infrastructure, then is an attack against such infrastructure can be considered an attack against the state itself.
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Due to his activities and background, Bandera's legacy is very controversial even in Ukraine. Ukrainian nationalists often view him as a national hero, a sentiment most prevalent in Western parts of Ukraine and he is held in especially high regard by far-right movements such as the Right Sector. However, due to the massacres that his nationalist movement carried out against the Poles and the Jews during WWII, and due to his willing collaboration with the Nazis irregardless of his motivations, he retains a strongly negative image in Eastern Ukraine, especially within the Russian speaking minority in Ukraine.

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