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The Rise of New Types of War

A Case Study on Russian Hybrid Warfare in the Ukrainian Crisis in 2014

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ABSTRACT

The Russian intervention in Ukraine in 2014, which turned into the Ukrainian Crisis, is broadly considered the prime example for "hybrid warfare" in Europe. The warfare concept became popular during the last two decades and was conceptualised by various academics. Nevertheless, it still lacks a commonly agreed definition and especially Russian warfare theories are often left out of analyses of the Ukrainian Crisis. Hence, this thesis aimed at analysing the Russian intervention in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine in the beginning of 2014 to detect whether the actions deployed by Russia can be considered "hybrid warfare".

For this, a framework for the elements of "hybrid warfare" was established based on the theoretical concepts of three American and three Russian military theorists. The concepts have been compared and merged into one analytical framework that was applied to the crisis in the following step to identify possible "hybrid warfare" elements. This approach led to a comprehensive analysis of the Russian intervention in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine.

Indeed, the analysis revealed that the Russian Federation deployed a wide range of warfare elements which can be accounted for the "hybrid warfare" form. The main characteristics of the crisis are the deployment of unconventional warfare, best represented by the appearance of Russian "little green men", as well as non-military means. The latter primarily includes psychological warfare means, for example information warfare and information technologies, which is especially in line with the Russian warfare concepts.

Furthermore, the case study indicated that the context of the intervention is crucial for winning a "hybrid war". In Crimea, the Russian Federation was more successful, especially due to the support of the pro-Russian and Russian-speaking population, with the result of the Crimean annexation. In Eastern Ukraine, on the other hand, the Russian intervention lacked a popular backing which resulted in more difficult conditions for a successful Russian intervention.

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1. INTRODUCTION

War between nation-states has always been part of the world's history. The first historically recorded war took place in 2700 BC between Sumer and Elam, two regions in Mesopotamia, the modern-day Iraq and Kuwait[1]. Since then, war between nation-states occurred repeatedly and became "part of the human condition throughout recorded history and invariably results from the tribe mentality inherent in human communities and their fear or mistrust of another, different, 'tribe' as manifested in the people of another region, culture or religion." (Mark, 2009[2]).

However, as the world and humanity develop and evolve steadily further, also does warfare. As to Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831), the famous Prussian military strategist of the early 19th Century, warfare evolves in every age and every age has its own conception of war (Marcuzzi, n.d.). As history reveals, wars have taken on new forms in the last 100 to 150 years. Wars are no longer fought only between nation-states but also include actors other than states. This has led to the emergence of new concepts of war such as "new wars"[3], "fourth generation warfare"[4] or "hybrid warfare" (Herta, 2017). Especially the concept of "hybrid warfare" is, since the Lebanon war in 2006 and in Europe especially since the Russian annexation of Crimea and the subsequent Ukrainian Crisis in 2014, the catchword in the media, public and academic discourses as well as among politicians and military personnel.

"Hybrid warfare" is frequently used to describe current situations and threats of warfare, so, to label actions of adversaries as was the case with the Ukrainian Crisis from 2014 onwards. It describes the "blurring and blending" (Hoffmann, 2010, p. 443) of previously distinct categorisations of warfare modes, hence, the combination of different warfare methods, both conventional and unconventional or regular and irregular[5] (see 2.1.), and in general military

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[1] In this war between the two regions of Mesopotamia, Sumer (modern-day southern Iraq) and Elam (modern-day southwest and far west Iraq), Sumer had been victorious. The war was fought in the area around modern Basra, Iraq. The Sumerian ruler Sargon the Great transformed and united a range of settlements throughout the region with the aid of a professional army. When trying to subdue the Elamites, the Sumerians were confronted with resistance. In the end, however, the army of Sumer was successful (Military History Now, 2014).

[2] This source is an online article without page numbers.

[3] "New Wars" is a term primarily advanced by British academic Mary Kaldor. Herta (2017, p. 136) defines it as follows: "New war" focusses "on the main differences between conventional, Clausewitzian, trinitarian warfare (associated with the rise of the modern state) and the novel aspects of post-Cold War armed conflicts. [...] the classical, Clausewitzian pattern of inter-state was gradually replaced by various dynamics of intra-state violence." "New wars", in consequence, are fought by state and non-state actors aiming at controlling the target state's society.

[4] The concept of "fourth generation warfare" (4GW) likewise underlines the blurred nature of conflicts and the decrease of wars between nation-states. As to William S. Lind (2004, p. 13) 4GW is also marked by a return to a "world of cultures", not states, underlining the variety of non-state actors present in this form of conflict. In addition, 4GW is characterised by the use of lethal and non-lethal tactics. Third generation warfare, on the contrary, was characterised by tanks, aircraft, heavy firepower and manoeuvre, as exemplified by World War II or the war in Korea (Anderson, n.d.).

[5] These two pairs of terms will be used interchangeably in this work. "Conventional" and "regular" warfare describe a form of warfare with conventional weapons (aircraft, military troops etc.) between two states or more. "Unconventional" and "irregular" describe a warfare form with mostly unconventional weapons, e.g. guerrilla, and

and non-military. However, there is only little agreement among military theorists and academics on what the concept really entails.

During the Ukrainian Crisis, Russian aggression against Ukraine was made up of a broad range of varying military and non-military warfare means. It led to the fragmentation and destabilisation of the Ukrainian state and the accession of the Crimean Peninsula to the Russian Federation as well as the independence[6] of the two Ukrainian oblasts[7] Donetsk and Luhansk[8]. The crisis is characterised by a blurring of both regular and irregular warfare techniques by the Russian side. The Russian warfare form, in consequence, is labelled "hybrid" and in the Western sphere, the crisis is classified as the prime example of "hybrid warfare" (e.g. Meredith, 2019).

1.1. RESEARCH QUESTION

However, there is no commonly agreed definition of "hybrid warfare" in academic military and strategic theory literature. Studies and research on the Ukrainian Crisis are based on different definitions of the warfare form. Therefore, this thesis aims at investigating the Russian actions in Ukraine in 2014 to identify elements of "hybrid warfare" based on an analytical framework. Consequently, the research question for this work is the following:

"Which elements of 'hybrid warfare' can be identified in the Russian actions during the Ukrainian Crisis from February to May 2014?".

The research question enables to explicitly detect the different elements of "hybrid warfare" deployed by Russia during the Ukrainian Crisis and, consequently, to establish a list of characteristics of the warfare form used by Russia during the chosen period of the conflict.

1.2. HYPOTHESES

The results of Russian deployment of "hybrid warfare" in the chosen period are the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula as well as the separation of the two Ukrainian oblasts Donetsk and Luhansk which together constitute the Donbas region. They represent a success regarding the Russian intention to attain control over the region and to not let it fall into the hands of NATO (Murphy, 2016).

With regards to the case study on the Russian deployment of "hybrid warfare", four hypotheses are established which will be tested during the analysis and evaluated in the conclusion.

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where the actors involved are not regular military forces of a state but non-state actors or others. For information on these two warfare forms see 2.1.

[6] The oblasts self-proclaimed independence. Their independent status, however, is not internationally recognised except for by the Russian Federation (Banasik, 2016).

[7] Oblast is the term for Ukrainian administrative divisions, hence a region.

[8] See map of the Ukraine in the Appendix for their geographical position.

Due to the "quiet" invasion of "little green men"[9] (Murphy, 2016, p. 1) and the further non-military actions in Crimea, the first hypothesis is the following:

H1: *Russia primarily used non-military means during its intervention in Crimea and the Donbas region.*

In addition, it is supposed that Russia primarily used propaganda and information technology to secure the consent by the Ukrainian, and among them the Russian-speaking population. This consideration derives from the international and public accusations against Russia for having influenced elections by technological means (Jalonick & Tucker, 2020):

H2: *Propaganda and information technologies were crucial elements of Russia's "hybrid warfare" strategy.*

Furthermore, it is assumed that Russia, regarding its role as an energy supplier for many neighbouring countries, made use of cuts in energy supply and economic pressure to force the Ukrainian authorities to fulfil its will:

H3: *Russia used its role as energy supplier for making use of cuts in energy supply and economic pressure.*

Finally, a last hypothesis shall concern the crisis in general. At this point it is assumed that the analysis may reveal the lack of "hybrid warfare" elements among the Russian actions in the chosen period of the Ukrainian Crisis:

H4: *Russia did not deploy elements of "hybrid warfare" in the chosen period of the Ukrainian Crisis.*

1.3. METHODOLOGY

This thesis will pursue a qualitative analysis by means of a case study. It is the aim of this work to identify the elements of "hybrid warfare" that have been used by Russia during the Ukrainian Crisis in 2014. Due to the lack of a commonly agreed definition of "hybrid warfare", its characteristics need to be determined in this work. This will be done by the operationalisation of the theory of "hybrid warfare". For this, the theoretical assumptions of the American military theorists Frank G. Hoffman, John J. McCuen and Russel W. Glenn concerning the concept of "hybrid warfare" will be presented and analysed. These theorists have been chosen because they are three of the most popular and esteemed military strategists who have worked on the concept of "hybrid warfare" which originally is an American concept.[10] In addition, regarding

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[9] "Little green men" is the common expression for the unmarked soldiers that appeared on the Crimean Peninsula and which marked the beginning of the crisis. For further information see 4.1.2.
[10] See for example Dayspring (2015), Glenn (n.d.), Hoffman (2009a) and Otaiku (2018).

the choice of Russian intervention in Ukraine, three Russian concepts of irregular warfare by the military strategists Evgeny Messner and General Makhmut A. Gareev as well as Russian General Valery Gerasimov will further be considered. Even though they do not name their warfare concepts "hybrid" the concepts will be considered for this work because they are acknowledged to be the theoretical bases of the warfare Russia pursues in Ukraine (e.g. Banasik, 2016; Sawa-Czajka, 2014). Banasik (2015, p. 22) furthermore states that Messner's concept is "a prototype for the concept of hybrid wars" (see also Klus, n.d.). Moreover, as Rácz (2015, p. 43) points out: "the original denotations of hybrid war are not capable of completely describing the Russian warfare in Ukraine. […] Russia's operations in Ukraine have been much wider than any earlier analysts of hybrid wars could have imagined." Hence, the original mostly Western explications and theoretical concepts of "hybrid warfare" are not sufficient for clearly analysing Russian way of warfare in Ukraine.

The concepts will be compared regarding the elements they ascribe to "hybrid" and irregular warfare as well as regarding their differences. In the end, this comparison will allow for the establishment of a detailed analytical framework including the characteristics of Russian "hybrid warfare". This framework can then be applied to the case of Russian intervention in Ukraine in 2014 and the characteristics of "hybrid warfare" established before will be used as indicators for the identification of "hybrid warfare" elements deployed by Russia.

The Ukrainian Crisis and Russian actions during the crisis have been chosen as the case for this thesis because multiple theorists have labelled Russian actions "hybrid" without providing a generally accepted definition of the term or a profound analysis of the case, which will be pursued in this thesis (e.g. Banasik, 2016; Lanoszka, 2016). Hence, also in journals, the crisis was considered "hybrid". Furthermore, this case brought back times of major conflict and unrest to the European continent. Especially the Eastern Member States of the EU are concerned about the Russian aggression against Ukraine (Murphy, 2016). The Ukrainian Crisis, in consequence, is the European example for "hybrid warfare". In addition, the case is considered worth to be examined due to the high public attention it caused and its relevance for the European neighbourhood as a prime example for modern Russian military strategy.

The time frame of this thesis will be February 26 to 27, the night when the "little green men" appeared on the Crimean Peninsula, to May 11, the day of the referendum in Eastern Ukraine, more precisely in Luhansk and Donetsk. Both oblasts were proclaimed independent republics, however not internationally recognised (Banasik, 2016). Although rather short, the chosen period includes a whole sum of events and actions which did take place, both in Crimea as well as in the Donbas region. Hence, it provides a good quantity of examples of Russian interventions to be analysed. Besides, the chosen time frame will allow for a comparison

between the two regions, Crimea and Donbas, regarding the process of Russian actions and its results.

The data that will be used in this thesis consists of academic and theoretical articles and papers especially for the theoretical background and of academic and journal articles as well as reports for the case study. The literature mainly consists of English documents, while a limited number are also in German. Moreover, translated versions of Russian original documents are used for the theoretical part on the Russian warfare concepts of General Valery Gerasimov, General Makhmut A. Gareev and Evgeny Messner. However, the last concept could only be considered by using secondary literature as well as a self-translated version of his work[11].

1.4. STATE OF THE ART AND RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

The literature on new forms of war and the Ukrainian Crisis provides a great number of papers, reports and articles. The concept of "hybrid warfare" has been analysed primarily by Western academics, such as Frank G. Hoffman, John J. McCuen and Russel W. Glenn, who will be considered in this thesis. Primarily Frank G. Hoffman is well-known among the military theorists for his concept of "hybrid warfare".

Especially since the outbreak of the Ukrainian Crisis, the concept of "hybrid warfare" has been subject of many academic writings. Laura-Maria Herta (2017) for example, analyses "hybrid warfare" in comparison to concepts such as new wars and fourth generation warfare. She explores the history and development of "hybrid warfare" and concludes that it is an "aggregate of blended strategies" deployed by both military and non-military actors (Herta, 2017, p. 140).

András Rácz is the author of the report "Russia's Hybrid War in Ukraine" (2015). He examines the development of "hybrid warfare" starting with the history of "asymmetric warfare"[12] on to "hybrid warfare". Unlikely other academic writings on the deployment of Russian "hybrid warfare" during the Ukrainian Crisis, Rácz also considers the Russian theoretical concepts behind the crisis. He describes the development of the different labels that were used for the type of war in the crisis. The first time that the conflict was labelled "hybrid" was on 26 April 2014 by Dutch general Frank van Kappen. However, the discussion on the name for the kind of war fought by Russia continued and other expressions were introduced as well. Notwithstanding, Rácz concludes that the term "hybrid warfare" remains the most used one.

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[11] The works of Evgeny Messner could not be found in English, French or German which would have been languages the author of this thesis masters. Only one work in its original Russian version could be accessed online: Messner, E. (2005). "If you want peace, defeat the rebellion!" (2005). *Russian Warrior Guard, Vol. 21.* Retrieved from http://militera.lib.ru/science/0/pdf/messner_ea01.pdf (last accessed 11.06.2020). With the secondary literature its essential parts could be identified and translated with the online translator deepl.com.

[12] "Asymmetric warfare" describes a type of conflict between forces that differ in military power. In consequence, such conflicts typically include unconventional and non-military means (RAND, n.d.).

Ofer Fridman is another theorist who works on the evolution of "hybrid warfare" with a special focus on the Russian concept "gibridnaya voyna"[13]. He concludes that, even though the two concepts share the name and several similar elements, Russian "gibridnaya voyna" increasingly underlines the importance of psychological means for winning a "hybrid conflict" while Western theorists focus on the military means (Fridman, 2017).

Apart from academics, also international organisations such as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) or the EU (European Union) deal with the warfare concept in their roles as security providers. NATO, for example, claims that "[h]ybrid threats combine military and non-military as well as covert and overt means, including disinformation, cyber attacks, economic pressure, deployment of irregular armed groups and use of regular forces. Hybrid methods are used to blur the lines between war and peace, and attempt to show doubt in the minds of target populations." (NATO, 2019[14]).

Remarkably, the literature review revealed that the definitions of "hybrid warfare" that were established after the outbreak of the crisis in Ukraine in 2014, increasingly emphasise the deployment of non-military actions such as economic pressure and information warfare.

The Ukrainian Crisis is also a hot topic in the literature. Catalin Alin Costea (2019) investigates the Russian deployment of "hybrid warfare" during the Ukrainian Crisis and the reasons behind it. Concerning the crisis on the Crimean Peninsula, for example, Costea evaluates the geopolitical and historical background of the relation between Crimea and Russia. In her report, she examines the different "hybrid warfare" means used by Russia in Ukraine and identifies, for example, cyber warfare and economic means that were deployed by the Russian Federation in the target state.

Mehmet Seyfettin Erol and Safak Oguz (2015) analyse the Crimean Crisis in 2014 regarding the deployment of "hybrid warfare". The authors argue that the Russian example is the first which "changed the common belief that weaker opponents, especially non-state actors, resort to hybrid warfare strategies" (Erol & Oguz, 2015, p. 274) because it has been the Russian Federation that resorted to "hybrid warfare". They conclude that the Russian intervention in Ukraine presented, in fact, a "new chapter" (Erol & Oguz, 2015, p. 274) for the new warfare form, in terms of the use of non-military means.

Sona Rusnáková and Maria Snegovaya are two further authors who analyse the Russian way of "hybrid warfare" in Ukraine. Rusnáková published the article "Russian New Art of Hybrid

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[13] This is the Russian term of "hybrid warfare".
[14] This source is an online article without page numbers.

Warfare in Ukraine" (2017) in which she analyses the form of "hybrid warfare" as deployed by the Russian Federation and concludes that especially General Gerasimov's doctrine (see 2.3.3.) can be considered the basis of Russian way of war. Snegovaya drafted a report on "Putin's information warfare in Ukraine" (2015). She explores modern Russian information warfare with the case of the Ukrainian Crisis and sums up that Russian propaganda, to various extents, has been successful. Notwithstanding the claims for the novelty of this approach, Snegovaya (2015, p. 21) concludes that Russian information warfare is highly based on approaches "from the Soviet toolkit" and that it is only successful in case the outer conditions are beneficial, for instance a population likely to influence.

All in all, the literature provides a variety of studies on "hybrid warfare" in general, but also in line with the Ukrainian Crisis. However, there still exists already mentioned lack of a widely accepted definition of "hybrid warfare". Wither (2016, p. 74), for example, states that hybrid warfare "has become the most common term used to try and capture the complexity of twenty-first century warfare". Hence, studies and observations differ in their characterisation of the concept.

Due to this, this thesis aims at providing a valid framework for the analysis of "hybrid warfare" elements used by Russia in the Ukrainian Crisis. In addition, many studies and analyses have been conducted on the warfare nature of the Ukrainian Crisis without accounting for the Russian point of view, even though the literature review above may signal otherwise. Consequently, this thesis will also consider the concepts of warfare presented by General Valery Gerasimov in his military doctrine in 2013, thus shortly before the crisis, and, even though long before the crisis, by Evgeny Messner during the 1960's and General Makhmut A. Gareev from the 1990s. This will allow for a broader and deeper understanding of Russian action during the Crisis.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – HYBRID WARFARE

The theory of "hybrid warfare" will provide the basis for the analysis of the Russian intervention during the Ukrainian Crisis in 2014. To describe the concept of "hybrid warfare", an overview about the evolution of warfare will be given beforehand.

2.1. THE EVOLUTION OF WARFARE

The most famous theorist on war, still today, is Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831). The Prussian strategist defined war as "an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will" (von Clausewitz, 2006[15]).

Clausewitz claims that war is governed by several factors which he calls the "trinity of war". The first factor is the people (passion), the second the military (chance) and the third the government (reason)[16]. The motivation for war, at least to a small extent, must already exist among the people, and the military is decisive for the competence, obedience and organisation. The government, lastly, holds the political objectives (von Clausewitz, 2006).

This last factor of the "trinity of war" is essential, as the Prussian military strategist furthermore describes warfare as the "mere continuation of politics by other means." (von Clausewitz, 2006). Clausewitz declares the connection between politics and war to be inseparable: "[…] war in itself does not suspend political intercourse […]. War cannot be divorced from political life" (Cajic, 2016, p. 73, quoted from Clausewitz, 1989[17]). The causes of war, in consequence, are to be found in politics and war is not solely about military capabilities.

Notwithstanding the importance of politics, Clausewitz considers war to be influenced by psychology and its "inherent unpredictability" as well (Marcuzzi, n.d., p. 3). Clausewitz concludes in his book that war is unpredictable, "a chameleon" to put it in his words, which "changes its aspect at each occurrence, reflecting the features of the competing political entities that engage in it." (Marcuzzi, n.d., p. 3).

For a long time, Clausewitz's definition and theory of war determined the academic landscape of warfare theory. As to Lieutenant Colonel Brett W. Andersen (2012), 21st Century warfare will be characterised by major changes, but it will nevertheless represent the basic nature of warfare as described by Clausewitz. However, other military theorists deprive the Clausewitzian concept of its relevance for 21st Century warfare. It is claimed that while Clausewitz studied wars between nation-states, warfare in the 21st Century will increasingly concern intrastate wars, civil wars and terrorism. The scholars of new warfare theories and concepts therefore dismiss Clausewitz's theory arguing that the nature of war has changed. They criticise, for instance, that Clausewitz's trinity of war becomes less essential in times

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[15] The translated text of Clausewitz's work "On War" that is used in this work, is the translation by Colonel J. J. Graham (1st edition of this translation in 1874) in the new and revised edition provided by the "Project Gutenberg EBook of On War, by Carl von Clausewitz". Retrieved from https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1946/1946-h/1946-h.htm#chap01 (last accessed 17.06.2020). It is an online document presenting the whole book "On War". Therefore, no page numbers can be given for citations of this work.

[16] The words in brackets refer to expressions that are also commonly used for Clausewitz's concept of the "trinity of war".

[17] Von Clausewitz, C. (1989). *On War*, p. 75. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

where nation-states, hence governments, are no longer parties to the conflict every time (Olson, n.d.).

Martin Van Creveld (*1946), another famous military theorist and strategist, is one of the critics of Clausewitz and developed a warfare concept opposing the concept of the Prussian strategist. In his book "The Transformation of War", published in 1991, he claims that major armed interstate conflict is declining. He accredits this decrease to the growing international interdependence caused by globalisation as well as the increasing identification of territory and nationality by international law. His main argument, however, is that conventional warfare is declining due to the changing nature of warfare and the failure of nuclear deterrence[18].

In his opinion, warfare between nation-states declines without a simultaneous decline of organised violence. In consequence, Van Creveld argues that the war between or against organisations others than states will increase and predicts the rise of non-trinitarian, low-intensity wars with more than one non-state actor and unconventional warfare forms (Van Creveld, 2002). In detail, Van Creveld defines low-intensity conflicts as conflicts with rarely regular armies on both sides. These conflicts are rather characterised by the deployment of conventional forces on the one side and unconventional forces, for example, guerrillas, terrorists or civilians, on the other side. The trinitarian approach is therefore not appropriate for analysing or winning low-intensity wars. In contrast with Clausewitz, Van Creveld states that there is no trinity of war, hence, that there is no division of labour between the government, the people and the military: "Sometimes they [armed conflicts] only applied to one side, and sometimes, as in Somalia and (before the current US intervention) Afghanistan, they did not apply at all." (Van Creveld, 2002, p. 8).

Furthermore, Van Creveld argues that there exists a profound misunderstanding of the nature of war that entirely goes back to the concept of Clausewitz. Van Creveld criticises Clausewitz's famous explanation that war is the "mere continuation of politics by other means": "As a prescription of the way things should be the truth of the dictum is undeniable. As a description of the way things are it is very often anything but correct. The lower down the war-making hierarchy we proceed, the less true it becomes." (Van Creveld, 2002, p. 12). Van Creveld claims that people are not guided by political interests but by something "they feel is greater, or more important, or more valuable, than themselves, be it king or country or freedom or anything else;" (Van Creveld, 2002, p. 13).

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[18] "Failure of nuclear deterrence", according to Van Creveld, means that deterrence by means of nuclear weapons is no longer possible for a state because it is not difficult to establish an arsenal of nuclear weapons anymore – any state could do this (Van Creveld, 2002).

This evolution of warfare, hence the changing of the warfare nature from the Clausewitzian concept to the one of Van Creveld, is not coming to an end but continues even further. The decrease of conventional wars, armed conflicts between nation-states, as forecasted by Van Creveld, seems to have been affirmed. Theorists claim that contemporary wars are characterised by unequal capabilities, a broad range of actors and the combination of regular[19] and irregular[20] elements of warfare (e.g. Herta, 2017; Lanoszka, 2016).

This change of the nature of warfare, consequently, has led to the rise of new forms of war characterised by the mixing of regular and irregular forms and methods of war. However, irregular warfare is not clearly defined. The American Department of Defence defines irregular warfare as "[a] violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. [Irregular warfare] favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will. It is inherently a protracted struggle that will test the resolve of our Nation and our strategic partners." (Larson et al., 2008, p. 10).

Other definitions emphasise the use of non-political and non-military instruments for creating political struggle, "putting into practice, in a planned and coordinated way, the political economic, psychological, propaganda, military measures against a state to destabilize its political power replacement and bringing it into a state of dependency and subordination." (Frunzeti, n.d., pp. 5-6). Yuichiro Nagao (2001) defines unconventional warfare as a "generic term that covers all military and quasi-military operations other than conventional warfare." (Nagao, 2001).

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[19] Regular or conventional warfare is fought between states; hence it is an interstate war. Actors are states with the goal of military, economic and political change or damage. The relative power between the actors is symmetric as both are states using their regular armies. The overall strategy is direct and open. Van Creveld defines conventional wars as "armed conflicts openly waged by one state against another by means of their regular armies" (Van Creveld, n.d., p.1).

[20] Irregular or unconventional warfare is not only fought between states, but participants can also be non-state actors. As such, the motivation for war may also be different from that of conventional wars, such as ideological or religious reasons (Van Creveld, 2002). Furthermore, the means used in the wars are not dependent on regular armies, but it is rather made use of guerrilla tactics and terror or propaganda. Please see also the definitions presented in the following paragraphs aiming at providing an insight into the broad range of varying definitions on irregular warfare.

	Conventional Warfare	Unconventional Warfare[21]
Actors	▪ Nation-states	▪ States and/or non-state actors
Aim of the war	▪ Destroy/weaken the military strength of the enemy and its ability to engage in conventional war ▪ Take control over regions and borders to gain territorial control	▪ Reaching influence and legitimacy over the target state and its population
Military means	▪ Regular armed forces	▪ Unconventional means: militias, guerrillas, partisans, terrorism
Other means		▪ Indirect and asymmetric approaches ▪ Non-military means, e.g. economic, political, social, and psychological measures

Even though differences between conventional and unconventional, or regular and irregular warfare can be accounted for, the boundary between the two forms is very thin. According to Frunzeti (n.d., p. 14) "contemporary conflicts can not be assigned exclusively to one or the other of the dimensions analysed", hence, no armed conflict is purely conventional or unconventional in nature.

In consequence, new forms of warfare emerged, trying to clear the blurring of the lines between the two concepts. "Hybrid warfare", the form of warfare that will be dealt with in this thesis, is a perfect example for the impossibility of clearly differentiating between regular and irregular warfare, as to the combination of conventional war with irregular as well as cyber warfare for example (Frunzeti, n.d.).

2.2. HYBRID WARFARE

The term "hybrid warfare" came up in the military discourse at the beginning of the 21st Century as irregular forms of warfare increasingly appeared. It first emerged in relation with the war in

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[21] The means in the list derive from the definitions of conventional and unconventional warfare, see e.g. paragraphs above.

Chechnya and was introduced by US Major William J. Nemeth in 2002 (Nemeth, 2002). He considered "hybrid war" a war in which irregular and regular tactics are combined with psychological warfare and information operations. In this sense, "hybrid war" is to be understood in contrast to conventional warfare which comprises regular, clearly legitimised armies of states that operate within the framework of a defined set of rules facing each other (Asmussen, Hansen, & Meiser, 2015).

With the Israeli-Hezbollah war in Lebanon in 2006, the expression gained further popularity and awareness among military professionals[22]. The war represented the usage of regular and irregular warfare modes "that created a synergistic effect. They employed a lethal combination of conventional weaponry with improvised weaponry suited for irregular warfare and ambush attacks." (Marcuzzi, n.d., p. 3). In the end, Hezbollah won the war due to the deployment of regular and irregular modes as well as its use of the media and a deceiving political result for the Israeli government.

Likewise, the war between Georgia and Russia in 2008 is considered a "hybrid war", especially with the use of cyber warfare[23] which resulted in massive cyber-attacks against the Georgian government, banks and media websites (Marcuzzi, n.d.).

In the West, especially in Europe and the EU, "hybrid warfare" is mostly linked to Russia and its actions in Ukraine as of February 2014. However, it is no new phenomenon and no invention by Russia. Nevertheless, as to the lack of a common definition, the exact occurrence of "hybrid warfare" or elements of the form of warfare are debatable.

2.2.1. FRANK G. HOFFMAN

Frank G. Hoffman[24] analysed "hybrid warfare" with the case of the Lebanon war and the tactics of Hezbollah in 2006. By this, he became one of the most prominent theorists for the concept of "hybrid warfare". He argues that "hybrid wars" encompass a wide spectrum of different elements of war and that the concept focusses on the "ongoing implications of globalization, the diffusion of military-related technologies, and the information revolution" (Hoffman, 2018, p. 38).

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[22] Marcuzzi (n.d., p. 3) for example refers to the Israeli-Hezbollah war in Lebanon stating that this war provided "further stimulus to the debate" on "hybrid warfare". Veljovski, Taneski & Dojchinovski (2017, p. 293) also refer to the war claiming that "hybrid warfare" "became adopted as a new trend amongst military professionals to describe future warfare since the combined actions of Hezbollah in 2006."

[23] In general, cyber wars are waged against networks, for example of the government or the military of the target state, to disrupt, deny or destroy their use. The Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.) defines "cyber warfare" as "the activity of using the internet to attack a country's computers in order to damage things such as communication and transport systems or water and electricity supplies." (This source stems from an online encyclopaedia and does not provide page numbers.)

[24] No birth date could be found for Frank G. Hoffman.

Hoffman defines the warfare concept as follows: "Hybrid Wars incorporate a range of different modes of warfare, including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder. These multimodal activities can be conducted by separate units, or even by the same unit, but are generally operationally and tactically directed and coordinated within the main battlespace to achieve synergistic effects" (Hoffman, 2007, p. 14) "[…] in the physical and psychological dimensions of conflict" (Hoffman, 2009a, p. 36). Hoffman emphasises the last warfare mode, criminal disorder, which he considers the base of the disruptive character of "hybrid wars". Criminal activities, such as smuggling or illicit transfers of weapons, are used to support the "hybrid" force in general and to easily achieve disorder in the target state (Hoffman, 2009a).

"Hybrid warfare", in consequence, represents a form of multi-modal[25] conflict in comparison to a black-or-white characterisation of conflicts[26]. "Hybrid wars" are characterised by a "blending" of warfare forms: "Future threats can be increasingly characterized by a hybrid blend of traditional and irregular tactics, decentralized planning and execution, and nonstate actors, using both simple and sophisticated technologies in innovative ways." (Hoffman, 2009, p. 5). Hence, adversaries in "hybrid warfare" employ different modes of warfare to achieve an asymmetric advantage (Hoffman, 2009).

In his article "Hybrid Warfare and Challenges" (2009a) Hoffman describes the conflicts the US was faced with at that time as "convergence"[27], meaning the fusion of different elements of warfare into one threat. It is not about a growing number of distinct challenges but their convergence into "hybrid" threats, Hoffman argues: "This includes the convergence of the physical and psychological, […] combatants and noncombatants. So, too, we see the convergence of military force and the interagency community, of states and nonstate actors, and of the capabilities they are armed with." (Hoffman, 2009a, p. 34).

2.2.2. JOHN J. MCCUEN

John J. McCuen (1926-2010) was an "author, lecturer business executive and a consultant on Irregular Warfare, Counterinsurgency and Hybrid War" (Small Wars Journal, 2010[28]). He studied the concept of "hybrid warfare" and argues that conflicts are no longer fought on conventional but on asymmetric battlegrounds. McCuen emphasises, more increasingly than Hoffman, the simultaneity of actions in diverse battlegrounds. To win "hybrid wars", McCuen

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[25] "Multimodality" describes the use of different elements, as well as, for example, actors, of warfare.

[26] This expression refers to the use of single warfare elements in comparison to a multi-modal warfare approach.

[27] "Convergence", in Hoffman's meaning, describes the merging of different warfare approaches and elements. This can refer to the simultaneous use of conventional and unconventional military means or the inclusion of combatants and the civil society as non-combatants in a conflict. In consequence, "convergence" focusses on the merging of the different warfare elements into one hybrid threat.

[28] This source is an online article without page numbers.

argues, simultaneous success must be achieved on the three combined battlegrounds of "hybrid war"[29]: "the conflict zone population, the home front population, and the international community population." (McCuen, 2008, p. 107). He explains that "hybrid wars" are won or lost within these areas, as they are the "battlegrounds for legitimacy and support." (McCuen, 2008, p. 108).

McCuen (2008, p. 108) defines "hybrid wars" as "a combination of symmetric and asymmetric war in which intervening forces conduct traditional military operations against enemy military forces and targets while they must simultaneously – and more decisively – attempt to achieve control of the combat zone's indigenous populations by securing and stabilizing them (stability operations). Hybrid conflicts therefore are full spectrum wars with both physical and conceptual dimensions: the former, a struggle against an armed enemy and the latter, a wider struggle for, control and support of the combat zone's indigenous population, the support of the home fronts of the intervening nations, and the support of the international community." To win a "hybrid war", success must be achieved in all three battlegrounds. In the target state population's battleground, for instance, the aggressor will always aim at destroying, damaging or otherwise disrupting the social, political, and military critical infrastructure of the target state. However, for gaining legitimacy and support in the target state's population, the intervening force needs to rebuild such essential elements of the target state (McCuen, 2008).

Moreover, besides underlining the importance of the psychological dimension, he nevertheless emphasises that "hybrid wars" "will always contain a significant proportion of direct combat by conventional […] force" (McCuen, 2008, p. 112).

"Hybrid wars", according to McCuen, also include the protraction of the war by the enemy by conducting the war within the population of the target state "while simultaneously attempting to erode confidence at home and abroad as a precursor to military victory." He adds: "Our [the US] enemies have learned that in hybrid war, protraction wins, especially with its trenchantly modern, technology-enabled impact on spectator populations. Both the insurgent's conventional and information operations are designed to protract the war and gain outside support, thereby wearing down their enemies." (McCuen, 2008, p. 109).

2.2.3. RUSSELL W. GLENN
Russell W. Glenn (*1953) is a retired US Army officer and another military strategist who follows up on the warfare concept (Hoffman, 2009a). He defines "hybrid warfare" as follows: "An adversary that simultaneously and adaptively employs some combination of (1) political, military, economic, social and information means, and (2) conventional, irregular, catastrophic,

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[29] The three combined battlegrounds of "hybrid war" are to be seen in addition to the conventional battleground.

terrorism, and disruptive/criminal warfare methods. It may include a combination of state and non-state actors." (Glenn, n.d.[30]).

He includes "catastrophic" into the list of "hybrid warfare" characteristics, meaning "any natural or man-made incident, including terrorism, which results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, and/or government functions" (Glenn, n.d.).

Furthermore, Glenn explicitly considers the use of non-military, hence political, economic, social and information means. Similar to Hoffman, Glenn also refers to the Second Lebanon War in 2006 underlining Hezbollah's "political, social, diplomatic, and informational components that provide bedrock support for its military organization" (Glenn, n.d.). He considers these components the real strength of the group, namely the "comprehensive approach", which in the end led to Hezbollah's success against Israel's military forces.

In consequence, Glenn acknowledges the "comprehensive" character of "hybrid" threats which include all elements of power, both military and non-military.

2.3. RUSSIAN CONCEPT OF IRREGULAR WARFARE

To provide a well-funded theoretical framework, the Russian side and view on this warfare form must be considered as well[31]. As to Rácz (2015, p. 34) "Russian military thinkers have also studied the changes taking place in the nature of warfare in depth, and the emergence of new forms of combat" in line with Western developments. However, when analysing the concepts of Russian military strategists, it quickly becomes obvious that there is a different focus. According to Fridman (2017, p. 43), Russia's focus is more on the non-military spheres of "politics, economy, social development, culture" whereas the US military thinkers rather focus on military activities.

The theoretical bases for Russian "gibridnaya voyna" were already laid out by Evgeny Messner in the 1960s with his theory of "subversion" or "rebellious" wars ("myatezh-voyna"). Masuhr (2019, p. 2) confirms this, arguing that modern Russian warfare is based on the arguments put forward by traditional military theorists "even if in recent history the emphasis has been placed more on non-military and unconventional means". In the aftermath, Messner's concept has

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[30] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[31] "Hybrid war" in Russian is "gibridnaya voyna" (Fridman, 2017). However, the notion was mostly absent from Russian military literature until 2014 when Western strategists as well as journalists started using the term for describing the conflict waged in Ukraine (Jójárt, 2019).

been further developed by Russian military strategists, of whom General Makhmut A. Gareev and General Valery Gerasimov will be considered in this thesis[32].

2.3.1. EVGENY MESSNER

Evgeny Messner (1891-1974)[33] was a Russian military theorist[34]. In his works[35] Messner claims: "Today [1959], the regular forces have lost their military monopoly; the irregular forces are fighting together with regular […] forces." (Fridman, 2017, p. 43, quoted from Messner, 1959[36]). He describes the changing of the nature of conflicts and predicts the rise of multidimensional wars in which both, regular and irregular activities are used, supported by information warfare (Fridman, 2017). Consequently, he predicts the decline of wars between nation-states for the 21st Century (Banasik, 2016; Fridman, 2018).

According to Messner, the main type of conflict will be fought by irregular means and with a variety of actors. He names these types of conflicts "rebellious" or "subversion wars". He includes actions such as terrorism, guerrilla activities and sabotages among the irregular warfare means (Messner, 2005). Furthermore, Messner claims that new types of conflict will also include political, social, and economic fronts next to the military front (Fridman, 2018).

Actors will not only be of military, but also of civilian nature as "secret police and rebel militia" (Messner, 2005[37]) for instance, and will mostly be integrated in rebellions and national movements. In line with this, Messner underlines the focus on psychological factors: "If in classical wars the morale of standing armies was of great importance, then in the current era of nations in arms and violent popular movements, psychological factors have become dominant. A people's army is a psychological organism, therefore a popular movement is a purely psychological phenomenon." (Fridman, 2017, p. 44, quoted from Messner, 1960[38]).

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[32] As this thesis is interested in the concept of "hybrid warfare" as deployed by Russia during the Ukrainian Crisis, only military concepts of Russian origin will be considered. Nevertheless, the "Primakov Doctrine", named after former foreign and prime minister Yevgeny Primakov, shall be mentioned at this point as the "doctrine that has guided Russian policy for over two decades" (Rumer, 2019 – no page numbers provided) as a reference for Russia's reasons for intervening in the Ukraine. For more information, see: Rumer, E. (2019). The Primakov (Not Gerasimov) Doctrine in Action. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Retrieved from https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/06/05/primakov-not-gerasimov-doctrine-in-action-pub-79254 (last accessed 17.06.2020).

[33] For this thesis, secondary literature was used in addition to Messner's work "If you want peace, defeat the rebellion!" that was accessible to the author. It was translated with the online translator deepl.com.

[34] Until the end of the Cold War his publications were prohibited in the USSR because of his strong anti-Communist opinions. After the Cold War, however, his works on military strategy became increasingly popular in Russian military thinking (Fridman, 2018).

[35] Two of the most popular theoretical works are "Subversion – The Name of the Third World War" ("Myatezh – Imya Tret'yey Vsemirnoy"), Buenos Aires: South American Division of the Institute for the Study of the Problems of War and Peace, 1960; and "The Face of the Contemporary War" ("Lik sovremennoy voyny"). Buenos Aires: South American Division of the Institute for the Study of the Problems of War and Peace.

[36] Messner, E. (1959). *Lik sovremennoy voyny [The Face of the Contemporary War].* Buenos Aires: South American Division of the Institute for the Study of the Problems of War and Peace, p. 11.

[37] This source is an online E-Book without page numbers.

[38] Messner, E. (1960). *Myatezh – Imya Tret'yey Vsemirnoy [Subversion – The Name of the Third World War].* Buenos Aires: South American Division of the Institute for the Study of the Problems of War and Peace, p. 5.

According to Messner, the new type of war evinces a revolutionary character and will make use of aggressive diplomacy and subversive activities, such as disorder and propaganda (Banasik, 2016). The purpose of those "rebellious wars" is to achieve the destabilisation of state structures which consequently leads to the collapse of the targeting state. Hence, the fight will take place within the territory of the target state.

For winning these "rebellious" or "subversive" conflicts, Messner emphasises the need for propaganda as the success or failure of wars will depend on the nation's spirit (Fridman, 2018). Moreover, he underlines the value of information and communication methods and instruments for rapidly accessing and responding to information as well as for destabilising the target state's systems of command (Banasik, 2016).

2.3.2. GENERAL MAKHMUT A. GAREEV[39]

General Makhmut A. Gareev (1923-2019) is generally considered Russia's "foremost military theorist" (McDermott, 2014[40]). In his book "If War Came Tomorrow" (1995)[41] Gareev argues that the nature of warfare will change, primarily due to the appearance of advanced and high-accuracy conventional weapons as well as electronic and information warfare.

Gareev refers to B. H. Lidell Hart's "indirect approach" that will dominate warfare strategy: "Now a new era has begun, when it is especially important to understand that indirect actions give no less effect." (Gareev, 1998, p.15). He includes actions such as political measures, economic sanctions, blockades of air, sea and land routes or the demonstration of power into the range of "indirect actions". These should, nevertheless, be backed by military actions in case they do not lead to the desired results (Garejew, 1996, p. 114). Consequently, Gareev foresees, at least if necessary, the simultaneous use of military and non-military means. Furthermore, he argues that new technological weapons will allow for simplified simultaneous actions during conflicts (Garejew, 1996).

Within the range of "indirect means" Gareev pays special attention to psychological and subversive and intimidating actions as well as the deployment of special troops. He states that every fighting action should use surprising effects, meaning the disguising of crucial deployment methods and the disinformation of the enemy (Garejew, 1996).

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[39] Makhmut A. Gareev is the spelling that will be used in this thesis. Another common spelling, above all in the German literature, is Machmut A. Garejew.
[40] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[41] In this thesis, the 1996 German edition "Konturen des bewaffneten Kampfes der Zukunft. Ein Ausblick auf das Militärwesen in den nächsten 10 bis 15 Jahren" sponsored by the Federal Institute for Eastern and International Studies in Cologne and published by Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, will be used. Furthermore, an extract of the 1998 English edition "If War Comes Tomorrow? The Contours of Future Armed Conflict" edited and with an Introduction by Jacob W. Kipp and published by FRANK CASS Publishers, London, will be used.

Gareev also emphasises the utility of information warfare for creating "mass psychosis, despair and feelings of doom" by "systematic broadcasting of psychologically and ideologically-biased materials of a provocative nature, mixing partially truthful and false items of information" (Rácz, 2015, p. 35, quoted from Gareev, 1998[42]). In general, the use of information warfare can lead to the destabilisation of states, thus, creating a fruitful basis for actions of the aggressor. Gareev furthermore considers information warfare a decisive means that could lead to a change from direct to hidden and undeclared conflicts (Rácz, 2015).

2.3.3. GENERAL VALERY GERASIMOV

In 2013 General of the Army Valery Gerasimov (*1955), Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, published his military doctrine[43] of "new generation warfare" with a focus on information technologies and has since been associated with Russian "hybrid warfare" (Rumer, 2019).

His doctrine is an article entitled "The Value of Science Is in the Foresight – New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations"[44]. He wrote: "The very 'rules of war' have changed. The role of non-military means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness. […] All this is supplemented by military means of a concealed character." (Gerasimov, 2016, p. 24). Hence, according to Gerasimov, the objectives that had been achieved by military means such as direct military action, can now be achieved by the simultaneous and converged use of non-military means, for instance economic pressure, information technologies as well as political and diplomatic pressure or information warfare.

Gerasimov forecasts the link between conventional warfare and non-military means to achieve successful warfare. The non-military means are therefore not only a supplement to the regular force but the best way to win. He states that the new form of warfare includes a broad range of domains, so describing a "whole-of-government warfare" which entails conflicts at all fronts where hard and soft power are fused with a variety of actors and instruments.

Gerasimov focusses explicitly on the potential provided by information technologies which make "[l]ong-distance, contactless actions against the enemy […] the main means of achieving combat and operational goals." (Gerasimov, 2016, p. 24). He values non-military instruments

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[42] Garrev, M. (1998). *If War Comes Tomorrow? The Contours of Future Armed Conflict*, p. 53. Translated by Yakov Vladimirovich Fomenko. Routledge, Abingdon.

[43] It is called the "Gerasimov doctrine" in the Western states. The term "doctrine" was given by Mark Galeotti when publishing a translated version of Gerasimov's article with his comments on his blog: "[…] for a snappy title, I coined the term 'Gerasimov doctrine', though even then I noted in the text that this term was nothing more than 'a placeholder', and 'it certainly isn't a doctrine'." (Galeotti, 2018 – no page numbers provided).

[44] The version used in this work is the translated version published in "Military Review" in 2016: https://jmc.msu.edu/50th/download/21-conflict.pdf (last accessed 17.06.2020). The article was originally published in February 2013 in the weekly Russian trade paper "Military-Industrial Kurier".

and their superiority to direct military means, so their potential for reaching political and strategic goals. At this point, once again, he emphasises the importance of technological means which can create situations of unrest, chaos and conflict in the target state: "The information space opens wide asymmetrical possibilities for reducing the fighting potential of the enemy." (Gerasimov, 2016, p. 27). Hence, he envisages the deployment of various tools such as hackers and the spread of fake news.

2.4. OPERATIONALISATION OF THE THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Having presented the theoretical bases of "hybrid warfare" from the American and irregular warfare from the Russian point of view, this basis must be operationalised and, in this way, turned into an analytical framework for the identification of Russian "hybrid warfare" deployed during the Ukrainian Crisis in 2014.

First, the "hybrid warfare" concepts of the three American theorists will be fused into a working definition to be used for this thesis. In the next step, the three Russian concepts will also be operationalised to identify their main characteristics. The final step is the combination of both, the Western and the Russian angle into the definition and analytical framework for the case study on Russian "hybrid warfare" deployment during the Ukrainian Crisis.

2.4.1. HYBRID WARFARE

The "hybrid warfare" concepts of Frank G. Hoffman, John J. McCuen and Russel W. Glenn share similar elements but also differ in some respects. Following their concepts, "hybrid warfare" can be defined as follows: "Hybrid warfare" is characterised by multi-modality, the deployment of different warfare elements, and convergence, the fusion of different warfare modes into one threat. Warfare and non-warfare methods are employed within "hybrid" wars. The non-warfare modes comprise economic, social, political and information means as well as technological means whereas the warfare means include both conventional and unconventional methods. Furthermore, elements can also be terrorism and criminal and disruptive behaviour. "Hybrid warfare" operates in both, the physical and the psychological, in McCuen's words conceptual, dimension and actions can be deployed simultaneously.

Especially McCuen underlines the psychological dimension of modern conflicts, stating that success must be achieved in the controlling of the three combined battlegrounds of "hybrid wars": the conflict zone's indigenous population as well as the home front and the international community. Nevertheless, the theorists, especially Hoffman, focus rather on the deployment of military warfare means, such as conventional and unconventional elements.

The identified characteristics will be divided into warfare modes and dimensions, according to the concept of Hoffman.

	Modes	**Dimensions**
Hoffman	▪ Conventional capabilities ▪ Irregular tactics ▪ Terrorism ▪ Criminal disorder	▪ Simultaneity ▪ Convergence ▪ Multi-modality ▪ Physical ▪ Psychological
McCuen	▪ Conventional capabilities ▪ Information means ▪ Disruptive behaviour	▪ Simultaneity ▪ Physical ▪ Conceptual (the three decisive battlegrounds)
Glenn	▪ Non-military means ▪ Conventional capabilities ▪ Irregular methods ▪ Terrorism ▪ Disruptive/criminal warfare	▪ Simultaneity ▪ Multi-modality ▪ Catastrophic

2.4.2. RUSSIAN IRREGULAR WARFARE

Evgeny Messner, General Makhmut A. Gareev and General Valery Gerasimov establish a warfare concept that focusses on the use of both regular and irregular warfare means and, in the case of Messner and Gerasimov, also on the variety of actors. All three concepts share the deployment of non-military means such as psychological and economic means and underline the importance of information warfare, hence propaganda. Gerasimov primarily focusses on the deployment of information technologies. Especially Messner and Gareev underline the psychological dimension of future wars which include, besides information warfare means, also intimidating actions for example. Messner and Gerasimov also focus on the deployment of irregular warfare means such as terrorism and guerrilla.

In consequence, all three emphasise the need for and the value of non-military means such as propaganda and political, technological, and economic instruments which, in their concepts of warfare, are combined with and supported by military means. Furthermore, they underline the multi-modality of wars. Gareev and Gerasimov also address the simultaneity of the deployment of warfare elements and Gerasimov points furthermore to the convergence of warfare means.

In comparison to the three American theorists who focus more on the deployment of military means, the Russian strategists also consider the deployment of non-military means highly effective. A focus on specific elements of warfare, especially on the psychological element propaganda as in the concepts of Messner and Gareev, can be accounted for.

	Modes	**Dimensions**
Messner	▪ Conventional activities ▪ Unconventional activities ▪ Non-military means (special focus on psychological means)	▪ Psychological ▪ Physical ▪ Multi-modality
Gareev	▪ Non-military means ("indirect actions") ▪ Military means	▪ Psychological ▪ Physical ▪ Simultaneity ▪ Multi-modality
Gerasimov	▪ Non-military means (special focus on technological means) ▪ Military means	▪ Simultaneity ▪ Convergence ▪ Multi-modality

2.4.3. HYBRID WARFARE – WORKING DEFINITION

Notwithstanding the missing name "hybrid warfare" for their concepts, the comparison with the above-mentioned framework for "hybrid warfare" elements, hence warfare modes and dimensions, reveals similarities: The theorists underline the use of both, conventional and unconventional warfare means as well as military and non-military elements. Hoffman, and especially McCuen and the two Russian military strategists Messner and Gareev also emphasise the psychological dimension of conflicts and the concomitant means such as forms of pressure, propaganda, or coercion.

Nevertheless, the American concepts reveal a focus on the physical components of "hybrid warfare", whereas the Russian concepts rather underline the importance of psychological warfare elements. Within the psychological dimension of conflicts, primarily the two Russian strategists Messner and Gareev focus on the value of information warfare. Gerasimov highly emphasises the value of information technology for the success of modern conflicts.

Finally, especially the Russian theorists and McCuen agree on the aim of destabilising the target state and taking over the control of the target state's population. In consequence, as especially McCuen and Messner point out, the battleground is not only of conventional nature,

but includes the society in the target state, as well as in the aggressor's state and the international community.

All in all, the theorists identify the following modes of warfare: conventional warfare, unconventional warfare, terrorism, criminal and disruptive warfare, information warfare (propaganda), intimidation, information technology, economic pressure, political and diplomatic pressure, social means, and the control and support of the combined battlegrounds.

These can be divided into physical and psychological means which fits the explanations of Frank G. Hoffman and John J. McCuen who state that hybrid warfare is fought on the physical and the conceptual battleground, the latter meaning the psychological, hence the unphysical, nature of the conflict:

<div align="center">Modes</div>

Physical	- Conventional warfare - Unconventional warfare - Terrorism - Criminal and disruptive behaviour
Psychological	- Information warfare (propaganda)[45] - Intimidation - Information technology - Economic pressure - Political and diplomatic pressure - Social means (control and support of the combined battlegrounds)

Conventional warfare is related to the military capabilities of a state, such as its army, navy or air force. Unconventional warfare, on the other hand, includes the use of irregular tactics and formations, for example guerrilla or militia. Terrorism will be defined in accordance with Hoffman's definition of "indiscriminate violence and coercion" (Hoffman, 2007, p. 14). Criminal activities such as smuggling or illicit transfer of weapons are also mentioned by Hoffman (2009a).

The psychological dimension includes information warfare which refers to the usage of propaganda and information campaigns, for instance for spreading disinformation. The element of intimidation refers to the use of measures that create a feeling of danger in the

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[45] For reasons of clarity, "propaganda" is put in brackets to provide a synonym for "information warfare" as this is very similar with "information technology" and might otherwise lead to disorientation. The two expressions will be used interchangeably in this work.

target state and its population (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d. a). Information technology, not to be mixed up with information warfare, signifies the use of information technology for accessing networks or systems of the target state, for example with the use of cyber-attacks. The economic warfare element describes "the use of, or the threat to use, economic means against a country in order to weaken its economy and thereby reduce its political and military power" (Shambaugh, n.d.). Political and diplomatic pressure is defined as "the intentional use of one or more of [the instrument of power] to affect the political composition of decisionmaking in a state." (Robinson et al., 2019, p. 1). The social means, in this thesis, will consider the three decisive battlegrounds mentioned by McCuen and the means for control as well as the degree of control achieved by Russia over them.

The theorists identify six dimensions: simultaneity, convergence, multi-modality, catastrophe, and the physical and psychological dimension of "hybrid warfare". Simultaneity describes the application of different modes of warfare at the same time. Convergence means the fusion of different warfare elements into one threat, for instance the fusion of conventional and unconventional elements into one "hybrid" threat. Multi-modality, on the other hand, considers the general use of different warfare means and actors during the conflict. The catastrophic dimension, according to Glenn, describes any man-made or natural incident which severely affects the population. Lastly, the physical and psychological dimension are the generic terms for the above-mentioned division in warfare modes.

Simultaneity	Convergence	Multi-modality
Catastrophe	Physical	Psychological
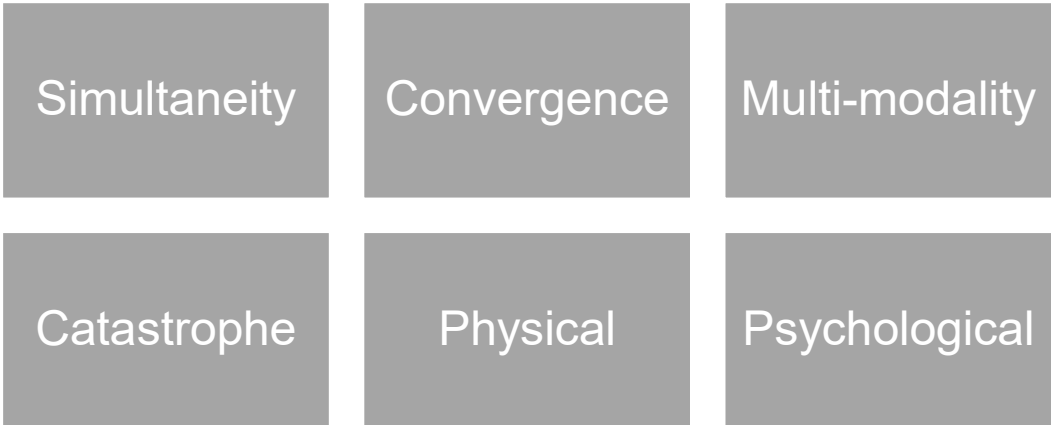
3. THE UKRAINIAN CASE 2013-2014

The Ukrainian Crisis which resulted, among others, in the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the secession of the two Ukrainian oblasts Donetsk and Luhansk, began in November 2013. Its catalyst were internal Ukrainian protests against former President Yanukovych who had decided to postpone the signing of the European Union Association

Agreement[46] (Marxsen, 2014). The subsequent intervention by the Russian Federation in Ukraine, which had long time been denied during the crisis by Russian President Putin, was later declared a Russian intervention for support and began in late February 2014 (Allison, 2014)[47]. The international community, however, declared the intervention "an act of war in contravention of the United Nations Charter and international law." (Murphy, 2016, p. 1).

Before explaining the events that took place in Ukraine, a brief historical overview will be given.

3.1. THE UKRAINIAN HISTORY FROM 1991-2014

Today, Ukraine is Europe's second largest country. Due to its historical ties with Russia, a significant minority of 40% of the Ukrainian population has Russian as its mother tongue, especially in the East of the country (Kellermann, 2018; Matviyishyn & Michalski, 2017). In general, around 17% of the Ukrainian population are of Russian ethnic origin (index mundi, 2019), particularly in the Eastern parts of the country (see map 1, p. 31) (Lindekugel, 2011).

Since 1922, Ukraine, named the "Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic", was part of the Soviet Union. This rested in place until 1991, the year that marked the breakup of the Soviet Union (Yerofeyev et al., n.d.). As of this year, Ukrainian foreign politics were balancing between the West and Russia. The joining of the EU and NATO were declared Ukrainian priorities, for example, while treaties on the bilateral relation between Ukraine and Russia were signed in the 1990s (Suba, 2019).

In 1991, aspirations for Ukrainian independence succeeded in the renewed independence of the Ukrainian state. As of this year that was also marked by the fall of the Soviet Union, Ukraine was separated between those in favour of closer relations with the West and especially the EU and those supporting tighter relations with Russia (Cfr, n.d.).

The first half of the 1990's was marked by an increasingly independent state that was seeking for better relations with its neighbouring countries in the West. In 1994, for instance, Ukraine joined NATO's Partnership for Peace, "a collaborative arrangement for non-NATO European countries and post-Soviet States" and in 1997 Ukraine and NATO agreed on a deepened

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[46] A European Union Association Agreement designates a treaty between the European Union, its Member States and a non-EU country. The treaty creates a framework for cooperation between the parties which establishes "a special relationship" (BMAS, 2018 – no page numbers provided).

[47] While President Putin denied the intervention of Russian soldiers and troops, he later admitted that the Crimean annexation was deemed necessary for preventing Ukraine's NATO accession (Rácz, 2015). On April 17, 2014, Putin admitted that Russian troops had been present in Crimea (Murphy, 2016). On March 15, 2015, he admitted that Russia had planned the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula weeks before the referendum on the peninsula. On Russian TV, the President explained that he had ordered work on "returning Crimea" to begin on 22 February 2014, after Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych had been ousted (BBC News, 2015 – no page numbers provided).

partnership[48] (Cfr, n.d.[49]). Furthermore, also in 1994, Russia, Ukraine, the United States and the United Kingdom signed the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances. The three states guaranteed Ukraine security assurances in exchange for giving up its nuclear weapons (UN Treaty, 1994).

With the elections in 1994, however, the picture changed. Leonid Kuchma was elected President of Ukraine, especially due to the support of industrialists, unemployed and Soviet nostalgics from the East and the South of the country (Lindekugel, 2011). His presidency was marked by an economic decline as well as several economic crises and charges of corruption (Cfr, n.d.; Lindekugel, 2011). Furthermore, although a new constitution was ratified in 1996, Kuchma managed to strengthen his presidential position. The opposition, the communists, however, won the parliamentary elections in 1998. Notwithstanding, Kuchma was re-elected President in 1999, having presented himself as the only alternative to communism (Lindekugel, 2011).

The situation, nevertheless, did not improve, and Kuchma lost the population's trust in the East and South of Ukraine. His term finally ended in 2004. In autumn of the same year, Ukraine experienced the "Orange Revolution", a peaceful protest movement. It was triggered by massive electoral fraud in the presidential elections between Viktor Yanukovych, supported by Kuchma and the Russian Federation, and Viktor Yurchenko, the main opposition candidate. Yanukovych called for better ties with Russia, while his opponent Yurchenko wanted Ukraine to turn its attention to the West with the aim of joining the EU. Kuchma's favourite candidate won the elections but doubts on the correct election completions quickly came up which led to protest movements in Kiev and other cities. The Ukrainian Supreme Court finally declared the election results null and void and Yurchenko, in a second runoff, won the elections (Karatnycky, 2005).

During his term, Yurchenko turned his attention to the EU. His electoral support, however, evaporated during this time and in the presidential elections in 2010, Yanukovych became the new President of Ukraine, bringing back the aim of intensified relations with Russia (BBC News, 2010). Yet, he explained to the BBC that "Ukraine's integration with the EU remains our strategic aim." (BBC News, 2010[50]).

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[48] This deepened partnership, also called "distinctive partnership" aimed at "building an enhanced NATO-Ukraine Relationship" (NATO, 1997 – no page numbers provided) on the basis of, for example, a strengthened consultation and cooperation between the two actors on political and security related subjects or conflict prevention. To do so, a NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) was established (NATO, 1997).

[49] This source is an online document without page numbers.

[50] This source is an online article without page numbers.

Despite his claim, Yanukovych denied signing the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement which led to protests in Kiev and, eventually, to the Ukrainian revolution[52] in 2014.

3.2. THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS 2013-2014

The Ukrainian Crisis is widely considered an expression for the geopolitical competition between the EU and the West, and Russia for influence in the post-Soviet space. Repeatedly, the crisis is compared to Russian intervention in Georgia in 2008 as the relations between Russia and its Western neighbours have still not improved, but the rife with the West has further increased (Euractiv, 2018). Like Russia's intervention in Ukraine, it intervened in Georgia for supporting the pro-Russian region South Ossetia: "Russia demonstrated its military might […] and showed its readiness to defend – by force, if necessary – its interests in the region it considers its sphere of influence. Six years later in another ex-Soviet country, Russia annexed the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea from Ukraine in response to pro-Western politicians taking power in Kiev" (Euractiv, 2018[53]).

According to a report of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) (2019[54]) the effects of the crisis "are felt across Eastern Europe and Eurasia, and have led to further polarisation between Russia on the one side and the European Union, NATO and the

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[51] The map is retrieved from the New York Times *"Ukraine Crisis in Maps – A visual guide to the continuing conflict"*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-divisions-crimea.html (last accessed 09.06.2020).

[52] Also known as Euromaidan Revolution, meaning the protests that took place in February 2014 with a series of violent protests. It is also called "Euromaidan" due to the events taken place on the Maidan Nezalezhnosti (literally: place of independence) in Kiev (Suba, 2019).

[53] This source is an online article without page numbers.

[54] This source is an online article without page numbers.

United States on the other. Ultimately the events in Ukraine have led to the deepest rift between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War."

3.2.1. THE ACTORS OF THE CRISIS

The actors of the crisis are on the one side the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian nationalists. On the other side are the pro-Russian separatists and, even though long time denied, the Russian Federation. Special attention in analyses and reports is brought to non-state actors, who play a crucial role in the crisis.

The Ukrainian state and its supporters, hence the Ukrainian nationalists, are in favour of deeper relations with the West, especially with the EU and NATO. That is why the postponement of the signing of the EU Association Agreement led to protests by pro-European Ukrainians. The government in Kiev was completely crushed by the actions that took place in Crimea and later in the Donbas region which led to the military advantage of the rebels and Ukraine's only late intervention (BBC News, 2014b). As such, Ukraine also lost control of the two Eastern oblasts Donetsk and Luhansk (International Crisis Group, 2014).

The pro-Russian separatists, on the other hand, sought closer ties to Russia. They were mostly found on the Crimean Peninsula as well as in the Eastern parts of Ukraine, where the Russian language is most widely spread (see map 1 & 3, p. 35). On this side, the self-proclaimed "People's Republic" in Donetsk and Luhansk can also be counted among the pro-Russian separatists coming into play as of the start of the fighting in the Donbas (Fischer, 2019).

On the side of the pro-Russian separatists is also the Russian Federation even though it "refuses to acknowledge its role as a party" (Fischer, 2019, p. 5) to the war in Donbas and also long time denied its intervention on the Crimean Peninsula[55].

The international community did not intervene militarily, but member states of the EU, the EU itself as well as NATO and the US aimed at resolving the conflict through negotiations. The two Minsk agreements of 2014 and 2015[56] should provide the basis for a resting peace. Its preconditions, hence, the preconditions for successfully implementing the two agreements, however, are constantly aggravating and a resting peace has not yet been achieved (Fischer, 2019).

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[55] As of August 2014, however, when the pro-Russian separatists experienced defeat and the city of Donetsk was surrounded by the forces of the Ukrainian government, Russia actively intervened in the war (International Crisis Group, 2014a).

[56] The Minsk agreements consist of "Minsk I" (the Protocol of September 2014) and "Minsk II" (package of measures of February 2015). The agreements were prepared with the help of the OSCE and were signed by Russia, Ukraine, the OSCE as well as the separatists of the "People's Republics" in Eastern Ukraine (Stewart, 2016). The process was monitored by the countries of the "Normandy Format", Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine (see next footnote).

Among the EU member states, especially Germany and France played a crucial role to the conflict's resolution, namely in the so-called "Normandy Format"[57]. The EU as well as the US reacted to the Ukrainian Crisis by imposing sanctions on Russia, hence they consider Russia being the aggressor in the crisis.

Even though the international community, in form of the above-mentioned actors, tries to influence the war in Donbas and the crisis in general, it only has a limited scope of possibility. There are, for instance, no relations between the West and the People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk as they are completely dependent on Russia and the international community did not recognise the referendums on May 11, 2014, in the oblasts.

3.2.2. OVERVIEW ON THE CRISIS 2013-2014

Because of Yanukovych's denial to sign the EU Association Agreement, months of demonstrations started in November 2013 in Kiev and other cities in Western Ukraine (Stetsvych, 2020). President Yanukovych, notwithstanding the protest movements, again refused the signing of the agreement which triggered further protests and dissatisfaction among the Ukrainian population (Costea, 2019). On February 22, 2014, the Ukrainian Parliament decided to dismiss President Yanukovych who, in consequence, fled to Russia (Costea, 2019; Welt, 2015).

MAP 2 - SITUATION AS OF BEGINNING OF MARCH 2014[58]

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[57] This format was created on June 6, 2014, when the leaders of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine met for the first time (de Galbert, 2015).
[58] The map is retrieved from the New York Times *"Ukraine Crisis in Maps – A visual guide to the continuing conflict"*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-divisions-crimea.html (last accessed 09.06.2020).

The crisis physically began in the night of February 26 to 27, 2014, with the appearance of "little green men", soldiers without insignias, on the Crimean Peninsula (Murphy, 2016). They occupied the Crimean parliament in its capital Simferopol, as well as other administrative and military buildings throughout the peninsula (see map 2), and requested the immediate setting of a date for a referendum on the membership of Crimea (MDR, 2020). Subsequently, the deputy Sergei Aksionov, member of the small party "Russian Unity", was elected Prime Minister of Crimea and the date for the referendum on Crimea's citizenship was set for March 16, 2014[59] (Euronews, 2016; MDR, 2020). The majority of the Crimean population, according to official Russian sources, voted for the reunification with Russia, and on March 18, Russian President Wladimir Putin and Crimean Prime Minister Sergej Aksionov signed the accession treaty between the Crimean Peninsula and the Russian Federation (MDR, 2020; Welt, 2016).

Costea (2019, p. 10) describes the situation on the Crimean Peninsula as follows: "Russia's special forces managed to occupy the peninsula without firing a single shot and on March 18, 2014, the Russian Parliament voted for the annexation of Crimea." The EU and US did not recognise the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and consider it a "blatant breach of international law" (lpb, n.d.[60]). The West reacted with economic and political sanctions against Russia and politicians from both, Russia and Crimea (EEAS, 2020). Putin, however, justified his hard line and attacked the West instead: he called the Crimean referendum "convincing", democratic and in accordance with international law. The Crimean Peninsula would be an "inseparable" part of Russia (Putin, 2014).

On March 23, the Russian Federation had also taken military control over Crimea and Russian troops had been stationed on the Eastern border of Ukraine (lpb, n.d.). In the following days, Russia gained complete sovereignty over the Peninsula and the rouble was introduced in addition to the Ukrainian national currency hryvnia (Arnold, 2014).

While the events in Crimea overturned, actions started in Eastern Ukraine when pro-Russian protests escalated into separatist movements. On March 1, pro-Russian demonstrations were held in the regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Mariupol, Kharkiv, and Odessa (Costea, 2019). The protests and demonstrations concerned the repeal of the law on the policy of state language[61] (BBC News, 2014). Similarly, on this day, the upper house of the Russian parliament approved

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[59] During the referendum, the Crimean population had the choice to either support the reunification with Russia (Crimea would become a federal subject of the Russian Federation) or a return to the Crimean constitution of 1992 which would grant the region more autonomy rights than Crimea had in 2014 (BBC News, 2014a; lpb, n.d.).
[60] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[61] On February 23, the Ukrainian Parliament revoked the law on the policy of state language. This law allowed the usage of minority languages in public institutions in those regions where minorities exceed 10% of the population (Costea, 2019). The law, for example, applied for the South-Eastern part of Ukraine where the ethnically Russian population is mostly situated. In consequence, great dissatisfaction arose among the Russian-speaking population which led to further protest movements (Costea, 2019).

the sending of Russian troops to Ukraine (lpb, n.d.; Tagesschau, n.d.). At this point, Ukraine already accused Russia of having transferred 6,000 soldiers and 30 armoured vehicles to Crimea. On March 2, Ukraine mobilised all its reservists due to its consideration of Russia's actions as a "declaration of war" (lpb, n.d.).

MAP 3 - SITUATION AS OF APRIL 14, 2014[62]

Until the beginning of April, the protests and separatist movements continued. On April 7, the protests had "degenerated and […] protesters occupied the main buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk." (Costea, 2019, p. 11)[63]. In Donetsk, the protesters declared the region's independence as the "People's Republic of Donetsk". The same happened in Luhansk on April 27, where the protesters declared the independence of the "Luhansk People's Republic" (Costea, 2019, p. 11).

Only as of April 15, Ukraine acted by starting an armed offensive against the protesters in Eastern Ukraine (BBC News, 2014b). April 17 seemed to present a "glimmer of hope" when representatives of the US, Russia, Ukraine and the EU held a crisis meeting (Borger & Luhn, 2014[64]). The establishment of a "broad national dialogue" and the protection of rights of citizens

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[62] The map is retrieved from the New York Times *"Ukraine Crisis in Maps – A visual guide to the continuing conflict"*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-divisions-crimea.html (last accessed 09.06.2020).

[63] On April 12, for example, the situation in Slavyansk in Eastern Ukraine escalated when several people were killed during an anti-terrorist operation by security-forces against pro-Russian groups. The Ukrainian interim government accused the separatists of "using human shields" and Moscow of "waging war against Ukraine and creating chaos in the east of the country" (lpb, n.d. – no page numbers provided).

[64] This source is an online article without page numbers.

were crucial points of their decision (McCarthy & Tran, 2014[65]). This should include the disarmament of illegal armed groups all over Ukraine and all occupied buildings should be returned to their rightful owners (BBC News, 2014c). However, neither side adhered to the decisions: pro-Russian separatists continued to occupy administrative buildings and the Ukrainian government declared new attacks against the separatists in the East of the country (lpb, n.d.).

MAP 4 - SITUATION AS OF APRIL 25, 2014[66]

One week later, on April 24, the situation in Eastern Ukraine was extremely heated (see map 4). Special government units fought pro-Russian separatists armed with tanks. Moscow reacted with a major manoeuvre directly on the Ukrainian border until April 28 (see map 3 for already placed Russian forces at the borders). The pro-Russian separatists were even holding OSCE[67] inspectors as "prisoners of war" who were only being released on May 3 (OSCE, 2014[68]). The EU as well as other Western countries, above all the US, increased their sanctions against Russia which accused the US to return to times of the Cold War (lpb, n.d.).

During the end of April and the beginning of May, pro-Russian separatists took control over an increasing number of cities in Eastern Ukraine: on May 1, for example, attackers stormed the

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[65] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[66] The map is retrieved from the New York Times *"Ukraine Crisis in Maps – A visual guide to the continuing conflict"*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-divisions-crimea.html (last accessed 09.06.2020).
[67] OSCE – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.
[68] This source is an online article without page numbers.

public prosecutor's building in Donetsk. The Ukrainian government, meanwhile, admitted being helpless against this and reintroduced conscription (Nemtsova, 2014).

On May 2, the Ukrainian government launched an offensive against pro-Russian forces in Kramatorsk and Slovyansk which resulted in fierce battles. In Odessa, dozens of people died in the fights between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian nationalists. Similar fights continued all over Eastern Ukraine in the first weeks of May (lpb, n.d.; Welt, 2016).

MAP 5 - SITUATION AS OF MAY 10, 2014[69]

On May 11, the pro-Russian separatists initiated the referendum in Donetsk, in which 89% of the participants voted for secession from Ukraine according to the head of the self-appointed Donetsk Electoral Commission, Roman Lyagin (Walker, Grytsenko & Amos, 2014). On the same day, a referendum was also held in Luhansk with an approval rate said to be up to 96% (Walker, Grytsenko & Amos, 2014). The referendums were not internationally recognised
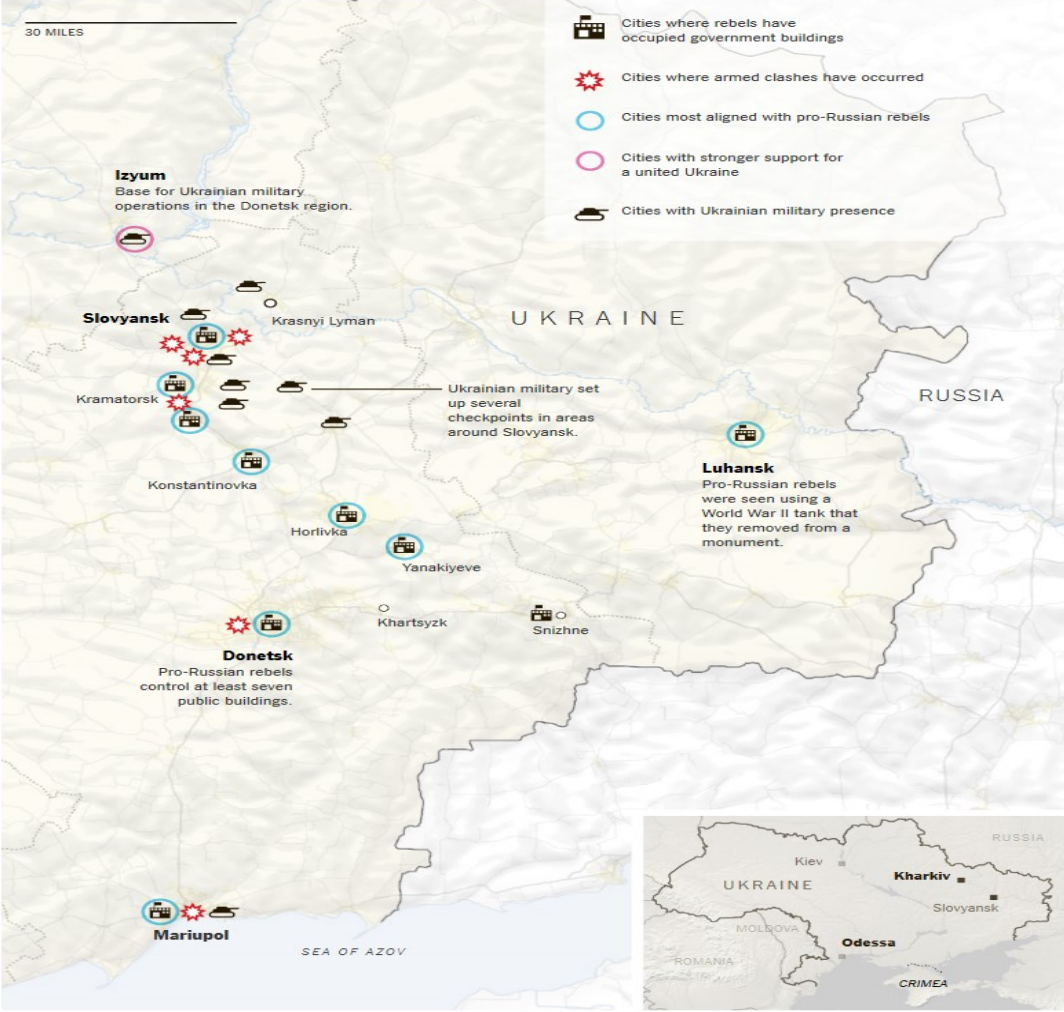
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[69] The map is retrieved from the New York Times *"Ukraine Crisis in Maps – A visual guide to the continuing conflict"*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine-divisions-crimea.html (last accessed 09.06.2020).

except of by Russia. The transitional government in Kiev described the elections as a "criminal farce" (lpb, n.d.[70]).

As outlined in the introduction, May 11, 2014 will be the final date for the examination period. Nevertheless, the fighting continued in Eastern Ukraine and is now known as the "war in Donbas" or "war in the Donbas region" (Hamilton, 2019, p. 3). On September 5, 2014, Ukraine and the separatists came to a deal "to halt violence and free prisoners" (known as "Minsk I" because agreed upon in Minsk) (Kirby, 2015[71]). However, the ceasefire revealed once again as fragile. On February 12, 2015, a new agreement between Ukraine and Russia ("Minsk II"), mediated by Germany and France, was signed. It intended to end the fighting and to achieve a sustainable ceasefire (bpb, 2019). The fighting in Eastern Ukraine, nevertheless, continues until this day.

Robert E. Hamilton (2019, p. 2) summarises the results of the Donbas war until autumn 2019 as follows: "The war in the eastern Ukrainian region known as the Donbas has killed over 13,000 people, displaced millions, and led to the worst rupture in relations between the Russian Federation and the West since the end of the Cold War."

4. FINDINGS

In this part, the Russian actions in the period of February 26/27 to May 11, 2014, will be analysed regarding the inclusion of "hybrid warfare" elements. To do so, the above-established analytical framework for "hybrid warfare" (see 3.4.2.) will be taken as the template for detecting its elements.

4.1. PHYSICAL MEANS

In accordance with the template, the first analysis part will consider the physical means of "hybrid warfare", namely conventional warfare, unconventional warfare, terrorism, and criminal and disruptive behaviour.

4.1.1. CONVENTIONAL WARFARE

On March 1, 2014, the Russian Parliament permitted President Putin to deploy Russian troops in Ukraine (lpb, n.d.; Tagesschau, n.d.). Ukraine, however, accused Russia of having deployed Russian troops on its territory even before. Nevertheless, Putin denied this for a long time, and only admitted the troop's presence on March 15, 2015, when he "triumphantly tore down the whole fiction in an elaborate TV documentary" (Murphy, 2016, p. 6).

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[70] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[71] This source is an online article without page numbers.

During the crisis, Russia performed navy, air as well as ground troop exercises at its borders with Ukraine which can be counted for conventional warfare elements. Already in late February 2014, snap combat readiness drills[72] of Russian military forces in Western and central Russian districts were ordered which involved over 150,000 soldiers (Barber, 2015; Erol & Oguz, 2015). On March 3, 2014, Russia started new military exercises that involved more than 8,000 troops as well as artillery, rocket launchers and anti-tank weapons. The Russian defence ministry stated: "The main aim […] is a multi-faceted check of units' cohesiveness followed by the performance of battle training assignments in unfamiliar terrain and untested firing ranges." (BBC News, 2014d, quoted from the Russian defence ministry[73]). Notwithstanding, then Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk stated that his country would be "a victim of Russian aggression" (BBC News, 2014d[74]).

Even though these exercises were not performed on the Ukrainian state territory, they can be counted as elements of the crisis. Besides intimidating the Ukrainian civil society and authorities (see 4.2.2.), such military exercises can also be considered a statement to the target state's community and government as they underlined the potency of Russian conventional forces (see 2.3.2.).

Furthermore, these snap exercises can also be considered a distraction with the objective of, for example, covering the deployment of troops in Crimea (Bowen, 2019; Kofman et al., 2017). This is perfectly in line with Gareev's argument to disguise crucial deployment methods and to disinform the enemy to win the war (see 2.3.2.). In general, of course, the military troops on the borders could have been quickly deployed in Ukraine as further support at any point in time[75].

In the beginning of the crisis Russia also lined up its conventional forces on the border with Ukraine. This, consequently, conveyed the image of an overwhelming threat of regular forces. In addition to the intimidation resulting from this, Rácz (2015, p. 62) argues: "In this way, [Russia] managed to both divert Kyiv's attention and resources, and also to block Ukraine's counter-attack options, as the government did not want to provoke Russia by opening fire on the increasingly violent demonstrators." Hence, in the beginning of the crisis, Ukraine neither used force against the "little green men" nor against violent pro-Russian protesters in Crimea or Eastern Ukraine.

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[72] "Snap combat readiness drills" describe military exercises that aim at inspecting the troops combat readiness (Norberg, 2015).
[73] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[74] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[75] According to Bowen (2019, p. 321) approximately 40,000 soldiers were stationed at the Ukrainian borders at the end of March 2014.

Another example for the use of conventional warfare is the deployment of Russian troops, hence Russian military intervention, in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine (Kofman et al., 2017). In the Donbas region for example, where the war started in the first days of April, Russian troops supported the pro-Russian separatist groups. On April 6, 2014, for instance, armed separatists stormed police stations in Donetsk and on April 12, separatists launched offensives in two cities in Donbas which resulted in the overtaking of military and police headquarters (Suba, 2019). The Russian troops were involved in these actions as well as in "blocking harbors with warships, controlling military bases and airports, and establishing checkpoints to control access to Crimea" (Erol & Oguz, 2015, p. 269).

In general, the involvement of Russian troops has easily been possible, especially in Crimea, due to the base agreement between Russia and Ukraine concerning the Crimean Peninsula. The agreement allowed for Russia to keep troops (up to 20,000 soldiers) in Ukraine which was explained by Russia with the need for the protection of legal units inside Crimea (Erol & Oguz, 2015). On February 27, 2014, for instance, a Russian troop of around 300 soldiers arrived in Crimea, however without advance notice to the Ukrainian government (Kofman et al., 2017).

Nevertheless, reports on the Russian intervention in Ukraine overall indicate that Russian deployment of conventional military elements only accounted for a minority of the whole sum of actions during the Ukrainian Crisis.

4.1.2. UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE

As stated above, the pro-Russian separatists were supported by regular Russian forces. However, the Crimean case is highlighted by the use of Russian special forces acting in an unconventional way since pro-Russian separatists have been backed by Russian "little green men" of the Spetsnaz forces[76] (Erol & Oguz, 2015).

Those men were unmarked soldiers from the Russian Federation who participated in the confinement of Ukrainian forces in their bases in Crimea as well as in the overtaking of communication and government buildings such as the Crimean Parliament on February 27, 2014 (Murphy, 2016; Rusnáková, 2017). The "little green men" acted as the primary forces for, for example, storming the Parliament and other official buildings in Crimea, blocking roads and streets, and organising the pro-Russian movements (Erol & Oguz, 2015). In Crimea, this led to the prevention of local political decision-making since the local Parliament had been overrun by the "little green men". The same strategy had been pursued in Donetsk in April 2014 where

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[76] "Spetsnaz" is the umbrella term for the Russian special forces. Within the Russian special forces is the "Special Operations Command" (KSO) which is most of the time being related to the "little green men" (e.g. Galeotti, 2015, p. 2; Galeotti, 2020 – no page numbers provided).

the regional state administration later served as the headquarter of the Donetsk National Republic (Rácz, 2015).

While the men of the Spetsnaz forces took control over more heavily defended buildings, "well-organized, often armed demonstrators, dressed in civilian clothes and exhibiting high tactical skills, started to take over other, less defended public administration buildings, media outlets and civilian infrastructure." (Rácz, 2015, p. 60). In consequence, both actors acted simultaneously but separated from each other. However, there were also actions conducted by both actors, hence acting as one group, where the Russian men served as support. Whether Russian actors or demonstrators, they always claimed being local protesters dissatisfied with the Ukrainian government in Kiev. As such they aimed at disguising their methods and actions (Masuhr, 2019) which is once again in line with Gareev's strategy of disguise (see. 2.3.2.).

Consequently, the "little green men" were responsible for establishing the movements or pushing already existing tendencies into real movements. This included, for instance, the recruitment of volunteers (Bowen, 2019). Hence, they perfectly fit the picture of irregular warfare, both by the way the "little green men" appeared and by the way they acted, namely mostly by clandestinely supporting the pro-Russian separatist movements.

Besides the "little green men", also Russian proxy groups[77] were involved in the crisis, for example the "Night Wolves motorcycle club", a group of Russian nationalists. They were mostly active in Crimea where they declared to aim at helping and understanding the people as well as ensuring free elections (Marquardt, 2014).

Hence, Russia pursued its objectives, the Crimean annexation as well as the further destabilisation of Ukraine, by combining local protestors with Russian special forces (Masuhr, 2019). This tactic goes back to the old Soviet concept of "maskirovka" (masking) which aims at sustaining "the pretence that the fighting force was wholly indigenous, supplemented by no more than some friendly volunteers from over the border." (Freedman, 2014, p. 22). By this, the narrative of the local resistance could be kept alive as long as possible. As such, the conflict in Ukraine, considered from a purely legal perspective, is an internal and not an international one (Newton, n.d.).

In the Donbas region, however, the situation revealed differently. Spetsnaz forces were deployed in Eastern Ukraine for training pro-Russian separatists and "to enforce the chain of

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[77] "Proxy" is defined as "authority given to a person to act for someone else, such as by voting for them in an election, or the person who this authority is given to" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d. b – no page numbers provided). There are also "proxy wars" in which "groups or smaller countries that each represent the interests of other larger powers, [which] may have help and support from these" fight against each other (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d. c – no page numbers provided). In the case of the Ukrainian Crisis, hence, proxy groups are those groups supported by Russia and acting in Russian favour.

command among the separatists." (Perry, n.d.[78]). Nevertheless, they also performed similar tasks as the units in Crimea, hence, seizing administrative buildings in cooperation with separatist groups (Freedman, 2014).

In contrast to the situation in Crimea, where the support of the separatist groups had been successful, this was not the case in the Donbas. At first, the operations were successful because the Ukrainian security forces were only badly prepared and equipped (Kofman et al., 2017). Yet, over time, the rebellion struggled to establish itself because the Russian-speaking population that led to the triumph in Crimea, has not been as sympathetic to Russia as on the peninsula, even though the Russian-speaking population nearly reach the same quantities (see map 1 & 3). Consequently, the pro-Russian movements were lacking "popular backing" (Freedman, 2014, p. 15).

All in all, Russia made great use of unconventional warfare tactics in Crimea and the Donbas region, primarily with the deployment of Spetsnaz forces. The results, however, revealed differently in accordance with the differing contexts the Russian interventions and the deployment of its unconventional warfare was placed in.

4.1.3. TERRORISM

Small acts of terroristic nature can be found in the beginning of the Ukrainian Crisis when Russia aimed at suppressing pro-Ukrainian protesters by, for instance, intimidating them. Consequently, this is in line with the psychological "hybrid warfare" element of intimidation. However, Russia did also make use of decisive threats and killings which ultimately resulted in the disappearance of pro-Ukrainian demonstrations (Erol & Oguz, 2015; Human Rights Watch, n.d.). Then President Petro Poroshenko stated that "several Tatars[79] […] have been murdered or simply disappeared. Many Tatar leaders have been barred from returning to their homeland." (Erol & Oguz, 2015, p. 272). Hence, this point is in line with "coercion" and "indiscriminate violence" which are summed up under the point of terrorism in Hoffman's concept of "hybrid warfare". However, these acts only account for a minority of the events that took place during the chosen period in Ukraine.

4.1.4. CRIMINAL AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

According to Kateryna Bila, the Ukrainian Representative to the United Nations, Russia caused instability in Ukraine by a "continuous flow of sophisticated weapons and ammunition from the Russian Federation to Crimea and eastern Ukraine" which had a "disastrous and destabilizing

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[78] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[79] "Tatars" or "Crimean Tatars" are indigenous inhabitants of the Crimean Peninsula, Eastern European Ethnic Turkic. The nation was established in the 16th century simultaneously with the establishment of the state of the Crimean Khanate (CMRC, n.d.).

effect." (UN Security Council, 2015[80]). She further stated that the supply of arms to Crimea had already started before the annexation of the peninsula and continued afterwards. Consequently, this fits Hoffman's description of criminal activities, namely smuggling or the illicit transfer of weapons. Nevertheless, like the point of terrorism, criminal and disruptive behaviour were only observed to a small extent during the period of analysis.

4.2. PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANS

The Ukrainian Crisis is known as a prime example for "hybrid warfare" and the deployment of especially unconventional as well as non-military elements in Europe (Haines, 2016; Meredith, 2019). In this work, the non-military elements are summarised under "psychological means" in accordance with the theoretical framework (see 2.4.3.).

Rusnáková (2017) points out that psychological warfare in general aims at delegitimising and intimidating the victim or the target state, hence Ukraine in this case. On the other hand, psychological warfare is deployed in order to create the perfect Russian image for the population of the combined battlegrounds of "hybrid warfare", namely the conflict zone's indigenous population as well as the home front's and the international community's population.

In accordance with the template, "hybrid warfare" includes the following psychological means: information warfare, intimidation, information technology, economic pressure, political and diplomatic pressure as well as social means which include the control and support of the combined battlegrounds of "hybrid warfare".

4.2.1. INFORMATION WARFARE

In this part, the analysis will start with the propaganda and information deployed by Russia during the crisis. According to a NATO analysis, the Russian information war conducted in Ukraine in 2014 was characterised by a "massive, multifaceted, and coherent operation" (Sazonov et al., 2016, p. 6). Russia used its propaganda to win "the war in [the people's] hearts and minds" (Galeotti, 2015, p. 151). Hence, it aimed at convincing the Ukrainian population of Russia's good intentions and at convincing them to participate in the separatist movements in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine (Snegovaya, 2015).

Via media campaigns, Russia mobilised local support among the Ukrainian population, especially the Russian-speaking part, by increasing pro-Russian feelings (Allison, 2014). These media campaigns, for example, were based on historical memory. The campaigns paid

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[80] This source is an online article without page numbers.

tribute to Russian historical achievements, such as the Great Russian Empire, but also reminded the people of the collapse of the USSR[81] (NATO Stratcom, 2015).

Another part of Russian propaganda in Ukraine is the Russian discourse in general. For strengthening the pro-Russian movements as well as covering Russian intervention in the beginning of the crisis, Russian official discourse always called the "little green men" as well as the protesters the "resistance". The "resistance" would be a movement among the Ukrainian population in favour of the Russian Federation, hence a local resistance movement (Rácz, 2015, p. 60). As such, the Russian discourse aimed at increasing the legitimisation of Russian actions and supported its claim that Russian forces were not present in Ukraine. This latter allowed Russia to gain time for clandestinely taking control over Crimea (Rusnáková, 2017; Snegovaya, 2015).

The analysis of the information warfare revealed another characteristic of the Russian narrative: The Russian Federation mostly used defensive narratives to justify its position in the opposition between East and West (Sazanov et al. 2016). Consequently, Ukrainian and other Western authorities were considered "merely puppets of the West under the guidance of the United States and NATO" (Sazonov et al., 2016, p. 6). Therefore, Russia needs to protect the Russian population in Ukraine. In line with this is the information campaign against the international community that was driven by Russia. This campaign primarily focussed on denial and deception and as such should "distract international actors – [hinder] their response to the Ukrainian crisis" (Perry, n.d.[82]). It was conducted via newspapers and various media channels throughout Ukraine whose spread was supported by Russia.

On the other hand, Russia also conducted a propaganda campaign against Ukraine. This contains a famous example for Russia's successful use of disinformation during the crisis, namely the myth of fascism used for delegitimising the Ukrainian government. Russia accused the government in Kiev of being a "fascist junta" (Esch, 2015, p. 3). The spread of the myth revealed successful: "[…] Russian propaganda was highly effective in sowing the seeds of doubt about the legitimacy of the interim government in Kyiv. As a result, many police officers could not be sure which orders to follow and whether the law was actually on their side." (Rácz, 2015, p. 70).

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[81] President Putin, in a speech given on March 14, 2014, on the occasion of the accession of the Crimean Peninsula to the Russian Federation, for instance, referred to: "the historic, spiritual and cultural unity of Russia and Ukraine, mourning for the collapse of the USSR, and the historic injustice of giving away Crimea to Ukraine, alleged abuse of the human rights of Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Crimea, labelling the Euromaidan as a coup executed by Nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes and anti-Semites, and NATO posing a threat […]". (NATO Stratcom, 2015, p. 8).
[82] This source is an online article without page numbers.

Another element of Russian propaganda was its claim to be acting in Crimea, where the intervention started, "by invitation" (Allison, 2014, p. 1259). A supporting argument was, for example, the danger for the Russian-speaking population, stemming from the "fascist" Ukrainian government (Esch, 2015; Freedman, 2014). This should serve as further legitimation of Russian intervention in Ukraine. Even though not a strong argument that would convince the international community, this probably aimed at creating at least uncertainty. In addition, Putin further justified the Crimean annexation, stating that no Russian forces were engaged in the process (see 4.1.2.). Consequently, the referendum in Crimea for instance, has been purely democratic and in line with international law.

A second example for the Russian attempt to legitimise its intervention are the referendums in Crimea and the Donbas themselves. According to official Russian sources, the Crimean referendum was successful with 97% of the Crimean population voting for the accession to the Russian Federation with an 80% turnout. However, as the Russian Human Rights Council stated after the referendum, the "turnout was only 30 percent, half of whom voted against independence, meaning that Russia gained the support of only 15 percent of the population" (Murphy, 2016, p. 6). The same applies to the referendums in the oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk were the turnout, reportedly, was at 75% in Donetsk and 81% in Luhansk (Wierzbowska-Miazga, Iwanski & Zochowski, 2014). The results were said to be 89% in favour of separation in the Donetsk oblast and even 96% in the Luhansk oblast. However, Ukrainian officials stated that, "the turnout was in fact much lower than 75% announced by the separatist leaders – 24% in Luhansk Oblast and 32% in Donetsk Oblast, and that in many towns the voting was not held at all." (Zoria, 2017[83]). Notwithstanding, President Putin used the numbers published and spread by Russian official sources to legitimise the Crimean accession to the Russian Federation.

A final, and highly popular, example of Russian information warfare means that were deployed during the crisis in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine and which is also in line with Russia's use of information technology, is the use of "Kremlin-paid pro-Russian trolls and agitators" (Rusnáková, 2017, p. 360). These actors were used for spreading disinformation on the Internet, for instance on blogs, websites, and social media, especially in the sections of public discussions. By involving its "troll army"[84] in Crimea, Russia gained control over the Internet (see 4.2.3.). The use of trolls and agitators led to the surrounding of the Crimean population by solely pro-Russian information as well as disinformation about the Ukrainian government,

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[83] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[84] Snegovaya (2015, p. 14) defines the Russian trolls as "individuals in online discussion forums who try to derail conversations, spam them with indecent comments, spread misinformation and steer online conversations with pro-Kremlin rhetoric."

for example by using the myth of fascism. All in all, the Crimean citizens were not able to access neutral information.

Consequently, Russia gained control over the Russian-speaking population in Crimea and the Donbas as well as over the Russian sympathisers. Especially in Crimea, hence from February 26 until March 18, the day of the Crimean accession to Russia, but of course also afterwards, Russia made use of information warfare and propaganda to manipulate and control the Russian-speaking population which forms the majority in Crimea [85] (Rusnáková, 2017). Consequently, the success of propaganda and information means in Crimea could be deemed probable considering that the maintaining of a language is oftentimes also connected with "cultural and emotional bonds" (Darczewska, 2014, p. 34). Finally, the Crimean annexation took place without the use of force and without any resistance by the Crimean population. Darczewska (2014, p. 6) explains this as follows: "This happened because Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine who had undergone necessary psychological and informational treatment (intoxication) took part in the separatist coup and the annexation of Crimea by Russia."

In the Donbas region, however, as already observed for the unconventional means, the situation was different. Here, Russia could not intervene as surprisingly and clandestinely as in Crimea. This was due "both to the lack of military resources (the best forces were kept in Crimea) and to Russia's overestimation of the support it would receive in eastern Ukraine." (Snegovaya, 2015, p. 17). Hence, Russia denied its presence in the Donbas region (Snegovaya, 2015). Furthermore, the case of Eastern Ukraine revealed that "disinformation campaigns erode over time as more and more factual evidence is revealed to negate lies and falsification, hidden information is discovered, anecdotal mistakes are made by the less warry"[86] (Nato Stratcom, 2015[87]). This revealed true considering the lack of a societal backing which had been the case in Crimea. Notwithstanding, the information warfare in Eastern Ukraine still led to the concealment of Russia's goals. As such, Russia covered its military intervention in Ukraine and expanded its diplomatic options with regards to "exit strategies from the conflict as well as peace settlements." (Snegovaya, 2015, p. 18).

To sum it up, Russia pursued a propaganda and information campaign in Ukraine as well as globally to legitimise and justify its intervention. In Ukraine, hence in the target state's population, the objective was further to create support and pro-Russian feelings.

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[85] The Russian-speaking population represents 58.5% of the population of the Crimean Peninsula (Rusnáková, 2017).
[86] The authors of the NATO Stratcom report refer to the example of Russian soldiers who had posted photos on their social media accounts which revealed their presence in Ukraine (NATO Stratcom, 2015).
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4.2.2. INTIMIDATION

Intimidation as a warfare means has also been detected among the Russian actions during the Ukrainian Crisis, for instance in the form of illegal persecutions of journalists as well as their mistreatment. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) (2015[88]) claims: "local and international journalists covering Crimea have been harassed, attacked, detained, and had their equipment seized".

Erol & Oguz (2015, p. 271) furthermore state that Russia, through the Russian-speaking population and its irregular forces, used intimidation in order to resolve pro-Maidan[89] protests: "Pro-Maidan protests […] disappeared in one day because of threats and intimidation by the pro-Russian population and especially Russian irregular forces." This, as already stated, is in line with the element of terrorism (see 4.1.3.).

Additionally, the above-described military exercises next to the Ukrainian borders (see 4.1.1.) can also be counted as an intimidation element as they worked as a warning signal to Ukrainian authorities that any military response could lead to military escalation. As seen, the Ukrainian government was hesitant reacting even to the pro-Russian separatist movements (BBC News, 2014b). Furthermore, the intimidation was even more effective given the fact that the Ukrainian regular forces were in a bad condition and not ready to combat.

The analysis of the Russian intervention in Ukraine revealed that intimidation can be related to the element of information warfare. Russia did not only conduct its media campaigns to legitimise its actions in Ukraine but also to "harass perceived opponents of Russia" (Freedman, 2014, p. 23). Russia counteracted by deploying "an army of trolls with a mission to contradict and abuse those taking anti-Russian positions on social media" (Freedman, 2014, p. 23) (see 4.2.1. and 4.2.3.). The NATO Stratcom report (2015) states that pro-Russian social media accounts have been increasingly active since late February 2014. Consequently, there is also a relation with the element of information technology.

Russia's use of information warfare for creating intimidation was also used on the international level where it constantly referred to its strength as a nuclear power. This "creating a sense of danger […] probably has an effect, albeit one that is hard to measure, in deterring the West from supporting Ukraine as much as it might otherwise have done." (Freedman, 2014, p. 24)[90].

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[88] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[89] Pro-Maidan refers to the Euromaidan movement in Ukraine (see 3.1. and 3.2.).
[90] After the period of this work, in August 2014, Putin is reported to have said "Russia's partners should understand it's best not to mess with us. […] Russia is one of the leading nuclear powers." (Parfitt, 2014 – no page numbers provided).

Consequently, Russia created feelings of intimidation and danger by deploying other "hybrid warfare" means as well as by persecuting and suppressing journalists and pro-Ukrainian demonstrators.

4.2.3. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Part of the Russian intervention in Ukraine is also the use of information technology, primarily cyber warfare. It mostly included Distributed-Denial-of-Service attacks (DDoS)[91] as well as website defacements[92] (Baezner, 2018; Weedon, 2015).

In general, during its intervention in Ukraine, Russia deployed a variety of cyber warfare elements such as espionage or computer network exploitation[93] (Weedon, 2015). These were mostly used to gain information or for "clandestinely stealing information" (Weedon, 2015, p. 68). An example is the so-called "Operation Armageddon" which is active since at least mid-2013 and which pursues cyber espionage campaigns. As of mid-April 2014, when Ukraine launched its firsts operations against the pro-Russian separatists, the cyber activities increased: "From this point onwards, waves of cyber attacks from the Russians directly correlated with the timing of military events and were geared towards gathering intelligence to empower themselves on the physical battlefield – a digital method of espionage in its truest forms." (Lookingglass, 2015, p. 4).

A cyber-attack took place in March 2014 when Russian troops entered Ukraine. At this point, the Ukrainian government website was shut down for nearly three days and many other official government as well as media websites were targets of DDoS attacks (Weedon, 2015). In addition, lawmaker Valentyn Nalivaichenko reported that "attack is under way on mobile phones of members of Ukrainian parliament for the second day in row" and that "[a]t the entrance to (telecoms firm) Ukrtelecom in Crimea, illegally and in violation of all commercial contracts, was installed equipment that blocks my phone as well as the phones of other deputies, regardless of their political affiliation" (Reuters, 2014[94]).

In Eastern Ukraine the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), furthermore, "had thoroughly penetrated the Ukrainian security apparatus, has encouraged defections and monitored Kyiv's plans" via information technologies (Galeotti, 2014[95]).

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[91] "In a DDOs attack, perpetrators overload targeted websites with requests causing disruption to the website services and preventing legitimate users from accessing these pages." (Baezner, 2018, p. 10).

[92] Baezner (2018, p. 10) defines website defacements as follows: "This technique, where a hacker breaches a web server […] to gain administrative access, is regarded as a cyber-version of vandalism. Once the system has been penetrated, the attacker changes the visual appearance of the website or replaces pages with their own materials."

[93] Computer Network Exploitation (CNE) "is best described as the attack on the confidentiality of the targeted computer system. CNE is the theft of data, with no other functions affected. […] CNE is essentially computer espionage." (Winkler & Gomes, 2017, p. 18).

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Moreover, cyber-attacks were conducted against the infrastructure of Ukrainian authority buildings such as the "National Telecommunications Operator" (Rusnáková, 2017; Weedon, 2015). Moreover, Russia not only gained control over telecommunication buildings on the Crimean Peninsula but also over the Internet via the use of its "troll army" (see 4.2.1.). By this, Russia could control the Crimean population by solely providing information sources of Russian origin. Hence, it achieved the Crimean isolation from independent news other than of Russian origin. This was further increased by Russian control over Ukrainian TV channels which were replaced by Russian ones (Rusnáková, 2017). Both actions, of course, greatly facilitated Russian attempts of gaining control over Crimea and its population. In addition, this also led to greater legitimisation of Russian actions regarding the fact that the population was only offered information of Russian origin (Giles 2016).

This shows that information technology and information warfare were highly interrelated during the Ukrainian Crisis. Weedon (2015, p. 68) states: "Rather than a 'cyber war' waged in a distinct networked domain, Russia's strategy has been to masterfully exploit the information gleaned from its worldwide computer network exploitation campaigns to inform its conduct, purposely distort public opinion, and maintain its dominant position in Ukraine."

All in all, the analysis reveals the high use of information technology for gaining information and disturbing the Ukrainian state apparatus. This is in line with Gerasimov's argument that information technologies open possibilities "for influencing state structures" and "reducing the fighting potential of the enemy" (Gerasimov, 2016, p. 27).

4.2.4. ECONOMIC PRESSURE

Russia is Ukraine's biggest energy provider. During the crisis, in consequence, the Russian Federation benefitted from its superiority towards Ukraine due to this role. In Crimea, Russia "nationalised" the Ukrainian energy company "Chornomonaftogaz" "together with all its energy assets, both onshore and offshore" (Rühle & Grubliauskas, 2015, p. 2). In this way, Russia gained control over Ukrainian energy supply and made Crimea once again more independent of Ukraine, and, by implication, more dependent from Russia.

In addition, it is also reported that Russia gained control over two Ukrainian drilling rigs seated in Crimea (Rusnáková, 2017). Together with Ukraine's loss of the energy company, this meant a heavy loss of natural resources and assets to Russia.

Besides, Russia's energy warfare also reached other levels. The Russian Federation, for example, cyber-attacked Ukrainian regions and by this caused energy blackouts. This shows the link between information technology means and economic pressure during the crisis. After the annexation of the peninsula, Russia even decided to stop its energy supply to Ukraine at

low prices (Rühle & Grubliauskus, 2015). For Ukraine which had "slid into recession" in 2013, this represented a heavy economic challenge (Spiegel, 2013[96]).

In March 2014, Russia announced great gas price hikes while simultaneously including the recent reduced gas prices in Ukrainian debt (Wierzbowska-Miazga & Sarna, 2014). A spokesman of President Putin announced on March 21, 2014, that "the discount on gas granted to Ukraine in 2010 under the so-called 'Kharkiv agreements' in exchange for Russia's Black Sea Flat being stationed in Crimea" (Wierzbowska-Miazga & Sarna, 2014[97]) would no longer apply after the Crimean annexation.

Russia went further within its role as gas supplier by demanding, on April 9, 2014, advance payments for gas supplies from Ukraine. In line with Ukraine's "possible bankruptcy" (Lichtenberg, 2014[98]), Russia established a great financial pressure for the Ukrainian state.

In consequence, Russia highly used its superior role in terms of economy to suppress the Ukrainian government.

4.2.5. POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE

During the chosen period of the Ukrainian Crisis, Russia proved being capable of effectively using instruments of influence, such as political and diplomatic pressure (Allison, 2014).

Political and diplomatic pressure in the Ukrainian Crisis is in line with Russia's information warfare, especially its denial of the presence of its forces. This, in consequence, complicated the international monitoring of the specific actions and possible reactions to it. According to Snegovaya (2015, p. 15) "the opponent is put in a position where he must guess them [Russia's true goals], which often gives Russian advantage. For example, with its true goals concealed, Russia can threaten the enemy to provoke a costly response." Furthermore, this also led to the only hesitant military intervention by the Ukrainian state. In addition, the Russian propaganda campaign conducted against Ukraine that spread the myth of fascism (see 4.2.1.) put the Ukrainian government under pressure. It led, at least, to uncertainty as well as to an undermining of political legitimacy and reputation of the Ukrainian government in the eyes of those influenced by Russian propaganda.

An example for political pressure, but also linked to the element of economic pressure, can be found in Crimea when Russia "nationalised" the Ukrainian company "Chornomornaftogaz" (see 4.2.4.). This act can also be regarded from the political point of view. The "nationalisation" of the company led to greater political control for Russia over the peninsula. Simultaneously, for

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the Ukrainian government, this meant a political challenge as it lost part of its political sovereignty, namely the power to supply its citizens with gas.

Another example for political pressure that was put on Ukrainian authorities concerns the Ukrainian special police force "Berkut" that had been disbanded by its government because they pursued criminal activities. Russia took advantage of this situation by announcing: "The Berkut officers who choose to get a Russian citizenship will be offered career opportunities in some regions of Russia" (Rusnáková, 2017, p. 368). Even though not direct political pressure, this nevertheless put Ukrainian authorities under pressure because it presented an undermining of its power.

Lastly, political pressure was created by the "little green men" in Crimea with the blockade of administrative buildings, especially the Parliament which led to a prevention of local decision-making (see 4.1.2.). In consequence, Russia created political and diplomatic pressure in Crimea and the Donbas especially by deploying other warfare means except for the recruitment of police forces.

4.2.6. SOCIAL MEANS

The social means shall concern the means for controlling and supporting the three decisive battlegrounds: the target state's population, the home front population as well as the international community.

THE TARGET STATE'S POPULATION

The target state's population, as described above, did not resist against the Russian intervention in Crimea (see 3.2.2.). Hence, Russia quickly gained control over the region and, especially by its information warfare also over the population.

The control over the Crimean population was further increased by suppressing the rights to freedom of assembly, expression, and association in the region. In addition, "[c]ivil society organizations were effectively closed down for non-compliance with Russian legal requirements. Local residents were declared Russian citizens. Those wishing to retain Ukrainian citizenship were required to notify the authorities." (Amnesty International, 2015, p. 386). Especially the Crimean Tatars were targeted by the "de facto authorities for the public expression of pro-Ukrainian views" (Amnesty International, 2015, p. 386) which led to abductions of Crimean Tatars.

Kofman et al. (2015, p. 73) furthermore argue that the Crimean annexation went mostly smoothly due to the "pervasive sense of public anxiety after the ouster of Yanukovych. Russia took advantage of these sentiments in a predatory manner, fuelling public fears of right-wing violence."

Concerning the Donbas region and the rest of Ukraine, however, the public opinion was rather negative regarding the Russian intervention: "[m]ost Ukrainians have soured on Russia, with many saying Russia is having a negative influence in their country and that it is more important for Ukraine to have strong ties with the European Union." (Pew Research Center, 2014[99]). Consequently, the Russian intervention in Eastern Ukraine was not as successful as in Crimea due to the lacking control over the population in the Donbas region, which, according to McCuen (see 2.2.2.) is one decisive part for winning "hybrid wars".

THE HOME STATE'S POPULATION

The information campaign on the Russian intervention in Ukraine conducted in Russia, hence at the home front, revealed effective. This was reflected by an increase of Putin's popularity and an anti-American sentiment among the Russian population (Sherlock, 2014). The Russian President "rode a wave of nationalist sentiment, especially with regard to the annexation of Crimea" (Freedman, 2014, p. 23). This, for instance, was achieved by constantly referring to the history of Crimea and Russia. President Putin, for example, stated that Crimea would be an "inseparable" part of Russia (Putin, 2014[100]).

The Pew Research Center (2014[101]) concludes: "[…] Russians have largely rallied around their leader. Putin is overwhelmingly popular, and Russian national pride appears to be on the rise. In fact, a plurality thinks Putin's handling of the crisis has improved Russia's international stature."

In cases where the opinion of publicly acting organisations or groups, for example, revealed negative, the Russian state apparatus immediately intervened: "[A]fter the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers in St. Petersburg expressed concern about Russian casualties in Ukraine, for instance, the Russian Ministry of Justice declared the non-governmental organisation to be a 'foreign agent'." (Freedman, 2014, p. 23).

Furthermore, whereas the Russian intervention in Crimea had been welcomed by the majority of Russians who mostly consider Crimea as "hallowed territory" (Kolsto, 2016, p. 714), the Russian intervention in Donbas increasingly resulted in a loss of Putin's national support. This was especially the case when the conflict in Donbas developed into a real war (Kolsto, 2016)[102].

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[101] This source is an online article without page numbers.
[102] Kolsto (2015, p. 714), however, furthermore argued that Putin was criticised by "[…] nationalists […] for the exact opposite reason: Russia was not supporting the rebels enough." Yet, this is out of the time framework of this thesis. For more information see Kolsto (2015).

The international community, in stark contrast to the home front, does not support Russian actions in Ukraine, but mostly allies with Russia's target state. Especially the US and the EU reacted to the Russian actions in Ukraine by imposing sanctions on Russian political leaders, for example. They also engaged in the peace-finding process (see 3.2.). However, the international community did not react in terms of active intervention in the Ukrainian Crisis. Due to the Russian denial of intervention, the crisis long-time appeared to be, in legal terms, an internal conflict (Newton, n.d.). In addition, Snegovaya (2015, p. 7) points out that Russia explicitly aimed for the US and the EU to "remain largely passive" during the crisis. For this, the Russian Federation used its information warfare which propagated the non-existence of Russian troops in Ukraine. By this, "Russia mitigated the hard and soft power response of the international community" (Snegovaya, 2015, p.16).

The constant denial of Russia's military presence in Ukraine led to a non-intervention of the Western states. Consequently, Russia can be considered successful in the international community to the extent that the US and the EU did not militarily intervene in the crisis. In terms of reactions, however, the international community has shown considerable dissatisfaction concerning Russian actions.

4.3. DIMENSIONS OF HYBRID WARFARE

Within the second chapter, six dimensions were identified: simultaneity, convergence, multi-modality, catastrophe, and the physical and psychological dimension.

The two last dimensions, physical and psychological, have already been identified with the analysis of the different means of "hybrid warfare" deployed by Russia during the Ukrainian Crisis. In consequence, the conflict had both, the physical component, marked by the deployment of military means, as well as the psychological component. This latter, in the case of the Ukrainian Crisis, is characterised, for example, by the high use of propaganda as well as the fight for legitimacy in the three decisive battlegrounds.

The analysis of the different elements of "hybrid warfare" during the crisis also revealed the simultaneity of their deployment. The time frame for this analysis covered the period from February 26/27 to May 11, 2014 and all elements of the template were detected, even though not in the same quantities. In Crimea, "the little green men" and Russian proxy groups, for example, supported pro-Russian separatist groups. At the same time, Russia performed military exercises at its borders with Ukraine and used violence to make pro-Ukrainian protests disappear. In addition, the psychological means were also deployed, information warfare even constantly. In the Donbas region, the simultaneous approach was similar. Russian special forces were deployed for supporting pro-Russian separatists and the Russian propaganda

machine constantly spread disinformation. The propaganda component, furthermore, also influenced all three battlegrounds and economic pressure, for example, aggravated the Ukrainian situation. Hence, several components of Russian "hybrid warfare" have been deployed simultaneously during the Ukrainian Crisis.

The second dimension concerns convergence. The main example for this is the fusion of conventional and unconventional warfare with the deployment of the "little green men". In fact, these were men of the Russian special forces, hence part of the conventional Russian troops. The manner of their deployment, however, was unconventional. They came to the Crimean Peninsula without any insignia and claimed being part of the local resistance movement.

The third dimension that could equally be identified in the crisis is multi-modality. As displayed in the analysis of the physical and psychological warfare elements deployed during the crisis, the conflict can be called a multi-modal one. This is also true in terms of actors which are the Ukrainian state, the pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian protestors as well as the Russian state with its special forces and proxy groups.

Fourthly, the catastrophic dimension is also relied to "hybrid warfare". Glenn (n.d.) notes himself that terrorism is part of the elements that cause a catastrophic dimension during a conflict. In the case of the chosen time frame, terrorist acts have been detected in a very small number. However, the analysis in general reflects great quantities of disruptions for the Ukrainian population and its government. When the pro-Russian separatist groups, in cooperation with the Russian special forces, seized the Crimean Parliament and by this blocked the process of decision-making, for example (Erol & Oguz, 2015). During the fighting in Eastern Ukraine as well as during the Russian intervention in the pro-Ukrainian protests, people were killed. This cannot be called "mass casualties" at that stage. Yet, the evolving war in the Donbas region, although out of the scope of this work, surely can be considered resulting in "mass casualties" as well as in damage, for example in damage of critical infrastructure (e.g. Park et al., 2017; RFE/RL, 2019).

Consequently, all six dimensions are present in the chosen period of the Ukrainian Crisis.

5. CONCLUSION

The Ukrainian Crisis is commonly considered the European example for Russian "hybrid warfare". The analysis, indeed, revealed that the Russian Federation deployed several elements of "hybrid warfare". The overall research question of this thesis *"Which elements of 'hybrid warfare' can be identified in the Russian actions during the Ukrainian Crisis from February to May 2014?"* can thus be answered as follows.

All elements, hence, warfare elements and dimensions, that have been established in the framework of "hybrid warfare" have been detected, to different degrees, among the Russian actions. Among the physical means, primarily conventional and unconventional warfare elements were detected for the time chosen. Especially Russian military exercises at its borders and its usage of special forces on the Ukrainian territory were identified.

Among the psychological elements, the Russian focus was on the conduction of information warfare. The analysis has shown a variety of different actions as well as characteristics of this element which is also interrelated with other psychological elements such as intimidation and information technology.

Finally, the category of social means considered the means for the control and support of the three decisive battlegrounds. On the indigenous battleground, Russia was partially successful, namely in gaining control over the Crimean population. However, Russia failed in completely controlling the Donbas population. Neither did Russia fully control the international communities' actions. At the home front, in Russia, the information campaign was coined by great success. The Russian population was nearly in full accordance with the political course of its President, however only until the beginning and development of the war in Donbas.

The warfare modes were summarised under the physical and the psychological dimension. The detection of the elements, hence, proves the existence of both dimensions in the conflict. In addition, also the other four dimensions were detected in the chosen period of the crisis. The conflict is a multi-modal one in which Russia also used convergence for the different warfare elements – the most prominent example is the appearance of "the little green men". The elements were often deployed simultaneously. Ultimately, the conflict also revealed the catastrophic dimension, even though only to a small extent. This dimension developed further during the war in Donbas.

The analysis of the crisis revealed that Russia deployed a great quantity of non-military, psychological means. Hence, the first hypothesis can be affirmed. Nevertheless, the military means in terms of Russian Spetsnaz forces and the military exercises are not to be underestimated for Russian success in Ukraine. These actions led to the only late intervention of Ukrainian forces, for instance. In addition, the war which developed in the Donbas after the period of this thesis, could reveal another situation in which the deployment of military and non-military means might be outweighed.

The second hypothesis can equally be affirmed. Especially information warfare and information technologies were deployed in Crimea and the Donbas region, and proved primarily successful

on the Crimean Peninsula. Information technologies, primarily cyber warfare, have been successful in both regions of Ukraine.

The third hypothesis concerned the Russian use of economic pressure. The analysis proved that Russia made use of its superior role in energy supply. This resulted in Crimea becoming dependent of Russia as the latter seized, for instance, the Crimean energy company. In addition, Ukraine, in total, suffered higher gas prices as part of Russian economic pressure.

Finally, having answered the three hypotheses above, the last hypothesis that no elements of "hybrid warfare" were deployed in Ukraine, can be denied. It can even be stated at this point, that Russia made use of the whole range of possible elements of "hybrid warfare".

Moreover, the analysis allows for a brief comparison of the two regions in Ukraine and the success of the Russian intervention in each: As already addressed in the analysis, there are distinctions in the success of Russia's intervention in Crimea and the Donbas. While the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula had passed swiftly without any rebellion or protest worth mentioning, the intervention in Donbas was not entirely coined by success. This is due to the different contexts the two Russian interventions were placed in. Whereas Crimea is mostly inhabited by a pro-Russian and Russian-speaking population, the population in Eastern Ukraine was not as sympathetic to Russia. Russian information warfare, which is deemed essential by Messner for the failure or the success of modern wars (see 2.3.1.), was only completely fruitful in Crimea. The Russian intervention in the Donbas, on the contrary, revealed more difficult due to the lack of a popular backing. Moreover, the context, for instance, in terms of economic and military conditions was quite different. In Crimea Russia could "nationalise" energy companies which led to a significant advantage for the Russian Federation in terms of control over the Peninsula. In Eastern Ukraine, however, "only" the rising gas prices could be used as a pressuring instrument (see 4.2.4.). Furthermore, the military conditions were more beneficial in Crimea, were Russia had already located parts of its troops (see 4.1.1.). The historical context between Russia and Crimea which had been played upon for Russian propaganda, finally, also revealed beneficial (see 4.2.1.).

The case study further revealed a characteristic already visible in the conceptualisation part in chapter two. The three US military theorists focus mostly on the multi-modality of conflicts with a focus on military means. The three Russian strategists, while similarly acknowledging the multi-modality of modern-day conflicts, focus on specific elements from the range of psychological elements, mostly on the importance of information warfare and the use of modern technologies (see 2.3.). The Russian focus on psychological elements could be affirmed in the case study.

At this point, the limitation of the case study, namely the Russian focus, shall be mentioned. The theoretical framework established in this thesis only applies to the deployment of Russian "hybrid warfare" as the theoretical concepts of the Russian military strategists have been used and the difference between the Western and the Russian theoretical concepts has been affirmed during the analysis. Due to the chosen case study, this decision had been valid to gain sufficient knowledge on the Russian way of military strategic thinking. As already outlined in the methodology and the theoretical framework sections, the case study proved that, indeed, the Russian "hybrid warfare" concepts take on a broader angle than the Western concepts. The Russian Federation realised this broader concept in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the theoretical concepts of the three US military strategists may serve as an independent theoretical framework for other case studies on "hybrid warfare".

All in all, the case study affirmed the conduction of a "hybrid war" in Ukraine. Russia served as a supporting party to the conflict in the beginning and made high use of all elements of "hybrid warfare". Due to its massive use of psychological warfare elements, the Russian way of conducting "hybrid war" constitutes a novel approach for Western states and supranational organisations such as the EU and NATO. This certainly poses a new risk for Western security systems and approaches. Notwithstanding, the Ukrainian Crisis also proves that "hybrid war", as conducted by Russia, is highly dependent on the context and the conditions in the target state. Consequently, the Russian approach does not present a guarantee for full success.

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7. APPENDIX

Map of the Ukrainian state:

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