# Security K

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#### [Links]

#### Security narratives based on symptom-focused crisis compellence prevent systematic transition---try or die to avert collapse

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2017, “Failing States, Collapsing Systems: BioPhysical Triggers of Political Violence,” p. 1-12

Since the 2008 financial crash, the world has witnessed an unprecedented outbreak of social protest in every major continent. Beginning with the birth of the Occupy movement in the US and Western Europe, and the Arab Spring, the eruption of civil unrest has continued to wreak havoc unpredictably from Greece to Ukraine, from China to Thailand, from Brazil to Turkey, and beyond. In some regions, civil unrest has coalesced into the collapse of incumbent governments or even the eruption of a prolonged state of internecine warfare, as is happening in Iraq-Syria and Ukraine Crimea. To what extent is this apparent heightening of geopolitical instability new? ¶ Increasing public dissatisfaction with government is correlated with continued government difficulties in meeting public expectations. Yet while policymakers and media observers have raced to keep up with events, they have largely missed the deeper causes of this new age of unrest—the end of the age of cheap fossil fuels, and its multiplying consequences for economic growth, industrial food production, and the Earth’s climate stability. ¶ Contrary to widely reported claims across mainstream media of a new era of prosperity heralded by the US-led shale oil and gas boom, the proliferation of contemporary climate, food and economic crises have at their root a single common denominator: the fundamental and permanent disruption in the energy basis of industrial civilization. ¶ This inevitable energy transition away from high quality fossil fuels to lower quality, more expensive energy forms—which will be completed well before the close of this century, and quite possibly much earlier—will force a paradigm shift in the organization of civilization. The twenty-first century, in this context, is a pivotal one for humanity as industrial civilization pivots through a process of systemic transition, driven by the complex interplay between human societies and biophysical realities. ¶ Yet for this shift to result in a viable new way of life will require a fundamental epistemological shift recognizing humanity’s embeddedness in the natural world. This, in turn, cannot be achieved without breaking the stranglehold of conventional models achieved through the hegemony of establishment narratives—dominated by fossil fuel interests and the banality of the mainstream media news cycle.¶ The central thesis of this study is that the escalation of social protest and political instability around the world is causally related to the unstoppable thermodynamics of global hydrocarbon energy decline and its interconnected environmental and economic consequences. It offers, in this sense, a biophysical approach to international relations, and argues that geopolitics remains fundamentally embedded in biophysical processes. This is not to reduce geopolitics to the biophysical—far from it—but to recognize that the dynamics of the geopolitical cannot be dislocated from the dynamics of the biophysical, and that biophysical processes are increasingly driving geopolitical instability to a degree unrecognized by policymakers, the media, as well as social and natural scientists.¶ Hydrocarbon energy decline can be understood as consisting of the following two intertwined processes: the inexorable reduction in industrial civilization’s production of net energy from hydrocarbon sources (fossil fuels) over the last decades; the acceleration of hydrocarbon energy production to attempt to make-up for this decline and sustain economic growth.¶ This process has in turn had two major consequences, namely: climate change and the corresponding destabilization of the Earth System due to the increasing quantity of greenhouse gas emissions due to hydrocarbon energy dependence; and the permanent slowdown of global economic growth due to the increasing costs of energy production relative to GDP. Climate and economic crises are, in turn, acting as amplifying feedbacks on the process of hydrocarbon energy decline, and in themselves are acting synergistically to undermine global industrial food production while simultaneously impinging on socio-political stability and human well-being.¶ While conventional policy and media approaches to socio-political instability tend to focus almost purely on ‘surface’ social symptoms—geopolitical competition, political corruption, economic mismanagement, ideological extremism, and so on—the deeper biophysical systemic drivers of instability are largely ignored or misunderstood. As such, missing from the vast bulk of conventional wisdom on escalating socio-political instability around the world is the crucial recognition of its central cause in a systemic process of hydrocarbon energy decline and concomitant civilizational transition toward an inevitable post-carbon future.¶ Currently, climate change is rightly and consensually recognized by the scientific community and has been accepted at least in principle by policymakers as a reality requiring an urgent collective response from human societies. However, despite growing recognition of the interconnected nature of these crises—illustrated through concepts such as the food-water-energy nexus—there remains a fundamental failure in the conceptualization of their interconnected nature in terms of the relationship between human societies and the biophysical environment, and relatedly, the relationship between human polities and the biophysical environment.¶ This root failure of conceptualization is perhaps the most significant factor focusing on the role of human agency in driving the current convergence of global crises. The failure is compounded by the necessarily compartmentalized nature of scientific specialization, which has produced a vast volume of information, but little in the way of epistemological mechanisms to integrate that into knowledge across disciplinary boundaries. It is further compounded by the transmission of incorrect conceptual diagnoses of global crises through the global mainstream media. The perpetual transmission of false and inaccurate knowledge on the origins and dynamic of global crises has created a situation in which as such crises accelerate, the human species as a whole is disempowered from being able to correctly understand these crises and their symptoms, and thus unable to solve them.¶ Yet to diagnose the intensifying perfect storm of climate, energy and economic crises requires a fundamental reconceptualization of their true nature as symptoms of an overall civilizational system which, increasingly, cannot be sustained by the biophysical environment.¶ This study offers an empirically-grounded social scientific theoretical framework for developing a holistic approach to this perfect storm through the lens of what this author has called the ‘Crisis of Civilization’ (as opposed to a ‘clash of civilizations’). My approach is not to create yet another new statistical model to add to the plethora of models that exist, but to strike at a deeper lacuna within the discipline of international relations—to create the beginnings of an accurate, integrated transdisciplinary theoretical basis for such modelling, derived from a holistic analysis of the relevant empirical data.¶ The study is divided into two main sections. The first consists of a general framework of the broad crises that this author considers to be integral to the biophysical processes driving geopolitical instability today. The second consists of a series of case studies which provide specific empirical data supporting and building on this general framework to test how and whether they are indeed acting out on local, national and regional levels as is my hypothesis. This opening section begins by building on this author’s previous work on the ‘Crisis of Civilization’ as an overarching analytical framework for the integrated examination of global climate, energy, food, economic and socio-political crises (Ahmed 2010 , 2011 ). This is achieved by establishing the inherent systemic interconnections between these crises on a global macro-level scale. The monograph then proceeds to explore how the general framework of biophysical factors aka the ‘Crisis of Civilization’ plays out at a micro-level within specific countries in key regions—the Middle East, Africa, Europe, South Asia, and North America. This examination takes us to the crux of my argument and provides specific evidence that the biophysical processes discussed more generally in the opening are, in fact, already having concrete geopolitical impacts accelerating the destabilization of human societies across the world, in a manner that can now be detected through a holistic and transdisciplinary empirical analysis. This not only provides surprising empirical vindication for our hypothesis that biophysical processes are playing an integral causal role in the intensification of political and geopolitical disruption on a global scale, it also provides us a basis to explore some tentative business-as-usual (BAU) forecasts.¶ This permits further exploration of the intersection between the thermodynamics of escalating hydrocarbon energy decline and the accelerating disruption of global industrial civilization. As prevailing social, political and economic structures become increasingly dysfunctional against the strain of hydrocarbon energy decline, the resulting rupture manifests in an increasing frequency of social protest and violent conflict.¶ Part of this study, then, identifies how conventional governmental, industry and media narratives of these crises for the most part fail to accurately understand them, not just due to a lack of a holistic-systemic frameworks for examining these crises as interdependent—but due to a fundamental epistemological failure that has allowed mythological ‘theories’ of human progress in the form of neoclassical and neoliberal economics to become entrenched as the dominant cognitive paradigm. The most powerful hegemonic component of this ideological capture of human collective cognition occurs through the global institutions associated with the mainstream media. The principal problem here is a highly compromised ownership and editorial structure that ties media outlets to the very prevailing structures of fossil fuel-centric power complicit in global crisis acceleration. The preponderance of fossil fuel-centric interests in conventional media ownership has led to consistently inaccurate reporting on energy issues, and their relationships with economic, food and climate crises, as well as specific conflicts.¶ Yet to some extent, and compounding the insular ideological approach of powerful government, industry and media institutions, there has been a similar failure from amongst experts in different fields of these crises, who have been unable to develop theoretical, conceptual and empirical frameworks to view their specialized data in its inherent interconnections with data from other fields. In other words, a lack of generalized systems training in our schools. Due to this problem, we are beginning to grasp only recently the extent to which geopolitical ruptures that overwhelm of the news of the day have been exacerbated by a convergence of crises studied largely separately in these disparate fields. There is, therefore, little understanding of how energy and resource depletion tangibly impact the political economies of different societies, and how these processes interact with the local impacts of global processes like climate change.¶ This has led to a knowledge deficit—specifically, a whole systems knowledge deficit comprising a paucity of reliable, actionable knowledge in the mainstream, exacerbating a sense of public apathy and confusion, and cementing a policymaking impasse among political leaders who remain subject to a fatal combination of intensive fossil fuel lobbying and media misinformation.¶ Among the most critical solutions to the ‘Crisis of Civilization’, then, is a concerted grassroots mobilization to rectify the whole systems knowledge deficit. This could be achieved in many different ways—whether through responsible journalism or more informed policy formulation based on the effective communication of interdisciplinary scientific research—but the end goal is the same: mass public education with a view to catalyze social action that is systemically transformative. Without addressing the knowledge deficit, the self-reinforcing cycle of amplifying crisis feedbacks cannot be overturned.¶ It is hoped that this study can begin contributing to addressing the whole systems knowledge deficit by firstly, establishing a scientifically-grounded systems theory framework for integrating data from different fields for the study of international politics; secondly, beginning the process of recognizing major geopolitical ruptures in the context of systemic crises driven by biophysical processes; thirdly, outlining the basis for a major, urgent new transdisciplinary research program bringing together the natural and social sciences to develop a holistic theoretical-empirical model of global crisis convergence; which in turn can pave the way for a fourth major, urgent new transdisciplinary action-research program on mitigating the impact of global crisis convergence, while transitioning human civilization to new more viable political economic structures that subsist in parity with their biophysical contexts. ¶ Chapter 2 The Crisis of Civilization as an Analytical Framework ¶ 2.1 The Human-Environment System as a Complex Adaptive System¶ The idea of a ‘Crisis of Civilization’ pivots around the goal of understanding human activity as a whole. It is premised on the fact that as a single biological species, human beings share common individual and social characteristics through which they interact with each other, with other species, and with the biophysical environment.¶ Global civilization constitutes the full mechanism of social organization by which this nexus of activities and interactions operates. I use a ‘Crisis of Civilization’ framework to examine multiple, seemingly disparate global and local crises. This does not obviate the specific and distinctive dynamics of those crises but permits examination of how these crises interrelate with one another in the context of the overarching global system of which they are part.¶ The theorization of human civilization as a “complex adaptive system” derives from the application of complex systems theory as developed in relation to biological systems and ecosystems (Kauffmann; Dyke; Homer-Dixon; Diamond). A rich and dense literature demonstrates that complex systems are found across the natural sciences in physics, chemistry, and biology (Ross and Arkin 2009), as well as in ecology (May et al. 2008) and economics (Farmer et al. 2012 ).¶ A system exists whenever a plurality of entities subsists in which each entity functions in some sort of relationship with the others. A complex system exists when the relations between these parts leads the system as a whole to display emergent properties and behavior which cannot be reduced solely to the nature of its different parts and their relationships. Those emergent properties can be codifi ed as overarching rules that characterize the system’s structure as a whole. In some cases this can be done mathematically, although this is a less useful approach when examining human societies. ¶ A complex adaptive system exists when the system as a whole is able to adapt— to generate a collective shift in its internal behavior in order to survive. Thus, while the relations between parts of a system generates the emergent structures that comprise the system as a whole, those relationships are, in turn, restrained and enabled by those wider structures. This circular relationship is integral to the system’s capacity to adapt to new environmental conditions. In time this is done by evolution; more immediately this can be done by behavioral changes or species shifts. ¶ Equally, due to the nested and interconnected nature of the components of a complex adaptive system, small perturbations in one part can have ramifying effects on other parts of the system, depending on how they are connected. This sort of internal positive feedback process means that the overall structure of a system can be greatly impacted by seemingly random occurrences—those structures can either be reinforced or undermined by these internal feedback processes. ¶ When such internal feedback processes reach certain thresholds, or ‘tipping points’, they can induce fundamental re-ordering of key structures in the system as a whole—the convergence of multiple tipping points, in turn, can generate a systemwide adaptive cycle of re-structuring, a ‘phase shift’, through which the system undergoes a transition to a new equilibrium (Holling 2001 ). ¶ The human-environment system is complex and adaptive because it represents a historically evolving civilizational form comprised of a vast interlocking array of nested sub-systems, including some from the earth’s geology, resources, oceans, and atmosphere; multiple living and non-living ecosystems across these domains; and human systems, comprised of psychological, cultural and ideological fi elds, relations of production and associated modes of energy extraction, technological and economic systems, and political structures. ¶ Thus, the ‘Crisis of Civilization’ framework is a systems approach that attempts to analyze the complex interrelationships between multiple global crises and human activities as a whole, thus understanding them not simply as discrete crises and activities in themselves, but as component factors of a wider global human environmental system with its own emergent properties and behaviors. ¶ This approach recognizes that each of these crises pertains to a specifi c subsystem in itself, with distinctive features and patterns of behavior, but equally recognizes that each of these sub-systems do not exist in isolation. Rather, their mutual interrelationship generates emergent patterns characterizing the system as a whole. Those emergent structural features, in turn, exert causal regulatory effects that shape, enable and constrain the behaviors of the sub-systems. ¶ A systems approach thus views particular crises and associated human activities as discrete sub-systems which are, nevertheless, inherently interconnected as subsystems in an emergent human-environmental system, captured through the concept of a world-scale human civilization. It is in this respect that the ‘Crisis of Civilization’ as an analytical framework is able to systemically locate multiple crises as interconnected features of a wider world-scale crisis in human civilization as an emergent macro-structure. By integrating detailed trans-disciplinary examination of crisis sub-systems with analysis of their systemic interconnections within the world-scale human-environment system, a much clearer picture of the precise drivers, dynamics and potential trajectories of these crises is possible. This permits discernment of a birds-eye perspective of overall civilizational structures and their emergent direction. ¶ Examining human civilization as a complex adaptive system, therefore, permits multiple global crises to be understood through the lens of a range of powerful concepts with solid empirical basis in the biophysical sciences—the thresholds and tipping points of feedback processes; how interconnections between different crises can generate amplifying feedbacks with the potential to accelerate the breaching of tipping points; the extent to which different crises can be seen as properly systemic— that is, related fundamentally to the key global structures integral to the prevailing dynamic of human civilization; and how these crises relate to the system’s adaptive capacity, in particular, whether they are generating a major ‘phase change’ in the system itself. ¶ In particular, this allows analysis of human civilization to return to a scientific framework defied by the thermodynamics of the fossil fuel system, and the evolution and adaptation of species, bringing in critical insights from the physical and natural sciences that can inform the development of robust historical and sociological theories. ¶ 2.2 The Energy Metabolism of Human Civilization ¶ Applications of complex systems approaches to social, environmental and economic phenomena have largely neglected the most fundamental factor in the evolution and adaptation of complex systems: energy metabolism. ¶ Extensive research in the biological and ecological sciences demonstrates that an organism’s relation to the environment is mediated fundamentally through the mode and manner by which it extracts energy from the environment, to maintain and improve its distance from thermodynamic equilibrium. Living systems extract free energy from the sun, store it, and use it. Further, they can reproduce as well as collect, process, and exchange information in order to control and direct energy and matter they receive from their environments (Terzis and Arp 2011 ; Hall et al. 1992 ). ¶ According to the Second Law of Thermodynamics, physical systems display a tendency to dissipate energy and thus transition from states of order to increasing disorder. Therefore, physicist Erwin Schrödinger defined a living system as an embodiment of “negative entropy” as they “extract order” from their environments to survive, adapt and evolve. (Schrodinger 1944 ) ¶ A living system or organism is thus defined by its ability to store energy under energy fl ow, before dissipation. It develops, maintains and reproduces, or renews, itself by mobilizing material and energy extracted from the environment, which is stored internally through cyclic non-dissipative processes coupled to irreversible dissipative processes. This permits the organism to survive precisely through the consumption and ordering of energy within systemic biological processes organized through genetic information protocols. The capacity to extract, store and mobilize stored energy is therefore integral to a reproducing life cycle. Eventually, of course, the energy must be irreversibly dissipated as required by the Second Law. But the increasing complexity of a living system is related directly to its capacity to extract, store and mobilize stored energy, and to thereby stave off the thermodynamic dissipation of energy. (Ho 1999) ¶ Organisms which successfully adapt to changing or challenging environmental conditions do so through the superior processing of information about those external conditions through genetic modification, reflecting increased efficiencies in energy extraction, storage and mobilization in relationship with the environment. (Schneider and Kay 1994 ) ¶ The thermodynamics of living systems applies, of course, not just to any single individual organism, but simultaneously to collections of organisms inhabiting specific environments. While human beings are the most advanced—that is, complex— biological organisms known to science, human civilization constitutes a complex adaptive system which has been able to maximize energy extraction, storage and mobilization from its environment far more efficiently and powerfully than ever before. The astonishing complexity of human civilization is related directly to its capacity to harness energy from the environment through numerous sub-systemic processes of social organization, thus maintaining increasing distance from thermodynamic equilibrium (Odum 1994). ¶ This framework allows for a more complete empirically-grounded theorization of what the contemporary escalation of global environmental and economic crises entails for the current trajectory of human civilization. Over its historical evolution, human civilization has demonstrated a relationship with its environment involving escalating energy use and energy dissipation, with wide-ranging consequences for the stability of the global human-environment system. ¶ Social power is an organic constitution grounded in an exploitative relationship with nature by which energy is extracted from natural resources, transformed into a commodity (through production) and eventually consumed. Energy is thus the very condition of production—but to examine the fl uctuating relationship between the two requires the recognition of social power through property : that is, the way access to land, resources and technology to enable energy production is mediated through property rights, which in turn are related to confi gurations of class (Wood 1981 ; Aston et al. 1987 ; Rioux and Dufour 2008 ). ¶ It is therefore necessary, in examining the energy trajectory of human civilization as a whole, to investigate inequalities in social power and class in the context of differentiated access to land, resources and technology between various human groups, and how this relates to the thermodynamics of energy as applied to human society as a complex adaptive system. This will enable us to properly grasp the processes of extraction, transformation and consumption of energy through labor, and varying relationships between society, labor, technology and natural resources, that are integral to diagnosing human civilization’s current predicament (Foster et al. 2010 ; Hall and Klitgaard 2012 ). ¶ The historical development of human civilization illustrates an accelerating trend in global net energy production driven by a series of increasingly sophisticated technological breakthroughs, each linked to fundamental shifts in the humanenvironment relations and corresponding socio-political and economic systems of organization. These civilizational phase-shifts toward more complex forms can be conceptualized in multiple overlapping ways. ¶ These phase-shifts have encompassed fundamental transitions in the energy metabolism of human societies—in terms of both the types of energy extracted, and the relations of production by which this energy is extracted, stored and mobilized in society through the creation of goods and services. These energy sources include our own muscle and that of animals, as well as wood, wind, water, coal, oil, and nuclear power (LePoire et al. 2015 ). The relations of production accompanying these phase shifts have included the following social-property relations: huntergatherer, nomadic, pastoral, agrarian, feudalism, slavery, agrarian capitalism, industrial capitalism, and neoliberal fi nance capitalism, which is rapidly moving to a new phase of late capitalism predominated by information technology and artifi cial intelligence (Ahmed 2009 ). ¶ It is also important to note that each new phase-shift does not necessarily constitute a clean break with previous shifts, but in the course of increasing complexity often builds on or incorporates older structures within a new, wider structural context. One useful way of understanding this process in an evolutionary fashion is through Arthur Koestler’s concept of nested self-organizing hierarchical systems which successively incorporate less complex systems to create higher scales of overarching complexity (Pichler 1999 ). ¶ While the latest phase shift of neoliberal fi nance capitalism has been able to generate an unprecedented level of wealth within the system, it has simultaneously developed an unprecedented degree of global inequality between the core—consisting of a transnational nexus of class power centred in the former G8—dominating the world’s productive resources including energy, raw materials, military and information technology; and the periphery—whose countries remains largely subordinated to the global structures institutionalized by the core (Ahmed 2009 ; Tainter 1990 ). ¶ 2.3 The Physics of System Failure ¶ Today, human civilization under late capitalism maintains its increasing distance from thermodynamic equilibrium via the throughput of vast quantities of increasingly depleted fossil fuel reserves, along with other fi nite and increasingly scarce resources such as metal ores, radionucleotides, rare earth elements, phosphate fertilizer, arable land, and fresh water (Nekola et al. 2013 ). ¶ One indicator of the system’s growing complexity today is the measure of material throughput, or economic growth—Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Under capitalist social-property relations, GDP must continuously increase through the maximization of private sector profi ts, simply for businesses to survive in the competitive marketplace and for the economy to maintain its ability to meet the consumption requirements of a growing population. However, as the complexity of human civilization has advanced, the continual growth in material throughput is correlated with an escalating rate of depletion of energy and raw materials, as well as an acceleration in the dissipation of energy through intensifying greenhouse gas emissions. ¶ Robust scientifi c assessments now demonstrate that the continuation of those biophysical processes of environmental degradation in a business-as-usual scenario will, before the end of the twenty-fi rst century, fundamentally undermine the biophysical basis of human civilization in its current mode of material organization and structural complexity. Further, the uncontrolled energy releases generated by these biophysical processes are manifested in climate change, extreme weather events, and natural disasters (Earth System Disruption); and drives geopolitical competition, social unrest, and violent confl ict (Human System Destabilization). ¶ These manifestations of dissipative energy release can be seen as distinctive feedback processes resulting from human civilization’s accelerating exploitation of fossil fuel energy sources within the context of the biophysical limits of the environment. In turn, these two strands of systemic feedbacks—Earth System Disruption (ESD) and Human System Destabilization (HSD)—are occurring within a single, overarching human-environment system, and thus are already inherently interconnected, therefore feeding back into each other. ¶ This mutual feedback process creates an amplifying global systemic feedback in which: (1) ESD drives HSD, which in turn generates ‘security’ issues perceived through the lens of ‘threat’ and ‘risk’ analysis; (2) this invites traditional securitized human responses that focus on the expansion of existing military, political and economic power to stabilize existing structures of authority and advance prevailing mechanisms of energy extraction and mobilization; (3) the entrenchment and expansion of existing structures undermines human civilization’s capacity to pursue structural modifications to ameliorate, mitigate or prevent [Earth Systems Disruption] ESD, thus intensifying ESD; (4) the feedback process continues as ESD drives further [Human System Destabilization] HSD. ¶ The trajectory of this amplifying global systemic feedback, carried to its logical conclusion and assuming no intervening shift, is simply the protracted, cascading collapse of human civilization in its current form toward increasingly less complex, and therefore less resource-intensive configurations, corresponding to available resources and constrained within the environmental limits imposed by accelerating climate change (Tainter 1990).

#### Mutual securitization causes blame games that drive conflict.

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Underlying Russia's rejection of “the West” and the deteriorating relations between these two political entities in recent years, there lie multiple drivers. Russian domestic politics and the changing approach of the Kremlin are at the heart of many explanations (Grigas 2016; McFaul 2018; Taylor 2018). Other accounts emphasize how deteriorating Russia–West relations are somehow the result of a mutual process (Legvold 2014; Mearsheimer 2014; Charap and Colton 2017; Conradi 2017; Monaghan 2019). This article can be placed in the latter school; it shows how what some call the “new Cold War” has developed out of interaction between Russia and the West, bringing these political entities into a relation where the threat of war appears imminent. It does so by investigating the dyad of Russia–West relations, which was particularly benign and where military hostilities seemed highly unlikely for twenty-five years following the end of the Cold War.

Focusing on the changing relations between Norway and Russia, I show how rising tension spread from the 2014 crises in Ukraine to the North.1 Initially, both parties declared that they neither wanted nor believed that the new strategic tension between Russia and the West would spread to or define relations in this region. This was not surprising. Norway and Russia had managed to build a close and practical partnership in the North following the end of the Cold War. Relations in the region had been characterized as pervaded by a spirit of cooperation and a “culture of compromise” (Hønneland and Jensen 2015). However, by October 2018, NATO was conducting “Trident Juncture,” the largest military exercise since the Cold War on Norwegian territory, with twenty-nine NATO countries participating, as well as Finland and Sweden, involving 50,000 troops in all.2 While this exercise was underway, Russia unexpectedly announced that it would conduct missile tests in the Norwegian Sea simultaneously.3 Few could deny that the new Russia–West tensions had spread to the North. Although the Norwegian authorities were reluctant to identify Russia as a “threat” for an entire year after the annexation of Crimea, today they openly speak of and prepare for hostilities. Russia, for its part, recently claimed that Norway has become “the frontier of deterrence of Russia” in the policy plans of the United States and NATO.4

This development will be explained with reference to changing Russian and Norwegian representations of each other: toward construing the other part more as a threat than a partner in one issue-area, the rippling outward of this representation to other issue-areas, the policy changes effectuated in line with these shifting representations, and how these changes have been (re-)acted upon by the other side. Within such a process of mutual and multifaceted securitization, attention to domestic audiences, quests for internal unity, and coherent identity articulation in volatile times send signals of offense and non-recognition across the border to the foreign state audience—playing into a mutual blame game, shaping interaction, and further escalating tensions to the point where the threat of hostilities seems imminent. As long acknowledged by security-dilemma theorists, both the classical realist and newer constructivist proponents, interaction has a dynamics of its own (Herz 1950; Jervis 1978; Mitzen 2006; Booth and Wheeler 2008). I argue that the emerging and mutual pattern of representing the other as a threat, not only in the military sphere, but also across issue-areas, has become an “autonomous” driver of conflict—regardless of whether either side (Norway/NATO/West, and Russia) might originally have had offensive designs on the other.5

By invoking the new Cold War in this article, I do not intend to measure the level of threat and distribution of power between the parties or suggest that these are the same as in the old Cold War. This article does not speak to the recent discussion on the similarities and differences between the old and the new Cold Wars (Legvold 2016; Lieven 2018). Rather, I put the spotlight on the mutual and evolving social identification processes between political entities that can help to push a relation to the point where an outbreak of hostilities seems imminent. Just as during the Cold War, the parties today hold increasingly and mutually incompatible descriptions of self and other (Ringmar 2002) and focus on blaming each other (Legvold 2016). I believe the totalizing “blame game” now underway and the mutual and intensifying descriptions of the other, metastasizing to a level where the other stands out as an “existential threat” at every encounter, are central to understanding the unlikely return of high military tension in the North.

Drawing on a detailed study of Russian and Norwegian official texts in the years following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and applying a discourse-theoretical approach to securitization theory, this article offers two theoretical contributions to second-generation securitization theory post-Copenhagen School (Balzacq 2005; Stritzel 2007; McDonald 2008; Salter 2008; Floyd 2010; Hagmann 2015; Wilhelmsen 2017; Stengel 2019, building on Wæver 1994 and 1996; Buzan et al. 1998). First, I propose that securitization processes should be understood and studied in dyads because the shift to more radical representations of the other—i.e., a higher degree of securitization—often unfolds in a mutual pattern of identification and interaction between political entities. Second, an issue-specific securitization—say, representing the other part as an existential threat in the military domain—may spread to other dimensions of the relationship, making the other part appear as different and dangerous at every encounter. Such multifaceted securitization can intensify a negative spiral, ultimately blocking the chances for positive mutual representation and recognition. Military means then become a logical and legitimate way of relating to the other: contact and collaboration in other issue-areas are precluded. With this approach, I seek to expand on and integrate a discourse-theoretical version of securitization theory into the study of how and why relations escalate to the brink of war.

Although the post-positivist foundation of this study complicates direct communication and compatibility with much of the classical literature on the security dilemma and spirals, it does speak to the central question of how collective actors, such as states, become unsure of whether the other has defensive or offensive intentions and why they come to see and act toward each other as aggressive, regardless of the “true intentions” of the other (see e.g., Jervis 2001; Mitzen and Schweller 2011). The positivist literature on the security dilemma and spirals usually theorizes such pathways to conflict as an encounter between actors reasoning through preference structures in rational games, or a set of games (Jervis 1978; Fearon 1995; Mearsheimer 2001; Glaser 2010; Copeland 2011; Mitzen and Schweller 2011). In contrast, my approach, building on the fundamental insight that political entities are socially constituted and that the identity of self and other is subject to change through linguistic practices, theorizes such pathways to conflict as emerging through many encounters and gradually changing relations where identity dynamics serve as the causal engine.

This article proceeds as follows: I first lay out the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of the argument, building on second-generation securitization theory and the concept of ontological security. Then, after a short presentation of the historical background of Russia–Norway relations in the North, I turn to changing Russian and Norwegian mutual representations in 2014–2018, and the shapes taken by the securitizing narratives on both sides. Investigating the Norwegian side in depth, I show how the image of Russia as a threat has solidified over time, spilling over into non-security issue-areas, and made a string of initiatives that reject Russia’ logical and legitimate policies in a new Norwegian approach. I examine how Norwegian official securitization of Russia has been driven by the quest for unity and continuity in representations of the self in a time of uncertainty and disruption. The fifth section concerns this driver and the unintended consequences of skewed attention to internal cohesion and domestic audiences at the expense of Russia. I point out how Russia has interpreted and (re-)acted to Norway's securitizing moves and policies, showing how mutual and multifaceted securitization unfolds in practice—and results in escalation.

Studying Escalation through Mutual and Multifaceted Securitization

While some hold that the growing rhetoric of confrontation between Russia and the West can be employed without running the risk of war (Lieven 2018), I take this use of words seriously. Political language serves to make some courses of action legitimate and logical, while precluding others (Hansen 2006, 21; Jackson 2006; Wilhelmsen 2017). According to this fundamental discourse-theoretical insight, securitization—defined as a process where the other is increasingly cast as different and dangerous to the self—will manifest itself in concrete policy practices (Hagmann 2015, 9; Hayes 2009, 985; Wilhelmsen 2017, 28–29). Thus, there is a link between the rhetoric of confrontation that produces the subjectivities of threatened self and threatening other, and the policy responses initiated in the course of such a securitization.6 The more different and dangerous to the self the other is construed as being, perhaps even to the level of “existential threat,” the more reasonable and logical will the use of force against this other appear (Bandura 1990, 7–8; Wilhelmsen 2017, 24–26).

Securitization, viewed through a discourse-theoretical lens, emerges through a plethora of utterings and is, therefore, best theorized as a gradual process, not one specific happening (Ciuta 2009; Hagmann 2015, 21–22; Wilhelmsen 2017, 21–24). That is not to say that securitizations cannot end up in a radical black/white juxtaposition, where They represent an existential threat to US and can be related to only through the barrel of a gun. Indeed, the aim of this article is precisely to show how the gradual and increasing securitization of Russia in Norway, and of Norway in Russia, is bringing relations to a point where the threat of hostilities seems imminent. But there is no necessary evolution to this point of possible destruction: it is a contingent process (Guzzini 2011). When securitization is produced through a myriad of statements that together make the other stand out as a threat, there is always a possibility for more and more statements that construe the other as “defensive” or even “potential partner” to feed into the process, bringing the threat image a few levels down and making possible a policy of restraint or even collaboration. Here, however, I seek to identify mechanisms that push securitization upward to the point where the buildup of force seems necessary and hostilities imminent.

My first suggestion is to conceptualize and study securitization processes in dyads, that is, as a mutual process. The shift to more radical representations of the other (a higher degree of securitization) often occurs in a reciprocal pattern of identification and interaction between political entities (Wilhelmsen 2020, 30). How political entities such as states identify, talk to (or about) each other, and the policies they launch in accordance with and following such speech, play into and shape the speech and policy courses of other states. There are essential effects of securitization processes where the other party is cast as different and dangerous to the self (Wæver 1995; Buzan et al. 1998; Stritzel 2007; McDonald 2008; Hagmann 2015; Wilhelmsen 2016). Within a dyad of political entities that increasingly identify the other as a threat to the self, a self-perpetuating logic sets in, with the two securitizations fueling each other.

Under what conditions and how does this happen? As noted by Mitzen (2006) and others, states do seek not only physical security, they also seek security of the self (ontological security), mainly because agency requires a stable cognitive environment.7 Particularly at a time of crisis states strive to create continuous narratives of self (Steely 2008a; Zarakol 2010; Subotic 2016). Routinized security talk and the projection of the other as a threat delivers ontological security. It creates inner cohesion in the referent group and the ability to act (Wilhelmsen 2017, 27–32). This is because representations of self and other are bound together, dependent on each other. Collective identities and the social groups they refer to are constituted in relation to difference and maintained through the continued juxtaposition and drawing up of boundaries between self and other (Barth 1969; Connolly 1991). However, securitizing the other for enteric use also creates a “securitization dilemma”—“a difficult choice where a securitizing move represents a powerful and attractive opportunity for political mobilization, but with the danger of perverse and unintended consequences” (Van Rythoven (2019, 2). The unintended consequences of securitization have been suggested to be of several kinds: contextual, social, and temporal (Van Rythoven 2019, 10). Within the social type of contingency, which concerns how an audience can interpret a security claim in unexpected ways, much attention has been given to situations in which a securitizing move can be rejected by the audiences it is meant to mobilize (Wæver 1989,1; Collins 2014; Van Rythoven 2019). Of particular relevance for relations between political entities, but less investigated, is the unintended consequences that a securitization within one political entity of another political entity may have on that other political entity.

To maintain ontological security, actors must not only be able to assure themselves of who they are (endogenously)—and protecting a continuous narrative of self becomes particularly pressing in a time of crisis—but they also need to be identified and recognized by others, and on their own preferred terms (exogenously) (Steely 2008b, 51–52; Zarakol 2010, 3; Ringmar 2014). A securitizing actor's firm (but probably unconscious) attention to ontological security and the domestic audience at a time of crisis can communicate non-recognition to the other (foreign) audience. If both parties in a dyad of political entities push securitization of the other upward for enteric use but disregard how the other will interpret it, as well as the non-recognition of the other party that such securitization implies, a negative spiral sets in.

For example, a securitization of NATO as different and dangerous to Russia creates both inner cohesion in the Russian polity and makes possible a policy of “military modernization” and a posture of “defensive deterrence,” but it can have unintended consequences. It can be taken as a rejection of NATO's self-constituted identity as a legitimate, reliable, security-seeking actor and elicit a string of representations of Russia as different and dangerous on the NATO side.8 Failure to be recognized by the other on one's own preferred terms might not necessarily result in feelings of inferiority and shame, triggering efforts to reconstruct one's own identity, as Bially Mattern has suggested (2004, 12–13) or “progressive change” of self to become like the other, as Ringmar (2014) holds. As Lupovici (2012, 818) notes a collective actor that experiences ontological threat can “redefine the situation in order to protect identity.” “Avoidance,” he says, building on Giddens (1991, 188) “allows an actor facing an ontological dissonance to revalidate its identity rather than to change it or to change its behaviour.” Lupovici explores the strategy of avoidance in situations where dissonance is created endogenously, between conflicting self-identifications and the responses undertaken to offset threats to these self-identifications within one political entity.

Avoidance may play out differently when the ontological dissonance emerges exogenously in a dyad of political entities. To reduce the dissonance between the understanding of self and the explicit identification of one's own political entity by the other as being something different and dangerous, revalidation of own identity can be achieved through externalization, by simply returning the negative identification. This strategy is manifest as a clear pattern in the texts by Norwegian/Western and Russian leaders studied below. It is hardly surprising that a collective actor would respond to the non-recognition implicit in being securitized with externalization in the form of talking and hitting back instead of undertaking some form of internal revision. Responding by mirroring the securitization of your group by the other party can be rewarding in terms of delineating and maintaining self-identity, particularly in a time of crisis. To restate and return to the case in focus: the non-recognition implicit in Russia's securitization of NATO can elicit highly antagonistic representations of Russia from the NATO side, triggering another round of representations and accusations from the Russian side, and so on.

Such a negative spiral of mutual representations and accusations can be driven further when the different non-military issue-areas in which collective political entities engage also become subject to securitization. While relations between such entities usually take place on different international arenas addressing different issue-areas and exhibit a mixed pattern of friendly and hostile interaction (Jervis 2001, 37; Bially Mattern 2004), they may become subject to patterned all-encompassing friendly or hostile interaction. The latter, I propose, can happen when security concerns take center-stage in relations, through a spillover from mutual securitization in the military sphere into other arenas of potentially neutral or friendly interaction, such as trade, culture, or even diplomacy.

In more scholarly terms, a negative spiral in relations is intensified when the other is securitized, i.e., construed, through speech, as different and dangerous at every encounter, and when every policy move in any issue-area is represented as a tool in the hands of this threatening other. Such multifaceted securitization pushes the representation of the other upward on the scale of difference and danger and can create a situation where positive recognition is not granted in any sphere. In this situation, the collective actor experiences an exogenous rejection of its self-ascribed identity in every policy sphere where it seeks outside confirmation—making the experience acute. In turn, this experience of acute ontological dissonance may be met by a strategy of avoidance and externalization: a counter-securitization that mirrors and matches the near-total rejection to which the political entity itself has been subjected. In the course of the ensuing spat, with hostile representations flung back and forth on every arena of encounter, the other is finally left with no face but that of an enemy. That resolves the dilemma of knowing what the intentions of the other are, as each party is now quite certain that the other has offensive designs.

From this understanding, logically flow policies of positioning and armament in the military sphere, and disengagement and non-communication in non-military issue-areas. In contrast to endogenously generated avoidance noted by Lupovici (2012, 813), the problem is not that a collective actor undertakes contradictory measures to alleviate ontological dissonance, but rather that the same measures of disengagement and confrontation seem logical and legitimate in every sphere of interaction between two political entities. In this situation, the parties have few possibilities of extricating themselves from the spiral that leads to confrontation. If the other is securitized and denied recognition across issue-areas and arenas, that leaves no space for responding with friendship to overcome mistrust—which would be the opening through which to start pushing the spiral downward.

A high level of mutual and multifaceted securitization can produce, in Jervis’ terminology (2001, 41), a “deep security dilemma” ... “a situation where mistrust cannot be overcome” and where there are “no missed opportunities for radically improving relations.” But in contrast to Jervis’ conception, the road toward this high level of mutual securitization, with the ensuing minimal trust, is gradual and contingent, and produced through a plethora of representations. Moreover, in this approach, the key “mover” in the security dilemma—the perception of each party that the other has offensive intentions—emerges from their discursive practices, their representations of each other. Mutual and multifaceted securitization answers Mitzen and Schweller's (2011) call to understand how certainty about the other actor's aggressive intentions can contribute to the onset of war.9 But this certainty, with the tragic outcome it can result in, should not be seen as conditioned by structural uncertainty at the outset; nor is the misplaced certainty in the next phase built from “inside” an individual decision-maker with reference to cognitive and affective causes (Mitzen and Schweller's (2011; Jervis 1976, 387–406). I submit that it is built through the multiple and spreading self/other representations that bring the “offensive intent” of the other into being as a social reality, making it reasonable and logical to undertake policy steps to counter this aggressive intent.

This alternative approach also has some advantages in terms of validation. Empirical validation of a theory is difficult if misplaced certainty is explained by intentions. Jervis, for example, although admitting that it is difficult to pin down whether the Cold War was a security dilemma (2001, 38) still tries to settle this question by revisiting archive material and establishing the nature of the US and Soviet leaders’ intentions at that time (2001, 53). My reading of the security(zation) dilemma acknowledges that the intentions of collective actors are inaccessible, and works from the tangible empirical fact of words actually issued.10 When such words are understood as having constitutive power, conditioning the paths of action collective actors can take, it is easier to ascertain whether two parties have moved into a situation where the use of force seems logical and legitimate.

For Norway and Russia in the North, the tragedy might be that, although they both need a coherent ontological landscape, think of themselves as “security-seekers” and as achieving more security through their multifaceted securitization of the other, they might be creating a relation devoid of any positive engagement, thereby endangering their own physical security.

#### Vote neg to interrogate the 1AC’s epistemological failures and accept insecurity

Mark Neocleous 8, Professor of Government at Brunel, 2008, “Critique of Security,” p. 185-186

The only way out of such a dilemma, to escape the fetish, is perhaps to eschew the logic of security altogether – to reject it as so ideologically loaded in favour of the state that any real political thought other than the authoritarian and reactionary should be pressed to give it up. That is clearly something that cannot be achieved within the limits of bourgeois thought and thus could never even begin to be imagined by the security intellectual. It is also something that the constant iteration of the refrain ‘this is an insecure world’ and reiteration of one fear, anxiety and insecurity after another will also make it hard to do. But it is something that the critique of security suggests we may have to consider if we want a political way out of the impasse of security.¶ This impasse exists because security has now become so all-encompassing that it marginalises all else, most notably the constructive conflicts, debates and discussions that animate political life. The constant prioritising of a mythical security as a political end – as the political end – constitutes a rejection of politics in any meaningful sense of the term. That is, as a mode of action in which differences can be articulated, in which the conflicts and struggles that arise from such differences can be fought for and negotiated, in which people might come to believe that another world is possible – that they might transform the world and in turn be transformed. Security politics simply removes this; worse, it removes it while purportedly addressing it. In so doing it suppresses all issues of power and turns political questions into debates about the most efficient way to achieve ‘security’, despite the fact that we are never quite told – never could be told – what might count as having achieved it. Security politics is, in this sense, an anti-politics,141 dominating political discourse in much the same manner as the security state tries to dominate human beings, reinforcing security fetishism and the monopolistic character of security on the political imagination. We therefore need to get beyond security politics, not add yet more ‘sectors’ to it in a way that simply expands the scope of the state and legitimises state intervention in yet more and more areas of our lives.¶ Simon Dalby reports a personal communication with Michael Williams, co-editor of the important text Critical Security Studies, in which the latter asks: if you take away security, what do you put in the hole that’s left behind? But I’m inclined to agree with Dalby: maybe there is no hole.142 The mistake has been to think that there is a hole and that this hole needs to be filled with a new vision or revision of security in which it is re-mapped or civilised or gendered or humanised or expanded or whatever. All of these ultimately remain within the statist political imaginary, and consequently end up reaffirming the state as the terrain of modern politics, the grounds of security. The real task is not to fill the supposed hole with yet another vision of security, but to fight for an alternative political language which takes us beyond the narrow horizon of bourgeois security and which therefore does not constantly throw us into the arms of the state. That’s the point of critical politics: to develop a new political language more adequate to the kind of society we want. Thus while much of what I have said here has been of a negative order, part of the tradition of critical theory is that the negative may be as significant as the positive in setting thought on new paths.¶ For if security really is the supreme concept of bourgeois society and the fundamental thematic of liberalism, then to keep harping on about insecurity and to keep demanding ‘more security’ (while meekly hoping that this increased security doesn’t damage our liberty) is to [foreclose] [blind] ourselves to the possibility of building real alternatives to the authoritarian tendencies in contemporary politics. To situate ourselves against security politics would allow us to circumvent the debilitating effect achieved through the constant securitising of social and political issues, debilitating in the sense that ‘security’ helps consolidate the power of the existing forms of social domination and justifies the short-circuiting of even the most democratic forms. It would also allow us to forge another kind of politics centred on a different conception of the good. We need a new way of thinking and talking about social being and politics that moves us beyond security. This would perhaps be emancipatory in the true sense of the word. What this might mean, precisely, must be open to debate. But it certainly requires recognising that security is an illusion that has forgotten it is an illusion; it requires recognising that security is not the same as solidarity; it requires accepting that insecurity is part of the human condition, and thus giving up the search for the certainty of security and instead learning to tolerate the uncertainties, ambiguities and ‘insecurities’ that come with being human; it requires accepting that ‘securitizing’ an issue does not mean dealing with it politically, but bracketing it out and handing it to the state; it requires us to be brave enough to return the gift.143

## Framework

### Framework---IR

#### Prioritize epistemological interrogation---theory at every level is necessary to establish political relevance and drive effective political engagement

Beate Jahn 17, Professor of International Relations at the University of Sussex, 3/1/17, “Theorizing the Political Relevance of International Relations Theory,” International Studies Quarterly, Vol 61, Issue 1, p. 64-77

In the modern context, the intimate linkage between politics and knowledge is established and reproduced through separation. Only by distancing itself from the particularities of politics and developing the language of universal reason can science establish its political relevance. This paradoxical relationship turns on its head the widely shared assumption that increasing levels of abstraction—from empirical to theoretical and metatheoretical work—undermine political relevance. Instead, with every step away from concrete policies, academic studies address broader questions, speak to wider audiences, and play a more foundational role for politics (Eriksson 2014, 102). Each of these levels of abstraction, moreover, constitutes an integral part of modern science and therefore also of its political relevance. “Practically relevant knowledge” is therefore not possible without “metatheoretical reflection” (Reus-Smit 2013, 605), and vice versa.¶ Locating the discipline of IR within the context of this relationship between politics and knowledge also illuminates the nature and function of some of its core features. It shows that the poverty of its subject matter, its fragmentation, and its immaturity arise from the ultimate limitation of modern knowledge—its inability to provide an account of totality—and is therefore common to all modern sciences. Within this context, however, fragmentation does not function as a barrier to scientific progress. Instead, it drives it in the form of greater theoretical pluralism. And far from indicating an “end of theory,” the waxing and waning of metatheoretical debates results from the political implications and limitations of scientific knowledge.¶ These dynamics of modern scientific development, in turn, carry with them political implications. Despite its universalist aspirations, modern knowledge is always partial and can only illuminate norms already embodied in given practices rather than generating guiding principles for practice (Weber 1948, 147). For this reason, the role of IR scholars interested in improving politics cannot be reduced to the “heroic” one “of providing scientifically derived knowledge by which foreign policy may be guided,” but must fundamentally include “the ‘ironic’ one of ensuring that rival explanations can be heard” (Zambernardi 2016, 4–5).¶ Theory, in sum, plays a pivotal role for the constitution, reproduction, and progressive development of IR as a modern science. What is more, theory at every level of abstraction plays a constitutive role for the political relevance of modern science in general. And theory, at every level of abstraction, also plays a directly political role. Theory, in short, is both indispensable and highly practical.¶ Finally, the implications of the present study apply also to its own findings. By focusing on the common epistemic basis of the modern sciences and modern politics, I established connections between politics and knowledge, and between IR and other disciplines. This highlights the political relevance of abstract and concrete, good and bad quality, and accessible and inaccessible studies. Yet, by focusing on the modern episteme, this study necessarily abstracts from the ontological dimension—from the specificities of politics and knowledge, the differences between IR and other modern sciences, between abstract and concrete, critical and mainstream, good- and bad-quality work. The source of the confusion over the relevance of IR, however, has always lain in the epistemic basis of the relation between modern politics and the sciences.

#### And, if they win policymaking good endorse the aff without the justifications we’re critiquing

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Securitization and desecuritization ¶ The ceteris paribus normative push, and political recommendation of the securitization approach has been ‘less security, more politics’, and the development of ‘possible modalities’ for the desecuritization of politics (Wæver 1989a, 52): it is generally (which can only be assessed in practice though) more conducive to treat identities as identities, religion as religion, the environment as the environment, and so on, and to engage their politics through the particular modalities and rationalities of those fields rather than those of security. In the received reading, whilst securitization raises issues into the realm of security policies and practices (arrow 2a in Figure 1), desecuritization lowers issues back into the realm of ‘regular politics’ or removes issues from the political agenda altogether (arrow 1 in Figure 1). ¶ Desecuritization can be achieved through a number of options: by simply not talking about issues in terms of security, by keeping responses to securitized issues in forms that do not create security dilemmas or other vicious spirals, and by moving security issues back into ‘normal politics’ (Wæver 2000, 253). These options can follow objectivist, constructivist or deconstructivist strategies in bringing about desecuritization (Huysmans (1995, 65–67). These strategies differ in regard to how the process relates to the claimed threat: has the threat been dealt with, can the security drama be somehow handled from without, or can identities beyond security threats be produced from within the process. ¶ Beyond conceptualizing desecuritization as an option or a strategy, it has also been viewed from the viewpoint of political actors (de Wilde 2008, 597), and their political moves in games of contestation and resistance (Vuori 2011a, 2015). There can be desecuritizing actors who evade, circumvent or directly oppose securitizing moves by, for example, emphasizing competing threats (de Wilde 2008, 597). Security policies aim at desecuritization (the solution to the threatening situation), but desecuritization can also happen independently from the actions of securitizing or desecuritizing actors: the original security problem may be solved, institutions may adapt through new reproductive structures, discourses may change (e.g., with the loss of interest or audiences), and the original referent object may be lost (de Wilde 2008). ¶ A key issue of debate has been on whether desecuritization can be considered to be an active political process, or whether desecuritization can only happen as a fading away of the issue (Behnke 2006, 65): the question is whether the logic and possibility of securitization is necessarily retained in explicit discussions of whether an issue has retained the status of a security issue. As empirical studies of securitization and desecuritization dynamics (e.g., Salter and Mutlu 2013; Lupovici 2014; Vuori 2015; Donnelly 2015) have shown, it is difficult to point to a definitive end point for either securitization or desecuritization: political and social situations evolve. Whichever the philosophical stance on how and whether desecuritization can be achieved (Vuori 2011a), such empirical studies show that political actors do make active desecuritization moves. ¶ Indeed, systematizing empirical studies of desecuritization, Hansen (2012, 529; 539–545) has identified four ideal type forms for the concept. In regard to its issues of concern, namely the status of enmity and the possibility of a public sphere, when a larger conflict is still within the realm of possibility, but when a particular issue is presented with terms other than security, we have an instance of (1) ‘change through stabilisation’ (arrow 2b in Figure 1); when another issue takes the place of a previously securitized issue, we have (2) ‘replacement’; when the originally phrased threat is resolved, we have (3) rearticulation; and finally, when potentially insecure subjects are marginalized through depoliticization, we have (4) ‘silencing’ (types 2–3 are represented by arrow 1 in Figure 1). ¶ The previous literature on both securitization (arrow 2a in Figure 1) and desecuritization (arrow 1 in Figure 1) has produced ample illustrations of both dynamics. As a brief example of how both dynamics can alter between the same political actors, we can use some of the vicissitudes of Sino-Soviet relations. ¶ China entered the Cold War in the Soviet camp and relied on the Soviet Union as the guarantee of the international security of the new People’s Republic. Chinese views in the late 1940s clearly structured the world into two opposing camps, with China firmly in the Soviet one (Mao 1949). In the 1950s, however, Sino-Soviet relations soured, and the following ‘Sino-Soviet split’ (Lüthi 2008) has been used as an example of the capacity of ‘parochial’ securitizations to become disaffected by or even be withdrawn from dominant ‘macrosecuritizations’ (Buzan and Wæver 2009, 257). ¶ Following the split, Sino-Soviet relations in the 1960s were characterized by intensive ideological conflict, and Mao Zedong securitized Soviet revisionism as a major threat for the Chinese Communist Party (Vuori 2011b). Indeed, newly available documents suggest that it was the Chinese side, in effect Mao Zedong, which was more active in the pursuit of ideological conflict (Lüthi 2008, 2). In his securitization of the Soviet Union, Mao linked the revisionism he identified there to that which he also securitized domestically (Vuori 2011b), and the issue of revisionism was presented as an issue of life and death for the party. ¶ Sino-Soviet relations began to mend in the 1980s with the removal of a number of political obstacles and with the intensification of the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union (Wishnick 2001). Yet, it is only with the fall of the Soviet Union that we can see an overall desecuritization in the form of rearticulation (Hansen 2012, 542–544) taking place in Sino-Russian relations. In the aftermath of the end of the Cold War, China’s line was not to take the lead in international affairs. China worked towards ‘world multipolarization’, which was exemplified with China and Russia forming a ‘strategic partnership’ in 1996. China and Russia even shared the same ‘threat package’ of ‘terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism’ (the ‘three evils’) within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Jackson 2006, 310). These are strong indicators of how the two states have managed to reform their identities away from the Sino-Soviet antagonism. In the overall state relations then, we can see a rearticulative desecuritization tactic at play on both sides: ever since the early 1980s, China’s policy towards the Soviet Union (and later Russia) shifted from antagonism to one of collaboration and negotiation rather than securitization.¶ Desecuritization can be conceptualized in the above manner as a negative ontological corollary to securitization. Yet, it is also prudent to investigate securitization and desecuritization as political moves in order to potentially understand the logic of when and how they are wielded in practical politics. It is proposed here that in addition to instances where a securitized situation is dismantled (arrow 1 in Figure 1), desecuritization can also be viewed as a political move that can be deployed before ‘securitization plays’ in a game of securitization (arrow 2a in Figure 1). In other words, desecuritization moves – both in terms of discourse and practice – can be used in a pre-emptive manner before the threshold of securitization is reached (arrow 2b in Figure 1). For Wæver (2000, 254), silencing can be a strategy to ‘pre-empt or forestall securitization’. We argue here that beyond silencing, active desecuritization efforts can be made to block the escalation of a contention. Thereby, in addition to change through stabilization (Hansen 2012) and the silencing of an issue (Wæver 2000), there can be explicit rebuttals of security frames and claims before they are solidified into policy. This tactic can be termed ‘pre-emptive desecuritization through rebuttal’.

### Framework---Narratives

#### Narratives matter. They are reflective of broader political and cultural contexts, and legitimate systems of power.

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Knowing the threat: narratives and security knowledge

Narrative analysis has been widely employed in IR and security studies to explore how certain issues are understood and communicated or what political consequences of telling a particular narrative there may be (Bliesemann de Guevara, 2016; Krebs, 2015; Miskimmon et al., 2014, 2017; Neumann, 2002; Spencer, 2016). Employing diverse theoretical approaches, all these studies nevertheless concur that a well-crafted narrative represents a potent way of rendering unfamiliar phenomena understandable and presentable to a wider audience (White, 1990). Building on these insights as well as those of securitisation theory (Buzan et al., 1998; Ördén, 2019), we propose a generalisable heuristic framework for the study of security narratives in IR, together with their underlying knowledge, based around the four elements of threat, protected value, response and knowledge.

Narratives are stories told by people in order to make sense of their practices and the problems they face (Bueger, 2013; Selbin, 2010; Wagenaar, 2011). Although a given situation might not necessarily have a meaning and cohesiveness in itself, a narrative helps to craft a coherent interpretation – a story – that reduces any complexity and uncertainty that the situation might be posing and reconstructs the identity of the narrator (Homolar, 2011; Subotić, 2016; Wagenaar, 2011: 215). Thus, narratives assemble heterogenous elements (protagonists, practices, wider structures and conditions influencing behaviour) into a larger story, articulated along particularly defined causes and effects (Bueger and Gadinger, 2018: 74; Edkins, 2019; Homolar and Rodríguez-Merino, 2019). This also means that narratives can speak ostensibly about the same issue, yet establish very different links between the presented causes, effects and prospective actions, leading to stories with markedly different meanings (Stampnitzky, 2014: 6–7).

Narratives are articulated from the broader knowledge that is available to their producers, reflecting what is accepted and valued in their respective cultural and political contexts (Bueger, 2013; Jasanoff, 2007; Wagenaar, 2011).2 The particular types of knowledge that are drawn upon serve as prisms through which a policy issue is constructed in a certain way and they also stabilise the narrative links between what are presented as the main problems and their causes (Stampnitzky, 2014: 6–7). For example, the story of the conflict in Afghanistan and policies proposed to ‘solve’ it are very different depending on whether they are weaved together from academic knowledge of Afghan tribal politics, or articulated from military counterinsurgency doctrines (Berling, 2019). While knowledge provides the basis for the construction of a narrative, its manifestation as expertise – socially recognised and authoritative proficiency in certain issues – plays an important role also for the legitimation of the narrative’s reading of a problem (Berling and Bueger, 2015: 7; Boswell, 2008). Therefore, we pay attention to what sorts of knowledge provide a basis for narrative constructions of HW and what types of expertise are articulated to give them credibility.

Building on previously outlined narrative characteristics, we propose a generalisable framework to reconstruct the different narratives in the Czech debate on HW on the basis of the main threat (its form and location), the main threatened value and the main action needed to counter the threat and protect the threatened value. In other words, as Stavrianakis (2020: 233) succinctly put it in her analysis of risk discourses, we explore how particular narratives explain ‘where potential harm comes from, to whom or what, and how?’ and ‘who has the ability to generate a constituency to act’. Together, these constitute a more or less coherent plot linking the security problem with its causes, potential negative consequences for those that need to be protected and a desirable reaction to avoid these consequences (Bueger and Gadinger, 2018: 74). In the final step, we also add a fourth element: the type of knowledge and expertise these narratives put forward.

### Framework---Geopolitical Imaginations

#### Evaluate competing geopolitical imaginations.

Jakub Eberle and Jan Daniel 22, Eberle is senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations Prague in the Czech Republic and Daniel is researcher and the Head of the Centre for the Study of Global Regions at the Institute of International Relations, 01/01/2022, “Anxiety Geopolitics: Hybrid Warfare, Civilisational Geopolitics, and the Janus-Faced Politics of Anxiety,” Political Geography, vol. 92, p. 102502, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629821001621

Our research is located in critical geopolitics, from which we borrow the understanding of geopolitics as discourses and practices through which people ‘‘spatialize’ international politics and represent it as a ‘world’ characterized by particular types of places, peoples and dramas’ (Ó Tuathail & Agnew, 1992, p. 192). Critical geopolitics focuses on how political events are articulated as somehow related to or driven by geographic phenomena, or how issues are ‘geopoliticised’, that is constructed as geopolitical problems (Cadier, 2019, p. 71). These ideas are best captured by the concept of geopolitical imagination: ‘Geopolitical imaginations are the result of subjects’ attempt to make sense of the world by associating political values with various parts of that map. They can also be spoken of in the collective sense, in which a group can be said to have similar (if ultimately unique) visions of the world.’ (Dittmer & Dodds, 2008, p. 447) More recently, critical geopolitics has paid increased attention to affects and emotions (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2020; Laketa, 2019; Müller, 2013; Pain, 2009).1 Such affective geopolitics explores how affects are an indivisible part of social construction of space, as they are intimately entangled with languages and images through which our ‘mental maps’ are produced and disseminated. Summarising this broader argument, Laketa argues that geopolitics should be understood ‘both as socially produced and intimately experienced’ and, consequently, ‘the emotional and the affective become the site of the geopolitical’ and vice versa (Laketa, 2019, pp. 156, 160). Therefore, international politics is spatialised also by engaging subjects at the affective level, which is an essential part of the production of geopolitical imaginations through which subjects view the world and their place within it. This links critical geopolitics to a range of literatures that deal with the relationship between identity, emotions and affects, including the scholarship on ontological security and anxiety in IR.

The rapidly growing literature on ontological security is concerned with how subjects – individuals, groups, or states – deal with the uncertainty of modern life without losing the ‘security of the self, the subjective sense of who one is’ (Mitzen, 2006, p. 344) that defines ontological security and makes life bearable. Building mainly upon the work of Anthony Giddens (1991), classical contributions agree that ontological security is sought through an active process of constructing the self and anchoring it in the social world, which happens through the establishment of routines (Mitzen, 2006), creation of biographical narratives (Kinnvall, 2004; Steele, 2008; Subotić, 2016), or maintenance of relationships (Berenskoetter & Giegerich, 2010). The key underlying purpose of ontological security-seeking is to avoid anxiety, which Giddens, following Freud, understands as an elusive and paralysing ‘generalised state of […] emotions’ that is different from fear (Giddens, 1991, p. 44). Fear is ‘a basic emotion directed at a specific object that prompts an adaptive response: fight or flight.’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 241). In contrast, ‘anxiety is diffuse, it is free-floating: lacking a specific object’, which makes it possible to ‘pin’ it to different things and concepts (Giddens, 1991, p. 44). Repressing the elusive anxiety by this ‘pinning’, which transforms it into the manageable fear of something, is then one of the key motives of human behaviour. As anxiety is considered overwhelming and paralysing; the ‘chaos’ that ‘threatens on the other side of the ordinariness of the everyday conventions’ (1991, p. 37), subjects often prefer to deal with it through the production of fear via the discursive construction of ‘specific objects and threats’ (Chernobrov, 2019, p. 39). This involves reaching to well-worn identity discourses, which serve as vehicles for ‘[t]ransforming the anxiety of the unknown into the security of the known (recognizable, even if illusory) [that] affirms the identity of the perceiving subject and enables it to confidently interact with the international other.’ (ibid.)

These arguments have a direct purchase for critical geopolitics, as geopolitical imaginations are good examples of how such sense-making and anxiety-managing discourses can look like. Some have already recognised and developed this link. For Guzzini, the ‘revival of geopolitical thought’ in Europe is directly linked to ontological insecurity stemming from ‘the sense of disorientation and foreign policy identity crises which followed 1989.’ (Guzzini, 2016, pp. 14–15) Making a more explicit link between anxiety and fear, Browning develops a very similar argument: ‘The attraction of tropes of a new Cold War and a return of geopolitics is precisely that they solve anxiety about current events by fitting them into clearly established systems of meaning, though doing so entails reducing anxiety by emphasising a world of threats and fears’ (Browning, 2018, p. 113).

### Framework---Hybrid War

#### Hybrid war discourse has “real life effects” and fosters creeping securitization.

Jan Daniel and Jakub Eberle 21, Eberle is senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations Prague in the Czech Republic and Daniel is researcher and the Head of the Centre for the Study of Global Regions at the Institute of International Relations, 2021, “Speaking of hybrid warfare: Multiple narratives and differing expertise in the ‘hybrid warfare’ debate in Czechia,” Cooperation and Conflict, Vol. 56, Issue 4, pp. 432-453, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00108367211000799>

Conclusion

This article analyses how the threat of HW is constructed in the Czech public debate. Connecting narrative analysis with attention to the role of knowledge and expertise in making authoritative claims on security issues, we argue that the broader HW discourse can be disentangled into three narratives that link the exact nature of the main threat, protected value and response in different ways. Furthermore, we show how different bodies of knowledge provide a basis for differing ways of narrating and justifying a specific understanding of HW. While the literature has already criticised the vagueness and broadness of the HW label, we highlight how this vagueness accommodates different readings of the main threat. We show that HW is a very different issue when interpreted through the lens of military science, popular literature on Russian history or cognitive psychology.

The disentangling of the HW discourse matters for both future analyses of HW and ‘real-life’ effects of the discourse. As nearly anything that has a vague reference to dangers in the information domain, challenges posed by illiberalism or great-power politics can be attached to the HW label; it is difficult to know what HW points to exactly, and where the threat is located precisely. This is unhelpful both for a sound risk analysis and for an informed and critical public debate. It also has profound political implications. An unproblematised reception of the HW discourse contributes to the creeping securitisation of issues that would have not necessarily been linked to security otherwise, such as media literacy or public diplomacy (Szostek, 2020). Proliferation of security framings of different issues in the name of HW can, furthermore, lead to mutually undermining and contradicting policy reactions. It makes a difference whether we treat the public as critically thinking citizens that can (with some assistance) make up their own minds, or if we understand them as a passive mass that needs to be protected from even being reached by hostile messaging or disinformation (see also Ördén, 2019). Each implies a markedly different view of the citizen – as active subject shaping their own life versus passive object in need of protection – and her relation to the government. Similarly, it matters whether we understand our adversaries as rational actors that can be deterred or accommodated, as the defence narrative does, or as malign and inherently irrational ‘others’ with whom we share no common rules or logics, as in the counterinfluence narrative (see Rühle, 2019).

#### The discourse of “hybrid war” maintains NATO and the West’s identity.

Maria Mälksoo 18, Senior Lecturer in International Security at the Brussels School of International Studies at the University of Kent, 2018, “Countering hybrid warfare as ontological security management: the emerging practices of the EU and NATO,” European Security, Vol. 27, Issue 3, pp. 374-392, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662839.2018.1497984>

A spectre is haunting the Western world – the spectre of hybrid warfare. All threats “hybrid” have become the buzzword of the international security commentariat ever since Russia’s swift annexation of Crimea in 2014 with the help of the “little polite green men” 1 and Russia’s involvement in the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine. The allegedly Kremlin-led meddling in the US presidential elections of 2016 is the most recent highprofile episode in this sequence of low-intensity “political warfare”, described by Mark Galeotti (2016b) as a “21st century conflict, more Machiavellian than military, where hacks, leaks and fake news are taking the place of planes, bombs and missiles”. Similar destabilisation campaigns have been noticed in the context of the French presidential election and in the build-up to German federal elections in 2017, and in numerous other European states.2

While the “new wars” debate has a long pedigree in international studies (Kaldor 1999, 2013, Henderson and Singer 2002, Evans 2003, Newman 2004, Smith 2005, Hoffman 2007, Münkler 2005, Strachan and Scheipers 2011), the scholarship has remained largely silent on the potential of these wars to generate immaterial insecurity effects. This article offers an ontological security-situated reading on the added insights the notion “hybrid warfare” brings to bear for our understanding of the contemporary Western security predicament. Ontological security (OS) is a condition underpinning the actor’s ability to act in the world with basic confidence about how the world works and her own place within it.3 Ontological insecurity, in turn, signifies “the deep, incapacitating state of not knowing how to get by in the world” (Mitzen and Schweller 2011, p. 29). With an explicit emphasis on uncertainty and anxiety as the key referents in ontological (in)security, this contribution seeks to complement the literature on the changing character of war by illuminating the disturbing ripple effect of hybrid warfare not only for the central security-political organisations of the West, but also for the ontological underpinnings of the International Relations (IR) discipline more generally.

I propose to link the study of OS in IR systematically with the debates on hybrid warfare along ontological, epistemological, and ethical dimensions to provide sharpened analytical purchase for understanding the nature of, and the emerging Western responses to, the said challenge. An OS perspective brings to the generally policy-centric study of hybrid threat management a systematic and conceptually rigorous understanding of the dual dynamic of anxiety (as a sense of unease and uncertainty), and routinised practices (as modes to confront anxiety in order to provide a stable cognitive environment) with important ethical and legal implications for conceptualising war (see Mitzen 2006, p. 346). My main argument is that “hybrid warfare” capsizes an embedded cognitive structure about what war is, thus defying attempts of organising life and social relations in a particular way, with fundamental consequences for the OS of the European Union (EU) and NATO. I proceed from the premise that defending and promoting a particular vision of one’s self is important for the “security of being” of these Western security-political institutions, and a prerequisite for the strategic use of their agency (Flockhart 2016, p. 801). This article offers an exploration of the EU and NATO’s identity maintenance “especially by acting, or doing things” (Mitzen and Schweller 2011, p. 28) vis-à-vis hybrid threats. It thus subscribes to Flockhart’s suggestion that the two strategies of OS maximisation (a “strategy of being” and a “strategy of doing”) are interlinked and cannot be understood in isolation from one another (Flockhart 2016, p. 799, p. 816).

What authority claims are the EU and NATO making about their ability and competence to handle hybrid challenges, or the “new type of warfare”? What is the “security story” these bodies articulate, accordingly? How are their respective attempts of countering “hybrid threats” embedded in particular understandings of politics and war? What signs of discursive cross-pollination can we observe comparing the two organisations in their hybrid threat/warfare management strategies and practices? How does it all relate to their respective identity sustenance struggles?

## Perm / Link

### Perm---2NC

#### Utilitarian appeals to rehabilitate security occlude resisting its foundations

Chris Rossdale 16, Teaching Fellow, International Relations, University of Warwick, “Activism, resistance and security,” Chapter 14 of *Ethical Security Studies: A new research agenda*, eds. Nyman and Burke, 2016, no page #

The previous two sections have highlighted a number of ways in which practices of resistance and activism engage the relationship between ethics and security in different ways. In producing subjugated knowledges, revealing the exclusions and power relations of established discourses, and engaging in security practices which seek to more directly respond to the insecurity faced by ordinary people, they invite an ethical response to security and insecurity. However, it limits our engagement with practices of resistance if we only see them as exploring ‘better’ or ‘more ethical’ ways of providing security. The more radical challenge to the politics of security comes when we see activism not simply as refusing particular orders of security, but as resisting the very conceptual and political foundations of security. This final section explores such an interpretation, looking at the ways in which the most substantive way to engage the relationships between ethics, security, resistance and activism comes when we view practices of resistance as (at their best) working to deconstruct security. I begin by outlining some of the arguments which suggest that the concept of security cannot so easily be refashioned in a more ethical form and that thinking in terms of resistance might take us further. I then look at how we might view such a resistance in the context of political activism, looking at some examples from anarchist activist groups.¶ A number of writers have argued that the concept of security is built around a series of images, codes and logics which render it deeply problematic and a dangerous candidate for rehabilitation. They have pointed out the ways in which our contemporary fascination with proliferating images of threat, danger and response, grounded in desperate but impossible fantasies of control and mastery, tends towards authoritarian political formations and the de facto legitimacy of dominant power relations (Edkins 2003; Campbell 1998: Shepherd 2008: 72–75). The pursuit of security serves to contain subjects within the existing order, promising protection in return for some level of compliance or obedience in a manner not dissimilar to a protection racket (Spike Peterson 1992: 50–52). As Mark Neocleous notes, such dynamics serve to neutralise radical political action, ‘encouraging us to surrender ourselves to the state in a thoroughly conservative fashion’ (2008: 4).¶ To understand how the pursuit of security intertwines with political authority, it is important to recognise the dependent relationship between security and insecurity. Institutions and technologies of security can only function in a context of insecurities, which they may identify and seek to pacify, but which they also need (and for which, of course, they are often responsible). In Michael Dillon’s terms, ‘it is only because it is contoured by insecurity, and because in its turn it also insecures, that security can secure’ (1996: 127). The nature and content of security depends on its particular relationship with insecurity, with its exclusions and violences and particular (political) designations of threat. This regulative binary of security/insecurity intersects with others that have similar effects, such as order/chaos, inside/outside and sovereignty/anarchy. All of them regulate politics in a manner which cements the place of political authority. On the latter dichotomy, Richard Ashley’s comments are pertinent:¶ On the one hand, the sign of ‘sovereignty’ betokens a rational identity: a homogeneous and continuous presence that is hierarchically ordered, that has a unique centre of decision presiding over a coherent ‘self’, and that is demarcated from, and in opposition to, an external domain of difference and change that resists assimilation to its identical being. On the other hand, the sign of ‘anarchy’ betokens this residual external domain: an aleatory domain characterised by difference and discontinuity, contingency and ambiguity, that can be known only for its lack of the coherent truth and meaning expressed by a sovereign presence. ‘Anarchy’ signifies a problematic domain yet to be brought under the controlling influence of a sovereign centre … whether it be an individual actor, a group, a class, or a political community.¶ (1988: 230)¶ As he identifies the conservatising regulation at the heart of the sovereignty/anarchy dichotomy, so would I suggest that a similar process is at work in the logic of security, privileging that which is rationally bounded, coherent and compliant, and necessitating the pacification or pathologisation of that which is not.¶ Political imaginaries rooted in binary concepts limit our ethical landscape in a variety of ways. As V. Spike Peterson argues:¶ [a]s long as we remain locked in dichotomies, we cannot accurately understand and are less likely to transform social relations: not only do oppositional constructions distort the contextual complexity of social reality, they set limits on the questions we ask and the alternatives we consider. True to their “origin” (Athenian objectivist metaphysics), the dichotomies most naturalized in Western world views (abstract-concrete, reason-emotion, mind-body, culture-nature, public-private) are both medium and outcome of objectification practices. Retaining them keeps us locked in to their objectifying-reifying-lens on our world(s) and who we are.¶ (1992: 54)¶ In such a context, rather than seeking to rehabilitate security (and remain within this security/insecurity dichotomy), it might be more productive to resist, displace or deconstruct it.¶ This is not a simple prospect; refusing the social fantasy of security would, in Jenny Edkins’ terms, involve ‘facing, on a day-to-day basis, questions many of us prefer to forget, if we can’, and ‘would involve a shift away from the notion of sovereign state and sovereign individual … would entail the development of a new vision of political community, one that was not based on the coming together of discrete participles to produce closed systems’ (2003: 368–369). While the violent politics of security is enacted through social institutions, it is also (as the discussion above shows) embedded in categories of thought. The binaries of security/insecurity, order/chaos, sovereignty/anarchy and more impose a theoretical domination which conditions political possibility in particular authoritarian ways. As such, the task of resistance might be to break down such binaries. This may take place through mocking, subverting or outwardly refusing the closures such binaries enact (Rossdale forthcoming-a; Rossdale forthcoming-b), or through embracing the proliferation of definitions of security as an aporetic space in which ‘to think and create new social, ethical and economic relationships outside the oppressive structures of political and epistemological order’ (Burke 2007: 30–31).¶ What I want to suggest here is that we can interpret many practices of activism and resistance as engaging in precisely this kind of resistance to security/insecurity; that is, not just as affirming ‘more ethical’ securities (though they may also do this), but as mounting a challenge to the conceptual and political order of security more generally. In a sense, this is not surprising, so often is resistance framed as that insecurity, chaos and anarchy which necessitates securing, ordering and sovereign gestures. It is also an unstable series of interventions, liable to recuperation within a set of security discourses which swiftly reposition challenge as threat. Nonetheless, these resistances hold open spaces for an ethical critique not only of particular orders of security, but more generally of the ways in which security orders.

### Link---China

#### The aff’s description of conflict with China is a self-fulfilling prophecy---it reinforces violent power relations and causes militarized policies aimed at countering China

Linus Hagstrom 14, Senior Research Fellow and East Asia Program Director at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, with Bjorn Jerden, East Asia Programme @ Swedish Institute of International Affairs, “East Asia’s Power Shift: The Flaws and Hazards of the Debate and How to Avoid Them”, Asian Perspective 38 (2014), 337–362, ProQuest

Once we acknowledge that academic concepts and analyses can have constitutive effects, we need to analyze their performative role. This means addressing the “double hermeneutic”—the way “‘findings’ of the social sciences very often enter constitutively into the world they describe” (Giddens 1987, 20)—and reflecting on what our interpretations might “do” (Guzzini 2007, 23). It is not necessary to accept social constructivism to recognize that the practice of social science is interlinked with power relations outside of academia. Far from scholarly navel-gazing, a reflexive attitude is arguably a necessary ingredient of any rigorous social science practice (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).¶ Hence, since the power-shift discourse is not simply a descriptive account of an independent reality but is destined to be constitutive of that reality, it is essential to explore its power. Thomas Diez (2005) makes a similar investigation into the power of the concept of “normative power Europe” (NPE). He finds that NPE constructs a benevolent and peaceful identity for Europe, but also that its alleged peacefulness is contrasted with and therefore dependent on an idea of what Europe is not—an outside consisting of “challenging threats” (2005, 636). The double hermeneutic twist is that the coining of the originally academic NPE concept has become an important instance of Europe’s “normative power.”¶ Diez (2013), however, seems to take for granted the distinction between post-Westphalian normative powers, which engage in a struggle over the definition of “normality” in world politics, and Westphalian great powers, which engage in war, empire building, and physical conquest. “Great powers,” however, are also the products of normative, discursive pressures, and they reproduce ideas of what is “normal” great-power behavior. Much of the power-shift discourse reproduces the same familiar self/ other dichotomy as the NPE literature. Here, the other is a rising and potentially threatening China, while the self is a weak but inherently righteous United States/West/Japan.¶ Pan argues that the “China threat discourse” is “always intrinsically linked to how US policymakers/mainstream China specialists see themselves (as representatives of the indispensable, security-conscious nation, for example)” (2004, 306). Hagström demonstrates how the discourse on Japan’s “abnormality” and “weakness” reproduces a standard of “normality” in world politics that is centered on the ability to go to war. Postwar Japan is socially constructed as deviant from this norm and thus as a threat to itself. This discourse, which emerges in both Japanese and Western academia and in Japanese political debate, legitimizes a road map for a more “realistic,” “active,” “responsible,” and “normal” Japan (Hagström 2014).¶ The power of the power-shift discourse does not stop at the production of identities and standards. The point is that identities and standards produce effects. Pan illustrates this by showing how the Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1995–1996 was often understood as “further objective proof of the long-suspected ‘China threat,’” but few acknowledged that “the ‘China threat’ discourse itself had played a constitutive role in the lead-up to that crisis” (2004, 323, 320). Moreover, standards in Japan’s “normalization” discourse have enabled Realpolitik changes in its foreign security policy. Chinese vigilance vis-à-vis Japan and the United States might also be interpreted as discursive phenomena—the theme of national reinvigoration is a product of the lingering notion that China has been continually humiliated and victimized by the great powers since the nineteenth century. As these examples illustrate, the ultimate power of discourse is the production of self-fulfilling prophecies. When self-fulfilling prophecies occur on both sides of a dyad, we might end up with a socially generated security dilemma (Johnston 2004).¶ Much research has warned of self-fulfilling prophecies in the East Asian context. Some observers suggest that US or Japanese discourses about China might produce policies of containment, Japanese “normalization” and “remilitarization,” and US “rebalancing” toward East Asia (Pan 2004; 2012; Hagström 2012; Turner 2014a; 2014b). Nonetheless, Japan and the United States have not yet embarked on containing China. Instead, both countries have on the whole accommodated China’s rise (Christensen 2006; Jerdén and Hagström 2012). In a similar manner, perceived increases in bellicose or nationalistic representations in Chinese discourses led some observers to jump to the mistaken conclusion that this had already resulted in a more assertive Chinese foreign policy (Jerdén 2014). As important as it is to remain vigilant against the emergence of socially constructed security dilemmas, we need to bear in mind that there is no deterministic connection between discourse and policy—just an enabling one. Dominant discourses create propensities for action but do not make any action inevitable. More empirically informed theorizing is needed to address the questions of how, when, and why discourses make some actions politically conceivable, easy to communicate, and sometimes even coercive (Holland 2013).¶ Reflecting on the possible power exercised through the alternative approaches introduced in this special issue is also necessary. In this article we raise analytical and normative concerns about the ideas of a more “powerful” and “threatening” China, a “weak” Japan, and a “declining” United States. We argue that such representations risk offsetting balancing policies and a security dilemma in East Asia, in line with the self-fulfilling prophecy logic discussed above. These arguments clearly belong to another site of discursive power production. That we have not seen any obvious balancing policies in East Asia thus far might arguably be interpreted as one of its effects.

### Link---Hybrid War---Anxiety Geopolitics

#### “Hybrid Warfare” Link---it perpetuates Orientalism that divides the East and West, and turns the case by replicating geopolitical anxiety.

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1. Introduction

This article theorises the relationship between geopolitics and anxiety and uses this conceptual argument to analyse and critique the discourse of ‘hybrid warfare’. Conceptual works on the link between geopolitics and anxiety are scarce, despite contemporaneous appearance of the claims that we are experiencing (yet another) ‘return of geopolitics’ (Auer, 2015; Guzzini, 2012, 2016) and that ‘we live in anxious times’ (Eklundh, Zevnik, & Guittet, 2017, p. 1; Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020; Zevnik, 2017b) in academic and public debates. We fill this gap by introducing the notion of anxiety geopolitics as a type of affective discourse that emerges to relieve the subjects from the uprooting experience of anxiety by anchoring both the self and the alleged source of danger within a familiar ‘mental map’. However, as anxiety can never be fully resolved or repressed, discursive fixes, including geopolitical ones, are always temporary and eventually failing. We contend that anxiety geopolitics is an ultimately ambivalent, Janus-faced way of ‘writing global space’ (Ó Tuathail, 1996), in which anxiety is both repressed and reproduced through geopolitical discourses.

In making these arguments, we build upon and contribute to multiple literatures in political geography and international relations. First, conceptualising geopolitics as a discourse through which global politics becomes spatialised, we borrow from the canon of critical geopolitics. We follow especially the more recent turn towards affective geopolitics, understanding affects as intertwined in the process of discursive construction. So far, anxiety has received only rare attention in this body of work (an exception is Gökarıksel & Secor, 2020), a gap this article addresses by theorising the role of anxiety in geopolitics in detail. Second, in adopting the argument that construction of identity narratives is a way to manage anxiety and make sense of the world, we engage with the IR literature on ontological security. Yet, conversely, this body of work has dealt with geopolitics only scarcely (Browning, 2018; Guzzini, 2012, 2016), and these rare studies rely on a reductionist notion of anxiety. For these purposes, we reach to a third literature, namely the work on the political dimension of anxiety embedded (mostly) in Lacanian social theory.

We then utilise these theoretical arguments to analyse and critique ‘hybrid warfare’ (HW), one of the key security discourses of our time. To start with, it is not easy to find out what HW is supposed to mean exactly, as there are many varying definitions of the interchangeably used notions of ‘hybrid wars’, ‘hybrid threats’ or ‘hybrid campaigns’ (for a magisterial conceptual discussion see Fridman, 2018). Most of them typically label some form of combination of ‘military and non-military as well as covert and overt means’ of conflict (NATO, 2019). This is usually followed by long lists of disparate examples. According to one EU definition, hybrid threats ‘range from cyberattacks on critical information systems, through the disruption of critical services such as energy supplies or financial services, to the undermining of public trust in government institutions or the deepening of social divisions’ ( European Union, 2018). In this logic, HW targets a wide range of pre-existing social issues, political cleavages and security vulnerabilities, while seeking to amplify and exploit them for the benefit of the attacker. The covert and psychological character of such form of attack then appears to be particularly worrying, as ‘hybrid campaigns’ are ‘designed to be difficult to detect or attribute’ so as to ‘create confusion’ (European Union, 2018) and ‘sow doubt in the minds of target populations’ (NATO, 2019). Clearly, such definitions of HW are so broad that they can encompass almost anything; ‘any possible combination of military and non-military means’ or even ‘any possible hostile activity’ as has been argued elsewhere (Fridman, 2018, p. 155). Consequently and in line with approaches rooted in critical geopolitics, we do not provide an authoritative definition of our own. Instead, we focus on how HW is used in discourse to produce certain (geo)political effects.

Apart from being a highly relevant problem, HW also presents a particularly fitting case to be analysed as an instance of anxiety geopolitics. First, the close link between HW and anxiety has been explicitly recognised by Maria Mälksoo, who shows how HW triggers ‘anxiety about the difficulties of concretising unknown and indeterminate threats’ (Mälksoo, 2018, p. 378). Second, the relation between HW and geopolitics is at the same time strongly pronounced and marked by a profound tension. On the one hand, HW ostensibly departs from a ‘modern’ geopolitical imagination based on territorial states and borders (Ó Tuathail, 1998). After all, it is about information operations in deterritorialised spaces of the globalised public sphere, unattributable cyberattacks carried out by non-state groups, or the incitement of horizontal protest movements discontent with the present political order. On the other hand, this ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination (ibid.) has been very often subdued to the much more traditional and ‘modern’ vision of a ‘new Cold War’ between Russia and ‘the West’ (for critical analyses of this discourse see Browning, 2018; Ciută & Klinke, 2010; Toal, 2017). Thereby, HW has been incorporated into the civilisational mode of geopolitical thinking that divides the world along an East/West axis.

Approaching HW as a case of anxiety geopolitics allows us to analyse this tension and unpack the underlying puzzle: Why is it that the ostensibly novel, networked and deterritorialised phenomena associated with hybrid warfare get so easily submerged under such an old, static and territorial geopolitical imagination? We argue that the allure of East/West geopolitics lies in its familiarity, as it provides a well-worn map that promises to ‘make sense’ of the anxiety-inducing manifestations of ‘hybrid warfare’. Yet, we also show that these attempts eventually fail and the HW discourse ends up perpetuating the insecurities and anxieties, which it was supposed to resolve. As such, it serves well to ‘a ‘hybrid-industrial complex’ of government agencies, think-tanks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and pundits’ that emerged around it (Galeotti, 2019, p. 11). By pointing out to the role of anxiety geopolitics in this economy of power/knowledge that emerged around HW, this article provides both an analysis and a political intervention.

#### “Hybrid War” Link---it’s discourse is Orientalist and unproductive.

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Bringing the argument together, by the notion of anxiety geopolitics we conceptualise the politics of dealing with anxiety by linking it to objects and issues spatialised through the means of geopolitical imaginations. By references to geographical categories, such as states, regions, continents or civilisations, this type of affective geopolitics promises to transform the amorphous and ambiguous anxiety stemming from range of different issues into tangible and manageable objects of fear taking the form of geopolitical threats. Yet, as all such narratives and images are ultimately bound to fail to resolve the underlying anxiety, the analytical focus must be extended also to how these failures are accounted for and how anxiety is being further reproduced with the help of geopolitical imaginations. Therefore, anxiety geopolitics is ultimately about the oscillation between repressing anxiety through the geopoliticisation of both the ‘threat’ and the self, as much as it is about dealing with the recurring failures to secure the subjects produced by such geopoliticisation, which result in reproduction of social anxiety.

3. Hybrid warfare as anxiety geopolitics: learning from the Czech case

We will now further develop our conceptual argument by discussing hybrid warfare as a case of anxiety geopolitics. Some have already shown that HW plays an ontological security role at the level of NATO and EU, as it ‘links the uncertainty emanating from the hybrid nature of the new threats to the known and routine relationship with its traditional antagonist’, that is Russia (Mälksoo, 2018, p. 380). Following this argument, Russia's aggression suddenly gave meaning to a range of hitherto unconnected, yet omnipresent, and, therefore, anxiety-inducing problems that NATO, EU and their member states were facing. Polarisation and the rise of populism, widespread distrust in institutions, erosion of international norms, cyberattacks, propaganda and disinformation campaigns suddenly all ‘made sense’, if they could be discursively linked to Moscow as instances of ‘Russian hybrid warfare’. HW thus provided NATO and EU, with the elusive ‘security’ of knowing one's enemy (also Browning, 2018).

Similarly, in Czechia, the HW discourse arrived at a time of intense social anxieties emerging from a range of different cultural, economic or geopolitical factors. For many in Czechia (and Central Europe more broadly), post-Cold War sense of ontological security had been provided through a civilisational geopolitical imagination of ‘the West’, which Central Europe supposedly (re)joined after 1989 (Cadier, 2019; Kuus, 2007; Todorova, 2009). Best captured by the slogan of a ‘return to Europe’, the vision of embracing liberal democracy, capitalism and Euro-Atlantic political structures was seen as a panacea that would resolve all big (geo)political questions once and for all. However, these very principles and structures arguably started crumbling precisely at the time that the Central Europeans were finally admitted in EU and NATO. The Iraq War laid bare the rifts within the West, calling in question its further relevance as a coherent geopolitical entity (Browning & Lehti, 2010; Jackson, 2006). Resurgent Russia challenged Western hegemony in Europe and led ‘an influential part of the Czech political and intellectual elite [to] succumb[…] to anxiety’ (Drulák, 2012, p. 79). Central European countries were hit particularly hard by the economic crisis and further hurt themselves by the (foreign- or self-imposed) ‘Western’ medicine of austerity (Tooze, 2018, pp. 220–238). In the Czech case, this led to one of the longest periods of economic recovery in Europe, accompanied by a free-fall in public trust in institutions, with only one in ten Czechs expressing trust in the government (11%) and the Chamber of Deputies (10%) at the lowest point in 2012/2013 (CVVM, 2013). Add to this the rise of illiberalism at home and increasing divides between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ EU member states, laid bare especially during the so called ‘refugee crisis’ of 2015–2016. As a consequence, you end up with a region that is not so sure about its feeling about and towards ‘the West’ any longer (Kazharski, 2018; Krastev & Holmes, 2019).

Put differently, by mid-2010s, the Czech society was already in a state of anxiety and uncertainty about its own geopolitical identity and in search for ontological fixes.3 This is where the HW discourse clicks in following Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2014. To the liberal voices that dominate security debates, hybrid warfare could be used to put a name on this anxiety and thereby attempt to suppress it by the construction of familiar geopolitical narratives. By invoking the prism of a conflict between a liberal-democratic West and an authoritarian Russia, all sorts of problems – spread of misinformation, return of nationalism, technological transformations or global power shifts – could be reduced to the logic of civilisational confrontation. This is the conventional ontological security part of the story, to which we add another step by showing how this promise of security is never actually fulfilled. Due to the supposed invisibility and omnipresence of hybrid threats and the insecure position the Czechs occupy in their own East/West geopolitical imagination, there is a surplus of anxiety that cannot be successfully managed.

The case study is structured according to the two ‘faces’ of the Janus-faced politics of anxiety. First, we show how hybrid warfare was used as a sense-making device promising to manage anxiety by providing a conceptual link between a broad range of social issues and anchoring them within the familiar East/West geopolitical imagination. This linking could simultaneously make hybrid warfare meaningful by geopoliticising it, and reinforce the crumbling East/West geopolitical imagination by showing its renewed relevance in facing hybrid warfare. Second, we show how the fleeting sense of ontological security achieved via this articulation gets undone by the recurring re-emergence of surplus anxiety and how HW ends up reproducing and perpetuating the sense of insecurity and anxiety it was supposed to resolve. The analysis is grounded in a range of empirical materials from 2014 to 2020, including official documents, media articles, popular books and parliamentary debates. Two caveats are in order. First, both Czech government and civil society have responded to the perceived threat of HW in many ways, including creating new official institutions and informal initiatives tailored to deal with it (Daniel & Eberle, 2018). In this article, we focus on the discourse that made these responses possible. Second, as shown elsewhere (Daniel & Eberle, 2021), the Czech HW discourse is not monolithic and includes different understandings of what exactly constitutes a threat to whom, ranging from military operations targeting public infrastructures all the way to individual citizen's struggles with media literacy. In this article, though, we downplay these differences and instead focus on the commonalities that tie these different notions together as parts of ostensibly the same problem of Russia's ‘hybrid warfare’.

3.1. Repressing anxiety: making sense of hybrid warfare through East/West geopolitics

Starting with the repression side of anxiety geopolitics, this can be observed in the successive steps through which ontological security is sought by associating a range of issues with hybrid warfare and then pinning HW onto the familiar map of East/West geopolitical imagination. This consists of four interrelated discursive moves: identifying the supposed ‘origin’ of societal unease, putting a name of the problem, localising it in space, and endowing it with broader geopolitical meanings. In this particular case, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014 serves as the supposed original moment and ‘cause’ of anxiety, hybrid warfare is the name presented to make sense of what is going on, Russia is constructed as the threat, and civilisational East/West geopolitics is used to give the situation broader meaning. Let us now discuss each of these steps in turn.

First, a certain event needs to be constructed as a supposed point of origin of the perceived unease, a ‘crisis’ that dislocates the symbolic order (Nabers, 2015). This is the first move in the repression of anxiety, one in which an ‘actually existing’ empirical event is discursively presented as the apparent cause of the deeper ontological crisis that is affectively experienced as anxiety. In the HW discourse in Czechia, Russia's aggression against Ukraine of 2014 is presented as such profoundly shocking and dislocating event. As the otherwise rather down-to-earth and matter-of-fact military intellectual, Karel Řehka, puts it: ‘the Russian Federation shocked the whole world. The unimaginable was broken into.’ (Řehka, 2017, p. 199) ‘Shock’ and ‘helplessness’ are words used also by a high-ranking Czech diplomat (personal interview, Prague, August 4, 2020). A leading Czech think-tanker then recalls how ‘surprised’ he was by Russia's invasion and how ‘disorganised and fragmented’ the security debates were in the months that followed (Janda, 2017). The affective experience is captured well also in a widely cited and circulated popular book, which vividly describes how ‘we are walking on the edge of a cliff’ and ‘[u]ncertainty is the only thing that you can count on these days’ (Alvarová, 2017, p. 20). Therefore, 2014 was constructed as a radical breakthrough into a much more insecure world. Yet, this move of identifying the supposed origin of these dizzying feelings of anxiety in one particular event was at the same time already the first step of seeking ontological security by making sense of it.

A second step is putting the name on the problem. It is only the performative and affect-laden performance of naming that connects disparate phenomena together and creates a discursive ‘object’ that can be then dealt with politically (Laclau, 2005). In our case, this leads to the creative appropriation of the concepts of ‘hybrid warfare’ and ‘hybrid threats’, which were virtually non-existent in the Czech public discourse prior to 2014 (Daniel & Eberle, 2018), and using them as a linchpin that connects all sorts of societal problems. For an authoritative Czech security document, ‘hybrid threat’ is a ‘way to wage a confrontation or a conflict’, one that is characterised by an extraordinarily broad spectrum of measures: ‘a wide, complex, adaptable, and integrated combination of conventional and unconventional means, overt and covert activities, characterised primarily by coercion and subversion’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 127). The range of actors that can execute such methods is similarly broad, including ‘military, paramilitary, and various civilian actors’ (ibid.). Similarly, an overview of a ‘Russian hybrid strategy’ provided by the counterintelligence service includes ‘interpretation of modern history’, different ways of ‘information warfare’, ‘networking/infiltration’ across the fields of politics, economy, crime, espionage, culture and education, and military/guerrilla operations alike (Security Information Service, 2018, p. 7). In statements like these, hybrid warfare is stretched so as to incorporate almost anything that can be understood as a hostile activity. A such, it becomes an universal object of fear, broad enough to be used as a placeholder for all sorts of anxieties.

In the third move, hybrid warfare is territorialised by pointing to Russia as its ultimate source. The ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination of hybrid warfare in terms of flows, clouds and infrastructures, is backgrounded in favour of the ‘modern’ territorial East/West geopolitics of a Russian threat. In certain cases, this means little more than merely pointing out that it is indeed Russia that ‘has executed hybrid operations [ …], including targeted disinformation activities and cyber-attacks’, as the Defence Strategy (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017, p. 7) puts it explicitly and other documents hint at implicitly (e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015). More interesting are the instances which present Russia not only as one source of threats, but as an orchestrator coordinating all possible means and actors. In such cases, the ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination of networks is used and reproduced, yet with a key twist: such networks are seen as hierarchical, with centre in Moscow. In this logic, different domestic actors – ‘alternative news’ websites spreading anti-Western narratives, right-wing populists, even contrarian intellectuals – can ultimately be tied to an overall Russia's masterplan (for an example see Janda & Kundra, 2016). The counterintelligence agency reports are an example of this ‘puppet-master’ approach. One of them lists ‘covert infiltration of Czech media and the Internet’ and ‘foundation of puppet organizations, covert and open support of populist or extremist subjects’ among the key activities of Russia's ‘information operations’ (Security Information Service, 2016, p. 9). Another outlines this logic in colourful detail, claiming that ‘Russia is creating a structure in Europe drawing on the concept of the Comintern (the Communist International; the Third International) founded by the Soviet Union’ (Security Information Service, 2015, p. 11), an organised network of all sorts of actors ‘with pro-Russian stances or fighting against the system’ (ibid., 12).

However, different actors can be labelled as agents or instrument of HW and then geopoliticised and linked to Russia not only by direct association, but also because they are merely voicing opinions that can be somehow qualified as ‘pro-Russian’. As a more recent counterintelligence report puts it, actually an ‘overwhelming majority of disinformation websites in Czech are the work of Czech […] citizens, who are not supported by Russian entities.’ (Security Information Service, 2018, p. 8) Nevertheless, this still makes them a part of a broader geopolitical threat, as ‘these people and their internet projects are misused by Russia to spread propaganda or support other components of the hybrid strategy.’ (ibid., 8) It is this imagination of a Russian-orchestrated networked threat that enables a leading Czech journalist to blankly dismiss the prominent disinformation website, Aeronet. cz, as ‘writing for Putin’ (Kundra, 2016b), without any evidence of links to the Russian state known at that point and with his own subsequent investigations showing that this is most likely not the case. It also makes it possible to deal with anxieties by externalising the problem, such as when a popular book argues that ‘Furious hate […] is not Czech, it is something new, foreign. It came from the outside and ‘somehow’ entered into us.’ (Alvarová, 2017, p. 88).

In the fourth and final move, this ‘hybrid’ struggle with Russia is endowed with meaning by being inserted into the whole symbolic structure of East/West civilisational geopolitics, in which ‘[i]ssues of security and geopolitics are […] reframed in cultural terms. They become simultaneously geographical, cultural and strategic concepts, and they diffuse into ever more spheres of political life.’ (Kuus, 2007, p. x) The societal anxieties that are managed via the narrative of hybrid warfare emanating from Russia, are now also made part of an eternal struggle between the East and the West. This reactivates the ‘mental maps’, in which ‘the West’ functions as a desired point of identification and a promise of security and prosperity, whereas ‘the East’ is seen as ‘an abyss’, a notion ‘which in the Czech political discourse refers less to a geographical space than to ontological categories defining the alienated past of the Czech Republic.’ (Cadier, 2019, p. 84) As one member of parliament, Jan Bartošek, put it, the Czechs are left with an unequivocal choice: ‘either we will be part of NATO as a firm ally of our pro-Western orientation, or we will be just one of Russia's many colonies. There is no third way.’ (in Chamber of Deputies, 2018a).

In statements like these, Russia is presented as a fundamentally different entity, a quintessentially Oriental actor, belonging to a different ‘universe’ that ‘until nowadays has not met’ with the European one (Alvarová, 2017, p. 70). Echoing classical Orientalist tropes, Russians supposedly rely on ‘[m]ysticism, irrationality, associational instead of logical thinking – thus, a model of thinking that is of different civilisation, the one we know rather from the Orient’ (Alvarová, 2017, p. 193). The potentially catastrophic consequences of allying with Russia are then often presented through references to the past, reinforcing the notion that what is at stake in HW is in fact yet another instance of a historical struggle between civilisations. ‘Many of us probably know our modern history, from 1945 through 1948, Russian advisers, death of [foreign minister] Jan Masaryk, occupation in 1968. The Russian influence, which simply broke us away from the West, ripped us from [our] democratic development, and has incalculable economic consequences stretching to this day.’ (Helena Langšádlová in Chamber of Deputies, 2018b).

This idea that issues like propaganda, misinformation or rise of populism are instances of a dramatic geopolitical confrontation, is finally driven home also by the notion that it is the West as a whole that is under attack, not just any individual country. According to a counterintelligence report, ‘the goal of the Russian hybrid campaign’ is ‘primarily to weaken NATO and the EU internally, e.g. by weakening individual member states’ (Security Information Service, 2018, p. 7). Therefore, should the Czechs fail to defend themselves, they are supposedly endangering something much bigger. According to a member of parliament, Jan Lipavský, what the Russians want is ‘to break European unity’ (Chamber of Deputies, 2018b). Such ideas connect hybrid warfare squarely to the Messianistic undertones of the East/West geopolitical imagination, in which the Central Europeans serve as guardians defending the West at its limit. To paraphrase Milan Kundera's (1984) foundational essay on Central European civilisational geopolitics, by fighting hybrid warfare, the Czechs are risking ‘dying for Czechia and the West’, which indeed gives a sense of deep purpose and meaning to their cause and produces a strong anxiety-repressing narrative.

To sum up this part, one important aspect of the anxiety geopolitics of hybrid warfare lies in the way how it allows channelling deeper anxieties by using the East/West geopolitical imagination to produce familiar storylines, identities and objects of fear. Despite being constructed as multifaceted, broad and difficult to detect, hybrid warfare is made legible by being projected on a familiar ‘mental map’, where it becomes merely the most recent instance of long-lasting struggle between the West and a fundamentally different, antagonist Russia. However, the relationship between the discourses of hybrid warfare and East/West geopolitics goes both ways: HW is not only territorialised by, but also gives broader meaning to and, in a way, promises to reinforce the East/West civilisational geopolitics. It is in and through HW that Russia is constructed as fundamentally different and the West presented as a coherent entity under attack, as well as something worth defending against the potentially tragic alternatives. Through the discourse of hybrid warfare, doubts about the relevance or resilience of a West-centric geopolitical order are seemingly brushed away and old geopolitical identities are hardened. This is precisely the logic of ontological security that makes the ideas of a ‘return of geopolitics’ and the ‘new Cold War’ so appealing, as shown by Guzzini (2012, 2016) and Browning (2018).

3.2. Reproducing anxiety: danger is everywhere and the East is already within

The HW discourse arguably succeeds on the level of meaning, that is in ‘making sense’ of the new threats by geopoliticising them in East/West terms. In contrast, its success is only fleeting at best as an anxiety-repressing ontological fix. In this section, we focus on the other face of anxiety geopolitics, showing how the HW discourse also contributes to the reproduction of anxiety. The argument that security discourses end up perpetuating the very insecurity they promise to deal with is not new (e.g. Campbell, 1998). More recently, Heath-Kelly (2018) and Jacobsen (2020) have advanced it from an explicitly Lacanian perspective and shown how the discourses of terrorism and cybersecurity are inherently bound to disappoint the underlying desire for security. The endurance of these discourses is made possible by the way how they pre-emptively incorporate an explanation for their own failure. Terrorism and cyberthreats are constructed in such a broad, complex and omnipresent manner that no individual achievement can lead to the resolution of the problems presented by these discourses. There are always new risks and vulnerabilities, as the destruction or neutralisation of no actually existing objects of fear (e.g. Osama bin Laden) can ultimately satisfy the underlying ontological anxieties. There is always something else to worry about.

Building on Heath-Kelly and Jacobsen, our final argument is that hybrid warfare works exactly like their examples, as HW, too, is a discourse that is simultaneously anxiety-repressing and anxiety-reproducing. In fact, we argue that the linking of HW and East/West geopolitics produces a particularly strongly anxiety-ridden discourse. While hybrid warfare presents threats as invisible and omnipresent due to their covert and networked nature, the East/West imagination further raises the stakes and salience of such threats by painting them as parts of a titanic civilisational struggle. The subjects produced by such discourse can never rest, as what may be going on right behind their noses is not just one particular cyber-attack, a single conspiracy theory that has gained traction on Facebook, or merely one instance of information stolen by a spy. Instead, it is a battle for the future of ‘the West’ and the Czech belonging to it, one where the alternative option is the most tragic one: a descent deep into the ‘abyss’ of ‘the East’ (Cadier, 2019). We will now illustrate these arguments by focusing on the unfathomability of HW, the shifting nature of the threats it produces, and the anxieties inherent in the East/West geopolitics that underpin it.

First, the ‘failure to secure’ (Heath-Kelly, 2015) is pre-emptively incorporated in the HW discourse by its portrayal of the looming dangers as insidious, invisible and even impossible to detect. As a key security document states, ‘[t]he principal risk to which a subject attacked by a hybrid campaign is exposed lies in the fact that they will not be able to identify the hybrid campaign – in time, in its full scale, or at all’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 129). According to the deputy Helena Langšádlová, what we are supposedly facing are highly dangerous, yet ‘creeping threats’, which we ‘cannot see on a day by day basis’ (in Chamber of Deputies, 2019). This leads some to claim that ‘at no point in history was it so extremely difficult to decide, if we are at war, or not’ (Táborský, 2019, p. 164). While there may be little drama on the surface, no one can ever rest in this logic. An attack may be already underway, one that can even be approximated to war, literally at any minute. As the Special Forces general, Karel Řehka, put it at a conference organised in the Czech parliament: ‘In a way, we are already at war, we just do not realise it or are not able to admit it.’ (Lang, 2015) This is a mode of thinking that produces highly anxious subjects, in a constant sense of the ‘expectant dread’ that is anxiety (Hook, 2015, p. 117), one not yet having a clear referent and directed towards all possible yet still unknown dangers that may materialise at any time.

It is in these notions that an unspecified existential threat may be hidden behind mundane events that the otherwise backgrounded ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination of HW suddenly kicks back in. If the ‘modern’ East/West geopolitical imagination ‘made sense’ and provided at least some fleeting ontological security by pointing to Russia, this is frustrated by the surplus anxiety produced via this ‘postmodern’ imagination of insidious, hidden networks operating in physical and cyberspace alike. In fact, as the discourse postulates, we may not even know that it really is Russia in the first place that is behind a particular incident, as hybrid attackers seek to create ‘an environment where responsibility for these activities cannot (at least formally) be attributed to them, or at least only speculatively and with great difficulty’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 127). We may ultimately never know if this or that mundane event is actually not a part of something much bigger, as it is the very aim of the attacker to ‘prevent a clear interpretation of events and the discovery of their interconnectedness’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 127). Therefore, while the prevalent ‘modern’ geopolitical reading of HW enables channelling anxiety by constructing Russia an object of fear, it still remains far from the manageable fear of ‘fight or flight’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 241). This is because these supposedly known aspects of the danger are constantly being accompanied and disrupted by the surplus anxiety of the ‘unknown unknowns’ stemming from the partial inclusion of the ‘postmodern’ geopolitical reading. This effectively pre-empts the HW discourse from ever solving the problems it is supposedly designed to tackle, as it is wholly unclear how to act upon threats that we are not yet aware of or do not know how to make sense of.

Second, this oscillation between the known and the unknown and between fear and anxiety manifests itself in the constantly shifting construction of what is supposed to be the exact nature of the threat coming from Russia. This is best illustrated in the wording of the annual reports of the Czech counterintelligence agency (SIS), which reinforce the notion that Russia is indeed a severe threat, yet the precise character and shape of this threat appears to be changing year after year. As already mentioned, in first annual public report reflecting on the situation after Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the SIS warned that their assessment showed the formation of what was spectacularly labelled as the ‘New Reincarnation of the Comintern’ – a loose network of allied actors, similar to the Cold War Soviet-controlled network of ideologically affiliated political parties, agitators and agents. The danger was portrayed as a new version of this tried and tested strategy, which Russia supposedly employs to connect different groups dissatisfied with the Western liberal democracy (Security Information Service, 2015, pp. 11–12).

However, the spectre of the Comintern was a one-off, never to appear again. Instead, SIS later concluded that the threat resided in a much looser combination of often uncoordinated actions of Russian intelligence, authentic Czech individuals not in any way linked to Moscow but ‘only’ spreading their own ‘pro-Russian’ worldviews, and finally, even in the lack of education about modern history in schools (Security Information Service, 2018, pp. 6–8). This trend of diffusing the danger from a Kremlin-coordinated network to seeing the threats in mere ideological resonances further continued. The most recent report notes that there is a ‘transition from state-controlled or directed activities to spontaneous actions’ of like-minded actors. ‘When Russian state officials express what they desire to happen (for instance by spreading manipulative information), proxy actors without any links to the Russian state proceed to action on their own initiative and based on what they think the officials might want’ (Security Information Service, 2020, p. 9).

Through this move, the spectre of ‘Russian hybrid warfare’ can now encompass virtually anything that can be somehow interpreted as matching with the desires or interests of the Kremlin, without any need for proving direct links, as these are no longer considered necessary. The construction of ‘a threat’ now includes even situations when ‘a foreign power does not engage in any direct action and keeps its distance, while using various ways (PR, instigating statements, propaganda etc.) to inspire individual persons to take action’ (Security Information Service, 2020, p. 9). Put differently, Russian threat can be present even where there is no direct Russian hand whatsoever. Literally any individual with views somehow similar to those of the Russian state can be seen as part of it, which makes the idea that security can ever be achieved virtually impossible. Instead, this logic contributes to the reproduction of an anxious society, defined by ‘the constant presence of the possibility of that threat, and with it, the sense that government cannot fully protect the people and that danger resides in the everyday’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 247).

Third, this notion that the possibility that something ‘Russian’ may be insidiously present deep within the Czech society then revives also the old anxieties inherent in the ‘modern’ East/West geopolitical imagination itself. Central Europeans' self-positioning in East/West geopolitics is highly ambivalent (Kuus, 2007; Todorova, 2009). On the one hand, being or becoming part of ‘the Western civilisation’ is a source of ontological security. On the other hand, this security is never quite complete or permanent. This is because Central Europeans locate themselves at the very limit of the West, as ‘European edge-men’ (Mälksoo, 2010, p. 5), whose membership in the civilisation must constantly be proved as it can always be taken away – especially by the forces of the ‘East’. The ‘old shadow of Yalta’, the feeling that the region's ‘freedom could yet again be expendable in times of crisis’ is constantly present (Mälksoo, 2010, p. 75). Put differently, East/West geopolitics equips the Czech ‘pro-Western’ security intellectuals with a ‘mental map, where the country is depicted as being on the “edge” of Europe and constantly risking to “fall” into an abyss […] traditionally characterised as the “East”’ (Cadier, 2019, p. 84). While the East/West geopolitical imagination can succeed in spatialising the threat in the Russian ‘other’, the position it grants to the self is always potentially insecure. Therefore, it is also East/West geopolitics itself that produces subjects that are constantly on alert, facing the constant ‘possibility of loss of one's soul’ (Balaska, 2019, p. 8) that defines the experience of anxiety.

Such fragile geopolitical self-positioning further fuels the search for new and new sources of hybrid threats, as failing to uncover and face them may have existential consequences, especially given that ‘Easternness’ may have already infiltrated and compromised the Czech social body. This notion of ‘East within’ links to the above discussed unfathomability and invisibility of HW and manifests itself in multiple ways. For one counterintelligence report, it takes the form of smuggled ideas and narratives, presented ‘in a way leading Czech citizens to believe they are recipients of opinions held by fellow citizens not of Russian propaganda’ (Security Information Service, 2015, p. 11). Similarly, a popular book on ‘fake news’ geopoliticises social attitudes en bloc by identifying them along East/West axis, presenting the ‘disappointed’ part of society as ‘seeing a model in Russia, or perhaps China’ (Gregor, Mlejnková, & Zvolsi.info, 2018, p. 62). For others, the ‘East within’ takes the form in the physical presence of ‘Putin's agents’ who supposedly ‘quite likely teach your children at universities, you meet them for a coffee in your favourite café or work in normal jobs.’ (Kundra, 2016a, p. 88).

The anxiety geopolitics of hybrid warfare is thus also about creating the normatively highly disturbing ‘“red under every bed” mentality’ (Fridman, 2018, p. 3) and applying ‘the ethics of total war […] even to the smallest skirmish’ (Galeotti, 2019, p. 8). Therefore, viewing security threats through the prism of hybrid warfare reproduces a highly anxious society and perpetuates the justification for those ‘intellectuals of statecraft’ (Ó Tuathail & Agnew, 1992) that would not hesitate to provide the sort of geopolitical fixes that were discussed in the previous sections. Thereby, the discourse ends up reproducing itself, as the two faces of anxiety geopolitics not only disrupt, but also dialectically reinforce one another: geopolitical discourse emerges to repress anxiety and provide ontological security, yet the anxiety inherent in the discourse disrupts ontological security and, to come full circle, creates the need for geopolitical discourses. The result is a society oscillating between its desire to avoid anxiety and the repeated frustration thereof; an affective pulsation that has arguably been elevated to a dominant mode of politics of (in)security in our present time (Eklundh et al., 2017), of which hybrid warfare is a prime example. As similar patterns of anxious over-reaction and securitisation of broad areas of social life have been recognised by authors writing about HW in different empirical contexts (Fridman, 2018; Galeotti, 2019; Mälksoo, 2018; Ördén, 2019), we believe that the problem with ‘hybrid warfare’ is of a more general nature and the relevance of our analysis reaches beyond the Czech case.

4. Conclusion

Introducing anxiety geopolitics as a conceptual linchpin between disparate arguments from debates on critical geopolitics, ontological security, and politics of anxiety, this article made two central contributions. First, we have theorised the relationship between geopolitics and anxiety, moving beyond the existing accounts above all by pointing out the Janus-faced character of anxiety geopolitics, in which anxiety is both repressed and reproduced. Second, using the case of Czechia, we have argued that hybrid warfare is a discourse that constantly oscillates between repressing anxiety by geopoliticising the source of danger in East/West terms, and subverting its own constructions by presenting the threats as insidious, invisible, and constantly shifting. Therefore, we contend that the HW discourse is structured in a way that cannot achieve its purported ambition to secure populations against ‘hybrid threats’ and instead ends up producing more insecurity and anxiety.

Our argument has clear normative implications that expand the existing criticisms of HW by putting the underlying civilisational geopolitics in spotlight. This should help us challenge the technology-centred presentism of the HW discourse, showing that many of the ostensibly unprecedented concerns are in fact reheated versions of narratives that date back decades if not centuries. More importantly, it enables us to point to the presence of some of the highly problematic aspects of East/West thinking, especially those that have been rightly criticised as Orientalist, chauvinist or even racist (see e.g. Said, 1978; Todorova, 2009). Realising the presence of civilisational geopolitics makes it possible to ask whether certain portrayals of Russia in HW debates – e.g. as barbaric, irrational, irredeemable – may not represent narcissistic projections of the ‘Western’ self, rather than credible threat assessments (Chernobrov, 2019). Importantly, these are not scholastic matters of concern just for ivory-tower peaceniks, as the proponents of HW sometimes like to put it. Instead, these criticisms have clear implications for security policy. As recognised even among NATO's own analysts and officials (Caliskan & Liégeois, 2020; Rühle, 2019), adopting the prism of HW and labelling Russia as an inherently irrational enemy is detrimental to leading a productive debate on the exact nature of the challenges that Putin's regime poses and formulating appropriate and efficient strategies to respond to it. We add to it by highlighting that the HW discourse not only ‘undermines strategic thinking’ (Caliskan & Liégeois, 2020), but also never actually manages to provide security and creates highly concerning societal side-effects (perpetuation of anxiety, proliferation of Orientalist images).

There are also important qualifications of our argument and avenues for further research. First of all, we certainly do not claim that everyone who ever spoke of ‘hybrid threats’ or ‘hybrid warfare’ would find themselves in agreement with the examples used in our analysis, or be instantly guilty of Orientalism. While the article focused on overarching themes, there is certainly variation within the HW discourse, not only in Czechia (Daniel & Eberle, 2021), but also in Germany, UK or EU (Janičatová & Mlejnková, 2021; Monsees, 2020; Ördén, 2019). One intriguing possibility for further research is in showing the variation in the way how geopolitical thought is invoked and anxiety repressed and reproduced within the different versions of the HW discourse. More generally, the theoretical argument should also be tried and developed in other contexts.

### Link---Hybrid War---Anxiety Inevitable

#### Anxiety is inevitable. It is impossible maintain a stable, coherent identity. That turns case---ontological insecurity drives ineffectual policy fixes.

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Both Guzzini and Browning are critical of using geopolitics as a tool of anxiety management, citing its adverse effects both in normative terms (creation of enemy-images, building an exclusionary ‘Fortress Europe’), and in the consequential decrease in physical security (e.g. as a result of escalating tensions between antagonists locked-in in their hardened identities). However, both also appear to ground their argument in the assumption that anxiety ultimately can be managed (more or less) successfully, one that is shared by the Giddensian mainstream of ontological security studies. While scholars making such arguments would consider the price of anxiety-management via geopolitics as too steep, they still accept that such a trade-off can be made in the first place and that one's ontological security can in fact be gained at the expense of physical security or the well-being of others. As some of the most recent debates in ontological security scholarship recognise (Browning, 2019; Cash, 2020; Gustafsson & Krickel-Choi, 2020; Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020; Rumelili, 2020), these issues stem from Giddens' problematic conceptualisation of anxiety that is adopted by most ontological security work in critical geopolitics and IR. To sharpen the analysis of the role of anxiety in geopolitics and deepen the critique made by Guzzini and Browning, an additional theoretical step is needed.

For this purpose, we reach to the literature on the politics of anxiety drawing mainly on the work of Jacques Lacan, a psychoanalyst whose ideas have been increasingly prolific in IR (for an authoritative overview see Zevnik & Mandelbaum, 2021), and, to a lesser extent, critical geopolitics (Klinke, 2016; Laketa, 2019; Müller, 2013). Our approach shares the Giddensian notion that anxiety is an inarticulable, traumatic and potentially paralysing affect that subjects attempt to avoid and repress. However, instead of seeing it as merely something that ‘lurks’ behind as the dark other of normal life, anxiety is understood as a durable affective condition interwoven in everyday experiences as well as social processes and political institutions. It doesn't just lurk, it is always already there, as it is present in the key mechanisms that hold society together: in the production of social subjects and the creation of rules through which these are regulated and bound together.

In this reading, anxiety is correlative to the very emergence and existence of the subject as such. It is ‘a type of expectant dread’ or ‘a crushing experience of ‘out of placeness’’ that arises ‘when the subject, unable to ground themselves in either a functional horizon of values or a reliable social or subjective identification, fears that they might be somehow swallowed up, devoured’ (Hook, 2015, pp. 117, 119). It is less about the disorientation and uncertainty caused by one particular crisis (e.g. Russia invading Ukraine, Covid-19 arriving) and more about being reminded of the ultimately irreducible fragility of all things, including human lives and social orders. In this sense, anxiety is an affect linked to experiencing the limit of one's own existence as a subject, something that signifies the encounter with ‘the real’, to use the Lacanian term for the internal limit of social order and/or the biological limit of human existence. Anxiety can never be fully managed or repressed, as it is a reaction to being confronted with what is for Lacan the ultimate reality of human existence: the fundamental ‘groundlessness of meaning’ (Balaska, 2019, p. 25) and, therefore, the impossibility of ever achieving a coherent and stable identity. In this sense, anxiety is the affect that ‘does not deceive’ (Lacan, 2014, p. 160), as it does not cover over the void at the heart of every social identity, but rather confronts us with it at the level of bodily sensation. To put it differently, subjects are always ultimately ontologically insecure, as no narratives, routines or relationships – personal or geopolitical – can ever fully deal with the omnipresent possibility that things may not make sense and everything can break down any minute. Anxiety emerges as the affect that signifies ‘the need for the stabilisation of the subject’ (Burgess, 2017, p. 29), yet this stabilisation is doomed to fail in the longer term.

Therefore, in contrast to readings that see it as an aberration, anxiety is omnipresent, even though it clearly varies in its intensity across time and space. Sometimes it is experienced more often and more strongly, while there may be other, less anxious times (Solomon, 2012 makes this argument with respect to affects in general). The current social condition is arguably one when anxiety is on the high; leading some authors to argue that we are now living in an ‘anxious society’, ‘a society on constant alert, despite having no identifiable existential threat. Instead, there is the constant presence of the possibility of that threat, and with it, the sense that government cannot fully protect the people and that danger resides in the everyday’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 247, emph. added; Eklundh et al., 2017). Such (highly) anxious society was created by the congruence of a range of factors. Some point to the effects of neoliberalism and austerity that produce the widespread feelings of powerlessness and loss of control (Hirvonen, 2017). Others focus on the social media economy that requires users who are constantly obsessively checking for news updates, notifications and the affective gratification coming from ‘retweets’ and ‘likes’ (Davies, 2019). For yet others, the proliferation of anxiety is connected to the societal changes linked to gender, race and immigration (Ali & Whitham, 2018; Klinke, 2016; Zevnik, 2017b), or the ‘security creep’ perpetuated by discourses and practices of counterterrorism and cybersecurity (Heath-Kelly, 2018; Jacobsen, 2020).

This extended understanding of anxiety as ontologically conditioned and socially circulated ‘nervous states’ (Davies, 2019) without a clear and concrete referent object opens the possibility to think (geo)politics of anxiety in broader and arguably more critical terms than in conventional ontological security literature. On the one hand, the Lacanian approach broadly agrees with the Giddensian ontological security framework with respect to how subjects try to deal with anxiety: by ‘pinning’ it onto an object and transforming it into a more tangible fear of something. In this manner, ‘fear becomes a way of easing anxiety; of attaching a signifier (an object of fear) to what is otherwise an unfounded experience of unease’ (Zevnik, 2017a, p. 237). Such ‘politics of fear’ then transforms the crushing and paralysing experience of anxiety into the management of ‘concrete objects that we have invented’ (Hirvonen, 2017, p. 261), such as the geopolitically coded ‘Muslim terrorists’ or ‘Russians hackers’. In this step, anxiety is ostensibly eased or repressed by the production of (geopolitical) narratives that ‘make sense’ of the unpleasant experience by giving it a name and placing it on a map.2

On the other hand, however, the Lacanian take allows us to account also for the politics that is imminent in the failure of these anxiety-managing attempts. As we have argued, all narratives built around particular objects of fear, including geopolitical ones, are eventually failing, as these objects are ultimately ‘false targets’. They are merely temporary discursive vessels functioning as placeholders for expressing deeper ontological anxiety, which is bound to strike back. Consequently, attempts to make societies (feel) more secure, habitually end up making them (feel) equally, or even more, insecure and anxious, regardless of how much effort is invested into fighting this or that particular threat. As Heath-Kelly (2015, 2018) and Jacobsen (2020) have shown, successful security discourses like counter-terrorism or cybersecurity have actually managed to internalise this ‘failure to secure’ (Heath-Kelly, 2015) by incorporating it into their very structure. According to them, counter-terrorism and cybersecurity are constructed as dangers so slippery and multifaceted that once we resolve one problem (by killing Osama bin Laden, resolving a particular cyberthreat), a whole new range of terrorist groups or cyber issues emerges to occupy their place.

Consequently, and in contrast to conventional ontological security literature, politics of anxiety is not only about managing and repressing it through narratives, routines and relationships. It is also about other ways of manipulating anxiety for political purposes, including reproducing, nurturing and spreading it via the construction of threats so opaque and widespread that they cannot be possibly resolved, like terrorism, cybersecurity – or hybrid warfare. By its repeated failure to secure, such discourses hold societies in the anxious ‘state of constant and heightened alertness’ (Davies, 2019, p. xii), making them ready to accept a range of pre-emptive security measures across all possible areas of social life.

### Link---Hybrid War---Defense Narrative

#### The link could not be more explicit---the AFF’s worries about cyberattacks and information war are a narrative that elevates hybrid war to existential threat.

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The defence narrative: protecting the state

The first narrative pictures HW as a problem for national defence. In this reading, which is closer to the original formulations of HW in US military thought (Bahenský, 2018; Fridman, 2018; Hoffman, 2007), ‘hybrid’ is above all a form of war, or at least an accompanying feature of conventional military confrontation. This leads to a narrative embedded in strategic studies and IR realism, where the threat comes from power politics backed up by military force and concerns, primarily, the state and its institutions. As such, the threat is to be minimised by building up and updating national and alliance institutions and defence capabilities. The key sources developing this narrative in the archive are the Security Strategy, the Defence Strategy and publications and interviews of Karel Řehka, a former Special Forces general and perhaps the most publicly visible military intellectual in Czechia

This narrative portrays HW as another type of war. It is animated by the broader Clausewitzian discourse about war as a phenomenon with unchanging ‘nature’, but constantly shifting ‘character’, where the latter is dependent upon the social and technological developments of a given age (Von Clausewitz, 1989). In Řehka’s words,

wars have always been and always will be a part of human society. And as long as people have different interests and there are conflicts between them and there comes a situation, when they are ready to use violence, we have a war. (Řehka in Golis, 2018b)

What is different, though, is the social and technological environment, and especially the rise of the information domain as one of the battlefields (Řehka, 2017: 54).

The realist and military logic is apparent in the portrayal of the threat, which is understood as a combination of military and non-military means at the service of great-power politics. With an implicit yet clear allusion to Russia, Czech Security Strategy in this context talks about ‘states’ that

are ready to pursue their power-seeking goals through hybrid warfare methods combining conventional and non-conventional military means with non-military tools (propaganda using traditional and new media, disinformation intelligence operations, cyber-attacks, political and economic pressures, and deployment of unmarked military personnel). (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015: 13)

Therefore, the Kremlin and its HW approaches are a threat first and foremost because of Russia’s military power that backs up its assertive policies in eastern Europe (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017: 7). This does not mean that Czech security intellectuals are worried by a direct prospect of Russian tanks in Prague. However, official documents present national security as ‘indivisible’ from that of other NATO and EU members (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015: 6). In this logic, Russia’s military threat to the Balts, Norwegians or Romanians is seen as a security issue also in Prague.

Of course, this does not concern only Russia’s conventional military operations, as ‘[t]hreats to the security of allies may be of the classical military nature or they may take the vague form of hybrid warfare’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015: 10). While these ‘vague’, ‘hybrid’ measures can take a range of forms, most attention has been given to their informational dimension, or the ‘threats associated with information warfare and organised cyber-attacks’ (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017: 7). Relying on US and NATO conceptual documents, Řehka treats information warfare as a subset of HW, defined as ‘the conduct of war in the information environment’ (Řehka, 2017: 23, 62). While the means may be different, information war is clearly part and parcel of warfare. ‘Information war is always complemented by armed action, or backed up by armed force’ (Řehka in Golis, 2018b). This link to military force is arguably what distinguishes the comparatively less threatening ‘information operations’ that are the norm also in peacetime from the much more dangerous information war: ‘You can operate in an information and hybrid way as much as you like. You can try to polarize society and influence political decision making, but you must always be backed up by real military force’ (Řehka in Golis, 2018b). Therefore, the primary danger of information operations lies in the possibility that they may one day turn into a ‘real’ war (Řehka, 2017: 178).

In this military- and state-centred logic of the defence narrative, the threatened value concerns, above all, the continuing ability of the state– with emphasis on defence and security institutions – to properly perform its role and be prepared for effective defence. The official documents define this in the familiar terms of defending ‘sovereignty and territorial integrity’ (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017: 7; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015: 6). Due to the above-mentioned principle of ‘indivisibility’ and Czechia’s emphasis on ‘collective defence’ (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015), the threatened value is extended also to the functionality of international institutions, of which Czechia is part, especially NATO and EU. Řehka’s work then outlines in detail how the functioning of institutions can be threatened by ‘hybrid’ operations, specifically by ‘manipulating information, information systems and [the] decision-making process’ in the case of information warfare, further listing a range of examples including ‘psychological operations, physical destruction, electronic combat, attacks against computer networks’ (Řehka, 2017: 140). All of these are aimed at disrupting key institutions and disarming the state, making it vulnerable to a possible conventional attack.

Consequently, the response is centred around reinforcing security and defence institutions. ‘The only thing that can effectively prevent the use of force by the Russian Federation, is resilience and preparedness of potential adversaries to face it, together with choosing the appropriate strategy’ (Řehka, 2017: 182). Therefore, the desirable answer of the state is ‘to strengthen its defence capacity and readiness, and to take its share of the responsibility in supporting those allies and partners who bear the greater share of the burden’ (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017: 7). At home, this means, above all, more money for the army, as the ‘response to the deteriorating security environment’ lies in that ‘the Czech government has begun to increase defence funding’ (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017: 7; Sobotka in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015: 3). In the longer view, it also means a complex adaptation of the whole defence system to the new realities of warfare (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016; Řehka, 2017). Abroad, the danger can be ‘eliminated’ through ‘the Czech Republic’s membership of NATO and the EU and its good relations with neighbouring countries’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015: 10). Within NATO, this primarily means conventional defence and deterrence measures (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017: 7).

As far as the broader knowledge and expertise behind the defence narrative is concerned, the threat and responses to it are constructed and legitimised by military expertise and the authority of the state apparatus. While the official documents rarely elaborate on the sources of their claims in detail, even though they also occasionally mention NATO strategies, it is Řehka in particular who grounds his views on HW in reference to US and NATO official doctrines, manuals and think tank documents, as well as military classics such as Sun-Tzu, Clausewitz or Lidell Hart (Řehka in Golis, 2018b; Řehka, 2017: 32–45). Thus, Řehka analyses Russian behaviour through references to the supposedly timeless rules of geopolitics, anxiety about defensibility of Russian borders (Řehka in Golis, 2018b) and through Russia’s apparent concerns about its position in international order (Řehka, 2017: 177–178). He also frequently invokes past and present military conflicts to provide illustrations. In his assessment of the shift in Russian strategy following Crimea, Řehka argues with a historical lineage, suggesting that ‘we heard the statements, we had the signals, we saw changes in the Russian strategic documents, we saw cyber-attacks on Estonia, taking control of South Ossetia. Everyone ignored that and then we were shocked by the occupation of Crimea’ (Řehka in Golis, 2018b). Lastly, the narrative proves the legitimacy of its reading of the threat by references to other official strategic and governmental documents. In this respect, Řehka provides lengthy quotes from governmental documents and reports of intelligence services (Řehka, 2017: 178–182).

HW is thus made known through a broad body of academic and applied military knowledge, governmental statements and reports represented and created by those inside (or close to) the national and international security apparatuses. With its official, diplomatic and somewhat detached tone, the narrative paints a broad picture of the international situation, strategies of different states and alliances and threats the Czech Republic is facing in relation to HW. On the other hand, it leaves many parts of the threat veiled and reserved only for those ‘in the know’, who are responsible for matters of national security. Just as the specifics of the threat are hidden from the public eye, so are many of the responses, which are mostly entrusted to dedicated intelligence services, armed forces and the alphabet soup of specialised agencies.

### Link---Hybrid War---Raitasalo

#### “Hybrid Warfare” is a prime example of securitization---it resecuritizes great power relationships and excuses the shaky foundations of IR.

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The outlook on international security within the Western security community, and particularly in Europe, has changed dramatically during the post-Cold War era.1 At the same time, the West has gone out-ofarea, developed an expeditionary military mind-set and fought several wars of choice against third-rate military adversaries in the name of “military crisis management,” “counterinsurgency warfare,” and the “War on Terror.”

During the past 25 years, the shared Western understandings on international security have gone through a process of foundational change. Western notions of international security and military affairs have gone through a paradigm change. At the core of this change has been the belief that we have been able to overcome the Cold War era zero-sum logic to international security and adversarial relations with other great powers of the day—namely Russia and China. The West has moved away or gradually grown out from containing and deterring state-based military threats towards ever broadening notions of international security. The “new” post-Cold War-era Western security perspective included the stability of the globalizing international system and human security as perspectives through which to analyse security threats and appropriate responses to these threats.2

Now that Russia has used very traditional great-power tools in Ukraine since 2013, and also in Syria since 2015, many Western states have found themselves in need of a “new” framework—any framework—to cope with this return of the past in contemporary international politics. After all, most European states could not conceptualize military threats in Europe only three years ago. Similarly, the United States has pulled out its troops from Europe with the conviction that state-based military threats in Europe are unimaginable. Thus, during the last 25 years, most Western states have focused on committing military troops to multinational expeditionary operations with scant direct connections to Western states’ survival or national security interests. After Crimea, advocating hybrid warfare has been a way to (re)securitize the traditional great-power perspective on international security—an approach that Western states had desecuritized since the end of the Cold War as the West was redefining international security on its own terms.3

The hybrid warfare thesis is represented by the idea that Russia has invented a new approach to statecraft and military affairs after the war in Georgia. It reflects more than anything the collective Western surprise that the very traditional actions of Russia have caused. This article argues that the hybrid warfare thesis has catered to the Western need to explain and understand Russia’s actions in Ukraine as the post-Cold War-era Western conceptualisations of international security have proved to be laid on shaky foundations. Great-power rivalries, spheres-of-influence thinking, propaganda, coercion, the use of proxies, spying, and the use of military force by great powers did not become extinct with the demise of the Cold War even though many Western analysts and statesmen thought they had. Recent actions of Russia have revealed this flaw in the Western approach to post-Cold War-era international security.

The emergence and development of the hybrid warfare thesis has been politically useful—highlighting the changing nature and shortcomings of the postCold War-era Western perspective on international security. The analytical utility of the hybrid warfare thesis is more limited. Many of the supposedly new elements of the so-called hybrid warfare and the myriad of associated and supposedly new forms of warfare are in fact normal practices of statecraft rather than novel expressions of war. Many Western strategic analysts and statesmen have problems in dealing with these traditional tools of statecraft due to the development of Western perspective on international security during the post-Cold War era. More than anything, the rise of the hybrid warfare thesis is a collective Western attempt to domesticate the traditional threat that Russia poses today.

### Link---Hybrid War---Malksoo

#### “Hybrid War” Link---it entrenches deep securitization and generates a risk society.

Maria Mälksoo 18, Senior Lecturer in International Security at the Brussels School of International Studies at the University of Kent, 2018, “Countering hybrid warfare as ontological security management: the emerging practices of the EU and NATO,” European Security, Vol. 27, Issue 3, pp. 374-392, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662839.2018.1497984>

Below, I set out to show how the hybrid war discourse epitomises the contemporary ontological insecurities of the EU and NATO. Attempts to frame bold institutional responses to the “hybrid” threats, notably via the promotion of resilience as the institutional equivalent of a sense of OS, mark “bringing the war back in” for the international security management profiles of these two major Western organisations. NATO and the EU’s emerging discourse and practice in countering hybrid warfare seek to prove their continuing relevance in the contemporary era. The preoccupation with hybrid threats has made the concept of war empirically more available for the EU. Albeit war continues to be normatively unacceptable, public discussion of concrete practices to counter various “hybrid” moves from third parties as part of the broader “hybrid warfare” countering paradigm is far from a taboo for the EU in this day and age.4 NATO as a more traditional security organisation is wrestling harder with the threshold of war becoming increasingly fluid in the context of “hybrid” engagements. Lawyers debate whether “hybrid warfare” calls for updates in the law of armed conflict. Ultimately, it is the legal characterisation which determines whether a situation is considered to amount to armed conflict, and accordingly, whether peacetime law or law of war applies (O’Connell 2015). The hybridisation of warfare further challenges the (substantively anyway dubious) legal distinction between international and non-international armed conflicts (Reeves 2016). Meanwhile, the general acceptance of the term “hybrid war(fare)” also signals the politicisation of the established legal definition of war as a particular practice that takes place when certain specific conditions have been fulfilled.

Brandishing “war” on political contestations of varying intensity has furthermore ethical implications (cf. Franke 2015). As the EU and NATO are grappling with honing their response to the menaces and tactics combining a mixture of special forces, backdoor proxies, information campaigns, and “digital warfare” (e.g. Ilves 2016), having further added the non-state variant of the “hybrid threat” to the mix (such as Daesh), a broader question transpires about the repercussions of the alleged hybridisation of warfare and its perpetrators for the study of security in IR.

The article proceeds in four sections. The first section gauges various definitions of hybrid warfare, outlines their relation to the notion of ontological insecurity, and the consequent countering attempts of hybrid threats to the mirror-image process of OS-seeking. I make a threefold proposition: hybrid warfare is disturbing ontologically, because it embodies the entanglement of politics and war in the contemporary era; epistemologically, because it unhinges the war/peace binary implicitly underpinning the IR discipline (Barkawi 2016);5 and last but not least ethically, because the inherent danger of becoming a monster in the course of fighting monsters (aka the efficient countering of hybrid warfare) is particularly poignant for democratic polities (cf. Nietzsche 2003, Aphorism 146). The second section applies various OS-attuned lenses on the institutional responses of the EU and NATO to hybrid warfare, and the third section empirically illustrates the argument. The article concludes with a call for caution: adopting the “everything is dangerous”- approach further blurs the fuzzy line between politics and war, adding heat to the calls to revisit the international laws on armed conflicts (cf. Winter 2011). The justifiability of illiberal methods in safeguarding liberal values constitutes the crux of the OS dilemma for the Western security community battling the “hybrid menace”.

Hybrid warfare as the epitome of ontological insecurity

Much of the strategic studies literature has been animated by the problem of uncertainty in international relations and, by extension, the consequences of uncertainty for the management of states’ security dilemma (Rathbun 2007, cf. Mitzen and Schweller 2011). Ambiguity is likewise the original sin the “hybrid warfare”-notion draws on. Yet, the concept “hybrid warfare” is itself faulty of definitional ambiguities. Although an increasingly utilised concept in the contemporary strategic and policy discourse, “hybrid warfare” refers to a number of distinct phenomena, and consequently means different things to different people. It lacks a clear and uniform definition, hence embodying and perpetuating the countenance it seeks to capture. “Hybrid warfare” is thus victim to its own conceptual plasticity (Tenenbaum 2015, p. 43).

The heterogeneous origins, composition, and use of the concept can be somewhat clarified by distinguishing between (i) hybrid threats (as complex and multidimensional modern menaces, crisscrossing multiple issue areas and amplifying one another); (ii) hybrid warfare (as a particular mode of waging war, combining conventional and unconventional, coercive and non-coercive means, capabilities, tactics and formations in a centrally organised and orchestrated manner), and (iii) hybrid war (as “a form of violent conflict that simultaneously involves state and non-state actors, with the use of conventional and unconventional means of warfare that are not limited to the battlefield or a particular physical territory” (Jacobs and Lasconjarias 2015, p. 3, cf. Jonsson and Seely 2015, Browning 2002, p. 2). Tenenbaum (2015) offers a useful genealogy of the “hybrid warfare” concept, highlighting the notion’s distinct effects at the political and strategic, operational, tactical and capability levels. Yet, the practical use of the term “hybrid” has interchangeably and rather confusingly moved between these different levels of analysis, seeking to capture the interconnected nature of modern vulnerabilities, the multiplicity of stakeholders in the contemporary security game (i.e. state and non-state actors, regular and irregular forces), along with the diversity and simultaneity of conventional and unconventional means used, ranging from military, political, economic, diplomatic, technological to criminal modes of engagement (Hoffman 2007, Glenn 2009, Pawlak 2015). Writings on hybrid warfare thus tap into both the literature on asymmetric/counterinsurgency warfare (McCuen 2008, cf. Winter 2011) and that on interstate wars (Gerasimov 2013). No wonder that “hybrid” has come to accommodate as varied phenomena as Russia’s takeover of Crimea in 2014 and its involvement in the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine, Russia’s meddling in the elections of various countries around the world via sophisticated phishing, doxing, and fake news campaigns, and the regional and global operating logics of politically ambitious non-state organisations, such as Hezbollah, Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda, or Daesh, or even criminal structures (e.g. the drug cartels in Mexico; see further Tenenbaum 2015).

Drawing on the emerging scholarship on hybrid warfare, three core interconnections can be flagged between hybrid warfare (as an empirical phenomenon and a discursive trope) and (the study of) OS in IR. First, along the ontological dimension, “hybrid warfare” captures the increasing porousness of lines between politics and war in the contemporary era, thus defying the attempts of organising life and social relations in a particular way (cf. Huysmans 1998). While many critics of the notion maintain that hybrid warfare remains just another variation on the old Clausewitzian understanding of war as the continuation of politics with a mixture of other means (cf. Gray 2007), others nonetheless highlight the particularity of the contemporary hybrid engagements. For the scholars finding distinct added value in the notion, the calibration and central coordination of the convergence of the various regular and irregular elements, further amplified by the new technological vulnerabilities and capabilities in contemporary hybrid engagements, have made the creeping indeterminacy about what war exactly is and how to go about it in the present day only more intense. The envisioning of hybrid engagements as a pre-phase of a full-scale military attack further adds to the ambiguity between th boundaries of warfare as essentially organised, reciprocal fighting and politics as a peaceful space of ordinary goings-about.

For those at the receiving end, hybrid warfare emerges as an epitome of ontological insecurity, referring to the “deep, incapacitating state of not knowing which dangers to confront and which to ignore, i.e. how to get by in the world” (Mitzen 2006, p. 345). It is an urgent reminder of the chameleon-like character of war – that is, war’s tendency to constantly change its forms as well as its appearances (Clausewitz 1976, p. 80). At the most fundamental level, then, hybrid warfare epitomises the blurry line between politics and war. It also symbolises the struggle for, and fear over losing, control “over the ends, ways and means of nations, communities and societies” (Ruiz Palmer 2015, p. 61). Assuming that collectivities’ agency is predicated on identification and routinisation (Greve 2017, p. 7), uncertainty about the nature of external threats does not just generate physical insecurity but also evokes ontological insecurity for the institutions (such as military) and organisations in question. Hybrid warfare exposes collective actors to the fundamental existential questions about the continuity of their external environment as they know it and their own finitude, with the related anxiety about the difficulties of concretising unknown and indeterminate threats (cf. Ejdus 2017). Thus formulated, hybrid warfare directly targets actors’ “security of being” (Kinnvall 2004, p. 746), disturbing the stability of their sense-making attempts of the surrounding world and the events they are faced with, and threatening to unsettle the established institutionalised routines. Instead, hybrid warfare itself emerges as an “institutionalization of doubt”, provoking considerable ontological insecurity (cf. Giddens 1990, pp. 92–94).

Epistemologically, and on a second note, “hybrid warfare” thus significantly unsettles the “war/peace binary” which has arguably structured the thinking about, and categorisation of, war in the Eurocentric tradition of its study. This particular understanding of war(time), cleanly juxtaposed to peace(time) has been attuned to the needs of an international system of sovereign nation-states, enabling the consequent categorisation of war into international (inter-state) and civil (intra-state) war (Barkawi 2016). “Hybrid wars” emphatically challenge a neat war/peace binary, which has, however, served as a core source of OS for the discipline of IR. There is a family resemblance between the concepts of “hybrid warfare” and the notion of “unpeace” introduced by Kello (2017), seeking to capture the ambiguous, yet persistent irritants by virtual weapons on the international order.

Finally, hybrid warfare meets OS at the intersection of ethical security studies (Browning 2016, Browning and McDonald 2013). Just as OS-seeking practices need to be analysed with an eye on the ethical conundrums and dilemmas they might give rise to due to the exercise of power along the way (e.g. Mälksoo 2015, Rossdale 2015), the “social turn” accompanying the hybridisation of warfare in various empirical settings, and the consequent countering attempts of hybrid warfare, require equally intent ethical attention (see Owens 2012). If hybrid conflicts are understood as full spectrum wars … combining a struggle against an armed enemy and 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 (McCuen 2008, p. 108), hybrid warfare really appears as yet another variation on the theme of “war amongst the people”. The intermingling of political and military activities thus not only underscores the need for their parallel examination (Smith 2005), but also calls for caution in the lax use of war as a metaphor for engagements of various types and intensity. If society must be defended (Foucault 2003) against nearly everything, at all times, and if everyone becomes connected and potentially targeted in the global “hybrid war” zone, what is left of politics, and the delicate balancing act between security and democratic liberties? The implications of constant public perception management in the service of protecting the freedom of speech in the “post-truth” world are perhaps not fully fathomable yet. The disconcerting potential of the increasingly prominent strategic communication discourse in the EU6 and NATO7 for the everyday of democratic politics is already evident (cf. Garton Ash 2016). Securing a core democratic value – freedom of speech/freedom of media – via an obsessive emphasis on proactive and purposeful communication management points at the classic paradox of militant democracy whereby the very attempt to defend democracy might inadvertently damage it (cf. Müller 2016, p. 253).

Managing hybrid warfare as ontological security-seeking

Hybrid warfare emerges as the embodiment of uncertainty for the EU and NATO. The meanings of uncertainty range from fear, ignorance, confusion, and/or indeterminacy in IR theory (Rathbun 2007, pp. 533–534). It is certainly possible to apply all these lenses and consequent emphases on reading the EU and NATO responses to the fundamentally undetermined condition of hybrid warfare, ambivalence par excellence. Paraphrasing Huysmans’s (1998) original application of the OS concept in IR, the Western countering attempts of hybrid warfare tell a security story wherein a fear of uncertainty, or of the unknown trumps a more concrete fear of death at the hands of other people. As hybrid warfare vividly symbolises “an epistemological fear – a fear of not knowing” (Huysmans 1998, p. 235) (e.g. when war is waged at “us”; what is this “new” kind of “war” really all about etc.), the emerging strategic responses of these two core Western organisations demonstrate how the double fear of death and not knowing quite when and in which ways to expect it, gets objectified in order to make the growing list of potentially existentially dangerous subjects and phenomena more concrete, palpable and conceivable for oneself. Hybrid warfare thus emerges as the “unbearable void” (Huysmans 1998, p. 237), which needs to be objectified, in order to become “knowable” and (more) tolerable.

Huysmans (1998) defines OS as a strategy for managing the limits of reflexivity by fixing social relations into a symbolic and institutional order. In his interpretation, OS thus concerns the general question of the political, or “how to order social relations while simultaneously guaranteeing the very activity of ordering itself” (Huysmans 1998, p. 242). Hybrid warfare, by definition, destabilises the traditional cognitive security environment of states and international organisations, and consequently, renders their identity insecure. Crafting the institutional responses to hybrid warfare thus becomes a “dread management” exercise wherein daily security administration attempts, seeking to objectify the abstract fear of death through constructing concrete enemies and thus introducing a level of certainty, nonetheless remain toothless at the inability to “hierarchize threats” in an atmosphere of potentially permanent state of crisis and urgency (Huysmans 1998, p. 243). The pursuits of daily security and OS (“security of being”) thus collapse into each other.

Hybrid warfare indicates a multitude of possible contingencies, generating anxiety about one’s ability to remain oneself and to continue to act. It is thus linked to “anxiety over the vulnerability of [Western] power” (Bell 2012, pp. 230–231), threatening the West about losing its particularistic form of existence (cf. Creppell 2011, p. 455). Anxiety, in contrast to fear, which per Giddens (1991, p. 43) constitutes a response to a specific threat, concerns “perceived threats to the integrity of the security system of the individual” (Giddens 1991, pp. 44–45, cf. Browning and Joenniemi 2017, p. 38; Rumelili 2015). OS-seeking aims to mitigate the effects of such hard uncertainty, bringing it within bearable limits (Mitzen 2006, p. 346). Routines are instrumental here, as they “pacify the cognitive environment … ‘inoculating’ individuals against paralytic, deep fear of chaos” (Mitzen 2006, p. 347).

Being able to survive the “hybrid threats” is directly pertinent to the survival of the EU and NATO as particular kinds of organisations, underpinned and driven by specific values – which cannot be sacrificed or diluted in the struggle for physical and institutional survival. Yet, hybrid warfare disturbs the OS of the EU and NATO in subtly distinct ways. Due to the particularities of their institutional set-ups and historical foundations, the OS drives of the two organisations are somewhat distinctive. NATO’s history is occasionally told through its surpassing of a sequence of crises, albeit the end of the Cold War and the collapse of its original enemy created a situation of unprecedented uncertainty and ontological insecurity for the Alliance. Meanwhile, the EU’s ontological insecurity is a more recent phenomenon, stemming mostly from the Eurocrisis and the looming possibility of a Grexit a few years ago; the refugee/migration crisis in Europe of 2015 (Dingott Alkhoper 2018; Mitzen 2018); the actual UK decision on Brexit in 2016 (Browning 2018); and the rise of populist politics within the EU (Kinnvall, Manners, Mitzen 2018) and the United States. NATO as a military alliance has been historically more accustomed to the othering practices of concrete geographical places, whereas the EU is generally regarded as an organisation that has risen above geopolitical othering, juxtaposing itself to Europe’s dark past instead (Rumelili 2018, Subotic 2018, and Della Sala 2018). Accordingly, the EU might be more at home with hybrid threat management due to its historically broader conceptualisation of security through the paradigm of intertwined risks rather than being focused more strictly on “the threat, use and control of military force” in the manner of a traditional defence alliance (Walt 1991, p. 212; Manners 2002). Regardless of its perpetual transformer’s self-image, hybrid threats represent the uncomfortable “hard” or “fundamental” uncertainty for NATO (cf. Mitzen 2006, p. 346) and are thus ontologically disturbing for the security of its self as a traditional alliance with a collective security pledge bound to “armed attack” against one or more of its member states.

In order to achieve OS, actors strive for “routinizing their relations with significant others” (Mitzen 2006, p. 342). Routines help to keep ontological fears at bay, out of everyday discursive consciousness (Mitzen 2006, p. 348). From this perspective, NATO’s naming and shaming strategy vis-à-vis Russia as part of its hybrid warfare countering strategy links the uncertainty emanating from the hybrid nature of the new threats to the known and routine relationship with its traditional antagonist.8 The incapacitating difficulties related to planning ahead in anticipating and countering hybrid engagements are thus somewhat alleviated by the latter’s attachment to a known rival. Russia’s hybrid intervention in Ukraine has concurrently provided NATO with the familiar parameters of the cognitive “cocoon” (Giddens 1991, pp. 39–40) which enables the alliance to reproduce its cognitively “knowable” world. A Mitzenian reading of NATO’s emerging response to hybrid threats/warfare thus points at the renewed routinisation of the “programmed cognitive and behavioral responses” to Russia as the alliance’s original nemesis.

Restoring traditional vigilance vis-à-vis Russia, buttressing the forward defence along the Alliance’s eastern flank with the respective military reinforcements, contingency planning and exercises, the emerging response of NATO to the hybrid menace could also be read as an attempted restoration of a known normative order for the North Atlantic Alliance. Hybrid warfare endangers the basic features of the said normative order (or that of the broadly conceived Western security community in general, including the EU as well) as its efficient countering would likely compromise the underlying principles for this order’s particularistic existence (cf. Creppell 2011, p. 450). As a threat of subversion, hybrid warfare exposes the internal vulnerabilities in the body of the traditional security alliance (NATO) and a self-proclaimed post-modern security actor (i.e. the EU; cf. Cooper 2004). This concerns, in particular, the ever-elusive (and contested) balance between national/organisational security and individual liberties (cf. Waldron 2003, Neocleous 2007), as strategic communication is inherently at odds with free speech as a core value of Western liberalism. Countering hybrid warfare is conducive of generating a security predicament of perpetual pre-emption which, by definition, would indicate pre-emptive gathering of all sorts of data, thus likely infringing on the privacy of the individuals for the sake of the organisational/regional/national security. This precautionary logic resonates with the risk society approach which characterises the struggling with a sheer volume of risks with potentially fundamental consequences as a key feature of modernity, implying that “decisions are … made not in context of certainty, nor even of available knowledge, but of doubt, premonition, foreboding, challenge, mistrust, fear, and anxiety” (Ewald 2002, p. 294).

A less sympathetic reading of such an ontological “dread management” exercise would regard particularly NATO’s emerging narrative and practice about hybrid warfare as an example of turning unknown anxieties into “the manageable certainties of objects of fear to physical security through securitization” (Browning and Joenniemi 2017, p. 38, Rumelili 2015, Steele 2008, p. 64). NATO’s and the EU’s “dread management” strategies vis-à-vis the hybrid “spectre” tune us further in the direction of Croft and Vaughan-Williams’s (2017, p. 27) research agenda, asking specifically “[w]hose dread is managed and at what cost for whom?”, thus illuminating the ethical pitfalls related to their OSseeking. Due to the omnipresence and ambivalence of hybrid threats, NATO and the EU’s countering strategies of hybrid warfare verge on “deep securitization”, which Abulof (2014, p. 397) defines by its distinctly high scale and scope of securitising moves. The hybrid warfare discourse has become ubiquitous in the respective repertoires of the EU and NATO, with hybrid threats framed as imminent, protracted, and existentially endangering. Securitisation thus emerges as a response to the ontological insecurity, with a promise of “mitigating the existential angst arising from death being both certain and undetermined” (Abulof 2014, p. 403, Huysmans 1998). Both NATO and the EU are engaged in collective securitisation of hybrid warfare since the threat in question has a systemic referent – that is, it “imping[es] upon international and collective identities, or the rules and norms governing interstate interactions” (Sperling and Webber 2017, p. 26). Hybrid threat management by the EU and NATO could accordingly be understood as the institutionalisation of their respective organisational OS-seeking via strategies of “being” (aimed at constructing a strong narrative to buttress a continuous and esteemboosting identity) and “doing” (focused on an attempt to uphold a stable cognitive environment through routinised practice “whilst also undertaking action contributing to a sense of integrity and pride”) (Flockhart 2016, p. 799). While the EU is emphatically defending core democratic values (freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, media freedom and access to information) (European Parliament 2016), NATO’s countering of hybrid threats demonstrates more explicitly the intertwining of its physical survival as an efficient political-military alliance and a sense of OS as the principal warden of the European security (and more broadly Western world) order. The inability to honour the collective defence pledge would be a blow to NATO’s identity and mean its (almost certain) death. The security of its “body” (i.e. physical security) and “self” (i.e. ontological/identity security) are therefore less distinguishable than in the case of the EU which is a far more complex political setting, with only relatively recent claims (albeit with increasing assertiveness) in the traditional security sphere.9 Regardless, for both organisations, countering hybrid threats serves as a reactive self-legitimation as they thus reassert their relevance and ability to be of assistance for their respective member states and populations.

### Link---Hybrid War---Cyber-Resilience

#### Resilience is an anxiety management strategy.

Maria Mälksoo 18, Senior Lecturer in International Security at the Brussels School of International Studies at the University of Kent, 2018, “Countering hybrid warfare as ontological security management: the emerging practices of the EU and NATO,” European Security, Vol. 27, Issue 3, pp. 374-392, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662839.2018.1497984>

Hybrid warfare in daily security management

A bird’s-eye view of the EU and NATO’s emerging management strategies of hybrid warfare demonstrates how the looming hybrid agenda is directly tapping into the everyday security concerns of these two main Western political and security organisations.

In NATO and the EU’s responses to hybrid threats, OS emerges as the actor’s ability to tolerate, and cope with change (Browning and Joenniemi 2017, p. 32). Albeit seemingly counterintuitive due to the general human preference for stability over change, OS might nonetheless “derive[] from constructive attempts to (re)create and consolidate collective self-identities” (Vieira 2016, p. 292). The leitmotif of adapting to changing circumstances is reflected in both the EU and NATO’s notable emphases on resilience – which, I argue, could be regarded as an institutional alias for their positive sense of self, and by consequence a functional equivalent of these actors’ OS. Rendered as “the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crisis” (Wagner and Anholt 2016, p. 414), “resilience” manifests a claim on a sense of institutional self-worth and relevance amidst deep uncertainty. Invoking “resilience” appears emphatically as an anxiety management rather than avoidance exercise, at relatively low ontological costs involved for the actors concerned. Resilience is thus conceptually linked, yet not synonymous with OS: it functions as an imperfect solution to the perennial ontological insecurity problem – for OS remains always to be measured in degrees, rather than being categorically achievable in practice. As a notoriously flexible notion, politically convenient and intellectually perplexing in equal doses, resilience refers to “the process of seeking to maintain the status quo in the face of shocks, but it also refers [to] the idea of transforming a referent object” (Bourbeau and Ryan 2018, p. 223).

Adaptability, or the ability to cope with change, has been the key trope in NATO’s discursive self-presentation throughout the post-Cold War era (Barany and Rauchhaus 2011). Likewise, the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy (2016) demonstrates the Union’s shift in emphasising “resilience” over more progressive foreign policy goals, as reflected in the earlier, 2003 EU Security Strategy (Mälksoo 2016, Wagner and Anholt 2016, Juncos 2017). NATO and the EU’s institutional emphasis on resilience captures the paradoxical dynamic of the “strategy of doing” in their OS maximisation attempts, combining a continuous struggle to manage emergent change by routinised practices, yet also demonstrating ability to undertake action to tackle transformative change (see Flockhart 2016, p. 816). For what it is worth, “resilience” functions as a symbolic codename for the EU and NATO’s institutional responses to the deeply unsettling ontological insecurity condition evoked by hybrid threats/warfare. It captures the necessarily “hybrid” defence to effectively counter the menace in question, including such non-traditional issues as social and political cohesion, vigilance about the funding sources of domestic political parties, and legitimate and effective governance in its spectrum of security (Galeotti 2015, 2016a). Countering hybrid threats by propping the EU and NATO’s resilience in various areas (ranging from critical infrastructure, energy and cyber security to transport, financial system and society as a whole) enables a host of claims on the pertinent polities’ viability, ability to adjust to the quickly changing demands of the modern world, ownership of the contemporary security scene, and last but not least a workable partnership between the two organisations. Understood “as a preventive and deterrent action to solidify societies and avoid escalation of crises both within and outside the EU” (European Commission 2017), resilience, and the calls to strengthen it, put the main responsibility to the respective member states and their populace, but notably also partner countries in neighbourhood regions (European Commission and High Representative 2017). The vernacular targets of hybrid threats thus become the main stakeholders in the OS management pursuits of these Western organisations, effectively enabling the EU and NATO’s evasion of responsibility under the banner of sought OS provision.

### Link---Hybrid War---AT: Offense

#### Hybrid war is descriptively false---information warfare and cyberwar have no tangible effects.

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The Emergence of the Hybrid War Thesis

Hybrid war and hybrid warfare represent the latest manifestation of the Western need to (re)conceptualise and (re)define the post-Cold War international security logic and associated rules according to which states use military force— and other elements of statecraft—in the international system. Hybrid warfare can also be conceptualised as the latest Western strategic discourse, which is supposed to explain away the international security problems that Western states have faced during the last several years, and which have been left unexplained by the other Western strategic discourses on globalization, new wars, the RMA, expeditionary military (crisis management) operations, and the GWOT.

In a way, hybrid warfare has become the latest Western strategic buzzword, which is facilitating a deeper understanding of the apparently new elements of the chaotic and unpredictable contemporary international security arena. From this perspective, hybrid warfare is assisting in explaining away the surprise that Russia’s traditional great-power policies and actions in Ukraine since early 2014 (and in Syria since autumn 2015) have caused amongst Western statesmen and strategic analysts.

Gen Philip Breedlove, the commander of the United States European Command and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, noted in January 2016 that for 20 years, US military decisions were guided by the effort to make Russia a partner. In General Breedlove’s words, the West has “hugged the bear”—that is, Russia— for 20 years, but after Georgia (2008), Crimea (2014), Donbass (2014-) and Syria (2015-), this has to change.30 Looking back some 20 years, the efforts to redefine rules of the international security game on Western standards have now become contested by Russia.

Within the Western strategic community, the hybrid warfare thesis has been advocated to depict the new reality of contemporary warfare. The concept itself is not a totally new one. It has matured over several years, focusing first on the mixing of regular and irregular forces and tactics with terrorism and revolutionary technologies to negate the military superiority of the West in general—and the United States in particular. It is noteworthy that this maturation of the hybrid warfare thesis took place in an era when the West was overtly preoccupied with asymmetric conflicts or irregular forms of warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq. It was during these years—more than a decade—that many believed that the “old” statebased big wars were a thing of the past and that the future will be marked with wars similar to those that the United States and its NATO allies witnessed in Iraq and Afghanistan.31 These wars showcased the deficiency of the high-tech RMA thesis and the ineffectiveness of the global-level militarized GWOT as a new security approach. As Mattis and Hoffman have argued,

[t]he kinds of war we will face in the future cannot be won by focusing on technology; they will be won by preparing our people for what General Charles Krulak, the former Marine commandant, used to call the Three Block War. … We are extending the concept a bit, and beginning to talk about adding a new dimension. … The Four Block War adds a new but very relevant dimension to situations like the counterinsurgency in Iraq.32

The so-called “green men” became the symbol of the Western discourse on hybrid warfare in early 2014, when Russia invaded the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine. As the hybrid warfare narrative goes, these unidentified green men without insignias—which in fact consisted of hundreds of armed uniformed soldiers— were the reason Russia was so successful in taking Crimea. This narrative overlooks the fact that the government in Kiev—and people around the Crimean peninsula—were very well informed that these so-called green men were not Ukrainian military troops. So, even if these armed Russian special operations forces soldiers were not carrying insignias, there was plenty of evidence that they were not part of the forces that were loyal to the government of Ukraine.

Thus, the decision not to stop or counterattack these invading forces—which were clearly soldiers of organized armed forces —was not based on the notion that Ukrainian authorities did not know that Crimea was being invaded. Inaction was based on the decision by the government of Ukraine not to attack these invading forces, because (1) Ukraine had no credible functioning armed forces, which could have beaten the Russian soldiers without the whole military operation turning into a bloodshed and slaughter of the Ukrainian military, and (2) the culture of corruption had degraded the fighting capability and morale of Ukraine’s armed forces, so that Russian military could take the garrisons around Crimea without any real fighting.33

The hybrid warfare narrative suggests that the use of nonconventional “green men” and the associated obfuscation of the Ukrainian situational awareness was the reason that the takeover of Crimea was so successful. This narrative turns a blind eye to the fact that Ukraine had no real usable military capability that had any chance of success against a regional great power—namely Russia. Moreover, Russia had more than 10,000 soldiers stationed within its military bases in Crimea when the “green men” suddenly appeared on the scene. At the same time, another 150,000 Russian military troops were in close proximity of Ukraine on military exercises.34 Thus, whereas some Western statesmen and strategic analysts may for a while have been confused by the true origins of the so-called “green men,” Ukrainian authorities knew that they should have been capable of mustering military operations against these invading forces, but they did not have the required military force, which could have done the trick.

Even if the proponents of the hybrid warfare narrative could agree with the analysis above, they would point out that as Western states’ situational awareness of what was going on in the Crimea was obfuscated, they lost their possibility of acting against Russia’s invasion in a timely fashion. This line of reasoning bypasses the fact that the Western states did not have the capabilities or the willingness to commit any military force against Russia’s invasion in support of Ukraine.35 The fact is that there was almost nothing that Western states could have done to halt the Russian invasion of Crimea even if they wanted to, and they did not.

The second aspect of the Western narrative on hybrid warfare waged by Russia accentuates the strategic use of nonmilitary tools. By definition, the true essence of war is related—but not limited—to the use of large-scale high-quality violence, that is, military force. Nonetheless, to analyse war without a political context and the diverse spheres of human interactions that are connected to the military sphere resonates well within the post-Cold War Western tendency to see warfare from a simplistic, mechanistic and technocratic perspective. This Western strategic myopia has evolved from the RMA thesis and the associated possibilities of waging war (operations) with a high reliance on force protection in the many wars of choice that the West has undertaken during the last two decades.36 The technocratic Western understanding of war—looking at pursuing politically defined goals with the use of large-scale violence through the prism of high-tech capabilities and force-protection possibilities—has been challenged in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya where superior Western military capability has not translated into politically defined goals during the last 15 years.

The technocratic high-tech Western focus on war has thus maturated in the past two decades. The emergence of the concept “comprehensive approach” testifies to the problems that Western states have confronted since they have gone out-of-area with the RMA approach on the use of military force. As the Alliance Joint Doctrine (2010) notes:

From a military perspective, a comprehensive approach is founded on not only a shared situational understanding, but also recognition that sometimes nonmilitary actors may support the military and conversely on other occasions the military’s role will be supporting those actors. . . The importance of including from the outset those elements – diplomatic, civil, and economic – that are to be enabled by military success must not be underestimated. Failure to do so will at best lose the strategic initiative; at worst, it will result in strategic failure. This is the basic premise of a comprehensive approach, which NATO applies to its operations.37

Thus, NATO member-states have jointly agreed upon the notion that purely military solutions to political problems are rarely possible. Strategic goals should be pursued with a mix of political, economic, cultural and in some cases also military means. This has been the essence of statecraft for centuries—or even millennia. Military analysts and strategic thinkers have understood war from a broad perspective for at least 2,500 years—since the days of Sun Tzu (or Sunzi). War has never been a “pure” military matter that is executed by military forces only. The formulation of the Comprehensive Approach within the European Union reflects the same understanding:

The EU’s Comprehensive Approach (CA) envisages the concerted use of the wide array of policies, tools and instruments at the disposal of the EU, spanning the diplomatic, security, defence, financial, trade, development cooperation and humanitarian aid fields.38

The above-mentioned definitions of the Comprehensive Approach both within the EU and NATO reflect the fact that for years Western strategic thinkers and statesmen have been painfully aware that military operations in and by themselves are not enough to produce favourable international security outcomes. Nor are purely military operations enough for the attainment on national interests in most cases. Based on the analytical similarities between the concepts of hybrid warfare and the Comprehensive Approach, it could be argued that the Comprehensive Approach has in fact been a Western hybrid warfare technique for example in Afghanistan, where military momentum and rising troop levels have not guaranteed “victory.” And as the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, has argued:

… how to deal with hybrid warfare? Hybrid is the dark reflection of our comprehensive approach. We use a combination of military and non-military means to stabilize countries. Others use it to destabilize them.39

The third argument in favour of the hybrid warfare thesis has revolved around Russia’s information warfare and its use of government controlled media houses and internet trolls (or troll armies) to change public perceptions of Russia’s actions in Ukraine. This strategic level information warfare—partly using internet trolls and partly other modern means to lie and to distort and modify the truth— has supposedly improved Russia’s possibilities at reaching its goals in Ukraine and more broadly within the international system. Through the “weaponization of information,” Russia has arguably successfully obfuscated what was going on in Crimea in March 2014 and what is currently happening in eastern Ukraine.

What the proponents of this information warfare argument often seem to neglect, however, is the fact that since the invasion of Crimea in early 2014, Russia has become a pariah state targeted with political and economic sanctions. Its proxy war in Eastern Ukraine has not gone unnoticed and the associated narrative about its noninvolvement does not resonate among Western strategic decision makers. Statesmen do not make decisions with information collected from internet discussion forums or from adversaries’ officials’ public statements. It is extremely difficult—with even the best of narratives —to create a long-standing “alternative reality” or shared understanding, which departs from preexisting conceptualisations and shared understandings, and which is contradictory to the “facts on the ground.”

It is true that today anyone can get his or her message out in some form— whether it is through conventional media sources or social media. However, it is a different thing to say that it would be easy to change preexisting narratives or to create new ones. Narratives influence how people conceptualize reality. Moreover, narratives constitute identities. Narratives are not only stories that can be made up by anyone. They are deep-seated cultural constructs through which people infer meaning about the social world. Thus, narratives are resistant to change. Changing narratives implies changes to the way people see the world and how they identify themselves. Narratives have a strong bias on status quo over change.40

When it comes to the use—or nonuse—of information, Russia was successful in its annexation of Crimea on the basis that it did not a priori reveal its intentions or methods for executing the land-grab. Russia thus departed from the postCold War Western method of publicly arguing in favour of and “selling” an upcoming military operation. However, it should be noted that even with this successful obfuscation of the situational awareness of Ukraine’s government and Western states for some hours or maybe even days, the possibilities of Ukraine’s armed forces to resist the Russian invasion were practically nonexistent. The difference in military capability between Russia and Ukraine was —and still is —so staggering.

The fourth aspect of the hybrid warfare thesis revolves around another strategic hype concept, that of cyber warfare. For many years—at least since the 2007 Estonian Bronze Warrior episode—cyber threats and cyber warfare have been proposed to fundamentally change the nature of warfare. Resonating with the logic of the RMA discourse in the 1990s and during the next decade, cyber warfare advocates and cyber threat prophets have moved to securitize the cyberspace. Waging war in cyberspace offered a way to conceptualize new vulnerabilities in Western societies and new asymmetric means of warfare that could threaten us, despite the fact that none of these cyber warfare elements had ever materialized on the “battlefield.”

So far, the things that we have witnessed have been related to denial of service attacks, infiltration of social media and e-mail accounts as well as other similar low-yield small-level incidents. Most of the reported cyber “warfare’” episodes have been criminal acts directed against individuals or enterprises. Concerning real cyber war incidents—with tangible national security effects—Libicki has argued based on his analysis on the war in Ukraine that one of the surprising features has been the lack of cyber war almost completely.

For the last twenty years, with the advent of serious thinking about “cyber war,” most analysts—and even the more skeptical thinkers—have been convinced that all future kinetic wars between modern countries would have a clear cyber component. However, the current Russo-Ukrainian conflict is challenging this widely held notion. . . . The most notable thing about the war in Ukraine, however, is the near-complete absence of any perceptible cyber war.41

The absence of cyber warfare in the hard core of security and defence issues so far does not mean that cyber threats are irrelevant to states at the strategic level. Needless to say, our ever increasing dependence and reliance on networked information and services make managing the cyber domain critical. Thus, it is noteworthy that so far the threats and possibilities of cyber warfare have been inflated and are closer to science-fiction than real life.

#### Conceptual stretching makes hybrid warfare ambiguous and meaningless. That turns case and implicates the West’s defense policy.

Tarik Solmaz 22, PhD candidate at the University of Exeter writing a PhD thesis on hybrid warfare at the Strategy and Security Institute, 2-7-2022, “‘Hybrid warfare’: A dramatic example of conceptual stretching,” National security and the future, Vol. 23, Issue 1, pp. 89-102, <https://hrcak.srce.hr/272057>

Introduction

Hybrid warfare is one of the most common terms used to describe present-day warfare. Nevertheless, it is still quite contested. There is no commonly accepted definition of hybrid warfare. Furthermore, the definitions regarding the hybrid model of warfare considerably differ from each other. For this reason, hybrid warfare has been severely criticized by many security experts as being a catch-all concept (see, e.g., Van Puyvelde 2015, Charap 2015, 51; Kofman and Rojansky 2015; Jordan 2017; Caliskan and Cramers 2018, 2).

The primary objective of this article is to analyse why the concept of hybrid warfare is so contested in the way it has so far been conceptualised by international security scholars and practitioners. In addition, this article will briefly discuss possible implications of the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding hybrid warfare for the West’s defence policy.

This article argues that the main reason why the explanatory value of the concept of hybrid warfare diminishes is that it has been taken out of its original context over time. Hence, conceptual links between the so-called examples/case studies of ‘hybrid warfare’ seem quite shaky. The evolution of the concept of hybrid warfare quite fit Giovanni Sartori’s notion of conceptual stretching. Before proceeding to analyse to what extent the concept of hybrid warfare has been stretched, let us take a brief look at the conceptual stretching.

What is Conceptual Stretching?

The term conceptual stretching first appeared in Sartori’s work Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics in 1970. According to Sartori (1970, 1034), “the wider the world under investigation, the more we need conceptual tools that are able to travel.” That is, Sartori argues that scholars require to apply existing concepts to new cases to make worldwide and cross-area comparisons. Nevertheless, Sartori (1970, 1034) argues, when concepts travel, they usually are stretched. This is because the application of concepts to new cases adds new dimensions to the original meaning of the concept. Sartori named this problem conceptual stretching. For Sartori (1970, 1035), the natural outcome of conceptual stretching is that concepts come to lose some of their precision.

Sartori’s notion of conceptual stretching has gained significant traction in social sciences. Synthesising Sartori’s ideas, Collier and Mahon (1993, 845) have characterised conceptual stretching as “the distortion that occurs when a concept does not fit the new cases.” Carlsson (2017, 148) describes conceptual stretching as “using valuable concepts with clear meaning to refer to inapplicable phenomena.” Mitchell (2005, 42) argues that “conceptual stretching results from taking a set of concepts and applying them to new cases when these new cases are not comparable to the original set.” According to Marsteintredet and Malamud (2020, 1024), “falling into the trap of conceptual stretching means identifying two different phenomena by the same name.”

So far, political scientists have mentioned a wide range of concepts subjected to conceptual stretching including democracy, deliberation, coup, clientelism, globalisation, populism, ideology, and capitalism (see e.g., Collier and Mahon 1993; Hilgers 2011; Regan 2017; Marsteintredet and Malamud 2020; Steiner 2008). This article argues that the evolution of hybrid warfare can be considered as one of the clear-cut examples of conceptual stretching too. In that sense, the next section will reveal how and in what ways the concept of hybrid warfare has been stretched so far.

Stretching Hybrid Warfare

Hybrid warfare has been included in the West’s strategic lexicon as a battlefield-oriented concept. Generally speaking, the initial proponents of the concept of hybrid warfare have used it to describe a type of warfare that combine regular and irregular military forces.1 In other words, according to the originators of the concept, hybrid warfare is a form of warfare that is neither purely conventional nor purely irregular. For example, in British Counterinsurgency in the Post-imperial Era, Mockaitis (1995, 16) stated that the Indonesian Confrontation “was a hybrid war, combining low intensity conventional engagements with insurgency.” Subsequently, in 1998, Robert G. Walker revitalised the term hybrid warfare in his master’s thesis titled SPEC FI: the United States Marine Corps and Special Operations. According to Walker (1998, 4), “hybrid warfare is that which lies in the interstices between special and conventional warfare.” Thereafter, in 2002, the term hybrid warfare reappeared again in William J. Nemeth’s master’s thesis, Future War, and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare. In his thesis, Nemeth (2002, 54) argued that “[w]hile not true guerrillas [Chechen fighters] also cannot be accurately classified as a conventional force.” In the years that followed, a few scholars such as Dupont (2003, 55), Carayannis (2003, 232) and Simpson (2005) have used the concept of hybrid warfare to refer to a type of warfare that can be classified neither purely regular nor irregular as well. Nevertheless, in the context of hybrid warfare, the academic and practical implications of these authors were relatively limited.

In the existing literature, the term hybrid warfare is often attributed to Frank G. Hoffman. This is because the term itself gained currency after Hoffman published a series of papers regarding the topic (see e.g., Hoffman 2007; Hoffman 2009a; Hoffman 2009b). In his seminal monograph, Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars, Hoffman (2007, 8) argued that the hybrid model of warfare consists of a combination of four elements: conventional capabilities, irregular tactics, terrorism, and organised crime. Hoffman (2007, 36) argued that Hezbollah’s way of warfare employed against Israel Defence Forces during the Second Lebanon War represents a pre -eminent example of the hybrid model of warfare. In addition, Hoffman has also argued that hybrid warfare can be conducted by state actors. In this sense, Hoffman (2007, 28) asserts that “states can shift their conventional units to irregular formations and adopt new tactics, as Iraq’s Fedayeen did in 2003.” So, the concept of hybrid warfare, as characterised by Hoffman, implies irregular fighters with advanced conventional weapons and state actors who adopt non -traditional tactics.

In one respect, Hoffman’s conceptualising of hybrid warfare resembles that of his predecessors. This is because both the aforementioned authors and Hoffman concentrate on a mode of warfare in which regular and irregular forces are of use. As such, the idea of hybrid warfare, as characterised by the originators, mainly entails the employment of overt military. Nevertheless, unlike his predecessors, Hoffman specifically focuses on the blurring of the lines between conventional and irregular warfare in the same battlespace. In the words of Hoffman (2007, 8):

At the strategic level, many wars have had regular and irregular components. However, in most conflicts, these components occurred in different theaters or in distinctly different formations. In Hybrid Wars, these forces become blurred into the same force in the same battlespace.

Subsequently, the concept of hybrid warfare has gained significant traction, particularly in the US military circles. In 2010, the Training Circular of the US Department of the Army (2010, 1 -1) codified a hybrid threat as “the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, and/or criminal elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects.” Likewise, in 2011, the US Joint Forces Command defined a hybrid threat as "[a]ny adversary that simultaneously and adaptively employs a tailored mix of conventional, irregular, terrorism and criminal means or activities in the operational battle space” (Fleming 2011, 2). Apparently, these definitions reflect Frank Hoffman’s understanding of hybrid warfare to a large extent. That is to say, the US military has considered hybrid warfare as a fusion of regular and irregular modes of warfare in the same battlefield.

Although various alternative definitions of hybrid warfare have been produced during this period (see, e.g., Bond 2007; McCuen 2008; Glenn 2009, NATO 2010; Burbridge 2013), until 2014, the concept of hybrid warfare has mostly been understood as a form of warfare in which regular and irregular elements are used in a highly coordinated way. However, the connotations of the concept of hybrid warfare were radically changed after Russian intervention in Ukraine. This is because the Russian activities in Ukraine dubbed hybrid warfare did not quite fit any of the preceding conceptualisations of hybrid warfare.

Briefly speaking, Russia attained its political goals in Ukraine by employing non -conventional means and techniques such as conducting covert operations, using surrogate forces, carrying out cyber -attacks and mounting misinformation campaigns without waging formally declared war. In this respect, the Russian government has consistently denied its active military involvement in Ukraine despite evidence saying otherwise. Accordingly, after Russian intervention in Ukraine, non -kinetic methods and techniques came to the fore in the definitions of hybrid warfare. Moreover, military aspects of hybrid warfare have generally been associated with covert and/or indirect actions.

For example, NATO’s (n.d) website currently declares that:

Hybrid 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 sow doubt in the minds of target populations. They aim to destabilise and undermine societies.

Like NATO, the European Union have conceptualised hybrid warfare as a way of achieving political goals by using a fusion of kinetic and non -kinetic tools while remaining below the threshold of formally declared war (European Commission 2016). Clearly, these definitions of hybrid warfare give particular importance to covertness and non-attributable methods and thus consider hybrid attacks as activities remaining below the threshold of war. And admittedly, this conceptualisation of hybrid warfare differs from the previous, battlefield-centric understanding of hybrid warfare.

Furthermore, in the years that followed, Western politicians, authors, and media have continued to apply the concept of hybrid warfare to the new cases. More importantly, although, after 2014, the construct of hybrid warfare is mostly defined as the combination of military and non -military tools, the term has also been used to refer to non -violent disruptive actions. For example, former US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson stated that Russia’s alleged meddling 2016 US presidential election is an act of hybrid warfare (EURACTIV 2017). Likewise, the EU has accused Belarus of conducting hybrid warfare by encouraging migrants to cross into Europe through its borders (BBC 2021). A Der Spiegel (2016) article has declared that “Putin wages hybrid war on Germany and West,” but, indeed, the article was almost entirely about black propaganda and influence operations allegedly conducted by Russia. Labelling these non -violent subversive activities as hybrid warfare obviously represents a significant departure from previous approaches to the hybrid model of warfare. This article argues that this departure represents Sartori’s notion of conceptual stretching to a notable extent.

Consequently, as a travelling concept, hybrid warfare has constantly been applied to new cases. Undeniably, the application of the concept of hybrid warfare to the new cases that lack features of the concept has broadened the meaning of hybrid warfare. Currently, the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding the concept reduces its explanatory power. This could also lead to serious implications for the West’s defence planning. Hence, in the next section, we will briefly discuss the potential implications of such poor definitional/conceptual clarity.

Implications for the West’s Defence Policy

As Wither (2016, 74) has underlined, “defining hybrid warfare is not just an academic exercise”. This is because, as emphasised in the previous section, Western states currently refer to hybrid threats in their strategy and policy documents. Likewise, Western organisations such as NATO and the European Union use the concept of hybrid warfare to imply contemporary security threats. Hence, the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding hybrid warfare may lead to serious consequences.

The most crucial consequence of this conceptual ambiguity is that states cannot develop an effective strategy to deal with what it deems as ‘hybrid threats. Logically, it is not possible to develop an efficient defence strategy against a threat that is not exactly identified in its scope and features.

To provide a better understanding of this situation, it is useful to make an analogy between terrorism and hybrid warfare. Terrorism is undoubtedly one of the greatest security threats to peace. However, it still does not have a universally agreed definition. The lack of consensus on the definition of terrorism creates confusion about which organization should be labelled a terrorist organisation. This obscurity about the definition of terrorism has been considered to be the most fundamental cause of the difficulty faced in the fight against terrorism. The concept of hybrid warfare seems to be suffering the same fate. Alongside the poor understanding of such a phenomenon, the implications of the conceptual ambiguity can be observed both in theory and in practice. In this regard, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that Western states have so far had a poor record in negating hybrid threats when we think of the U.S/Europe with China, the Ukraine/NATO vis-à-vis Russia and the West and allies vis-à-vis ISIS. Therefore, eliminating such a conceptual haziness should be prioritised by Western policymakers and defence intellectuals.

Conclusion

Hybrid warfare has become a buzzword among Western defence intellectuals and practitioners over the last decade-plus. However, as noted throughout the paper, there is no common definition of hybrid warfare. Moreover, there is even no consensus about the key elements of the hybrid model of warfare. This is because, this article argues, hybrid warfare has constantly been subjected to conceptual stretching.

Initially, hybrid warfare has been incorporated into the West's strategic lexicon as a battlefield-centric concept. Nevertheless, after Russian intervention in Ukraine, the connotations of the concept of hybrid warfare remarkably changed. Since then, the concept has often been described as a way of achieving political goals by using a mix of kinetic and non-kinetic methods while remaining below the threshold of the outright act of war. On top of that, over the last few years, the concept of hybrid warfare has also been used to just refer to non-kinetic destabilising activities. Consequently, the significant differences between examples/case studies have made hybrid warfare a rather vague and ambiguous concept.

Today, Western democracies are facing a wide range of complex security threats. Hence, having clear and welldefined paradigms regarding these threats is of significant importance. Currently, hybrid warfare is one of the most common terms used to describe contemporary threats. However, this usage is not built on a common understanding of what hybrid warfare entails. Although Western states and institutions agree that they need to be prepared against hybrid threats, they conceptualise hybrid warfare in different ways. For this reason, currently, the concept of hybrid warfare obscure the issues rather than clarify them. Hence, eliminating the conceptual vagueness regarding hybrid warfare needs to be prioritised in the West’s security agenda.

### Link---Information War

#### Information War Link---it’s a prime example of securitization, and it’s ineffective since it targets particular countries instead of as a universal problem.

Akin Unver and Ahmet Kurnaz 22, 02/21/2022, Akin Unver is Associate Professor at Ozyegin University in the Department of International Relations and Ahmet Kurnaz is “Securitization of Disinformation in NATO Lexicon: A Computational Text Analysis,” Social Science Research Network, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=4040148

1 Introduction

Over the last few years, disinformation, information warfare and fake news have become important strategic and political concepts in international relations(Cour la, 2020; Lanoszka, 2019). Although these terms aren’t new and are as old as the term ‘propaganda’, their mainstream use within the context of digital communication skyrocketed after the 2016 US elections (Grinberg et al., 2019). However even before that, these terms had begun to enter into the foreign policy discourse of NATO countries following the 2014 Russian military operations in Ukraine. Prior to the annexation of Crimea, Russia had already designated information warfare as part of its 2010 Military Doctrine, which was updated again 2014 with a special emphasis on digital communication (Renz, 2014). A year prior, the importance of the digital space for military doctrinal considerations was outlined by General Valery Gerasimov - Russian Chief of the General Staff. In his 2013 article titled ‘The Value of Science is in the Foresight’, Gerasimov wrote: “The very ‘rules of war’ have changed. The role of nonmilitary 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.” (Galeotti, 2019) These three texts are generally accepted as the doctrinal basis of modern Russian information operations that were demonstrated both in Ukraine in 2014, and later in Syria, after mid-2015 (Sinovets, Renz, 2015).

Since then, strategic communicative actions that are intended to influence, mislead and confuse foreign populations have assumed a central position in global debates about politics and foreign policy. Given the impact of such actions on elections, polarization and crisis management, it was natural for the rhetoric about these actions to assume such a central position(Bradshaw, Howard, 2018). However, over time, popular buzzwords like ‘disinformation/misinformation’, ‘fake news’, and ‘information operations’ have proliferated in global political mainstream discourse and assumed an accusatory nature worldwide as more leaders, diplomats, and politicians have begun using them to discredit and delegitimize their political opponents. This dynamic was later conceptualized as ‘discursive deflection’ (Ross, Rivers, 2018; Smith, 2019) and became acutely visible in the foreign policy domain, as more countries have begun securitizing the concepts ‘fake news’, ‘disinformation’, and ‘information warfare’ to similarly discredit, and delegitimize rival countries(Baum, Potter, 2019). Broadly speaking, ‘discursive-deflection’ is the strategy of discrediting competitors and rivals by portraying oneself as the sole source of truth. While the domestic political use of these terms is well-studied, we are still somewhat in the dark with regard to why countries choose to securitize these terms and what happens in their interactions with other countries when they do so.

The foreign policy use of such terms predates the 2016 US elections and proliferated after the Russian military involvement in Crimea and Donbas (Khaldarova, Pantti, 2016). The primary reason for this contextual proliferation was the Russian decision to deny the initial stages of its involvement in Ukraine and its broader strategy of distracting and dividing Western attention over Russian military operations (Mejias, Vokuev, 2017). There is still a debate over whether it was really Russian information operations that had derailed NATO response in Ukraine, or if disinformation discourses are employed in order to shift the blame over to Russia at a time when NATO was already divided over its commitment to Ukraine (Lysenko, Brooks, 2018). While there is robust evidence of Russian information operations in Ukraine and its role in spreading disinformation in NATO countries, sustained NATO apathy towards rising Russian military influence in the Black Sea after 2014 and Syria after 2015 support the latter claim.

Critics of Western disinformation discourses for example, argue that such discourses have turned into ‘floating (or empty) signifiers’, that have no specific or agreed-upon meaning (Farkas, Schou, 2018). In that vein, blaming others for engaging in disinformation often distracts attention away from a mistake or failed policy enacted by the blamer (Monsees, 2020). In this case, critics argue that Western discourses on disinformation are intended to distract attention away from NATO or EU divisions, or more domesticlevel polarization dynamics, by creating a unique empty signifier (disinformation) that is employed as a rallying rhetoric that bolsters the significance of external threats (Mas-Manchón et al., 2021). This way, disinformation and its associated terms like misinformation, fake news and information war get securitized, receiving disproportionate levels of attention in the policy domain. In this context, disinformation and its associated terms are used to exaggerate an existing threat and create a rallying discourse that would channel the attention of the divided Western nations away from their internal disagreements, and towards an inflated external threat. Some scholars go even further, arguing that disinformation is being securitized in the West (especially in NATO) to the extent the ‘war on terror’ was securitized through the 2000s (Lanoszka, 2019). In this line, disinformation is alleged to have become a new strategic glue that would help Western nations pool in their increasingly diverging interests and resources into a common cause (Baumann, 2020).

Securitization of disinformation in domestic politics is relatively well-studied (Freelon, Wells, 2020; Neo, 2021). Although these terms have entered into mainstream debate after the 2016 US elections, former President Donald Trump too, had securitized fake news to delegitimize his opponents by constructing rival disinformation as a national security problem, indirectly attributable to China (Polletta, Callahan, 2019). Following the tornado of accusations in the US, political actors in Britain, France, Italy, South Africa, Kenya and others have begun blaming each other for engaging in organized disinformation (Maweu, 2019; Saurwein, Spencer-Smith, 2020). Even in Sweden, there is empirical evidence that suggests accusing journalists of spreading fake news results in self-censorship of such outlets (Bennett, Livingston, 2018). There are further cases of evidence supporting the claim that elite-level discourses on disinformation have a direct effect on how the wider society perceives information and facts in general, creating a measurable effect on public trust towards such facts and information (Van Duyn, Collier, 2019). In Singapore for example, delegitimizing rival parties and news outlets through disinformation discourse is considered ‘acceptable’, as part of the state’s duty to discipline the opposition and its political actors (Tan, 2020). Similar trends emerging in democracies and authoritarian countries alike, such as in Austria, Australia, Poland, Russia, and South Africa, demonstrate the universality of instrumentalizing disinformation discourse as a political delegitimization tactic (Kurowska, Reshetnikov, 2018; Tandoc et al., 2018).

While a robust scholarship is emerging on the domestic political uses of disinformation discourse, there has so far been no longitudinal, large-N study that explored how such constructions emerge in international politics. Furthermore, there has so far been no exploration of how such discourses evolve over time and under what contexts in foreign affairs. We know that disinformation and fake news are important issues in world politics and that they are frequently used to bring an issue to public attention, but we are more in the dark over the contextual and temporal nuances that drive how these concepts are discursively constructed in foreign policy discourse.

This study aims to provide an early addition to the emerging literature on foreign policy uses of disinformation discourses by focusing on how the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has used them in its documents and social media posts. It does so by studying 238,452 tweets from official NATO and affiliated accounts, and more than 2,000 NATO texts, news, statements, and publications using computational methods since January 2014 and presents an unsupervised structural topic model (stm) analysis to explore the main thematic and discursive contexts of these texts. Ultimately, we hope to trigger a wider debate on the securitization of disinformation and fake news in foreign policy, and the greater explanatory value of computational methods in studying large-N text data in studying such securitization strategies.

2 Securitizing Disinformation

Over the last few years, defining what misleading content is and how to measure the legitimacy of its dissemination has been at the forefront of journalistic, political and scientific debate (Tandoc et al., 2018). Even before its proliferation in 2016, disinformation was a widely-used term in the mainstream discourse, co-existing with other terms such as infoglut, or information overload (Andrejevic, 2013). Although at first disinformation and misinformation were terms used interchangeably, today, disinformation refers to the deliberate dissemination of false information with the intention to mislead and confuse its audiences. Misinformation, on the other hand, strictly defines unintended diffusion of false information by mistake, without malintent. There are also bridge terms such as ‘malinformation’ that is factually accurate but is deployed to harm and damage an individual or an entity, or the concept of ‘problematic information’ as defined by Caroline Jack (Jack, 2017; Morgan, 2018). Although it is not directly mentioned, all of these concepts refer to the digital space, where information manipulation is disseminated faster and wider on social media and digital communication technologies compared to more media forms of media.

As terms ‘disinformation/misinformation’, ‘fake news’, ‘information operation’, and ‘hybrid war’ are often used interchangeably in political discourse, there are no clear-cut differences in the strategic topic of each word choice (Guess, Lyons, 2020). Politicians and leaders can often use these terms as a bag of buzzwords, without a clear operational definition of what each of them precisely means. Each of these buzzwords generate roughly the same effect on the consumers of such messages, which is the delegitimization of their target (Tucker et al., 2018). Especially problematic is the fact that once the discourse on disinformation is weaponized to delegitimize rivals, there is very little such rivals can do to defend themselves. Given the significant political charge of these terms, individuals or institutions that are alleged to be engaging in disinformation-related activities often have to enter into a fruitless spar of words to challenge such allegations, which usually leads to further controversy. This renders the accuser - or the side that securitizes disinformation - more advantageous compared to the accused, generating a dynamic similar to the ‘attacker’s advantage’ in cyber security where the defender is continuously blindsided (Tong et al., 2020).

Therefore, the securitization of disinformation - that is, discursively constructing disinformation as a security concern - is becoming almost as controversial as disinformation itself, and can often be deployed to muddle the waters of a healthy debate. Its problem lies within its success; namely how successfully disinformation gets securitized and rallies policy resources around itself. This fits into Buzan et. al. criteria for a ‘successful speech-act’, which takes places in a medium most appropriate for its dissemination and have a clear, mobilizable referent object (i.e. ‘those that spread disinformation’) (Buzan et al., 1998). By securitizing disinformation in the medium that is most conducive for its dissemination (social media and Internet), speakers get a chance to use the speed and volume advantage of digital communication technologies against their opponents. Also, such discursive constructions must be sedimented (1) rhetorically: have a clear argumentative function, (2) discursively: contain clear power and hegemonic relations within, (3) culturally: refer to a well-known case or instance, and (4) institutionally: in a way that mobilizes policy resources (Williams, 2003).

Yet for the Copenhagen school, not all speech acts constitute securitization. Securitization is a very particular discursive construct that designates a specific existential threat that requires the mobilization of uncommon resources and measures that go beyond the norms of institutional and political responses (Knudsen, 2001). In many cases, securitization happens to trigger and facilitate these institutional changes by ‘shocking’ power brokers and bureaucracies into action either through internal bureaucratic peer pressure, or through public opinion pressure (audience costs). As such, disinformation has been lifted ‘above politics’ in Western rhetoric as a peculiar threat that requires a sidelining of daily political squabbles, mobilizing unique resources and addressing it in unity that would otherwise cannot materialize (Buzan, Wæver, 2009). Ultimately the discursive constructions of disinformation do constitute acute cases of securitization as they generate amity-enmity relations among countries that adopt this discursive strategy, versus those that do not (Buzan, Wæver, 2009).

Social media offers a unique challenge for the study of securitization. Traditionally, such securitizing statements are extracted from lengthy speeches and texts through discourse analysis. However, the advent of faster and higher-volume digital communication technologies have led to a shift of state and elite discourses from older to newer media systems (Balzacq et al., 2016). To that end neither Facebook, nor Twitter or Instagram provides contiguous discursive framing opportunities for researchers to study securitization dynamics due to their word limits (Bouvier, Machin, 2018). Furthermore, since elite and state-level discourses on social media are often written by assistants, communications representatives or PR firms, they don’t constitute ‘performative actions’ that are the cornerstone of securitization (Lipizzi et al., 2016). This generates a significant ‘context gap’, where researchers may not fully understand the wider thematic and lexical ecosystem that such social media posts may inhabit. Interpreting securitization in such media platforms thus necessitates more robust techniques of ‘horizon scanning’ that allows researchers to extract long-term discursive variances and contexts.

Computational text analysis methods largely deliver this horizon scanning. Where social media posts lack in word and character limits, they provide an immense volume of data that provides ample context in longitudinal analysis. By extracting large quantities of text data from social media, researchers can not only interpret the changing contours and contexts of securitization, but they can also cross-check these findings with more traditional forms of discursive construction outlets such as speeches, documents and archival

**[Omit Table 1]**

material. That is why in this study, we not only engage in a large-scale longitudinal ‘old form’ securitization analysis by focusing on NATO archives, but also add in ‘new form’ analysis by extracting a large tweet dataset of official NATO accounts.

The logic of interpreting how disinformation gets securitized through relying on NATO documents is two-fold: first, NATO has been evolving to find new raisons d’être after the end of the Cold War and sought to capitalize on the securitizations of new forms of threats, such as terrorism, cybersecurity, Syria and forced migration (Stritzel, Chang, 2015). Disinformation and information war are two of the recent additions to this threat portfolio and helps us understand how NATO’s discourses on security adapt to a new-medium threat. Second, it enables us to understand how institutional security arrangements like NATO reinvent their security identities and construct their amity-enmity relations in light of newer technologies. Since identity and action are considered closely linked in constructivism, and that they are never fixed or intrinsic but rather fluid and are constituted through social processes, studying longitudinal securitization dynamics gives us valuable insight over long-term NATO security planning (Mälksoo, 2018)

3 Methodology

Since this study is interested in the longitudinal dynamics of how disinformation and related terms were securitized, and since the volume of text that we are dealing with is quite large, we follow a computational methodology that combines social media text data extraction methods with traditional text analysis tools. In recent years social media data has grown into a useful study area for social scientists as more and more governmental documents become digitized and such governments start taking an active role on social media (DiMaggio, 2015). Although traditional forms of text analysis and discourse analysis approaches use hand coding schemes, newer methods in text mining and analysis are increasingly more preferred due to their ability to process large quantities of text data and eliminate the inter-coder reliability issues from the equation (Krippendorff, 2004). Moreover, these newer methods increase the causal robustness of text data by building inter- and intra-text causal inferences, strengthening the explanatory power of words as dependent or independent variables.

**[Omit Table 2]**

In order to explore how NATO has securitized disinformation in recent years, we have scraped 238,452 tweets from NATO and official affiliated accounts from January 2014 to February 2021 and extracted more than 2000 speeches, press releases, reviews, official texts, archival documents and publications from the NATO e-library (?). Out of this sample, we have extracted documents and content that contained the keywords ‘disinformation’, ‘misinformation’, ‘fake news’, ‘propaganda’, ‘hybrid warfare’ and ‘information warfare’, and logged the number of their occurrences within these texts by date. Since this study doesn’t focus on the semantic differences between these keywords and consider them as different references to disinformation as a discursive strategy, we code and merge them singularly as variable ‘disinfo’. Our preliminary analysis shows that NATO has used these keywords most frequently in tweets, followed by speeches, reviews and publications. However, when analyzed proportionally, NATO publications focus on disinformation most frequently (75% of all documents), followed by tweets (40%), reviews (36.97%) and official texts (21.05%).

In this study, we employ structural topic modeling (STM) - a text analysis approach that finds ‘topics’ in an unstructured corpus based on covariate information (Roberts et al., 2019). It follows a statistical logic that measures co-occurrence likelihoods of keywords and terms that are more likely to appear with each other and derives topical meanings out of those likelihoods. Topic modeling is increasingly used in the study of large volumes of text in social sciences such as large archival documents, or social media text datasets by producing “each word on the basis of some number of preceding words or word classes,” and “generate[ing] words based on latent topic variables inferred from word correlations independent of the order in which the words appear” (Wallach, 2006). In recent years topic modeling has become a widely-used method to study large Twitter datasets, and political discussions that happen on other social media platforms (Giles, 2012; Hong, Davison, 2010; Liang, Fu, 2015).

A longitudinal analysis of the specific keywords sorted by document type reveals a clear difference in word choices between different NATO documents. In NATO Basic Texts, the most-preferred reference keyword is ‘hybrid warfare’, whereas in press releases reliance on the word ‘misinformation’ gradually evolves into ‘disinformation’ by 2018. NATO reviews also largely prefer ‘misinformation’, but NATO speeches and tweets are more diverse with a heavier use of the term ‘propaganda’, ‘disinformation’ and ‘fake news’. This difference is an interesting demonstration how elastic these terms are and how different institutional cultures and outlets can prefer one over the other in their communication strategies.

**[Omit Figure 1]**

The difference between NATO official texts and tweets are particularly interesting. Although NATO official texts shift from a ‘hybrid war’ focused discourse to ‘disinformation’ focused discourse by 2018, the reliance on ‘disinformation’ discourse in tweets is more striking. By late-2016 (US elections) ‘disinformation’ becomes a clear discursive choice in NATO tweets, skyrocketing in much of 2020, due to COVID and vaccinerelated securitization discourses globally. This could be interpreted as the discursive anchoring capacity of the United States for NATO, as the constructions of securitization in American political culture affects the wider institutional discourse of NATO. Perhaps as the clearest sign of the temporal variations in word choice shifts, NATO’s Twitter accounts overwhelmingly use ‘disinformation’, ‘information warfare’, and ‘misinformation words in comparison to its official texts and statements, that rely on ‘cyber war’ and ‘hybrid war’. As for NATO and affiliated accounts that use the keyword ‘disinformation’, three clear accounts stand out. These are @STRATCOMCOE (NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence), @NATOmoscow (NATO Information Office Moscow), @NATOBrazeB (NATO Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy), and @NATOpress (Official Twitter account of the @NATO Spokesperson). As for which NATO country

**[Omit Figure 2]**

**[Omit Figure 3]**

representations use this word the most, Latvia (@LV\_NATO), Lithuania (@LitdelNATO), United States (@USNATO), Ukraine (@NATOinUkraine) and Germany (@GermanyNATO) stand out the most.

Our ‘keyness measures’ (Marchi, Taylor, 2018) (two-by-two frequencies of words within a sample) indicate that while NATO’s official documents are more general with regard to its strategic word choices, NATO’s tweets are overwhelmingly focused on ‘disinformation’, ‘propaganda’ and ‘fake news’ terms within the context of Russia (‘pro-Kremlin’, ‘Russian’ and ‘Kremlin’ designations).

4 Unsupervised Structural Topic Model Results

For the structural topic models, we used the stm package for R, developed by Molly Roberts, Brandon Stewart and Dustin Tingley (Roberts et al., 2019). Stm was developed as part of its developers quest to come up with a methodological tool that would allow them to generate causal inferences from text data. By measuring document-level covariate measures, it introduces a new form of qualitative inference and within

**[Omit Table 3]**

**[Omit Figure 4]**

**[Omit Figure 5]**

text estimation algorithms for better topic correlations. This ultimately helps us generate more accurate topic associations and themes within complex, lengthy documents.

Our unsupervised machine learning tests within NATO documents and tweets containing disinformationrelated trigger words yielded 50 topic models with an optimum combination of semantic coherence and heldout values. Out of these 50 models, our algorithm found that 10 of them had greater higher semantic salience and thus, had a statistically higher likelihood of forming a coherent ‘topic’. Since not all word combination likelihoods imply a theme, K-means clustering is required to measure co-occurrence likelihood of words that make of a topic, in relation to the statistical significance of other topics (Roberts et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2011). These are the topics classified and numbered by our stm algorithm as 1, 4, 7, 9, 14, 16, 23, 35, 39, 47

Topic 1 demonstrates the over-reliance on the term ‘disinformation’ as the dominant discursive anchor for NATO documents, mostly correlating with keywords associated with its spread, the role of fact-checking and misinformation, which is a less-used term. Topic 16 demonstrates that the term ‘Russian’ is highly correlated with ‘fake’ and ‘news’ terms, within the context of info(rmation)\_war(fare), as well as ‘troll’. The second most salient model is Topic 23, which builds around the keyword ‘propaganda’. This model correlates most significantly with the n-gram clusterings: ‘strateg\_’, ‘fact’, ‘truth’ and ‘counter’, suggesting that such emphasis is generally made within the context of combating external efforts of propaganda. Third

**[Omit Figure 6]**

most salient Topic Model is 4, built around Russia, and the n-grams ‘Ukrain\_’, ‘hybrid\_war’, ‘Putin’, and ‘Moscow’. At least within the context of Russian military involvement in Crimea and Donbass, NATO has largely relied on the term ‘hybrid warfare’, instead of ‘disinformation’, or ‘misinformation’, suggesting that it doesn’t consider this military entanglement within the context of ‘disinformation’.

To understand NATO’s most active institution that deals with disinformation defense, Topic 35 is instructive. There, the keyword ‘disinformation’ correlates with STRATCOMCOE (NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia), and RigaStratCom revealing NATO’s frontier defense mechanism of choice in issues related to disinformation. This is in line with Topic 30, where geographies correlated with our ‘disinformation’ keyword cluster reveals ‘europ\_’, ‘baltic’, ‘german\_’, ‘danger’ and ‘prepar\_’, hinting at NATO’s perceived geographic vulnerability against disinformation attempts. A secondary vulnerability cluster emerges in Topic 49, where ‘lithuania’, ‘estonia’, ‘japan’, ‘poland’, and ‘baltic’ designations correlate with ‘target’ and ‘defens\_’ n-grams (Damashek, 1995) 1 . In Topic 14, we discover the emergence of COVID-related disinformation issues, although the correlated terms are not yet sufficient to infer a political trend of preference.

Longitudinal topic frequency analysis of Topic 1 shows that the keyword ‘disinformation’ indeed enters into the NATO lexicon after the Russian military involvement in Ukraine. However, we observe a clear

**[Omit Figure 7]**

difference between NATO official texts (web) that don’t prefer this term, versus NATO tweets that overwhelmingly rely on it. The peak in early 2014 is followed by a second peak after late-2016, possibly owing to the US elections, reaching its all-time peak in 2020, predictably due to COVID-related concerns. Topic 4 demonstrates how Russian involvement in Ukraine, as well as the ‘hybrid war’ narrative becomes less popular over time. Despite its significant salience in NATO tweets and a slight reference in its documents in 2014, these references largely disappear from NATO’s discursive attention zone by 2016.

Tendency to pinpoint Russia in statements containing ‘fake news’, ‘troll’ and ‘information warfare’ keywords is once again clearest in tweets compared to official statements, as seen in Topic 16. This tendency peaks once during Russian military operation in Ukraine, for a second time around the US elections in 2016, gradually disappearing from NATO’s Twitter focus gradually after 2017 with a brief third peak around the poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury, UK in March 2018. Same goes for Topic 23, which focuses on terms correlated with ‘propaganda’. It peaks with the Russian involvement in Ukraine, marking a second brief peak around the US elections in 2016 and a third peak around the Skripal poisoning incident in 2018, later disappearing from NATO lexicon. NATO’s reference to the Baltics and Germany as potential vulnerabilities against disinformation and hybrid war, Topic 30 produces a more varied picture. Here, we observe a significant and comparable activity within NATO tweets and official documents alike. Both NATO tweets and official documents follow similar curves around the same periods (Ukraine war, US elections in 2016, Skripal poisoning and COVID onset in March 2020), suggesting that such geographic vulnerabilities aren’t new, and carry on significant strategic baggage from the past. Indeed, as Topics 47 and 49 also demonstrates, concerns and vulnerabilities around Canada, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland and the Baltic states are emphasized continuously both in NATO official documents and in tweets.

To sum up, NATO’s discourse on disinformation presents a discursive continuity and is broadly in line with its securitization preferences prior to the popularization of the terms ‘fake news’ or ‘information operations’. By leveraging a buzzword that has mainstream popularity, NATO’s discursive efforts refocus the alliance’s strategic agenda back on Russia, and semantically clusters these securitization moves on existing competition areas with Moscow. Since securitization is the process by which regular events, actors and phenomena are elevated into a policy frame that requires special measures, NATO’s disinformation discourse directly fits into the theoretical spectrum. NATO’s 2018 Brussels Summit Declaration and the 2019 London Declaration both prioritized disinformation as a major, strategic-level alliance threat and combating information warfare have been integrated into NATO military exercises since 2017. NATO has been running wargames that focus on coordinated, Russian-origin disinformation campaigns against NATO battlegroups in Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland and has been investing in the establishment of new digital countermeasure labs (NATO, 2020). In other words, as a successful securitization effort, disinformation has been receiving ample attention, resources and cohesion-building initiatives within the NATO framework. As part of this strategy, NATO’s securitization efforts have a clear securitizing agent (alliance), existential threat (Russian-origin information warfare), a referent object (alliance cohesion, electoral integrity) and an audience (international public opinion), along with new doctrinal changes and investment schemees.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

Our analysis has shown that NATO has developed two disinformation-related communication strategies for two outlets: a more up-to-date and faster-developing threat discourse for its Twitter presence, and a more traditional, slow-moving threat presence visible in its official documents. This is particularly interesting and acutely visible in more 20th century military topics like command and control cohesion, missile defense, air defense architecture, naval defense, satellites and military intelligence-related topics that are more frequently mentioned in official documents, and much less referenced on Twitter. However, the overwhelming majority of disinformation, misinformation, hybrid war, information warfare and fake news-related communication topics are securitized on Twitter. This shows the emergence of two NATO discourses: one for its official documents, and one for its social media presence and messaging.

The advent of digital communication technologies and social media has been significant for the evolution of securitization. Since securitization entails production and dissemination of insecurity frames through discursive networks, a more dynamic, interconnected information ecosystem is more conducive for collective meaning-making. On social media, the formation of insecurity processes are more rapid and interactive, and are able to influence and alter traditional, boring securitizing acts of elites. To that end, media outlets like Twitter provide a more interactive and fast-paced securitizing environment where elites and non-elites can set the security agenda and mobilize masses. The most clear expression of this novel medium, as demonstrated in our results, is that NATO’s Twitter securitization efforts change much faster, and spread more widely than traditional outlets like official speeches, texts and reports.

This could be interpreted in two ways: first, that NATO may prefer securitizing disinformation exclusively on Twitter, since such threats are generally more visible and debated on social media platforms. The second interpretation is that NATO’s official statements and documents could largely be focusing on macrolevel doctrinal issues that pose a direct military security threat to its members, rather than disinformation, which is a nuisance, but poses no direct military threat. Since disinformation is being discussed in contemporary policy debates within the context of electoral integrity and social polarization, their actual military relevance may be less relevant to be taken into account in formal NATO documents. In either case, our study of the NATO lexicon demonstrated that disinformation and related terms are constructed as uniquely ‘Russian’ nuisances. This isn’t surprising since most of these terms - at least their digital interpretations - have entered the NATO lexicon after the Russian military involvement in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. However, since then, Russia remained the only country against which NATO has constructed its disinformation narratives, indicating that Russia is NATO’s sole disinformation concern. Although very recently China has emerged as a runner-up country within the context of COVID-related disinformation concerns, Russia is largely the main threat in NATO’s lexicon. This could be counterproductive to long-term NATO efforts to combat disinformation, given the global prevalence of fake news and information meddling. While Russian disinformation efforts are observably valid, cornering a universal problem like disinformation into the limited space of NATO’s interactions with a single country may lead to conceptual contraction. This in turn, may prevent NATO from mobilizing full alliance resources against disinformation, defined as a global and universal problem.

Overall, our analysis has shown that NATO still defines its security identity against Russia, and there isn’t a significant shift in NATO’s securitization dynamics since the Cold War, evidenced by our comparative analysis of older and newer NATO texts. Although Chinese disinformation attempts have also begun to enter into NATO threat language, NATO’s primary discursive security identity continues to develop against and around Russia. This is most evident in our longitudinal analysis or pre- and post-2014 documents that prioritize Russia as a threat alike, implying that it is not really disinformation or fake news agenda that is rendering Russia a threat for NATO. This suggests the hypothesis that even if technologies change, NATO Russia rivalry will remain securitized the same way. In other words, contemporary disinformation and fake news agenda is a continuation of the same NATO-Russia rivalry – at least in discursive form – through newer mediums.

### Link---Middle East

#### The aff’s frenetic obsession with stabilizing the Middle East is rooted in an unstable Western identity seeking a false sense of coherence---their impacts are political constructs that exemplify the West’s inability to recognize the Arab world as anything but violent---rejecting yes/no policy questions in favor of rethinking our understanding of the Middle East is the only way to avoid serial policy failure

Baroud 11—former prof of comm at Curtin U of Technology in Australia. (Ramzy, Arab Awakening and Western Media: Time for a New Revolutionary Discourse, 7/28/11, dissidentvoice.org/2011/07/arab-awakening-and-western-media-time-for-a-new-revolutionary-discourse/)

Western media and think-tanks have long presented a mistaken and divisive understanding of Arab – and other – societies. There is a discrepancy between the actual situation and indicators-driven understanding. Entire Arab societies are deconstructed and reduced into simple data, which is filtered, classified and juggled to fit into precise criteria and clear-cut conclusions. Public opinions and entire policies are then formed or formulated based on these conclusions.

The problem does not lie in academic practices, per se, but rather the objective-specific understanding that many in the west have towards the Middle East. Most Washington-based think tanks – regardless of their political leanings – tend to study distant societies only for the sake of producing definite answers and recommendations. However, providing an all-encompassing depiction of a society like Yemen’s – whose internal dynamics and complexity necessarily differs from any other’s in the region – would be most unhelpful for those eager to design policies and short-term strategies on the go.

Arab revolutions continue to tear down archaic beliefs and misguided understandings, challenging the wild theories around Arab peoples and their supposed wrangling between secularism and Islamism. Despite all of this, the self-seeking objectifying of Arabs continues in western media.

Under the all-inclusive title, “The Arab World: The Awakening”, an article in Economist Magazine (Feb 17) attempted to describe the upheaval currently underway throughout the Arab world. Interspersed with such predictable terms as ‘extremists’, ‘Islamists’, ‘strongmen’ and so on, the inane analysis made way for equally silly conclusions. The article, for example, suggested that the West’s decision to accommodate dictatorial regimes in the Middle East was motivated by a mix of despair and altruism: “The West has surrendered to this (Arab) despair too, assuming that only the strongmen could hold back the extremists.”

While words such ‘extremists’, ‘fundamentalists’ and ‘terrorists’ may have their own special ring to western audiences, they could well mean something entirely different – if anything at all – to Arabs. Listening to the Arab media’s coverage of ongoing revolutions, one may not even encounter any of the above terminologies. **At times,** they can be entirely irrelevant in terms of understanding the momentous happenings **underway** throughout the region**.**

The Libyan rebellion is another example to note here. Revolution and war in Libya have ignited a heated debate among Arab intellectuals, pertaining to the use of violence and foreign intervention – although barely in support of the Libyan regime. However, for the New York Times, the coverage of the story is often slated and removed from current reality in Libya. The article “Exiled Islamists Watch Rebellion Unfold at Home,” (NYT, July 18) attempted to answer a nagging question concerning the relationship between Islamists and the Libyan rebels. This question is relevant only to western governments. Although the group examined – the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group – has long been dismantled, its alleged former ties with al-Qaeda continue to concern many in the west. While for Libyans, “the men are seen not as an alien, pernicious force but as patriots,” the article claims that many in the West “are trying to assess their influence and any lingering links to Al Qaeda.”

Arab revolutions are attempting to examine larger issues that have tremendous impact on all aspects of life. They are actively confronting the suffering caused at the hands of local dictators supported by Western and other foreign governments. Western media and intellectuals, however, continue to seek only easy answers to intricate, multi-faceted questions. In doing so, they follow the path of the same superficial, stereotypical and predictable discourse. While Arab societies discuss democracy, freedom and social justice, Western writers continue to follow the imagined paths of al-Qaeda, Islamists, moderates and extremists. In all of this, they are embarking on yet another futile hunt, a hunt that will yield no concrete answers, and more misguided policies.

## Impact

### Impact---Endless War

#### Endless war

Charlotte Heath-Kelly 18, Associate Professor in Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick, Ph.D. in International Politics from Aberystwyth University, 2018, “Forgetting ISIS: enmity, drive and repetition in security discourse,” Critical Studies on Security, Vol. 6, No.1, p. 85-86

Security never seems to make any progress. Despite military investments, security reviews and ever more powerful technological surveillance, European and North American populations are continually represented as unsafe. The most powerful states in the world, enjoying historically unprecedented levels of health, prosperity and stability, are simultaneously the most hysterically possessed by security-related fears. The compulsion to experience the self as insecure, despite evidence to the contrary, is the starting point for this paper. ¶ Much has been written about political anxiety in the fields of political theory and sociology. Corey Robin has explored the developing permutations of fear in Western philosophical thought as an operational concept (Robin 2004); Frank Furedi has explored how the social alienation and declining community ties associated with contemporary neoliberalism have led to cultures of insecurity (Furedi 2002), and Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck have both written about the transformation of risk and anxiety in an age where technology produces its own, sometimes existential, dangers (Beck 1992; Giddens 1990). Fear and risk are prominent topics on sociological and philosophical landscapes.¶ Not wanting to be left behind, international relations has also produced substantial literatures on the risk discourses and anxieties which dominate contemporary political life. Much of this research was initially located within the Copenhagen School of securitisation theory, which analysed the construction of threat by political elites and the centrality of speech acts to processes of securitisation (Buzan, Wæver, and De Wilde 1998; Hansen 2012a; McDonald 2008). The functionality of securitisation is here understood in terms of identity: identifying and invoking an external threat serves to performatively constitute the nation (Jackson 2005; McCrisken 2003).¶ In the wake of securitisation theory, European international relations developed a poststructuralist critique of Beck’s ‘Risk Society’ thesis. In their rethinking of risk, Claudia Aradau and Rens Van Munster critiqued Beck’s macro-sociological assumptions that risks exist independently in the world from the governmental technologies which invoke them (Aradau and Van Munster 2007). The incalculability of contemporary risks does not make them ungovernable, as Beck suggests; rather governance structures have shifted to incorporate the unpredictability of certain dangers into precautionary risk management. Incalculability becomes the modality of security.1 Poststructuralist International Relations has found fertile terrain in the idea of risks and their governance. Pushing this research beyond its focus on the security sector, Emmy Eklundh, Andreja Zevnik and Emmanuel Pierre-Guittet have explored the logics of anxiety at play in austerity politics and security governance, and the anxious and resistant subjectivities produced therein (Eklundh, Zevnik, and Pierre-Guittet 2017).¶ But what does it mean to centralise anxiety, fear and risk in Western political and sociological thought at a time of relative geopolitical stability and wealth? In his own take on the politics of anxiety, Mark Neocleous (2000) tackled the proliferation of (in)security and risk discourse in sociology and international relations, arguing that the acceleration of (in) securitisation reflects the policing of civil society to protect bourgeois property and status. The articulation of pollution, terrorism and migration as security threats depoliticises them; it silences the social and political creation of these issues, enabling governing structures to pursue technocratic solutions which efface the real genesis of threats: capital accumulation.¶ It is important to note that the arguments made by Neocleous, poststructuralist scholars of risk and securitisation theorists share more in common than their focus on political anxiety. They all also describe ambivalence within security practices towards the threat object. While politicians promise that destroying the enemy will bring about resolution and ontological stability, IR literatures show that frames of enmity enable the pursuit of other goals: biopolitical governance, identity consolidation and the furtherance of capital accumulation. There is a gap between security and its threat object. The threat object is made hypersignificant in political discourse, but it is simultaneously treated ambivalently and can be replaced at will. New objects wait in the wings as potential vessels for enmity.

### Impact---VTL

#### No VTL under their security apparatus

Michael Dillon 96, professor of Politics and International Relations at the University of Lancaster, 1996, Politics of Security, p. 26

Everything, for example, has now become possible. But what human being seems most impelled to do with the power of its actions is to turn itself into a species; not merely an animal species, nor even a species of currency or consumption (which amount to the same thing), but a mere species of calculation. For only by reducing itself to an index of calculation does it seem capable of constructing that political arithmetic by which it can secure the security globalised Western thought insists upon, and which a world made increasingly unpredictable by the very way human being acts into it now seems to require. Yet, the very rage for calculability which securing security incites is precisely also what reduces human freedom, inducing either despair or the surrender of what is human to the de-humanising calculative logic of what seems to be necessary to secure security. I think, then, that Hannah Arendt was right when she saw late modern humankind caught in a dangerous world-destroying cleft between a belief that everything is possible and a willingness to surrender itself to so-called laws of necessity (calculability itself) which would make everything possible. That it was, in short, characterised by a combination of reckless omnipotence and reckless despair. But I also think that things have gone one stage further—the surrender to the necessity of realising everything that is possible—and that this found its paradigmatic expression, for example, in the deterrent security policies of the Cold War; where everything up to and including self-immolation not only became possible but actually necessary in the interests of (inter)national security. This logic persists in the metaphysical core of modern politics—the axioms of interState security relations, popularised, for example, through strategic discourse— even if the details have changed.

### Impact---AT: Case Outweighs

#### The traditional debate impulse to rely on body counts for impact calc is an example of our impact---it relies on the continual imagination of external threats to the social order and teaches students to be constantly searching for the best way to describe those threats, instead of examining the structural conditions that enable violence. This enables a system of governance that elides the endless war present in incarceration, global policing, and more by insisting on narrow chains of causality and the most catastrophic impacts possible

Kevin McDonald 13, Professor and Director of the Centre for Cultural Diversity and Wellbeing at Victoria University, *Our Violent World: Terrorism in Society*, 2013, pp. 1-4

Among the most significant Of these changes are transformations in forms Of social and political violence, the kinds Of violence recently described by the philosopher Charles Taylor as 'categorial', directed towards people whom the protagonists do not personally know (2011). Often such violence is contrasted to the violence that takes place within personal relationships, but as we will see as this book develops, this distinction is not as clear as it once may have been. The chapters that follow attempt to explore a con- text that has become increasingly evident, as violence that once appeared to be 'contained' by key dimensions of modern society is now much more fluid, increasingly part of the flows making up a global world (Urry 2005). But such violence is not a 'thing' or an object. It is a form of agency, an embodied relationship and human experience. As such, it is a critical lens through which to explore wider transformations of social life. On the Other hand, to separate violence from such transformations profoundly limits our capacity to understand, and respond to, one of the most urgent questions shaping the twenty-first century. ¶ The Surveillance Society ¶ Most of us are aware of changing forms or potentials of violence through the growth of security and surveillance (Crelinsten 2009). Some developments are obvious, such as airport security. Others are less so, such as passport tracking systems, internment camps, control orders and detention without trial, or erosion of the distinction between immigration policy and security policy (Connolly 2005: 54). Some receive extensive debate in the press and social media, while Other developments are less discussed. Over recent years, for example, states as different as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel and the United States have been engaged in the construction Of thousands Of kilometres Of walls along national bor- ders, a development that the political scientist Wendy Brown calls 'walling', something she contends is driven by 'waning sovereignty' (2010). Global military expenditure, which had declined in the years following the end of the Cold War in 1989, expanded rapidly over the first decade of the new century, increasing by some 49 per cent to reach US$1.53 tril- lion in 2009 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2011). New types of public surveillance involve pervasive but ambiguous categories Of 'pre-crime' as public policy seeks to identify groups and individuals 'at risk' of committing criminal acts (Zedner 2007). The changing role of the criminal justice system has become evident in the relentless increase in the number of people imprisoned in the world, a figure that reached some 10.65 million in 2009 (Walmsley 2010). ¶ Political theorists in particular have been aware of the ways these transformations 'resonate', mutually amplifying each other (Connolly 2005: 54). Brian Massumi (2007) argues that we are witnessing the emergence of a new type of governance in complex societies, one shaped by a shift from a model Of prevention, which operates in an 'objectively knowable world', to a model of pre-emption, which involves the attempt to wield power in a world based on uncertainty. Brad Evans (2010) points to the rise of 'consequentialist ethics' involved in this development, where forms of moral judgement framed in terms of 'right' and 'wrong' are becoming redefined as calculations to determine whether a situation is to be judged better or worse as a result of a course of action. These are not minor trans- formations. The OECD argues that 'security' has become a major area Of economic activity, a driver Of modern economies (OECD 2004), while the sociologist David Lyon traces the contours of a surveillance society increasingly based on digital technologies (Lyon 2004). The political philosopher William Connolly argues that this new social and political model involves an increasing mobilization of the population against 'unspecified enemies' (2005: 54). ¶ The Blurring of War and Peace ¶ One Way to think about this transformation is in terms Of a changing relationship between peace and war. The historical sociologist Charles Tilly argues that the emergence Of modern societies from the seventeenth century to the Second World War Saw violence moving in two directions: increasingly deadly inter-state confrontations and increasingly peaceful domestic societies, evident in the disarming Of populations and the rise Of peaceful forms Of protest and conflict (Tilly 2002, 2003). This constituted an increasingly clear separation between zones of war and zones of peace, a separation that for the philosopher Immanuel Kant constituted the very basis Of modern society (Kleingold 2006: ix). This account of the birth Of modernity locates violence beyond the borders of increasingly peaceful societies, and to a significant extent has established itself as a structure of thought preventing any significant exploration of the violence at the heart of modern societies, in particular the violence present in colonial expansion, or in the extent of atrocities and extreme violence undertaken by the colonizers in the process Of decolonization (Bennett 2011). Within this modern self-understanding, the capacity for extreme violence has always been associated with 'the Other with modern society, by definition, understood as being inherently peaceful. ¶ The securitization we have referred to above signals two related transformations: the separation between war and peace is becoming less and less clear, while the state's monopoly of violence is becoming less and less certain. Rather than war being an external event, the cultural geographer Nigel Thrift argues that contemporary, globalizing societies have entered an 'era of permanent and pervasive war' (2011: 11), with war no longer understood as taking place beyond borders, but across all areas of social life. This shift seems particularly evident when we 100k at urban design, where we encounter not simply the increasing integration of blast proofing and other defensive systems into buildings, but the actual militarization of urban space, evident in particular in contemporary military theory where older conceptions of 'battlefield' are giving way to new models of 'battle space' (see Graham 2012) where the space of warfare becomes 'cotermi- nus with the space of civil society itself' (Dillon and Reid 2009: 128). This pattern is evident in the extent that conceptions of urban security devel- oped in a warzone such as post-2003 Baghdad have established themselves as paradigms for policing and security in the cities Of North American and Europe (Graham 2010). ¶ War, from this perspective, rather than being an activity beyond the borders Of modern society, becomes instead a lens with which to conceive of the core organization of such societies. The rise of war as a lens to frame social life has been particularly evident in military theory. William Lind, for example, argues that the world has entered an age of 'fourth generation war', characterized by the loss Of the state's monopoly over the exercise Of War. Today states find themselves at war with non-state opponents, wars he argues that states are losing. Writing in a respected journal, Lind argues 'invasion by immigration can be at least as dangerous as invasion by a state army' (2004: 14). We do not need to embrace this type Of argument to rec- ognize that the twenty-first century has been shaped by an awareness of a new vulnerability.

#### Their framework for impact calculus is not a neutral tool---it’s a political construct inextricably linked to systems of domination that directly obfuscate the global realities of violence---critique is a prerequisite to accurately assess consequences

John Schwarzmantel 13, Democracy and Violence: a theoretical overview, in *Democracy and Violence: Global Debates and Local Challenges*, ed John Schwarzmantel, Hendrik Jan Kraetzschmar, 27-8

Ignatieff, like Walzer, is at pains to point out that the justification of necessity in the face of risk, threat and imminent danger can never dissolve or excuse the morally dubious nature of the act itself. 3 S The lesser evil approach acknowledges a tension of 'tragic dimensions', as Gross argues, between 'what is necessary' and what is right'. This tension however reveals a conceptual incoherence at the heart of the 'dirty hands' and 'lesser evil' accounts of political morality. It is difficult to fuse together the conflicting claim that we ought to do what is the wrong thing to do with the contradictory judgement that actions can be both right and wrong, and to see how this judgement could be embodied in public policy or interpreted in any politically intelligible fashion. Walzer endorses a utilitarian or consequentialist morality as necessary and right in politics. In this case, acknowledging the wrong that is done cannot have any moral significance if morality is ultimately overridden by utility considerations. Ignatieff, like Walzer, reJects what he calls 'moral perfectionism which holds that states should never have tmck with dubious moral means'. 7 However, he dis-tinguishes his position from a 'morality of consequences', and argues that some rules should never be broken. He tries to folge a middle way between the priority given to rights or to security, but he does not tell us how 'lesser evil' claims are made, and he has an unreasonable and naive faith in democratic decisionmaking procedures and safeguards to ensure that leaders do not exaggerate such claims or abuse their powels. In the context of a political environment which prioritizes security and is hostile to moderation, it is hard to see how 'lesser evil' arguments will not be used to justify overriding any rules if necessary. Significantly, arguments in favour of torturing terrorist suspects have used precisely this 'lesser evil' argument. The Bush administration constructed a necessity self-defence justification so that interrogators could violate the prohibition on torture if they believed it necessary as a lesser evil to prevent a direct or imminent threat to the US and Its citizens. ¶ Il September and supreme emergency ¶ Accepting the necessity of 'dirty hands' in politics and 'lesser evil' arguments lends support to the architects of the war on terror who in the aftermath of Il September constructed a narrative framework that presented the ongoing threat as a supreme emergency in order to justify extraordinary measures. 39 The terrorist threat was portrayed as an unprecedented, catastrophic, and existential one, as a challenge to our values, to our way of life, to civilization itself. The portrayal of the scale and nature of the threat and the demonization of the enemy as evil and irrational conjure up fears of a uniquely dangerous threat so that political impertives trump all other legal and moral considerations. The state of emergency serves to justify the suspension of normal politics as well as the resort to any means including pre-emptive wars, the violation of the basic human rights of terrorist suspects, and the narrowing of civil liberties and basic freedoms. ¶ Those who reject this narrative and the resulting ethics of emergency challenge the assumption that the terrorist threats are exceptional and believe that the declara- tion of the war on terror was a disproportionate response to an exaggerated threat. None of the terrorist attacks in the US (2001 ), Bali (2002), Madrid (2004), London (2005) or Mumbai (2008) literally threatened the life of the nation or freedom or democracy, still less 'civilization'. Statistically, the actual risks to individuals from terrorism should not be exaggerated. 40 The eleventh of September was not an exceptional event understood in terms of the number of people who died, in comparison to Rwanda in 1994 or the Democratic Republic of Congo since 1998. Approximately 3000 people died in the US terrorist attack, but Richard Jackson argues 'on September 11, 2001 itself, an estimated 30,000 children died of hunger and preventable diseases across the developing world — as they do every day. In this sense, the myth of exceptional suffering represents something of an obfuscation of global realities' .4

## Alt

### Alt---General Solvency/AT: Apolitical

#### Critique has political effects---security is produced through mundane practices and scholarly frames, which means making visible the practices of security can rupture their naturalization

Claudia Aradau 15, Department of War Studies at King's College London, Jef Huysmans**,** Andrew Neal and Nadine Voelkner INTRODUCING CRITICAL SECURITY METHODS, in *Critical Security Methods,* 13-4

The ‘political life of methods’ draws attention to the role that methods can play in challenging and changing dominant productions of (in)security. Methods do not just carry substantive assumptions about the world; they also have effects for social and political life. This demands that critical security methods consider not only the ‘situated-ness’ and limits of knowledge and the contestations surrounding methods, but also include a sensitivity to potentially subjugated, silenced or marginalized practices and knowledges. Unease with scientificity and the dominance it entails upon other forms of knowledge has often surfaced in critical approaches. For example, feminist scholars have rightly pointed out that scientific knowledge entails its own forms of masculine domination (Tickner 2006; Sylvester 1994). They have led a call for a methodological privileging of subordinated positions, in which knowledge about the world can be formulated from the position of those who are politically as well as epistemologically marginalized. As such, feminism has been most outspoken about developing knowledge that is grounded in the lifeworld of women who are often absent from security knowledge (Enloe 2007; Haraway 1988). Poststructuralist approaches similarly experimented with methods of intertextuality and the breaking down of disciplinary distinctions between genres of text and knowledge to demonstrate how worlds are not simply created by political and security systems and elites but are also brought into being in mundane practices that are often seen as insignificant in the security studies field, such as sports, travel writing, diaries, popular TV series and so on (see e.g., Lisle 2013; Rowley and Weldes 2012; Kiersey and Neumann 2013; Derian and Shapiro 1989). Their methods also made visible how instituted scholarly methods tend to reproduce dominant power relations and the legitimating frameworks that sustain them. Disrupting the latter by introducing genre-crossing methods aimed at creating the possibility for subjugated knowledge and practice to gain presence in the scholarly field of security knowledge.

The political life of methods thus refers to reflexivity about the power relations and habitus that methods produce and sustain. This means proactively positioning oneself through the development of methods so as to challenge familiar and instituted processes of validation of what matters for security practice and studies. A key question for critical scholars, in spite of their IR/security studies heritage, is what it means to start not here in ‘the international’ but elsewhere. Feminist, Marxist, and postcolonial approaches share this mobilizing of a distinct positioning, as does the use of popular culture and the recent experimenting with autoethnographic methods to understand international politics. For critical security scholars this can mean starting with situated practices of struggle rather than security (see Chapter 6). For example, developing critical mapping methods when analysing geopolitical security practice or the reification of territoriality through border control regimes often work by making visible the victims and injustices produced by security practices (Chapter 2). Or, it can require that critical security scholars undo security as an object and experiment with methods that analyse security practices as more dispersed and possibly not primarily intelligible as ‘security’ (see Chapter 6). Another way of taking a critical position through method is to experiment with collaboration in order to challenge the limits of individualizing forms of knowledge production in scholarly fields organized through new management practices (Chapter 8).

Critical security methods are thus also political because of their rupturing effects (see Aradau and Huysmans 2013). This may not mean ‘changing the world’ in the way that Marx (1994) called on philosophers to do (although it might); more often, critical methods mean changing worlds in local and immediate terms. When we practise methods, we talk to selected people, we go to distinct places, we interact, we are hired, we employ assistants, we buy, we consume, we introduce ideas, we collaborate, we argue, we produce and we publish. As security researchers, we interact with those affected by security practices and those responsible for security practices, and we interact with other researchers, creating new forms of knowledge and new social arrangements. In so doing, these practices can introduce turbulence into existing routines, habitus and practices. Sometimes they might resolve issues and questions, but they might also make them messier. Sometimes they also create entirely new issues and questions.

### Alt---Hybrid War---Disentangle HW

#### Vote neg to disentangle hybrid war narratives.

Jan Daniel and Jakub Eberle 21, Eberle is senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations Prague in the Czech Republic and Daniel is researcher and the Head of the Centre for the Study of Global Regions at the Institute of International Relations, 2021, “Speaking of hybrid warfare: Multiple narratives and differing expertise in the ‘hybrid warfare’ debate in Czechia,” Cooperation and Conflict, Vol. 56, Issue 4, pp. 432-453, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00108367211000799>

Since Russia’s aggression against Ukraine in 2014, ‘hybrid warfare’ (HW), a term most broadly understood as a combination of military and non-military means of conflict, has been elevated to one of the primary threats to European security (Fridman, 2018; Galeotti, 2019). While discussed and addressed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), and resonating in particular in central and eastern Europe, the shape of the threat has often remained opaque. What is it exactly that Russians are supposed to threaten, and how? What is it precisely that governments should do in response? Various experts have provided explanations ranging from the particularities of Russian military thought, through changing conditions of war, to the rise of new technologies and proliferation of social media. Some of them also highlighted the extremely vague and undifferentiated ways that HW1 is conceptualised and spoken about (Fridman, 2018; Johnson, 2018). In this article, we build upon and move beyond these studies by showing that the broader HW discourse in fact consists of multiple different and even contradictory narratives. While talking and writing about supposedly the same thing, participants in the HW debate often suggest markedly different ideas about the precise nature and target of the threat, offer different responses and draw upon different sources of expertise.

This variation poses a problem that deserves to be addressed for both analytical and normative purposes. If HW really is such a threat, as its adoption by NATO and EU, documented by the creation of a string of new institutions, strategies and action plans suggests (for overviews, see Bajarūnas, 2020; Rühle and Roberts, 2019), we should be interested in understanding its precise character to be able to craft well-tailored responses. However, as we will show, the HW label is pinned freely upon issues ranging from military challenges and functioning of democratic institutions, through covert subversion and social polarisation, all the way to critical thinking and media literacy. By identifying the key differences between the main threat constructions, we shed light on what issues are at stake when we talk about HW. Thereby, this article also makes a political intervention by denaturalising the often unreflected reading of HW as a singular problem. By disentangling the distinctive stories of causes and effects, we hope to re-problematise the coexistence of very different ideas under the same headline. It is often only the label of ‘hybrid war’ that temporarily holds these different narratives and knowledges together, as their assumptions may not be commensurable (see also Ördén, 2019; Rühle, 2019; Szostek, 2020). Therefore, the very label needs to be applied with extreme cautiousness as it hardly speaks about a coherent problem. Put bluntly, by facing HW without clearly specifying what it means exactly, we risk not only over-securitising the issue by applying security and war framing to issues such as social polarisation or media literacy, but also ending up tasking our security apparatuses with fighting everything and nothing at the same time.

While we are interested in the general issues of denaturalising HW, showing the variation within the discourse and pointing out the usually tacit discrepancies, we examine them through a study of one case: Czechia. The country is a good example for exploring how such a new threat is made sense of in the public sphere, as it is considered a pioneer in responding to HW (Jankowicz, 2020). The notion of HW made a significant impact on Czech security policies, as it has been included in key strategic documents and embedded in security and political institutions. Czechia has also played an outsized role in the European institutions, acting as a policy entrepreneur on several levels. Prague hosts the Stratcom Summit, a leading international forum for networking and discussing HW-related issues. As one of the very first countries, the Czech government contributed with two officials to the EU’s East StratCom Task Force, which runs the EUvsDisinfo website. The Czech Vice President of the European Commission, Věra Jourová, now oversees large parts of the EU’s ‘hybrid threats’ agenda, and Czech European Parliament members are highly visible in the matter, too. Czech discourse on HW is, thus, closely entangled with the broader European debate on the issue. This enables us to draw conclusions about the HW discourse and its variations relevant beyond our case, offering an important complement to the pioneering studies on the different articulations of ‘fake news’ discourse in Germany (Monsees, 2020) or the conceptualisations of the ‘information threat’ on the EU level (Ördén, 2019).

We read the HW discourse through a simple question: what exactly is the nature of the threat and how do we possibly respond to it? We answer it by identifying three narratives that interpret the nature of HW differently with respect to the threat, the threatened object or value, as well as what the response should be. First, the defence narrative is concerned with the possibility of a ‘real war’ resulting from great-power competition, which it wants to avert by building appropriate defence capabilities. Second, the counterinfluence narrative focuses on the societal and value threat in the form of Russian covert action practiced through disinformation and a network of local proxies, stressing the need to protect society against both foreign influence and its local allies. Finally, the education narrative zooms in on the individual ability to navigate and process information, calling for the development of media literacy and critical thinking skillsets.

This disentangling of the HW discourse into several cause–effect stories has important consequences, the analysis of which presents our first contribution to the critical literature on HW (Daniel and Eberle, 2018; Eberle and Daniel, 2019; Fridman, 2018; Galeotti, 2019; Mälksoo, 2018; Monsees, 2020; Ördén, 2019; Rychnovská and Kohút, 2018), as well as the broader field of Critical Security Studies. As mentioned earlier, we contribute to destabilising the story of a Russian malign meddling that manipulates the population and corrupts the elites (see Barša, 2020; Orenstein, 2019; Snyder, 2018) by showing that there are important discrepancies between various narratives. Further, we advance this scholarship by taking another step and shifting from the variations and contradictions on the level of narratives to their underlying knowledge and expertise upon which they rely. This takes us beyond the already analysed construction of the HW problem in particular controversies (Monsees, 2020) and formation of policies reacting to the HW in different institutions (Ördén, 2019; Szostek, 2020). Put simply, we do not look only at the narratives as such, but also at the knowledge that makes them possible and colours them in a certain way.

Second, in highlighting this broader perspective, our study contributes also to the literature on security knowledge and expertise (Aradau, 2017; Berling and Bueger, 2015; Leander and Wæver, 2019; Stampnitzky, 2014). As this work points out, security threats are often not readily connected to an already existing body of knowledge (Berling, 2019; Stampnitzky, 2014). Rather, their construction requires the interpretive intervention of experts who connect a threat with specific knowledge and create a narrative linking causes of the threat, its effects and needed courses of action (Edkins, 2019). Following this line of inquiry, we show how the central categories of HW (hybrid war, hybrid threat, etc.) function as discursive ‘nodal points’ (Diez, 2001; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) that draw together very different issues and fields of knowledge – for example, military science, media studies or popular psychology. We add to this work by bringing a case study of HW as a prime security discourse of our time, as well as by showing how different HW narratives emerge through lenses provided by different forms of knowledge. Synthesising the existing approaches in narrative scholarship and security expertise, we develop a generally applicable heuristic framework that allows for the identification and comparison of security narratives and the knowledge that they are built on.

### Alt---Security---Feasibility

#### Desecuritization is feasible.

Julie Wilhelmsen 21, Wilhelmsen is a senior research fellow at the Norwegian Institute of International Affair, and holds a PhD in political science and conducts research in the fields of critical security studies, Russian foreign and security policies and the radicalization of Islam in Eurasia, September 2021, “Spiraling toward a New Cold War in the North? The Effect of Mutual and Multifaceted Securitization,” Journal of Global Security Studies, Vol. 6, Issue 3, https://academic.oup.com/jogss/article/6/3/ogaa044/5916402#229359911

Conclusions

Ever since the Ukraine crises, Russia and Norway have been talking each other up as multifaceted threats as regards nearly all aspects of relations. This has legitimized policy changes far beyond the security sphere on both sides, which in turn are taken to confirm these new and incompatible identifications of the other side. It has created a disconnect in communication and recognition between Norway and Russia that seems to be driving tension upward to a point where the outbreak of hostilities seems imminent. With the societal and political fracture since the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian leadership's heavy securitization of external threats to the Russian self has been a prime social mechanism for creating a “sense of continuity and order in events” (Giddens 1991, 243). For the Norwegian leadership post-2014—faced with what has appeared to be a far more dangerous and unpredictable future—it has become imperative to pay attention to internal audiences, revalidate self-identity and forge unity, within Norway as well as in the wider West. And just as Russia fails to take into account what its rejection of the West may look like on the other side, Norway pays no attention to the audience on the other side of the border in the North. The result? The verbal and practical dismissal of Russia as a legitimate actor across issue-areas in the North triggers and encourages precisely the “assertive” and “aggressive” Russia that Norway has come to fear. The Norwegian–Russian case illustrates vividly how a pair of collective actors that experience acute ontological dissonance through their own mutual and multifaceted securitization, and that seek to resolve this dissonance through avoidance and externalization, can be caught up in a spiral that can lead to confrontation.

That said, for every other there usually are several identifications. “Russia” has a range of deep-rooted identifications in Norwegian political discourse; and in official texts 2014–2018, we can also see a more reasonable and law-abiding Russian neighbor gradually re-emerging, albeit in a small way. 126 There is an acknowledgment that the North is of strategic importance for Russia, and even that Norway needs to “respect Russia's legitimate security interests in the Arctic.”127 The idea of collaboration on common interests is gradually returning in MoD, MFA as well as Prime Minister texts.128 Foreign Ministry texts voice the need to uphold cooperation in the spheres of fisheries, nuclear safety, the environment and natural resource management, search-and-rescue in the Barents Sea, people-to-people collaboration, and in forums such as the Barents Council and Secretariat, and the Arctic Council.129 While this may look like a reluctant de-securitization from the side of the Norwegian government—these more positive identifications usually appear when pressured by domestic dissident audiences in Norway—this also sheds light on how de-escalation may be achieved.

First, in a democratic country such as Norway the audience does play a role. It can wage resistance by rejecting a securitizing narrative and giving voice to alternative identifications of Russia, at least in certain issue-areas, disfiguring the image of Russia as a multifaceted threat and helping to make possible positive interaction with and recognition of Russia in certain issue-areas. As noted by Wilhelmsen (2017) and Lupovici (2012, 815–16), securitizing actors are constrained by existing discursive structures, the specific discursive terrain in which they and their target audience are embedded. While the Russian system has fewer such correctives, criticisms of the stark securitization of the West are sometimes heard from voices within the Russian elite.

Second, political leaders can observe, learn, and make deliberate choices about what identifications to highlight when they speak of other states. Whereas the classical interpretation of the security dilemma obscures the role of choice by foregrounding structure, a discursive interpretation foregrounds human practice. Political leaders operate in complex, restraining discursive terrains, but can decide what identifications of self and other to accentuate. Norway's choices are not driven solely by “systemic pressures,” although this trope is constantly invoked. The return of “prudent restraint”—the realization that Norway does not need to embrace a total Cold-War-era rejection of Russia—is not beyond reach.

Third, and to the case at hand, interaction has a dynamic of its own—in a very practical sense. Not only do Norway and Russia still have several alternative, less-malign identifications of each other to invoke, but these identifications have also been implemented in long-standing practical collaboration in the North. This heritage of practical collaboration constantly becomes relevant through unexpected happenings. Such events, with direct contact between Russian and Norwegian officials, seem to elicit less-adverse official characterizations of the other. Moreover, they complicate the image of the other for the political leaders themselves. The direct telephone communication between Prime Ministers Solberg and Medvedev following a helicopter accident at Svalbard in October 2017, with several Russian fatalities, elicited Norwegian official representations of Russia as a responsible and trustworthy actor.130 From the Russian side came the acknowledgment: “We are grateful to the Norwegian side for the exceptionally high level of interaction with the Russian participants in the search operation.”131

While these small signs of positive recognition and interaction arguably can contribute to chipping away at the new ice front that five years of mutual and multifaceted securitization has created in the North, the current tension will most likely persist. Both for Russia and Norway/the West the securitization of the other works as a social glue in these times of global uncertainty.

# AFF

### AT: Hybrid War K---2AC

#### Researching the methods and culture of hybrid war is important---rejecting “hybrid war” exacerbates the danger it poses.

Andriy Tyushka 19, Senior Research Fellow in the European Neighbourhood Policy Chair, 2019, “Hybrid War(fare): The Challenge of Contagion,” 2019, Torun International Studies, Issue 12, pp. 5–29, http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-c63913a7-9115-4d4a-8c3e-a620eeb5d495

With great (power) wars past long ago and today’s decline of inter-state conflicts worldwide, with Pax Americana and Pax Europaea largely enduring since the end of the WWII (thus, democratizing nations and relations among them)1 , a Fukuyama-styled decisive victory of a liberal democratic order willy-nilly crosses one’s mind. And yet, the 1989-declared ‘end of the history’ has to be postponed – again:

‘There is a feeling abroad today that Western civilization is on trial before history. One of the clearest signs of it is the increasing frequency with which we hear the word “challenge” in connection with the policies and progress of Soviet [Putin’s] Russia and the Communist [illiberal] world at large’ (Tucker 1959: 1) (edits to the original mine. – AT).

It sufficed two tiny edits (updates – if you wish) in the afore-quoted statement to render the strategic world-political assessment of the 1960s-peaking Cold War, made by a renowned American Sovietologist at Harvard and Princeton Universities, its full-sound quality and resonance in the realities of our-age and twenty-second century global politics

Indeed, just a decade ago, as Russia’s military campaign in Georgia was unfolding, the near and far neighbourhood’s discourses were intensively echoing questions such as: ‘Is Ukraine next?’ Some half a decade ago, as Russia’s less conventional military aggression and political subversion campaign in Ukraine erupted, questions did resonate in the region and far beyond: ‘Are the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia next’2 ? Couple of years ago, as Russia’s covert military and political overtures in Syria and Libya, US and the UK, Germany, France, Poland, the Netherlands and so forth unraveled, the answers to the question ‘who’s next?’ seem to have been tacitly found – at least no more geographical directions are being pointed to. The paradox discovered here lies in the simplicity that was self-delusively denied being accepted in many European capitals: the genuine realist answer to the ‘what/where/ who next?’ question has always been ‘where necessary – to defend national interests’ (however defined). Waging a hybrid war(fare) has become one of the proven ways to defend Russia’s interests in near and far neighbourhoods. Rather disturbingly, it is incrementally becoming a preferred way to advance interests of other state and non-state actors. The spread of the hybrid warfare methods and the culture of hybrid war as such is a new reality to which the policymakers and scholarly communities alike need to wake up.

A number of analytical works written so far have been dedicated to disentangling the hybrid warfare’s nature and manifestations, i.e. the art of war. It is of little use if it is not accompanied with the analysis of ‘whose war?’ problem in the sense of seeking response to the fundamental questions who is waging the war (aggressor), to what end (broad strategic and tactical aims), against whom (war targets and theatres) and who will stand in defence (national and/or collective defence and deterrence)? The vast majority of these questions is left unanswered in much of the scholarly and policy writings. Ambiguity and deliberate straight-talk avoidance abound. Ambiguity is the best bedfellow of hybrid war(fare). Thus, as long as there is a lack/avoidance of clarity in scholarly and political answers to the aforementioned questions, the international constellations will remain thriving for a spatial and temporal contagion of hybrid war(fare).

This article seeks to problematize the contagion of hybrid war and hybrid warfare – both with the zoom on Russia and in a much wider world-political perspective: geographic, temporal and agential.

With no pretense to pathetic or inflated claims, this article casts a broad analytical perspective on the creeping hybridization of war and order and posits that the phenomenon is there to stay unless strategically contained and devaluated as a proliferating means of twenty-first century politics. Thereby, it invites thinking beyond ‘the Ukraine crisis’ and ‘the Russia challenge’ in (Eastern) Europe – i.e. a well-founded, though, admittedly, a way too narrow (both spatially and temporally, as well as in terms of agency and warfare modalities) hyper-focus in much of the political and academic debate today. The currently observed expansion of Russia’s theatres of hybrid war(fare) from Ukraine to Middle East, Europe and the US, as well as the tactical variance and constant innovation of warfighting methods, as practiced and mutually observed/emulated by agents beyond Russia (such as Iran, China, or the ISIS), points to the pertinence of broader emerging trends that concern the foundations of international theory, strategic and military studies – rather than policy or area studies alone. The contagion effects of hybrid war(fare) discursive and political practices across the globe is what shapes the core analytical puzzle of the current article. Focusing on the ontologies of the hybrid war and warfare contagion, as evidenced in proliferating ideologies and politics of hybrid war(fare) as well as richly documented in policy analyses and scholarly literature, this article problematizes the agency (action-reaction) dilemmas for both states and societies directly targeted by such hostile campaigns as well as the international (liberal democratic) community at large.

#### Perm---do both---the AFF renegotiates the scope of A5 in light of an armed attack which solves the K.

Maria Mälksoo 18, Senior Lecturer in International Security at the Brussels School of International Studies at the University of Kent, 2018, “Countering hybrid warfare as ontological security management: the emerging practices of the EU and NATO,” European Security, Vol. 27, Issue 3, pp. 374-392, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662839.2018.1497984>

NATO

“Hybrid warfare” has emerged as yet another “resilience test” (Stoltenberg 2015a) for the Alliance in its post-Cold War existential search for a new purpose and mission. Moreover, the hybrid insecurity predicament enables the allies to bring together the renewed focus on NATO’s traditional mission (i.e. endorsing collective defence in order to counter the main geopolitical contestant of the North Atlantic Alliance in Europe) and the Alliance’s post-Cold War out-of-area military expeditions. While “tak[ing] on two different forms of strategic challenges simultaneously” – that is, “the Russian hybrid warfare approach” and that of “other non-state actors like ISIS to the south” – remains NATO’s “greatest challenge”, the common idea behind these “hybrid strategies” endorses the relevance of “a comprehensive approach across the DIMEFIL spectrum” (i.e. diplomatic/political, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, legal) for NATO (Breedlove 2015, p. xxv; cf. Bell 2012, pp. 225–226). The “beauty of the hybrid warfare concept” is accordingly seen to lie in its ability to “provide tools for a comparative strategic perspective of NATO’s southern and eastern flanks, while allowing for a differentiated response” (Johnson 2015, p. 276). NATO’s motto in the face of these twofold challenges is called to be “adopt, adapt, adept”: the new strategies adopted to deal with the hybrid threats to NATO’s East and South need to be accompanied by NATO’s adaptation of “its structure and readiness to become adept at handling the new challenges it faces” (Calha 2015, p. 9).

Countering hybrid threats posed by Russia and the Islamic radicals threatening the territories, populations, interests, and values of the Alliance thus enables NATO to endorse its continuing relevance by constructing a strong narrative and maintaining its OS as the core security guarantor for its members (cf. Flockhart 2012, pp. 78–79). The softer, partnershipgeared, or so-called “Jane” narrative of the early-post Cold War NATO is clearly giving way to a more familiar, hard security-focused “Tarzan” self-vision and public representation (see further Flockhart 2011). Calling the kettle black is the least of NATO’s worries: Russia’s use of “proxy soldiers, unmarked Special Forces, intimidation and propaganda, all to lay a thick fog of confusion; to obscure its true purpose in Ukraine; and to attempt deniability” is explicitly dissected in outlining NATO’s emerging counter-strategy to hybrid engagements of the sort (Stoltenberg 2015a). Yet, just the traditional set of NATO’s capabilities is clearly deemed to be insufficient in the face of, inter alia, “sophisticated disinformation and radicalization campaigns” (Stoltenberg 2015b), this more forceful and traditional antagonist-driven agenda reflects NATO’s long-pursued comprehensive approach – that is, “a combination of military and non-military means to stabilize countries” (that others use to “destabilize”) (Stoltenberg 2015a). “Hybrid” is accordingly coined as “the dark reflection” of NATO’s comprehensive approach, and accordingly, early warning and situation awareness, good governance and the resilience of societies become equally essential parts of deterrence and defence against hybrid threats (Stoltenberg 2015a). This necessitates “renewed attention to strategic communications” and public outreach and education “to build up public awareness and resilience” and “strengthen the role of an informed civil society in every member state” (Calha 2015, p. 10).13

NATO declared its readiness to address the specific challenges posed by “hybrid warfare threats” in the Wales Summit Declaration of 5 September 2014 as a forceful response to the conflict in Ukraine. While NATO’s traditional toolbox of collective defence is hardly perfectly geared for “insidious and ambiguous threats” (Johnson 2015, p. 270, Calha 2015, p. 4), countering hybrid warfare emerges as a continuing relevance and resilience test for the Alliance. NATO’s institutional responses to “hybrid threats” have been further detailed in its Readiness Action Plan, a roadmap for building capability packages, a comprehensive concept for creating an enhanced NATO response force, in a classified strategy for hybrid warfare and a cyber security action plan. Altogether, the ambiguity and gradient nature of hybrid tactics directly challenge the ontological underpinnings of NATO’s core mission and strength as hybrid activities might “progress incrementally towards a threatening situation while remaining under NATO’s Article 5 threshold” (Calha 2015, p. 4). The detection and definition of a threat hence becomes significantly less straightforward, pointing at the need to renegotiate the scope and substance of NATO’s collective defence clause (i.e. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty) in light of the contemporary hybrid engagements.

### AT: Hybrid War K---Offense

#### Hybrid war is real and dangerous.

Andriy Tyushka 19, Senior Research Fellow in the European Neighbourhood Policy Chair, 2019, “Hybrid War(fare): The Challenge of Contagion,” 2019, Torun International Studies, Issue 12, pp. 5–29, http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-c63913a7-9115-4d4a-8c3e-a620eeb5d495

Certainly, an unnecessary reverberation (if not simply a hype) of the term bears nasty consequences for policy response as the first question being naturally advanced is whether the hybrid warfare talk is ‘much ado about nothing’ or a serious concern about the emerging security gap? In a way, the entire problematique gets ridiculed to the somewhat simplified and overgeneralized dilemmatic question to be resolved: is it prudent or paranoid to talk about proliferating hybrid threats and hybrid world order? Rich empirical evidence, which is only selectively presented in the next section, suggests a positive answer to the afore-stated question.

3. EXPLORING HYBRID WARΈFAREΉ CONTAGION: TRENDS AND GEOGRAPHIES

Evidence from much of the public, political and academic debate convincingly demonstrates: the proliferation of hybrid war and warfare are more than a ‘buzzword’ matter – legible concerns about it incrementally grow across the nations, regions and even entire continents, with some being more and some less affected by hybrid war(fare) contagion. Both public, political and academic issue salience point to such a conclusion.

For instance, the hybrid war(fare) topic trending in public discourse exhibits quite a revealing picture of issue salience since at least 2004, with the European terrain being the epicenter of public attention to the issue in question (cf. Figure 2). The geographical spread of hybrid war(fare) – or a threat thereof, as perceived in public discourses, is most concentrated around the top topic-trending countries, with Ukraine – rather expectedly – enjoying the place of the most important locus of attention, followed by Poland, Estonia, Bulgaria and Georgia, Croatia, Czechia, Latvia, Belarus, and Finland on the top-10 list.

**[Omit Figure 2]**

In policy debate, the hybrid war(fare) topic salience can be observed in a number of world’s regions – from the topic-trending Russia and the former Soviet Union space to integrated Europe and North America, but also Middle East, Asia and Africa (cf. Table 1).

**[Omit Table 1]**

As seen from the table, hybrid warfare clearly presents a salient policy issue for Russia’s neighbours – first and foremost, Ukraine, Belarus, CEECs such as Poland or Czechia as well as the Baltic states. Within the so-called Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS) alone, the situation is quite telling as ‘[e]ach of Russia’s reform-minded neighbours is plagued by “separatism”4 [ – and] it’s no coincidence’ (Orttung and Walker 2015). Of course, the scope and extent of hybrid threats is bigger than that: in addition to the weaponization of self-determination (so-called astroturfed ‘separatism’), both information and culture, economics and democratic openness, etc., are seen being weaponized within respective hybrid warfare stratagems.

Finally, the evidence of hybrid war(fare) topic salience can also be found in the academic debate, as the herewith undertaken bibliometric analysis shows. Whereas the current article’s effort is concentrated on pinpointing the academic salience of the topic as covered in major Web of Science indexed journals (cf. Figure 3), it should be acknowledged that the topic is covered much broadly in non-WoS indexed peer-reviewed journals. Still, the academic production corpus of WoS indexed journals reveals the topical salience of hybrid war(fare) in scholarly enquiries on security and defence affairs in Ukraine, the US, Romania, UK, Poland, Russia, Czechia, Germany, Austria and Italy. A clear gap in topic coverage by academic literature, as revealed by the WoS corpus analysis, is rather surprising compared to other indexed outlets as well as public and political debates – much broader in their geographic and issue-matter foci, with a centre of analytical gravity that massively revolves around Russia’s agency in that very context (at the expense of a wider perspective?).

**[Omit Figure 3]**

Thence, with a varying intensity and focus laid on state and non-state agency as well as geographic theatres of hybrid warfare operation, the topic is clearly salient in both public, political and academic debates, and this salience is very much predicted to expand further – together with the proliferation of the hybrid war culture and hybrid warfare methods among countries and regions worldwide.

An exponential rise of the ‘hybrid warfare’ phenomenon owes its dynamics particularly to the number of military and politically subversive operations Russia has undertaken since early 2014 in Ukraine’s Crimea and eastern regions of Donbas. The phenomenon is much broader both in terms of geographical and agential spread worldwide, with some parts of Eurasia, Middle East and Asia Pacific looming large as the hotbeds of this proliferating type of warfare below (classical understanding of) war.

Internet search retrievals abound in references to academic and policy writings as well as journalist investigations on the matter.

Official communications delivered by government officials and high-ranking international fonctionnaires worldwide, too, contain increasing references to the proliferation of ‘hybrid threats’ and the necessity of developing a suitable policy response – both in national and intergovernmental contexts.

All that points to a rather new development where the prerogatively military term and the related vocabulary of ‘hybrid warfare’ lose their exclusivity as concepts applied by, and relevant for ‘military strategists only’, thus entering the everyday political and diplomatic vocabulary as well as public discourses.

Whether in Estonia, Czechia or Poland (Schultz 2017), Germany, France or the Netherlands, Russia’s hybrid warfare operational theatre steadily expands to new sovereign terrains of the Western liberal democracies.

Following Russia’s resonant and highly plausible meddling in the 2016 US presidential elections, in 2017, then-presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron successfully dodged similar hack-and-leak cyber-attacks and fake news reports widely attributable to the Kremlin. In late 2018, the French authorities faced a renewed challenge of Kremlin’s digital offensive – now from among 600 Twitter pro-Kremlin accounts that, under the top hashtag #giletsjaunes, i.e. ‘yellow vests’, intensively fuel outrage of street protesters. Possible involvement of the Kremlin in amplifying the ‘yellow vests’ protests in France (cf. e.g.: Blakely 2018; Matlack 2018) is now being investigated by the French authorities in spite of Russia’s ‘traditional’ implausible denials

In response to the Skripal poisoning earlier in 2018, yet another widely attributed to the Kremlin undercover operation in Europe and the UK in particular, British PM Theresa May bluntly put it that ‘[t]he Russian threat does not respect borders, and as such we are all at risk’ (quoted after: McTague, 2018). The threat looms even more so large if one considers the strategic rationale of Russia’s hybrid gambit – in fact, an undeclared war against the Western-dominated world order and the hegemony of the liberal democracy as such.

In this war, Ukraine is only one of the many targets and theatres, which expand in both the scope and depth of engagement – as far as the strategic and operational goals will require

The case of Russia’s ‘hybression’, i.e. hybrid aggression, in Ukraine is quite illustrative when it comes to the contagion effects of (strategic) hybrid warfare proliferation.

First, the Blitzanschluss of Crimea (the so-called ‘self-determination’ staged by the Russian special operation forces), then the (failed) attempts to extend hybrid incursion to Ukraine’s wider South-East (the so-called ‘Novorossia’ offensive), successful detachment of Ukraine’s eastern areas (the so-called ‘separatism’ in Donbas region), and, more recently, renewed attempts to twist the ‘Novorossia’ offensive, now undertaken as a naval offensive in the Kerch Strait of the Sea of Azov. Not only did the geography of Russia’s operational theatre expand in Ukraine – every next struggle, however narrow (MacFarquhar 2018), risks wider war

Fifth year on, the contagion of Russia’s hybrid warfare can now however be traced far beyond Ukraine’s borders. Already back in 2015, Zbigniew Brzeziński, a senior political scientist and former adviser to the US-American President Jimmy Carter, was not sparkling with optimism as the Russian war in Ukraine was concerned. In the wake of his March 2015 visit to Poland, he put his advice for the compatriots in a very succinct and unequivocal passage: ‘Ukraine is not the endpoint. We have to be ready to defend ourselves’ (Brzeziński 2015).

Time and again, Polish intelligence agency ABW and investigative journalists uncover Russia-linked subversive groups who – via disinformation campaigns or political subversion (astroturfing, false flag outrage) – seek to exacerbate tensions both within the Polish society and with Ukraine – to sow discord between Poland and Ukraine, thus directly or indirectly promoting the Kremlin’s interests (DW, 2018). The tension in Polish-Ukrainian relations may resonate well beyond the confines of this bilateralism, not least in the context of Poland’s role as a key supporter of pro-Western policy attitudes in Ukraine and pro-Ukrainian policy attitudes in the European Union, both of which run contra Kremlin’s illiberal script for the post-Soviet space.

Up north in the Baltics, the spread of Russian hybrid warfare became a serious political concern the very moment Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in early 2014. Whether the Baltic states were (to be) next, has been since then one of the permeating questions in security debate both within the small region and Europe-wide (Radin 2017).

A number of other European countries and Western democracies have been affected by the spread of Russia’s hybrid war from Crimea to Salisbury, for the past five years now. Whereas tracing (and predicting) the contagion effects of hybrid warfare in toto is quite a daunting task – not least because of the problematic means identification and agency attribution, its main components, such as information weaponization (fake news spread, public and media propaganda campaigns) or ‘weaponized self-determination’ (external orchestration, partisan sponsoring or otherwise supporting of ‘self-determination’ processes regionwide), can be feasibly analyzed. For instance, Cunningham and Sawyer’s (2017: 598) spatial analysis of the spread of self-determination claims – statistically – confirms that that self-determination is contagious, for the onset of self-determination claims in a country is strongly predicted by the onset of self-determination claims in the neighbourhood. The observations of the micro-regional dynamics in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus well-illustrate such a contagion – from Nagorno Karabakh to Transnistria, form Abkhazia and South Ossetia to Crimea and (partially) Donbas, and to a smaller extent, Gaugauzia. Rather unsurprisingly, Russia’s orchestrating or other-how instrumental efforts behind these processes have been disentangled and moderately well documented. With Putin’s Blitzanschluss of Crimea in 2014, the debate about the challenges of a weaponized ‘self-determination in the age of Putin’ (Simpson 2014) loom large – and not only in the context of lasting fears in the Baltics about the externally-strategized secession of Latvian Latgale or Estonian Narva provinces; the concerns grow in ‘old Europe’, too, especially after Russia’s considerable politically subversive effort was identified behind the 2017 Catalan referendum in Spain (Palmer 2017; Emmott 2017; Alandete 2017b; EFE 2018) and the ‘Brexit’ campaign in the UK, which, in a way, too, can be seen as a case for (a different but still a kind of) ‘self-determination’ – i.e. British determination to ‘depart’ away from Brussels and the EU’s institutional embrace. Importantly, one should, to a lesser extent, perceive such a subversion driven by the Kremlin as a hostile act strictly against respective nation-states, or at least nation-states alone (Cohen and Radin 2019) – such a weaponization of ‘self-determination’ processes in Europe targets the European Union and its transatlantic links, which stand in the epicentre of Russia’s fight against the liberal democratic hegemony of the Euro-Atlantic order. Bonet (2017) put it quite eloquently when referring to the Russian influence campaigns in Spanish Catalonia: ‘Russia’s official media speak about Catalonia, but they are really shooting at Brussels, using the referendum as ammunition’

The Russian uses of referenda as part of political warfare campaigns abroad are not limited to the cases of self-determination. Its uses span across a variety of deliberative democratic policymaking processes – from policy-consultative referenda, such as the 2016 Dutch referendum on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement or the ‘Brexit’ referendum (Ostanin and Rose 2016), to electoral campaigns, such as the 2016 US presidential elections, German 2017 parliamentary elections (Applebaum et al. 2017), French 2017 presidential elections (Dearden 2017), etc. The evidence abounds that the ‘weaponization of referenda’ has meanwhile successfully broadened in its use as part of the hybrid warfare toolkit. NATO Parliamentary Assembly STC’s most recent report on Russian meddling in elections and referenda in the Alliance (cf. Davis 2018) draws on the collected evidence of the Kremlin’s past elections and referenda influence campaigns in the US, UK, France, Germany, Spain and the Netherlands, and argues that such interference operations pose a serious threat to the Alliance and its members, especially when seen against the broader efforts of Russia to divide, destabilise and otherwise undermine Alliance members.

Russia’s hybrid warfare proliferates, however, well beyond the weaponization of ‘self-determination’ and ‘referenda’ campaigns. It includes a range of activities in stirring up dissent abroad – from influencing campaigns to financial military and political support of local radical groups or insurgent forces. In this context, Afghanistan is yet another largely overlooked grey zone of Russia’s proliferating hybrid war against the West sought to undermine the latter’s global hegemony and resources in sustaining it, inter alia by provoking – mainly the US – to fight on several fronts (cf. e.g: Sazonov 2017). Casting a look at Afghanistan (again!) and actively courting the Taliban through arms supply and diplomatic conciliation amidst still designating it a terrorist group and domestically outlawing as such (cf. e.g.: Ramani 2019) has little good reason and military-strategic promise – if not considered against the Kremlin’s prima facie irrational (but no lesser deployed for that very reason!) strategy of inducing a ‘manageable chaos’5 , i.e. an operation in shaping a strategic environment conducive to Russia’s broader political warfare against the West. In the Kremlin’s forceful drive against the international liberal order and the ‘power of rules’, the strategic value of a spread of ambiguity, uncertainty, chaos and hesitation (be it via proliferation of grey-zone conflicts and hybression of sorts, weaponization of migration, populism or the rise of the so-called illiberal democracies, etc.) can hardly be overestimated (cf. e.g.: Tyushka 2018).

Reviving dormant ethnic-political tensions, sowing distrust, exaggerating tensions up to staging coups (such as the attended coup in Montenegro, cf.: Higgins 2016) is yet another modality of political warfare the Kremlin wages in the Western Balkans, in addition to the heating-up of separatist and revisionist movements (Bechev 2018).

Ironically enough, hybrid warfare campaigns can, too, spread to include deceptively ‘integrative’ agendas. As the pressure of Western sanctions and tensions between Russia and Belarus grow, the discussions on Russia’s possible hybrid invasion of Belarus have started to unfold among regional security scholars, especially after their joint 2017 ‘Zapad’ (‘West’) military drills (Wilson 2017) and more recent Kremlin’s calls for a closer integration between Russia and Belarus (Applebaum 2019).

Even though the prominence of Russia’s hybrid warfare in the region abounds in its scope and intensity, it would be wrongful to attribute all the endeavor and ‘brilliance’ in contemporary practices of hybrid warfare to Russia alone: a number of other state and non-state actors worldwide, unilaterally or collectively, resort to hybrid tactics in support of their diverse strategic goals – from China, India, Pakistan, Qatar or Iran to the US (cf. Figures 2 and 3, and Table 1 above). In the Middle East, Iran and Qatar come to the fore of attention. Dalton (2017: 312) posits that, for as long as the past three decades, Iran ‘has grown proficient at using hybrid-war capabilities and tactics to achieve its regional objectives’, typically operating below the threshold of conventional warfare, thus ‘using a blend of military and paramilitary tools, including proxy forces, missiles, cyber tools, maritime forces, and information operations to share and coerce regional actors to its advantage’. Supporting non-state actors, like Hezbollah and other proxy groups from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan or Pakistan, forms part of the Iran’s regional leverage toolkit. In Asia and its regional security architecture, proliferation of hybrid warfare may, too, be fraught with systemic consequences. Niruthan (2016) contends that, already now, ‘[m]any of the conditions that breed hybrid threats are ripe for harvest in the Asian continent, with its ethnic conflicts, a vibrant tech industry, territorial disputes, and inconsistent rule of law’. Whereas the topic reappears more frequently in the discussions of China’s ‘legal alchemy’ and political subversion around the South China Sea dispute, potential cradles of hybrid warfare in Asia may also become Burma (Myanmar), Thailand or Pakistan, with the latter one becoming incrementally framed in the regional political discourses as both a target (Khan 2018) and a wager of hybrid warfare in its rivalry with India (AFP Kargil, 2014; Kumar 2017).

Evidently, the geography and uses of hybrid war(fare) manifest contagion effects, which remain underexplored in the subject-matter literature.

#### Researching hybrid war is good. Information war is a threat.

Alika Guchua 18, Scientific Researcher at Caucasus International University, 2018, “ASYMMETRICAL THREATS AND THE IMPACT OF HYBRID WAR ON GLOBAL SECURITY AND ROLE OF NATO IN ENSURING PEACE,” 2018, No. 2, Issue 11, pp. 214-224, https://anteportas.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/AP.XI\_Guchua.pdf

Asymmetric threats

Against the challenges and geopolitical processes in the modern period world, research of the challenges coming from asymmetrical threats and hybrid warfare is very important. The world faces a number of challenges that cannot be solved without a united effort. Therefore, it becomes necessary to create alliances and enhance the effectiveness of international organizations. Coming from the current situation of today’s reality and geopolitical changes the role and the function of NATO is very important in world security issues. Since the establishment of the North Atlantic Alliance, ensuring collective defence and security is one of the main principles and purposes of functioning of this organization that require the Alliance to prevent the land, air and naval attacks with united forces, however, in modern times the Alliance faced new challenges that come from asymmetric threats and hybrid warfare.

The security trends play the great role in the process of forming a new system of international relations. In the past few years, one can often hear the reasoning that the nature of war in the twenty-first century has changed. Non-state structures even a century ago used partisan methods of warfare, and the beginning of the twentieth century was marked by the use of terrorist tactics.

Before we begin to talk about asymmetric threats and a hybrid war, it is important to consider what these two phenomena mean and what role they play in global security. During the consideration of the hybrid war, it is interesting to pay attention to the asymmetric warfare factor - asymmetric war represents such a war when the military powers of the opposing sides clearly differ from each other. The military tactics or the strategy used by them are very different from each other.

The term asymmetric warfare is used when describing situations such as guerrilla warfare, terrorism, insurrection and during such armed conflicts when regular military force confronts an irregular, ill-armed opponent.

The term became popular in 1975, when Andrew J. R. Mack, wrote in academic journal World Politics, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars," where he used an asymmetric war to determine the differences between important military forces among the parties involved. In the word "power" he meant the material strength, like a large army, good weapons, a developed economy, etc.

As for the connection of the asymmetric war with terrorism, there are different opinions on this issue. In today's world, asymmetric warfare is being increasingly considered as a part of the fourth generation war. Some believe that if the asymmetric war goes beyond the rules of war, it turns into terrorism. In addition, some believe that the asymmetric war is not connected with terrorism. They believe, because of the propaganda of the strong parties, it identifies the weaker party as bandits or terrorists. They also believe that the word terrorism is specifically used for political purposes because of its negative significance. One of the main security problems of the modern world is asymmetrical threats, such as international terrorism and transnational organized crime; Weapons, including weapons of mass destruction and its components; Also illegal drugs and drug trafficking; Human trafficking, cybercrime, and the fourth generation war. There are many other types of confrontations - rebellion, civil war, revolution, etc.

The tactical success of asymmetric wars depends on several components. On the example of technological advantage - if any party has a technological advantage, this can outweigh the enemy's numerical advantage. Neutrality of technological advantage is possible on important enemy facilities and with an attack on infrastructure. With attacking the electrical power lines or generators, roads, pipelines or water. In heavily populated places, such sabotage can greatly affect the morale and economics of people inhabiting the territories. The weaker side in such a war uses special tactics to cope with a strong opponent. You can break the rules of war and use them for your own good. The rules of war prohibits the use of a medical machine for asylum, an attack or an ambush, and the use of urban settlement for military bases is also prohibited. The weaker side uses such tactics with the hope that the opposing party will defend the rules of war and not attack the city2 .

The beginning of the 21st century brought about non-conventional security threats (they include natural disasters, drug, weapon and human trafficking, cyber warfare and piracy, etc.) which represent new challenges for those international organizations that consider maintenance of security and stability as their principal goal on either global or regional levels. The North-Atlantic Alliance has taken the responsibility for addressing these new challenges3 .

Today NATO provides its capabilities and resources to assist international and regional organizations in tackling crises and resolving a wide range of problems

Asymmetric warfare used to be determined as “a conflict including two states with different total military and economic resources”. However after 9/11 attacks the definition has been adjusted, Asymmetric warfare is now defined as “using inferior tactical or operational strength against the vulnerabilities of superior opponent to achieve the disproportionate effect with the aim of undermining [the opponent’s] will in order to achieve the asymmetric actor’s strategic objectives.”4

The problem of terrorism is not only the problem of a single country but also the first enemy of international security. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11) led to a more clear perception of the threat of terrorism. Terrorism has become the most acute issue after this incident, and maintains the considerable attention of the international community until now.

After 9/11 terrorist attack, NATO instantly expressed support for U.S. For the first time NATO activated the Article 5, which envisaged the collective protection of member states at risk. The purpose of this action was not only America fighting against terrorism. Europe joined the events of 9/11. The fight against terrorism became the mainstay of EU member states.

While we start talking about the factor of hybrid war in the modern era, let us see what the existing theories and their authors are saying about the hybrid war. In general, there are two basic mental approaches around the hybrid war. Some researchers think that a "hybrid war" is a reality that needs to be understood. They think that this is separate from the traditional and non-traditional possibilities of creating a war, although it includes both. According to the second part of the researchers, the "hybrid war" by its content consists of the fact that it is not new for the stories of creating a war, does not need branches and is easily described with the help of comprehension of the historical perspective. In general, it can be said that the vast majority of researchers agree that in the form of creating a modern war, there are novices that need attention. The main question is how new this phenomenon is in the framework of the historical perspective.

At present, the term "hybrid war" has a significant place in the political dictionary. Over the past decade, a new military strategy has become more relevant in the world political arena.

In the Euro-Atlantic space, the number of conflicts that are not part of the Western category of war is growing. We can say that the analysis of these conflicts show the modern idea of a hybrid war, in which we see an intentional combination of forms of war to achieve strategic goals.

Modern American military analyst of conflicts, Frank Hoffman in various forms of analysis of hybrid threats defines as follows: "hybrid threats if the enemy at the same time uses conventional weapons, irregular tactics of terror-ism and criminal behavior, as well as a combination of military operations to achieve political goals."5

Military experts of the United States during the XX century introduced the concept of military planning together with the concept of "hybrid threats" and, consequently, the new concept of "hybrid wars" - a form of warfare that includes different composition, means, and level of training and characteristic of forces - was created. However, what makes a hybrid challenge the new phenomenon is the growing importance of non-military means. This is a modern form of war, which focuses primarily on achieving strategic goals without physical confrontation, especially at the initial stage of the conflict.

Conventional (regular) warfare is, according to NATO’s definition, warfare where regular opponents, officially enlisted as states, are engaged and regular tactics and activities are used, while respecting international treaties, conventions and laws.

Irregular warfare, according to available NATO’s definitions, represents a warfare that denotes a form of conflict, where one or more protagonists adopt irregular methods. Additionally, “irregular troops are any combatants not formally enlisted in the armed forces of a nation-state or other legally constituted entity.” Other definitions describe it as “a violent struggle among state and nonstate actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. Irregular warfare favours indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will. ”Moreover, irregular opponents are unlikely to adhere to recognized treaties and international conventions. On the other hand, they are likely to rely on local support, fight in the place they live and they are often hard to distinguish from local civilians. The irregular opponents’ tactic will often include undermining and eroding target’s will and determination. The tactic also includes avoiding regular decisive deployment of national forces, and if necessary, then preferably under the terms and circumstances chosen by the irregular opponents.

Hybrid warfare in NATO’s view is a violent conflict applying combination and simultaneous use of conventional and irregular warfare, involving both state and non-state actors, used adaptively in pursuit of their objectives and not limited to physical battlefield or territory. Each attack contains its own combinations and mutations of the two and targets further aspects of state and society to undermine it and reach its goals. Hybrid warfare can be employed in conflicts not only by states and armed forces but also by a variety of actors beyond the authority of states. (Such as terrorist or extremist groups.) Even though the phenomenon is hardly new, what is new and surprising is the “scale of use and exploitation of old tools in new ways.”6

**[Omit Fig. 1]**

Hybrid methods of warfare, such as propaganda, deception, sabotage and other non-military tactics have long been used to destabilize adversaries. What is new about attacks seen in recent years is their speed, scale and intensity, facilitated by rapid technological change and global interconnectivity. NATO has a strategy on its role in countering hybrid warfare and stands ready to defend the Alliance and all Allies against any threat, whether conventional or hybrid.

Highlights

- The primary responsibility to respond to hybrid threats or attacks rests with the targeted nation.

- NATO is prepared to assist any Ally against hybrid threats as part of collective defense. The Alliance has developed a strategy on its role in countering hybrid warfare to help address these threats.

- In July 2018, NATO leaders agreed to set up counter-hybrid support teams, which provide tailored targeted assistance to Allies upon their request, in preparing for and responding to hybrid activities.

- NATO is strengthening its coordination with partners, including the European Union, in efforts to counter hybrid threats.

- NATO’s Joint Intelligence and Security Division has a hybrid analysis branch, that helps improve situational awareness.

- It also actively counters propaganda – not with more propaganda, but with facts – online, on air and in print7 .

Hybrid threats include cyber-attacks, disinformation, economic pressure, the destruction of non-permanent armed forces and the use of regular forces, which is of military and non-military importance. The most important work of NATO is the prevention and destruction of hybrid attacks (the scale and frequency of which has greatly increased in recent years) and it does not matter whether it comes from government or non-state bodies. Hybrid methods first blur the boundary between peace and war and begin to be a problem for NATO. Since 2015, NATO has begun to fight with this warfare. To this end, NATO will prepare the Alliance and Allies to the extent that they can provide it all. For constant readiness, NATO continually gathers, exchanges and evaluates information to ensure any necessary activity. An integrated intelligence and security unit at NATO Headquarters assists this process. The hybrid analysis department provides maximum information on hybrid threats. Together with the abovementioned, NATO also supports allied in civic preparedness and response to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) phenomena; protects critical infrastructure, strategic communications, and energy security, combats terrorism, and also provides cyber defense, which is very important. To implement all of the above, it is very important to conduct trainings and checks, which will make the fight against hybrid threats much effective

NATO can hold up hybrid threats much faster and more agile, and each time it improves preparedness for the fight and the decision-making process and the management of defense and control. It also shows that the Alliance is also strong in political and military efficiency and in a quick decision-making process. In the event that the struggle becomes impracticable, NATO, with its speed and flexibility, at any time and in any place protects its allies from any attacks.

To strengthen and improve the fight against hybrid threats, NATO continues to cooperate with Finland, Sweden, Ukraine and the European Union. The European Union and NATO have especially strengthened their cooperation against cyber-attacks and are successfully conducting this process.

For better experience, centres of excellence (international research centres) provide the alliance with more knowledge at the national or multinational level.

In October 2017, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, together with the European Union Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini, opened the European Centre of Excellence for Combating Hybrid Threats in Finland, which supports 14 countries to improve their capabilities and preparedness to counter hybrid threats8 .

New Security Challenges: The Emergence of ‘Hybrid Threats’ as Challenges to Peace and Security

Multimodal, low intensity, kinetic as well as non-kinetic threats to international peace and security, including cyber war, asymmetric conflict scenarios, global terrorism, piracy, transnational organized crime, demographic challenges, resource security, retrenchment from globalization, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction were identified and labelled by NATO as ‘Hybrid Threats’, as threats ‘posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives’

Having identified these threats, NATO undertook work on creating a comprehensive conceptual framework, a Capstone Concept, which was to provide a legal framework for identifying and categorizing such threats within the wider frame of possible multi-stakeholder responses. In 2011, NATO’s Allied Command Transformation (ACT) supported by the U.S. Joint Forces Command Joint Irregular Warfare Centre (USJFCOM JIWC) and the U.S. National Defense University (NDU) conducted specialized workshops related to ‘Assessing Emerging Security Challenges in the Globalized Environment (Countering Hybrid Threats [CHT]) Experiment’.

These workshops took place in Brussels, Belgium, and Tallinn, Estonia, and aimed at identifying possible threats and discussing some key implications when countering such risks and challenges. The findings of the workshops were published in the ACT’s final report and recommendations in 2011.

Hybrid threats faced by NATO and its non-military partners require a comprehensive approach allowing a wide spectrum of responses, be it kinetic and non-kinetic by military and non-military actors. Such a comprehensive response will have to be in partnership with other stakeholders, such as international and regional organizations as well as representatives of business and commerce. However, due to a lack of financial resources in general, and an absence of the political will to create necessary ‘smart defence’ capabilities among its member states, NATO decided in June 2012 to cease the work on CHT at its organizational level while encouraging its member states and associated NATO Excellence Centres to continue working on hybrid threats9 .

At present, information warfare is the main component of the war, which means influencing the masses through access to the media, getting support for some idea and making the client's policy. Information warfare often includes informative, propagandistic, psychological, and cyber components and the characteristic of the "hybrid war" is the use of integrated financial resources, material resources and hidden military means.

A new type of war in the North Atlantic alliance, the "hybrid war" that unites all elements of a new strategy, is called tactics, when military facilities are not used. The war contains elements of propaganda and disinformation, as well as forced use of economic pressure and Special Forces. This kind of war is referred to as "soft power". Today, the main component of the war is "informational war", which means influencing the masses through access to the media, getting support for some idea and making a client's policy. "Informative war" often combines information-propaganda, psychological and cybercrime.

A vivid example of such a conflict is the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The appearance of Russian militaries in Crimea without the marking signs ("hidden faces, hidden management and controls") directly means the secretive use of Special Forces, which is one of the main elements of this kind of war. The use of such forces, which do not have any marks, in military opera- tions, allows Moscow to carry out an active campaign of rejection, aiming to mask its military intervention. Russian television is actively using militarist propaganda to mitigate and justify aggression

It is worth noting the cyber-attack on Ukraine. Russia's actions against Ukraine are a good example of how cyber operations can be integrated into conventional military operations. Cyber-attack and anti-state propaganda campaigns of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict were carried out by DDoS attacks against Ukrainian media and government organizations, as well as on NATO and NGO sites. In addition, Russian communications intelligence used the data on the Internet to determine the location of the Ukrainian military units in eastern Ukraine.

Former NATO advisor on security issues, General Frank Van Kappen, was one of the Western analysts who described the Russian-Ukrainian conflict as a "hybrid war" on 26 April 2014.

It is possible to say that the "hybrid war" theory of the Russian-Ukraine conflict has been created. This type of war has already been recognized as "hybrid war" - one of the major challenges, confirming a new strategy against the threats by NATO in December 2015. As NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said at a meeting of the NATO Foreign Ministers in Brussels, the Alliance will agree with the EU in implementing a new strategy, as the hybrid war contains both military and civilian elements. The emergence of a hybrid war as a new form of conflict fundamentally alters the existing landscape and provides many questions about the possibilities of security systems10 .

Finally, we can say that "Information War" is one of the most important threats of the XXI century, which threatens international security in addition to internal state relations. This can be used that support the recent history of the Russian Federation from the "information war" as the use of technology (2008) and Ukraine (2015-2016 years) against. Briefly, let's review the results of intelligence impact on the national security system of Georgia in the summer of 2008. Analysis of events allows us to assume that its northern neighbour used not only traditional ways of attack - by land, sea and air, but also implied the fourth, relatively new, but the most effective way of attack in terms of information, including cyber-space. According to the report published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia in August 2009, the Russian citizens and their sympathizers on 7-16 August 2008 carried out a coordinated attack that destroyed dozens of important web pages, including the web pages of the President, Defence Minister, National Bank of Georgia and other state agencies. Turns out, that cyber- space protection (including the threat of a timely response to the propaganda) in terms of intelligence and counterintelligence measures completely collapsed.

The stability of national security depends much on each individual component of international security. One of the major and general components in the world today are considered the danger coming from asymmetric threats and hybrid war, which seriously threaten the national security and strategic interests of the states. The world faces a number of challenges that cannot be solved without a united effort. Therefore, with the purpose of prevention of similar threats and minimization of the risks, it is necessary for states to take appropriate steps toward cooperation, where collective security is granted with big significance and the necessity for forming alliances, increasing the effectiveness of international organizations, defending the international security system and protecting of global security occur. NATO plays an important role in tackling existing threats, has a strategic concept and takes preventive measures to combat threats. NATO has a variety of approaches, which are brought forward in its new conceptual documents, to ease the existing challenges and threats.

Security is especially important in the era of globalization, when economization, democratization, informatization creates unprecedented opportunities for development, but at the same time makes the international relations system more vulnerable against challenges such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction to use.

Conclusion

The increasing popularity of the use of asymmetric threats and hybrid operations in more and more parts of conflict areas rise questions how to adopt traditional Western conventional warfare so that it is able to face new challenges of the 21st century. The future conflicts will however no longer be possible to categorise only as conventional or irregular, state or non-state. NATO has mechanisms, means to combat actively asymmetric, and hybrid threats. The world is facing global threats, risks and challenges that make international security vulnerable with the development of new technologies. The development of technologies in the XXI century has brought many benefits to the society, but in terms of intelligence and "informational war" for its implementation, it has led to many threats. The security trends and new challenges play a major role in the establishment of a new system of international relations. After the Cold War, NATO's successful transformation and regulation of non-traditional security threats is the basic prerequisite for the globalization of the international role of the alliance.

Asymmetric threats and hybrid warfare affect the global security environment, which makes the global security environment vulnerable to modern threats. Despite global changes in the world, NATO has managed to establish peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. After the end of the Cold War, when the main enemy of the Warsaw military bloc was disintegrated, there was the illusion that NATO had exhausted its function and could have dissolved. NATO underwent a transformation in the post-Cold War period, which significantly strengthened the Alliance and helped stabilize the balance of the power in the world. Today, NATO successfully cope with new challenges and threats of the 21st century and makes a significant contribution to the international security system.

### AT: Hybrid War K---Perm Do Both

#### “Hybrid threats” bring criticism of modern power into the open.

Maria Mälksoo 18, Senior Lecturer in International Security at the Brussels School of International Studies at the University of Kent, 2018, “Countering hybrid warfare as ontological security management: the emerging practices of the EU and NATO,” European Security, Vol. 27, Issue 3, pp. 374-392, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09662839.2018.1497984>

Conclusion

This article has brought the notion of OS to bear on the thus far heavily policy-oriented hybrid warfare literature. As hybrid threats epitomise ontological insecurity, NATO and the EU’s synergistic discourse and emerging practice on countering the hybrid menace emerges as an attempt at the institutionalisation of their organisational OS-seeking. Tackling the hybrid challenges of the day in apparent unison further provides NATO and the EU a silver lining of a tightened cooperation between the two organisations. Further research could map the complex interactions between the OS-seeking strategies of these distinct intergovernmental institutions and their member states/societies with regard to countering hybrid warfare. It would be interesting to investigate, for example, how the traditional lines of division within the European community along the more Russia-friendly and Russia-wary countries might tap into the institutional dynamics of hybrid threat management of the EU and NATO. Moreover, the newly established special sub-institutions to confront hybrid threats within the EU along with the organisationally unaffiliated Centre of Excellence could themselves develop their own identities, OS drives and placating routines, potentially generating organisational fragmentation and inter-agency tensions instead of bolstering the OS of the Union as a whole (cf. Steele 2017).

With regard to the ethical drawbacks of effective hybrid threat management, such an endeavour points at the problematic prospect of compromising the already fuzzy distinction between politics and war – as according to the hybrid warfare paradigm, all politics becomes reduced to the potential build-up phase for a full-blown confrontation. In that sense, hybrid warfare is close to the criteria of “minimal wars, which consist in merely threatening the enemy with negotiations held in reserve” (Clausewitz 1976, 604, emphasis in the original). The alleged “minimality” of such a way of warfare nonetheless has considerable potential to induce broad and deep securitisation of various public policy processes in the Western societies and their supranational organisations in question. Hybrid warfare and the emerging institutionalisation of its countering practices highlight the paradox of defending democratic security communities, as the efficacy of such defence might in fact be detrimental to some of the core organising principles of democracy.

An alternative approach would be to argue that hybrid warfare, and the countering practices it is generating, have simply brought the nature of the modern power out into the open. As Foucault maintains in his Society Must Be Defended, liberal “civil peace” must be understood as a secret form of war, for “war is the principle and motor of the exercise of political power” in general (Foucault 2003, p. 18). Viewed from such a perspective, hybrid warfare and its emerging management practices by the EU and NATO enable us to see what politics is allegedly all about anyway – “the continuation of war by other means” (Foucault 2003, p. 15). For the EU and NATO, hybrid warfare embodies not just the unsettling of the politics/war distinction but raises the fundamental question about the practical distinguishability of their physical and ontological security in the first place.

### AT: Hybrid War K---AT: Terminological Ambiguity

#### Hybrid war is not ambiguous, and there isn’t a universal formula to describe its contents.

Andriy Tyushka 19, Senior Research Fellow in the European Neighbourhood Policy Chair, 2019, “Hybrid War(fare): The Challenge of Contagion,” 2019, Torun International Studies, Issue 12, pp. 5–29, http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-c63913a7-9115-4d4a-8c3e-a620eeb5d495

Since the early 2000s, the rise of the ‘hybrid warfare’ term can hardly go unnoticed. From a new term in U.S. military and operational code, introduced with the 2005 National Defence Strategy Review, to a consolidating phenomenon in strategic studies and a proliferating buzzword in public and political debates, especially in Europe, the notion of ‘hybrid warfare’ seems to be living a life of its own. Coined by Hoffman (2009) as a way to describe modern fanatical fighting styles, supported by new technologies and deployed in the shadow of state agency (no full deployments of army, no uniforms – and no need to obey the laws of armed conflict), the ‘hybrid warfare’ term is now used and abused in many possible ways – including the cases in which it is misleadingly equated with the idea of ‘hybrid war’, understood as something less than war. The lack of clarity as to what is what is particularly disturbing as the term(s) virally spread in public and political debates as well as academia. Hardly any security journal or a strategic studies event save an effort in addressing the ‘complexity’ of the notion. Some find it fancy and meaningless, some – revolutionary but evasive in its conceptualization (cf. e.g. a critique of the literature by Johnson (2018)). The term seems to be broad and flexible enough to encompass many things at once – and different things in different contexts, wherefore it is often used as a catch-all term for all non-linear threats. And yet, the idea is rather simple: modern technology has enhanced the known modes of warfare as well as it enabled the discovery of new battlefields, methods and ‘fighters’ – beyond armed troops. NATO’s 2014 Wales Summit declaration described ‘hybrid warfare threats’ as ‘a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary and civilian measures [that] are employed in highly integrated design’ (NATO 2014). As such, they ‘blend the lethality of state conflict with the fanatical and protracted fervor of irregular warfare’ (Hoffman 2009: 37). The notion is therefore not constrained to a particular set of fighting methods or a particular agent of war – it can equally be deployed by any state and non-state actor and will hardly be deployed in precisely the same manner twice – and, thus, can hardly be ‘calculated’. Critiquing Fox and Rossow’s (2017) attempt at ‘making sense of Russian hybrid warfare’ on their sixteen-page working paper published by the AUSA Institute of Land Warfare, Ricks (2017) laments that ‘[t]hey offer a series of unsatisfying summaries of other experts’ unsatisfying claims, and come up with an unwieldy version of “hybrid war = information operations + unconventional + cyber + conventional, spread out along an axis of covert and overt operations”’. This can be said about much of the literature on the subject trying to find and ‘patent’ the universal formula of hybrid warfare applicable in any context and in any part of the world – which does not exist, of course: every instance of this evolving warfare campaign has its specific sources, strategic and operational goals, battlefield(s) and tactics – all within a particular hybrid war strategy.

What can be said with (a greater) certainty, is that this twenty-first century art of warfare is multi-modal, multi-theatric and multi-agential. Hybrid wars begin long before the first shots are fired, if at all. With the use of both overt and especially covert means such as external financial and organizational support of democratic tools (referenda, elections, other public participation and influence campaigns) or less ‘visible’ information or cyber operations in target countries, the challenge is to instantly and firmly attribute an action, or a result thereof, to a hostile foreign agency. Both public debates, policymaking processes, digital transactions or physical battlespace may become theatres of warfare in hybrid strategies. In hybrid warfare, conventional military operations are not excluded – they just form the latest operation level. Before that moment, the place of uniformed soldiers is taken by soldiers without insignia (special forces, private mercenaries), astroturfed irregulars, troll and bot ‘armies’, cyber hackers, criminal racketeers, captured or corrupt elites, propagandists, psychologists and by manipulated media. In their 2012 book, Williamson Murray and Peter R. Mansoor define hybrid warfare as a ‘conflict involving a combination of conventional military forces and irregulars (guerrillas, insurgents, and terrorists), which could include both state and nonstate actors, aimed at achieving a common political purpose’ (Mansoor 2012: 2). Thereby, ‘[i]rregular forces need not be centrally directed, although in many cases they form part of a coherent strategy used to oppose an invader or occupation force’ (Mansoor 2012: 3). The range of ‘hybrid actors’ is, too, context-dependent and may include any combination from the variety of interpenetrated state and non-state agents – from insurgent or terrorist networks, organized crime groups, social groups (such as clans, tribes or ethnic groups), and ideologically or religiously motivated organizations, all of which may be backed covertly, or overtly, by states and/or legitimate businesses (Schroefl and Kaufman 2014: 867).

### AT: Russia K---2AC

#### Our securitization was good AND no generic links

Samuel Carruthers 19, Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University, “Countering Disinformation: A Case Study of Government Responses to Russian Information Warfare,” Master’s Thesis, 2019, Institute of Political Science, https://dspace.cuni.cz/bitstream/handle/20.500.11956/110029/120343310.pdf?sequence=1

Ethics of Securitization

As discussed in the literature review, securitization is most often discussed as a ‘negative’ concept for several reasons. First of all, securitization argues that the normal democratic procedures for decision makers be abandoned in favor of a streamlined decision-making process handled by a small elite that dictate policy on security related issues. Critics assert that securitization is something largely inconsistent with the openness and accountability that liberal democratic systems value, therefore securitization is something ‘negative’ to be avoided in societies that place true importance on these values. But what if the issue being securitized is a direct threat to those very democratic procedures themselves. Are there issues that deserve to be securitized for the common good, and can government policies have a positive impact on society when these issues are securitized?

Experts on disinformation warn of the dire potential that such propaganda can have on a society, and argue that liberal democracies are especially vulnerable to them. New technologies have made the 21st century into a completely different type of information space than its predecessor. The internet has decentralized and democratized the flow of information to the point where somebody sitting on a laptop at home may be able to make the same impact with a blog as a major newspaper with an article. With less institutional control and traditional media gatekeeping on the flow of information, the internet is a truly democratic platform.148 These democratic processes; freedom of information, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and free elections; are precisely what make liberal democracies so vulnerable to disinformation and propaganda. With knowledge of these asymmetric vulnerabilities, the Kremlin consciously aims “to take advantage of the free flow of information in a democratic society, the effect of that information on public opinion, and the electoral mechanisms through which public opinion determines a country’s leadership.”149

One foundation of a democratic society is the ability to make decisions in the public forum based on shared truth. When voters go to the polls, they may make a judgement on which candidate or which proposal they favor based on the information that they have consumed. Traditionally, they may differ on what course of action may be the best way to handle a problem, but there is an agreed upon reality that is a matter of fact; it is shared. Disinformation, from Russia and other actors hostile to the West, promotes falsehoods to the point where society cannot have a shared truth. Imagine four people each with a different source of news. One reads the New York Times, one watches Fox News, one reads Breitbart, and one watches RT. Each one of these people will not only come to radically different conclusions about what solutions are best for society, but also about what the basic facts of reality are in the first place. One person may be out on the streets protesting the disappearance and rape of a young Russian girl by Muslim migrants, while the next person may be aware that the story is a complete falsehood that never happened to begin with. Russian efforts in the EU show that these situations are not a hysterical fear-mongering reaction to new technologies and new sources of information, but that they are already a reality.

Disinformation creates a situation where people can have opposing realities because the information they consume is so radically different from that of their neighbor. Critical theory in international relations warns that securitization subverts democratic decision-making processes, but disinformation destroys these very democratic processes that are so fundamental for liberal democratic societies to function the way they are intended. It is impossible to imagine normal democratic processes solving these types of problems when those processes are being eroded by propaganda to the point where Western societies may no longer have normal democratic processes if this trend continues. In order to maintain these democratic norms, securitization may be a necessary process, even a ‘positive’ concept that can yield positive results and protect the democratic values that have propelled the European project into existence.

From the perspective of states, it is difficult to see why they would not wish to securitize the issue of Russian disinformation more. States tend to place an emphasis on matters of physical and territorial security over all else, which is why issues such as nuclear weapons, or rising military power in China, or international terrorism are prioritized in terms of security policy. States’ desire for physical security explains why these issues tend to be some of the most securitized political issues, with decisions made regarding military policy in Afghanistan by military panels rather than public referendums. Walt, arguing from the realist perspective, argues that states “place particular emphasis on the preservation of the state’s territorial integrity and the physical safety of its inhabitants.” 150 Material harm is of the utmost importance while more ethereal issues, like democratic procedures, freedom of the information space, and societal resilience towards propaganda are not prioritized in the same way. Disinformation has threatened some of the building blocks of democratic societies throughout the EU, and if these democratic systems fail, it isn’t difficult to imagine that physical security would come under threat as well. In the case of Spain, the issue of the Spanish government’s territorial sovereignty over Catalonia was attacked by Russian disinformation, exacerbating the political wounds of the independence referendum. The disinformation campaign questioned Spain’s fundamental right to exist in its current form, yet Spain did not place the integrity of their media space as an important security issue despite this. There needs to be a shift in the importance and value that European democracies place on the fundamental democratic principles that allow their system to flourish. They should be prioritized with the same importance that states place on more traditional measures of power. Securitization of disinformation with the liberal democratic system and democratic processes themselves as the referent object, has the potential to have a more ‘positive’ outcome than emphasis on hard power, or immigration, or other issues that contribute to the ‘negative’ conception of securitization.

Successful Securitization and Societal Resilience

In the case studies it is clear that some European countries have securitized Russian disinformation while some have not. Namely, the United Kingdom and Lithuania have successfully securitized disinformation, while Spain, Germany, and the supranational institutions of the EU have not securitized disinformation. Those that have not securitized, have identified Russian disinformation as a perceived security threat and have several securitizing actors currently at play. The potential audiences of the securitizing speech acts, those within the security apparatus, NGOs, think-tanks, and even the wider public of these countries have accepted that Russian disinformation is a security threat that warrants greater action by their governments. Thus far, they have not taken measures that could by any means be considered extraordinary, having allocated a relatively small number of resources and minimal effort towards combating disinformation, and therefore cannot be considered to have securitized the issue. These countries, and the EU, are possibly in the early stages of the process of securitization, though this does not necessarily mean that they will complete the process by taking more extraordinary measures against disinformation. In fact, there could be a reversal and disinformation could slip back into the realm of normal politics and become desecuritized.

Some clear trends emerge in the countries who have successfully securitized disinformation. First, propaganda narratives have a weaker effect on society when disinformation has been securitized, failing to have their desired impact and cause major rifts in the public. They also show that securitization of disinformation is possible without implicitly violating democratic norms of freedom of speech and open access to information. This becomes clear in looking at the contrast between Lithuania’s countermeasures against disinformation compared to those of Germany and Spain. In Germany, the Lisa case was dealt with almost exclusively via the normal criminal and legal channels, with the police investigation into Lisa’s accusations of kidnap and rape by migrants and police handling of most public statements related to the controversy. 151 They have begun to enact minor laws that aim at punishing hate speech and disinformation when posted on popular social media platforms as well.152 Spanish authorities have started task forces devoted to alerting the national government when disinformation narratives start to dominate a story online. 153 Spanish and German officials at the higher levels of national authority in their respective foreign and defense departments gave minimal statements regarding the controversies, and have preferred to continue dealing with Russia through dialogue over more overt confrontation that could complicate communication. Both Germany and Spain have taken a more reactive approach to countering disinformation, choosing to deal with it on a case-by-case basis as an incident unfolds.

Lithuania has taken similar messages to alert national authorities on dangerous narratives as they develop online, but it has also taken extraordinary measures that encompass a broader scope. The Lithuanian government has supported efforts at every level of society; political, economic, educational, and cultural. 154 Their wide spread programs focus not only on dealing with each case as it emerges, but also on strengthening the fundamental resilience of society at the source through teaching media literacy in secondary schools, funding Russian language media for the susceptible minority group, and sensitizing the public to the dangers of propaganda by making disinformation a security issue linked to the physical security and existence of the state.155 Their bans on Russian media channels during disinformation campaigns, while possibly construed as violations of a free press, are necessary to prevent media from spreading out right falsehoods. The news media, both Lithuanian and Russian language, should be held accountable and has a responsibility to act as a gatekeeper of the truth. Many media channels in Lithuania have voluntarily chosen to follow such a route, choosing not to report on ‘fake’ news stories that can be detrimental to society by becoming ‘real’ news through regurgitation by legitimate media outlets. It is important not to confuse the right of free speech of an individual with that of a news organization with ties to a foreign country, and such acts should not be considered violations of democratic norms when it comes to protecting the fundamental values of democracy.

The countermeasures taken by a country undoubtedly play a role in the impact disinformation narratives may have in that country. With Lithuania’s ‘successful’ securitization of disinformation, fake stories and attempts at propaganda have often fallen on deaf ears, with little real success. Lithuania’s overarching, comprehensive strategy at countering disinformation is the reason the NATO rape allegations failed to cause a large disruption in the news cycle.156 This strong contrast is seen with Germany, where the story of a rape by migrants of a young Russian girl caused an uproar and led to protests in Berlin and a diplomatic row with Moscow. 157 Spain also fell short, with Russian disinformation exacerbating a contentious independence referendum in Catalonia and influencing public opinion at home and abroad on the status of Catalan autonomy. Government policies that fail to securitize disinformation and alert society to the dangers of propaganda lead to false stories having explosive consequences.

Both Spain and Germany’s strategies of dealing with disinformation narratives as they arise is simply not effective enough. The state can spend time and resources trying to discredit every fake news story that finds its way to the public forum, but there will always be one to take its place. It is like fire prevention; a fire alarm can be an important part of fire prevention, alerting the fire department to come extinguish a blaze. But there are more important measures as well, such as building structures with fire resistant materials, or teaching people what to do in case of a fire. These types of continuous measures, like the policies Lithuania pursues, make society more resilient and prevent disinformation from causing a fire in the first place.

Policies aimed at improving societal resilience towards disinformation are being utilized in other countries with successful outcomes as well. Latvia uses a sweeping media literacy program from an early age to improve critical thinking in its citizens.158 Finland, a country with a long history of hostility with Russia, uses similar programs, emphasizing not only the need to publicly correct false narratives, but also the importance of creating a positive counternarrative to disinformation that is repeatedly applied to offer an alternative vision.159 These countermeasures only appear in countries that have securitized disinformation, as Finland and Latvia have similar histories as Lithuania and treat disinformation in similar terms, and they are much more promising than government authorities attempting to play catchup with internet trolls and false stories.

Internationalization of Countermeasures

Another key conclusion comes from the other case of successful securitization in the United Kingdom. The UK, in its securitization of disinformation following the assassination attempt on Sergei Skripal, internationalized the threat by creating a set of countermeasures that could be implemented along with its allies. The UK successfully convinced 20 allies to expel Russian diplomats in a coordinated effort at punishing Putin’s regime for the incident and the subsequent disinformation surrounding it.160 Theresa May, as a securitizing actor, not only convinced her public in the UK of disinformation as a security threat, but convinced the international community that such behavior “threatens the security of us all.” 161 Compared with the minimal Spanish attempts at coordinating counter disinformation at the EU level, and German attempts to keep the Lisa Case under the authority of Berlin’s police department, British efforts at securitizing their incident by bringing it to the attention of the international community and launching a unified response were highly successful.

This lesson of internationalization should be critical for the EU to deal with disinformation. Securitization needs to take place not only at the national level of member states, but also at the supranational level of the EU as an institution. The EU itself is under threat of Russian disinformation just as much as individual member states, with experts warning of further regionalization of Europe and the EU after Brexit. In this critical time for the continued existence of the EU, the threat of disinformation “requires new international instruments to manage it.” 162 Thus far, member states have shown a preference for taking individual routes in order to deal with disinformation. The importance of joint initiatives could be especially important during elections, a time in which the ability of national and EU authorities to cooperate is critical. During the European elections of 2019 for example, consisting of four days of simultaneous elections across 28 individual member states, “the failure of one government to properly mitigate disinformation efforts threatens the credibility of the entire electoral process.” 163 This problem of coordination cannot be understated, as some countries do not even have their own systems in place to monitor disinformation, allowing “local and national actors to spread fake news more freely” and leaving these countries defenseless against propaganda.164

It is essential for the EU to act as a bloc and start joint initiatives to counter disinformation. Russian efforts, as shown in the case studies, are not exclusive to one particular area of Europe, but threaten all member states. Issues Russia chooses to target; the migrant crisis, espionage, the use of chemical weapons in a member state, the solidarity and legitimacy of the NATO, and even the territorial sovereignty of some countries; should alarm every single member of the EU. These issues are not unique to one country, but they are issues that countries even outside of the EU are currently confronting. Europe is targeted as a bloc, and therefore it should respond as a bloc. Such a response, as seen in with the UK’s diplomatic expulsion, has a larger impact as a bloc rather than individually. Division will only encourage more provocations. Acting on a unified front in securitizing disinformation and reacting with countermeasures will do much more to potentially deter Russia from continuing down the same path in its relations with Europe. The EU needs to stop hesitating, and start throwing its full weight on the economic, political, and informational fronts.

‘Positive’ Securitization

The two trends discussed in the sections above also show that disinformation can be securitized without wide violations of democratic norms and exclusionary tactics towards Russian minorities in Europe. By arguing for securitization, this paper is not arguing that democratic principles should be thrown out in favor of extraordinary measures that subvert the democratic process, indeed the democratic process is of the utmost importance because these principles are the referent object of a European push to securitize disinformation. And according to polls in all of the countries involved in the case studies and the EU as a whole, the general public agrees that disinformation constitutes a security threat that could be detrimental to liberal democratic norms. Efforts like media literacy, cooperation with news organizations, and comprehensive strategies that deal with disinformation at every level of society are still extraordinary without necessarily violating democratic norms. These policies aim to sensitize the public to disinformation. They do not aim to monitor the public in a surveillance state and punish individual views that are unfavorable to European states. On the other hand, these policies are not afraid to prevent large news outlets from spreading lies that harm the ability to make democratic decisions based on shared truths. Diplomatic expulsion and unprecedented international cooperation on information issues are extraordinary measures taken without abuse of state power as in the War on Terror. Policies that aim to provide alternative news sources to Russian speaking minorities in Europe are not exclusionary ‘othering,’ but are inclusive and offer a broader, diverse, and more positive view of the Russian diaspora than as a monolithic fifth-column prone to side with Moscow and Putin’s regime over their new homes. These policies need to be inclusive to mitigate the risk of disinformation and the subsequent disillusion with European governments. A conscious, just policy of securitization of disinformation must take democratic principles, inclusion of diverse viewpoints, and the treatment of Russian minorities into account while avoiding the misuse of state power in order to succeed.

### AT: Russia K---AT: Threat Construction

#### The threat of hybrid warfare isn’t constructed---statements by Russian military officials prove the accuracy of our securitization

Lesley Kucharski 18, Research Assistant for The Center for Global Security Research, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, “Russian Multi-Domain Strategy against NATO: information confrontation and U.S. forward-deployed nuclear weapons in Europe,” 2018, https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/4Feb\_IPb\_against\_NATO\_nuclear\_posture.pdf

\*IPb= informatsionnoe protivoborstvo=Russian information warfare

While traditional military measures are still considered the hallmark of inter-state conflict, Russian strategic thinking is increasingly highlighting the strategic importance of non-military, asymmetric, and indirect measures, including military and non-military IPb operations, in its multi-domain approach to conflict in the 21 st century. According to the Chief of the Russian General Staff, Valeriy Gerasimov, IPb is the only means of conflict resolution which spans across all stages of modern inter-state conflict and encompasses both military and non-military means (see Figure 2).23 The complexity of its role further increases during the initial stages of kinetic conflict operations. Reflecting a desire to minimize military confrontation during these stages, the ratio of non-military and military measures is described as 4:1.24

The novelty of Gerasimov’s perception of modern conflict (often described as the Gerasimov Doctrine) and the role of information in conflict resolution should not be overstated.25 The literature on Russian IPb emphasizes that contemporary information operations demonstrate that “the Kremlin is falling on a time-honoured strategy in its propaganda war.”26 Indeed, Russian leaders have operationalized information for strategic purposes since at least the Revolution. The Soviet government developed and systematically applied active measures and deception techniques that were intensive, persistent in times of war and peace, worldwide in scope, and centrally coordinated in a way that was not mirrored by Western governments.27 Informational psychological operations were coordinated by the political leadership and implemented by the state security apparatus, specifically the KGB (and its predecessors) and to a lesser extent the GRU, both domestically and internationally.28 Initially these operations were orchestrated on an ad-hoc basis, but by the late 1970s, an institutionalized system for coordinating and implementing them had been fully established. These overt and covert, non-military and military information operations were referred to by Soviet intelligence services as active measures. In 1982, the CIA described active measures as “an unconventional adjunct to traditional diplomacy. They are quintessentially an offensive instrument of Soviet policy.”29

The 1970s saw an organizational restructuring within the KGB and CPSU that signified an increase in the perceived strategic importance of active measures. According to a Ladislav Bittman, a former active measures agent for Czechoslovak intelligence (one of the most successful and loyal satellites of the KGB) who defected to the West, this organizational change was the result of an evolution in the perceived strategic importance of active measures that unfolded in three stages after World War II.30 In the first stage (1945-1948), active measures were characterized by an ideological emphasis on communism. In the second stage (1948-1959), the Soviet Union sought to increase the efficacy of active measures by making them appear more objective. To achieve this, the Soviet Union dialed back the overt ideological emphasis of its propaganda and used communist front organizations and Soviet satellite intelligence services to conceal its role in coordinating active measures.

Bittman notes that the Soviet government valued active measures as secondary to intelligence collection in the first and second stages and that this hierarchy of values visibly reversed in the third stage, which began in 1959 with the establishment of a department of active measures within the First Chief Directorate of the KGB. Many Soviet satellite intelligence services soon established similar departments which carried out orders from the KGB in addition to their own operations. Throughout the 1970s the Soviet government formally established an institutionalized structure for coordinating and implementing active measures (see Figure 3). This process began in 1970 when the active measures department of the KGB was elevated to a special service called Special Service A within the First Chief Directorate. Special Service A was responsible for carrying out active measures which were coordinated by the International Department (ID) of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU). The ID assisted the Politburo in coordinating policy by liaising with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, military, Academy of Sciences, the KGB, and non-ruling foreign communist parties.31 In 1978, the CPSU established another department for coordinating active measures: The International Information Department (IID).32 The IID was responsible for improving the effectiveness of Soviet propaganda abroad and improving treatment of foreign affairs by domestic media. Service A of the KGB managed the implementation of active measures coordinated by the IID as it did for the ID.

When exploring the causal mechanisms behind the institutionalization of active measures, one cannot overstate the influence the anti-war movement in the United States during the Vietnam War had on Soviet strategic thinkers. The movement demonstrated the potential efficacy of exploiting peace movements and public opinion in democratic societies to achieve political and security objectives.33 The foundation for this strategy was embedded in Bolshevik and then Soviet strategic thought which embraced the Marxist-Leninist notion that the struggle for peace is constant and characterized by conflict.34

This same notion of constant conflict is reflected in Gerasimov’s chart, particularly with respect to the role of IPb, since it is the only means of conflict resolution which is applied across all phases of conflict. The role of IPb in the Gerasimov Doctrine should therefore be interpreted as an evolution enabled by technological innovation, globalization, and the changing nature of conflict rather than a revolution in Russian strategic thinking about conflict.

Contemporary Russian strategic thinking about IPb developed within the body of thought known as New Generation War [voyna novogo pokoleniya], or NGW. Sergei Chekinov and Sergei Bogdanov published the seminal article on this concept in 2013. Entitled “The Nature and Content of a New Generation War,” the piece describes thinking within the Russian Ministry of Defense about the nature and content of warfare in the 21st century as well as how to prepare for and emerge victorious from it. 35 NGW emphasizes the growing importance of non-military, asymmetric, and indirect means of conflict resolution over traditional military methods.36 The theory of victory reflects an effort to achieve reflexive control [refleksivnoe upravlenie] without resorting to the military subjugation of the adversary.37 Under NGW, traditional kinetic military measures are used only after non-military measures and non-kinetic military measures fail to achieve strategic objectives or de-escalate a conflict. Figure 4 provides a graphical illustration of NGW and the Gerasimov Doctrine.

Dima Adamsky provides a useful description of Russian NGW strategy using Western nomenclature while avoiding the cognitively and conceptually problematic terms such as hybrid warfare. Borrowing from the body of thought on cross-domain deterrence, he develops a concept called Russian cross-domain coercion. Cross-domain coercion “refers to the host of Russian efforts to deter and to compel adversaries by orchestrating soft and hard instruments of power across various domains, regionally and globally.” 38

NGW first arose as a way to think about Russian military policy in light of U.S. advances in high-precision, non-nuclear military technology and its impact on the nature of conflict in the 21st century. 39 U.S. operations in the First Gulf War and NATO operations in the Balkans during the Yugoslav wars were perceived by Russian strategic thinkers as a watershed in the evolution of conflict. The advanced military technology utilized by the U.S. and its allies allowed them to carry out military operations remotely and with high precision, thereby decreasing the need for the type and level of mobilization characteristic of previous conflicts of the 20th century while simultaneously increasing U.S. and NATO power projection. Russia, which was suffering through an economic crisis after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was not in a financial position to develop symmetric countermeasures to U.S. advancements in non-nuclear military capabilities. In light of this economic disadvantage, Russian strategic thinkers sought to conceptualize a theory and develop a strategy for countering U.S. conventional superiority using asymmetric, including non-military, and less costly methods.40 Chekinov and Bogdanov note that the importance of this intellectual effort was highlighted by President Putin during a speech to the Federal Assembly in 2006 when he remarked: “We must consider the plans and development trajectories of the armed forces in other countries. We must be aware of perspective innovations. However, we must not chase after quantitative indicators…Our response must be based upon intellectual superiority. It will be asymmetric and less costly.”41

Justification for the informational component of NGW was provided by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Color Revolutions, particularly those in the post-Soviet space, and Arab Spring.42 Chekinov and Bogdanov argue that U.S. information warfare techniques were a major factor contributing to the collapse of the Soviet Union.43 The perceived effectiveness of these techniques increased with the development of the Internet and social media. Russian strategic thinkers expressed alarm at the role of the Internet as a vehicle for undermining regime stability in the countries affected by the Color Revolutions and Arab Spring. They were further alarmed by Western financial, informational, and special operations support for anti-regime NGOs and political parties/movements in those countries. Such support, they contend, is a form of hybrid warfare that constitutes a violation of national sovereignty and is thus illustrative of Western aggression.

While condemning the use by adversaries of informational and other non-military, indirect techniques to undermine regime stability, Russia recognizes the strategic significance and costeffectiveness of such efforts in 21st century conflict and therefore incorporated them into its own strategy. Reflecting upon Western involvement in the conflicts in Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, and Ukraine, General Alexander Dvornikov, Commander of the Southern Military District and Commander of Russian Armed Forces in Syria when Russia began its military intervention, observed: “Now, aggressor states achieve geopolitical goals through a complex of non-military means which in several cases significantly exceed the effectiveness of military means. The primary objective is not the physical destruction of the adversary, but rather his complete submission to your will.”44 He further noted: “Modern armed conflict is acquiring a vast array of forms which, depending on the region and concrete situation, integrate separate elements into a unified approach. We [Russia] have taken account of this history, gained useful insights, and applied them to our operations in Syria.”

NGW identifies IPb as the primary tool in the Russian military and foreign policy toolkits for achieving victory in modern conflict as described by General Dvornikov, i.e. the submission of the adversary to one’s will rather than his complete military destruction. According to Chekinov and Bogdanov, “the means for exerting informational influence have reached a level of development whereby they are capable of resolving strategic objectives.”45 They further note: “In the ongoing revolution in information technologies, information and psychological warfare will largely lay the groundwork for victory.” Some Russian strategic thinkers predict that military actions in the information space will become the “deciding factor” in armed conflict.46

### AT: Russia K---1AR

#### Securitization of Russian disinformation is positive

Samuel Carruthers 19, Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University, “Countering Disinformation: A Case Study of Government Responses to Russian Information Warfare,” Master’s Thesis, 2019, Institute of Political Science, https://dspace.cuni.cz/bitstream/handle/20.500.11956/110029/120343310.pdf?sequence=1

\*ableist language changed

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to identify similar processes occurring throughout the EU by analyzing how four individual member states have approached the issue of disinformation. In looking at incidents of disinformation in the UK, Germany, Lithuania, and Spain, research was conducted to analyze the incidents themselves and how governments responded, placing that response into the wider context of securitization within those countries. It is clear that there is an ongoing process of securitization taking place in Europe around the issue of disinformation. Not all countries researched have demonstrated that disinformation has been fully securitized, but every country had elements of securitization taking place, such as securitizing actors and speech acts meant to draw attention to propaganda as an existential security threat. While these countries did show the initial factors in securitization occurring, they chose to deal with disinformation through the route of normal politics rather than extraordinary politics. It can be concluded that the level of securitization of Russian disinformation within a society, that is the treatment of propaganda and false narratives as a security threat and how deep a country is within the process of securitization, played a direct role in shaping the policies those countries pursued in order to counter disinformation.

Examining the different cases, the research showed how history, experience, and threat perceptions related to Russia influenced securitization of disinformation. The United Kingdom securitized Russian disinformation in the aftermath of a catalyst event, the attempted assassination of former GRU agent Sergei Skripal and the subsequent disinformation campaign in its aftermath. The UK government propelled disinformation to extraordinary politics in its diplomatic expulsion of Russian diplomats coordinated with its allies. Lithuania securitized Russian disinformation over a long period of time because of its complex history with Russia and the Soviet Union, and its experience of a slow barrage of disinformation since it regained independence. Due to decades of experience, Lithuania pursues a more comprehensive strategy at countering disinformation, which seeks to address the threat at multiple levels of society and multiple stages as false-narratives spread.

It was clear that other countries, and the EU as an organization, had not fully securitized Russian disinformation, although they showed signs they were in the process of securitization. Germany, in response to a young girl’s explosive accusations of rape in the context of the migrant crisis, showed a clear preference for dealing with disinformation through the normal political channels of Berlin’s police department. Spain took minimal responses through its foreign and defense ministries and is still in the early stages of instituting policies aimed at alerting the government to disinformation narratives. As a bloc, the EU also failed to enact extraordinary policies to counteract disinformation from Europe’s Eastern neighbor, with a lack of coordination between the individual member states and the supranational EU bodies.

While some countries have securitized disinformation, other have chosen a different route, and we can see how the different policies enacted by these countries can either protect society or make society more vulnerable to disinformation. Those countries that have securitized disinformation have also had the most success in countering it. Continuous policies that not only track disinformation narratives and discredit them as they emerge on a case-by-case basis, but also build resilience at the source through policy efforts in the social, cultural, educational, and political realm have proven more effective. Media literacy, Russian language programming, and public statements exposing false stories can all have an impact. Disinformation narratives have often failed to cause the same explosive consequences in those countries that have instituted comprehensive strategies to counter it. Internationalization of counterdisinformation policies, seeking solidarity and joint initiatives with like-minded allies, has also proven more effective cultivating societies that are less vulnerable to fake news. Diplomatic expulsions, online tracking, and coordinated alert systems have the potential to ensure that the more vulnerable countries in the EU do not let disinformation exert influence on political processes and thereby endanger the bloc as a whole.

This paper has also argued against ‘negative’ conceptions of securitization in relation to the issue of disinformation. It has warned that disinformation is indeed a security threat to liberal democracies in the West, with its ability to destroy foundations of shared truth and potentially ~~cripple~~ [destroy] democratic decision-making processes. While critical IR theorists believe securitization should be avoided to protect openness and accountability, and frame the process in a negative light, this paper has argued that securitization is a necessary protective measure and does not inherently lead to abuse of state power. Policies pursued by the case study countries that have successfully securitized disinformation prove that while still extraordinary, countermeasures against disinformation do not necessarily need to violate the democratic values they are meant to protect. These policies do not need to be exclusive towards Russian minorities, but can be inclusive and contribute to public life. If European countries and the EU as an institution value the democratic principles that govern their societies, a conscious, successful securitization of disinformation may be beneficial and even have ‘positive’ results. Viewing disinformation as a national security threat is the path forward for the EU to respond to Russia.

### AT: Psychoanalysis

#### Can’t scale up psychoanalysis – sweeps historic and cultural forces unique to state political units under the rug

R.D. Hinshelwood 16, Professor of Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Essex, 5/11/2016, Reflection or action And never the twain shall meet, https://freudconference.wordpress.com/2016/05/11/reflection-or-action-and-never-the-twain-shall-meet/

There is a major problem in using psychoanalysis in political activity. The unconscious individual influences and the external social ones are essentially different categories, and can be bridged conceptually only with some difficulty. I have been struck for some time by the conceptual divergence. In 1996, making an attempt to understand the convergence between a social (contemporary Marxist) explanation and an internalist, psychoanalytic explanation of human personality and experience, I noted that both paradigms are avowedly materialist; so,¶ Economic activity and bodily experiences create separate theories [but] they also generate separate superstructures – the world of social relations and the world of object relations respectively… [T]he two superstructures converge. They lean together and coincide At certain points, we have dealt with three of those points – oppression/repression, alienation/depersonalisation and commodity/identity (Hinshelwood 1996, p. 100-101).¶ In this Chapter, I return to this paradigm, and take further the alienation/depersonalisation point of convergence. The dialectical relations can be unpacked as several interactive cycles,¶ Group dynamics and the Labour Party¶ Back in the 1990s, I was part of a group that worked out some ideas which we might take to the Labour Party. You may remember that the dying regime of the Conservatives, Mrs Thatcher and John Major was hanging on, and with the election in 1997 coming up, the Labour Party was desperate to convince the electorate of its better policies. The idea was whether we could give an account of group dynamics which might be helpful to Labour to understand the way to create a more democratic society. At the time Labour were talking about ‘the third way’; somewhat vague, but it appeared that it might promote more measured attitudes in Society suggestive of depressive position thinking – ambivalence, considerateness towards everyone, and generally a reluctance towards the unrealistic perfectionism of ideologies. It seemed there could be a match between the political rhetoric and the study of unconscious group processes. In the event when we met a couple of people at Millbank, it was clear they were politely indifferent to what we were trying to present. Their interest was whether we had the secret of how to influence the electorate to vote for Labour. They wanted advice on their marketing. There seemed a radical disconnection between our earnest views about a more mature society, and their wish for effective marketing.¶ I have thought, over the years, about our naïvety. Obviously there is a potential for psychology to be used as a social and public instrument for manipulation, and later, I came across the writing of one of the founders of marketing and public relations, in the US back in the 1920s. He wrote,¶ If we understand the mechanism and motives of the group mind, is it not possible to control and regiment the masses according to our will without their knowing about it? (Bernays 1928, p, 71).¶ and¶ The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country (Bernays 1928, p.37).¶ I find this unpalatable. Shamefully, this author, a founder of this ‘invisible government’ as he called it, was Edward Bernays, Freud’s nephew. He, like Freud, was interested in the ‘unseen mechanisms’ at work in individuals – but for different purposes. ¶ Political change and psychoanalytic change¶ The aim of psychoanalysis is to change things. That is what patients want help with. The aim of politics is also to change things. But the changes, and how they are brought about, are completely different. Is that difference bridgeable? Influencing a patient towards some healthy state, and doing the same for society, shouldn’t be impossibly different. After all a society is made of people. So what really is the difference, and how can one inform the other?¶ Practising psychoanalysts address the internal unconscious factors that determine an individual’s personality – and how the individual is captured and controlled by them. On the other hand, political attitudes and actions are socially generated, arising, many would say, from the economic system of production. The individual is located at the junction of these two sets of influences, one from inside and one from outside. If someone has a phobia for spiders, he is driven by internal factors (his unconscious imagining, say, that the web-like embrace is a controlling mother). If someone drives his car on the left-hand side of the road, it is from social forces – the highway-code, police patrol cars, etc.¶ These are inherently different kinds of influences. How do social and unconscious determinisms fit together? Edward Bernays decided it is simple, the external social category is used to manipulate the individuals’ interior unconscious choices. Well…. for me that is not good enough, and I am interested in whether there are other ways by which these two categories of influences can be combined in our understanding). ¶ Interpreting society!¶ I claim we need to find models of interaction between social relations and psychodynamics. It is, otherwise, so easy for us, psychoanalysts, to approach society or social institutions as if they were individuals. To equate a social organisation with the individual mind risks leaving out the very valid social, historical, political forces that act on organisations, create cultures and induce or enable individuals to collaborate unconsciously, as well as consciously, with each other.. ¶ I am thinking of the campaign started by psychoanalysts in the 1980s, Psychoanalytic Psychotherapists against Nuclear War (PPANW). Led by Hanna Segal’s especial interest, expressed in her paper ‘Silence is the real crime’ (Segal 1987), the individual defence mechanisms she suggested seemed to be simply aggregated, and she talked of regression during wartime from depressive position to paranoid-schizoid functioning. The campaign remained largely ineffective, so, it seemed there were serious limitations to this kind of individualistic political approach –interpreting a supposed unconscious as if it were an individual unconscious. The political problem only disappeared with a political solution – the collapse of the cold war in 1990. I would suggest that attributing individual dynamics to social and political issues risks psychoanalysis becoming irrelevant to social scientists and politicians.

#### Psychoanalytic insights can only apply to the single person being analyzed

Adam Rosen-Carole 10, Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Bard College, 2010, “Menu Cards in Time of Famine: On Psychoanalysis and Politics,” Psychoanalytic Quarterly, Vol. LXXIX, No. 1, p. 218

Second, the structural-epistemological problem is that, if psychoanalytic practice is not to be theoretically heavy-handed, then psychoanalysts can only know what individuals within analysis can know, and if social relations are reified, then there is a socially imposed limit to the insights achieved and future prospects delivered via analysis. If social objectivity is dissimulated and mystified, that is, if the structures of our interdependence are socially opaque and the forces organizing modern social life are self-obscuring, then this reification is bound to be reproduced in the source material of analysis, that is, in the analysand’s self-experience. So, when the analyst facilitates the analysand’s freedom to experience, think, feel, and ultimately commit herself otherwise, all he really can do is help the analysand, say, commit herself to forms of self- and world relation that appear less injurious or more livable *to her*, but what appears less injurious or more viable will in all likelihood be limited to that which *can appear so* from the historically sedimented purview of a more or less bourgeois, self-interested, rights-bearing being. That is, what becomes available via analysis is that which can become available to the sociohistorically positioned analysand, and not only is there nothing psychoanalysis can do to get around this, psychoanalysis is not even in a position to shed light on the problem without delving into social theory and thereby abdicating its mandate to tarry with the problems and issues that the analysand experiences as at the heart of her predicaments. Analytic practice is caught in a double bind: as it seeks the emancipation of the analysand, either it is forced to become politically didactic and consequently counterproductive (or at least problematic qua analysis), or it promotes the extremely limited forms of emancipation imaginable by a typical bourgeois subject—and so it should be no surprise that, from Freud onward, emancipation tends to be figured in terms of greater capacities for love and work. [Italics in original]

### Alt Fails---2AC

#### The alt does absolutely nothing

Nik Hynek 13, Prof of International Relations and Theory of Politics at the Metropolitan University Prague and Charles University, with David Chandler, No emancipatory alternative, no critical security studies, Critical Studies on Security, 2013 Vol. 1, No. 1, 46–63, http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/spais/migrated/documents/cssrg1.pdf

[Note: CSS = “Critical Security Studies”]

These ‘post-emancipatory’ scholars still frame Western and international intervention in potentially emancipatory terms, but the horizons and aspirations have been substantially lowered from the universalist call to radical academic policy advocacy, of the founders of emancipatory approaches within security studies. While the initial confident calls for emancipatory alternatives at least had an understanding of the need for emancipatory agency, unfortunately found only in Western powers and international institutions, the later approaches lack this clarity and confidence, merely suggesting that more ‘open’, ‘unscripted’, ‘locally sensitive’, ‘desecuritised’ and less ‘universalist’ and ‘liberal’ approaches can avoid the ‘resistances’ held to come from the local level. If these approaches are ‘emancipatory’ they lack any clear project or programme as to what these claims might mean or how they might be carried out in reality and are little different to mainstream think tank proposals calling for more ‘local ownership’,

### Extinction Outweighs---2AC

#### Extinction outweighs---our framing shifts security policy from a national to existential frame---solves their threat K’s

Nathan Sears 20, PhD Candidate in Political Science at The University of Toronto and Trudeau Fellow in Peace, Conflict and Justice at the Munk School of Global Affairs, 4/17/20, “Existential Security: Towards a Security Framework for the Survival of Humanity,” https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1758-5899.12800

Humanity’s capacity for self‐destruction poses a radically different problematique for security policy: survival interdependence . Survival interdependence means that the survival of human societies on one side of the world increasingly depends on the (in)action of human societies on the other. For most of history, human societies – clans, tribes, city‐states, empires, and nation states – could seek security irrespective of the security of other societies; but today no single nation state can solve the biggest security problems of the times on their own, nor in many cases can they hope to escape their security consequences. Humankind is becoming ever more tied together as a single ‘security unit’. The forces behind this process are not political – indeed, international politics remains stubbornly committed to ‘national security’ – but material (Deudney, 2007, 2018), especially certain human‐driven trends in technology and the environment that could threaten humanity with destruction. Security policy must take into account the significance of these changes. Thus, a new security framework is required.

‘Existential security’ responds to a similar set of questions as alternative security frames (see Table 2). Security for whom? The ‘referent object’ of existential security is humanity. Security is therefore about humanity’s survival . Security for which values? The ‘values’ to be secured are, at the minimum, the survival of humanity (i.e. the biological entity of the human species and cultural entity of human civilization), and, at the maximum, the long‐term prosperity of human civilization and the planet. The security of humankind ranges from the survival of existing human beings and societies to past and future generations of humanity – the past whose memory is recorded in history and preserved by the present, and the future whose possibilities of existence depend on actions taken in the present. Existential security therefore adopts an intergenerational perspective of security, not only for utilitarian reasons (e.g. quantifying the potential gains/losses in ‘future lives’) (Baum, 2015; Bostrom, 2002, 2013; Torres, 2017), but also because the significance of humankind – that is, all its past sufferings, present achievements, and future potential – is at stake, since existential risks simultaneously threaten humanity’s past, present, and future (Morgenthau, 1961).

How much security? Nick Bostrom (2013, p. 19) proposes the principle of ‘maxipok’, in which security policy would seek to ‘maximise the probability of an “OK outcome”, where an OK outcome is any outcome that avoids existential catastrophe’. While reducing the probability of existential risk to ‘zero’ may be impossible, the amount of security should be determined by a level of risk‐aversion equivalent to existential threats. Since thinking in terms of ‘worst‐case scenarios’ is a common practice in the security domain, and since some ‘worst‐case scenarios’ could include civilizational collapse or human extinction, this should imply a strong aversion to risk. Although there are logical limits to the ‘precautionary principle’ with respect to existential risks,10 it has practical implications for security policy, such as taking preventive, cost‐effective, and long‐term oriented action (Clarke, 2005). More generally, making (existential) security a priority does not imply the sacrifice of all other values (e.g. political liberty, economic wealth), but it does mean that potential gains in other values be weighed against potential losses in security. Security is always a question of degree (Wolfers, 1952).

From what threats? Existential security is concerned with those threats that have their origins in human agency and could bring about civilizational collapse or human extinction. This requires broadening the security agenda beyond its conventional focus on ‘security from violence’, while excluding ‘natural’ existential risks (e.g. asteroids and supervolcanos). There are two main reasons for emphasizing anthropogenic threats. The first is the low probability of natural risks on timescales relevant to humanity (Bostrom, 2013; Bostrom and Cirkovic, 2008;), whereas anthropogenic threats are, by definition, relevant to human timescales, including the twenty‐first century (Rees, 2003). The second is that many prevention/mitigation strategies for anthropogenic existential threats act on their drivers in human agency, which makes little sense for natural risks. The spectrum of anthropogenic existential threats includes threats to international peace and security (e.g. nuclear war), dangers from human intervention in the natural environment (e.g. climate change), and risks from emerging technologies (e.g. AI). Existential security must take into account the complex relationships between human, environmental, and technological systems, as well as inherent uncertainties about existential threat scenarios (e.g. ‘nuclear winter’, ‘hothouse Earth’, or ‘superintelligence’).

By what means and modes of protection? The existential security frame requires innovation in the means and modes of security policy. This is because the conventional emphasis on military capabilities and balancing is either inadequate (e.g. nuclear war), irrelevant (e.g. climate change), or counterproductive (e.g. AI). Moreover, the pursuit of relative gains/losses in security is fundamentally misguided for anthropogenic existential threats, since – as a general principle – either all human societies are safe, or none of them are. Existential security requires a paradigm shift from thinking about security policy as a matter of (national) ‘defense’ to being a matter of (global) ‘governance’. Governance is not an end in itself (e.g. the creation of a ‘world state’), but rather a means to security (i.e. the survival of humankind). The pursuit of existential security requires means of protection that involve a comprehensive set of political, economic, and technological resources – not merely military capabilities. The modes of protection are primarily ‘restraint’ and ‘resilience’. Restraint is a prevention strategy, while resilience is a mitigation strategy, which take on different forms for different threats. For the nuclear threat, restraint manifests itself in the policies of disarmament, arms control, and nonproliferation, while resilience comes mostly in the form of nuclear bunkers and shelters (Bull, 1961; Deudney, 2007). For climate change, restraint is primarily about limiting greenhouse gas emissions and the degradation of carbon sinks, while resilience is about making societies less vulnerable to heat stress, rising seas, food and water scarcities, new diseases, and human migration (Wallace‐Wells, 2019; World Bank, 2012). For AI, restraint entails the slow and careful development of AI (Bostrom, 2014) – or perhaps forgoing the ‘AI dream’ altogether (Joy, 2000) – while resilience is about reducing societal vulnerability to technological disruption (e.g. cybersecurity). Importantly, the growing survival interdependence of human societies implies that restraint and resilience must be mutual to be effective. If only some states choose disarmament or nonproliferation, if some societies reduce carbon emissions while others increase them, or if one technology firm decides to rapidly pursue ‘superintelligence’, then the (in)action of some actors may affect the security of all humankind. This emphasis on mutual restraint and resilience contrasts with the national security frame's emphasis on ‘self‐help’.

### Ontological Security Turn---2AC

#### Hybrid warfare disrupts NATO’s ontological security---reproduces the narrative of the “other” and turns the K---strengthening collective identity solves

Bahar Rumelili 15, Professor and Jean Monnet Chair at the Department of International Relations, Koc University, Istanbul, “Identity and desecuritisation: the pitfalls of conflating ontological and physical security,” Journal of International Relations and Development volume 18, pages52–74 (2015), https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/jird.2013.22

With regard to ontological security, the distinction between security and insecurity is the more critical one. In a state of ontological insecurity, the Self experiences instability and uncertainty of being. Ontological insecurity refers to a state of disruption where the Self has lost its anchor for the definition of its identity and, consequently, its ability to sustain a narrative and answer questions about doing, acting, and being (Kinnvall 2004). It may arise from deep uncertainty (Mitzen 2006a) and/or from the failure to have its sense of Self affirmed by others (Zarakol 2010). Conversely, in a state of ontological security, the Self experiences a stable, certain, and consistent social existence, where it remains in control about its identity and capacity for action. While I do not rule out the possibility of a state of ontological asecurity, where the Self is simply not concerned with the stability and certainty of its identity, I do not explore this possibility and how it varies across different states of physical security in this article.

Having identified different states of physical and ontological security, I make the further assumption that since ontological and physical security are distinct, states of security do not vary uniformly across the ontological and physical layers of security. One can be at a state of physical insecurity while being at a state of ontological security, and vice versa. Consequently, Table 1 charts out the four possible states of security based on the conception of security as both ontological and physical.

The state of ontological insecurity/physical (in)security is one where the Self experiences concern about physical harm and the instability and uncertainty of its being. Ontological insecurity tempts actors to engage in practices that mark Others as not only different, but also as morally inferior and threatening (Campbell 1992). Ontological insecurity and physical (in)security reproduce one another. As actors seek ontologica l security through constructing Others as threats to their security-as-survival, they mobilise their physical defences in the pursuit of physical security through representing the sources of threat as different and morally inferior.

Similarly, in a state of ontological security/physical (in)security, actors experience stability and certainty of being in a relationship where the Other is constructed as threat to their security-as-survival. Consequently, they remain locked into conflict-producing routines to maintain their certainty of being (Mitzen 2006a). In protracted conflicts such as in Cyprus and Israel/Palestine, this state of security sustains a stable Self/Other relationship based on enemy roles. When in such a state of security, minority and majority groups, migrants and host societies perceive and represent each other’s identities as radically different and inherently incompatible, and reproduce these perceptions and representations through acts of securitisation in order to ensure their ontological security. The states of ontological insecurity/physical (in)security and ontological security/physical (in)security are both securitised states; however, whereas the former compels actors to construct new narratives of difference and threat and engage in the securitisation of new issues to regain their certainty and stability of being, the latter compels actors to reproduce the existing narratives and continue the securitisation of existing differences and conflicts to maintain it.

The state of ontological security/physical asecurity is certainly the most attractive state of security from a normative point of view. Security communities in international relations, and in particular, the European non-war community (Wæver 1998) and the Nordic community (Browning and Joenniemi 2012) constitute the best examples of such a state of security in international relations. A collective identity discourse makes it possible for states in security communities to maintain the us/them distinctions, which are necessary for the certainty and stability of being, while remaining in a state of physical asecurity vis-à-vis one another (Mitzen 2006b; Browning and Joenniemi 2012). In this state of security, conflicts are sustainably resolved; issues that have propelled conflict in the past are either settled or have shed their physical security-ness, and are negotiated in normal political channels. Yet, identity differences maintain their ontological security-ness as groups reproduce their distinct identities through various social and cultural practices.

### Ontological Security Turn---1AR

#### Hybrid warfare disrupts NATO’s ontological security---contingency planning solves by isolating NATO from existential fear

Maria Mälksoo 18, Senior Lecturer in International Security at the Brussels School of International Studies, University of Kent, “Countering hybrid warfare as ontological security management: the emerging practices of the EU and NATO,” European Security, 27:3, 374-392, https://dl1.cuni.cz/pluginfile.php/772169/mod\_resource/content/0/malksoo.pdf

Hybrid warfare indicates a multitude of possible contingencies, generating anxiety about one’s ability to remain oneself and to continue to act. It is thus linked to “anxiety over the vulnerability of [Western] power” (Bell 2012, pp. 230–231), threatening the West about losing its particularistic form of existence (cf. Creppell 2011, p. 455). Anxiety, in contrast to fear, which per Giddens (1991, p. 43) constitutes a response to a specific threat, concerns “perceived threats to the integrity of the security system of the individual” (Giddens 1991, pp. 44–45, cf. Browning and Joenniemi 2017, p. 38; Rumelili 2015). OS-seeking aims to mitigate the effects of such hard uncertainty, bringing it within bearable limits (Mitzen 2006, p. 346). Routines are instrumental here, as they “pacify the cognitive environment … ‘inoculating’ individuals against paralytic, deep fear of chaos” (Mitzen 2006, p. 347).

Being able to survive the “hybrid threats” is directly pertinent to the survival of the EU and NATO as particular kinds of organisations, underpinned and driven by specific values – which cannot be sacrificed or diluted in the struggle for physical and institutional survival. Yet, hybrid warfare disturbs the OS of the EU and NATO in subtly distinct ways. Due to the particularities of their institutional set-ups and historical foundations, the OS drives of the two organisations are somewhat distinctive. NATO’s history is occasionally told through its surpassing of a sequence of crises, albeit the end of the Cold War and the collapse of its original enemy created a situation of unprecedented uncertainty and ontological insecurity for the Alliance. Meanwhile, the EU’s ontological insecurity is a more recent phenomenon, stemming mostly from the Eurocrisis and the looming possibility of a Grexit a few years ago; the refugee/migration crisis in Europe of 2015 (Dingott Alkhoper 2018; Mitzen 2018); the actual UK decision on Brexit in 2016 (Browning 2018); and the rise of populist politics within the EU (Kinnvall, Manners, Mitzen 2018) and the United States. NATO as a military alliance has been historically more accustomed to the othering practices of concrete geographical places, whereas the EU is generally regarded as an organisation that has risen above geopolitical othering, juxtaposing itself to Europe’s dark past instead (Rumelili 2018, Subotic 2018, and Della Sala 2018). Accordingly, the EU might be more at home with hybrid threat management due to its historically broader conceptualisation of security through the paradigm of intertwined risks rather than being focused more strictly on “the threat, use and control of military force” in the manner of a traditional defence alliance (Walt 1991, p. 212; Manners 2002). Regardless of its perpetual transformer’s self-image, hybrid threats represent the uncomfortable “hard” or “fundamental” uncertainty for NATO (cf. Mitzen 2006, p. 346) and are thus ontologically disturbing for the security of its self as a traditional alliance with a collective security pledge bound to “armed attack” against one or more of its member states.

In order to achieve OS, actors strive for “routinizing their relations with significant others” (Mitzen 2006, p. 342). Routines help to keep ontological fears at bay, out of everyday discursive consciousness (Mitzen 2006, p. 348). From this perspective, NATO’s naming and shaming strategy vis-à-vis Russia as part of its hybrid warfare countering strategy links the uncertainty emanating from the hybrid nature of the new threats to the known and routine relationship with its traditional antagonist.8 The incapacitating difficulties related to planning ahead in anticipating and countering hybrid engagements are thus somewhat alleviated by the latter’s attachment to a known rival. Russia’s hybrid intervention in Ukraine has concurrently provided NATO with the familiar parameters of the cognitive “cocoon” (Giddens 1991, pp. 39–40) which enables the alliance to reproduce its cognitively “knowable” world. A Mitzenian reading of NATO’s emerging response to hybrid threats/warfare thus points at the renewed routinisation of the “programmed cognitive and behavioral responses” to Russia as the alliance’s original nemesis.

Restoring traditional vigilance vis-à-vis Russia, buttressing the forward defence along the Alliance’s eastern flank with the respective military reinforcements, contingency planning and exercises, the emerging response of NATO to the hybrid menace could also be read as an attempted restoration of a known normative order for the North Atlantic Alliance. Hybrid warfare endangers the basic features of the said normative order (or that of the broadly conceived Western security community in general, including the EU as well) as its efficient countering would likely compromise the underlying principles for this order’s particularistic existence (cf. Creppell 2011, p. 450). As a threat of subversion, hybrid warfare exposes the internal vulnerabilities in the body of the traditional security alliance (NATO) and a self-proclaimed post-modern security actor (i.e. the EU; cf. Cooper 2004). This concerns, in particular, the ever-elusive (and contested) balance between national/organisational security and individual liberties (cf. Waldron 2003, Neocleous 2007), as strategic communication is inherently at odds with free speech as a core value of Western liberalism. Countering hybrid warfare is conducive of generating a security predicament of perpetual pre-emption which, by definition, would indicate pre-emptive gathering of all sorts of data, thus likely infringing on the privacy of the individuals for the sake of the organisational/regional/national security. This precautionary logic resonates with the risk society approach which characterises the struggling with a sheer volume of risks with potentially fundamental consequences as a key feature of modernity, implying that “decisions are … made not in context of certainty, nor even of available knowledge, but of doubt, premonition, foreboding, challenge, mistrust, fear, and anxiety” (Ewald 2002, p. 294).

#### AND the ALT makes OS crisis worse

Filip Ejdus 19, Associate Professor of Security Studies at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade, “Crisis, Anxiety and Ontological Insecurity,” Crisis and Ontological Insecurity pp 7-37, 7/2/19, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-20667-3\_2

Critical Situations and Ontological Insecurity

The issue of critical situations which produce ontological insecurity of collective actors has been a neglected topic in the literature on OST in IR. So far, only a few authors have reflected on the role of critical situations in ontological security processes in world politics. Drawing on Giddens, Brent Steele for example argues that critical situations are unpredictable events that affect a large number of individuals, catch state agents off-guard and disrupt their self-identities (Steele 2008: 12). It is irrelevant, in his view, whether or not a researcher decides if an event constitutes a critical situation; what matters is whether policymakers interpret them as such. Critical situations are therefore not objective facts but social constructions produced in the very process of interpretation (ibid.). Dimitry Chernobrov has a similar understanding of international crises as unpredictable set of events that create great uncertainty and which states often (mis)recognise because they rely on narcissistic self-conceptions (Chernobrov 2016).

While I fully concur that critical situations are radical and socially constructed disruptions that put self-identities to the test, they seem to be more than that. In fact, such conceptualisation of a critical situation is so wide and elastic that most crises in world politics, if not all, can easily fit into this definition. For example, it could be argued that every terrorist attack is usually unpredictable, affects a large number of individuals, catches a state off-guard and disrupts self-identity narratives. And yet, if any crisis can be treated by analysts as a critical situation, the concept of ontological (in)security loses analytical sharpness and an important part of its value to IR theory. As a result of this conceptual underdevelopment, we currently have few conceptual tools in IR to identify and analyse critical situations and the conceptual distinction between ontological security and ontological insecurity remains elusive.

This book fills this gap by proposing a conceptual framework to study ontological insecurity and critical situations. By drawing on the work of Anthony Giddens, I define ontological security in world politics as possession, on the level of the unconscious and practical consciousness, of answers to four fundamental questions that all polities in some way need to address. These questions are related to existence; finitude; relations and auto-biography. Collective actors become ontologically insecure when critical situations rupture their routines, thus bringing fundamental questions to the level of discursive consciousness. Their inability to ‘bracket out’ fundamental questions produces anxiety and a loss of agency.

What does it mean to be ontologically secure? According to Giddens, ‘To be ontologically secure is to possess, on the level of the unconscious and practical consciousness, answers to fundamental existential questions which all human life in some way addresses’. These fundamental existential questions relate to existence and being, finitude and human life, the experience of others and the continuity of self-identity (Giddens 1991: 47). As he noted, ‘To live our lives we normally take for granted issues which, as centuries of philosophical enquiry have found, wither away under the sceptical gaze’ (Giddens 1991: 37). In other words, in order to be ontologically secure, agents have to be able to ‘bracket out’ these fundamental questions through routines of daily life, thus building trust into the constancy of their social and material environment and fending off existential anxieties. If unable to put aside these existential trepidations related to death, transience of life and the continuity of the self and others, individuals simply cannot ‘go on’ with their daily life. Ontological insecurity, on the other hand, is a result of critical situations, circumstances of radical and unpredictable disjuncture ‘that threaten or destroy the certitudes of institutionalised routines’ (Giddens 1984: 62). Critical situations remove the protective cocoon created by routines and move fundamental questions, previously taken for granted, into the realm of discursive consciousness. The result is the ‘flooding through’ of shame and guilt from the unconscious mind (ibid.: 57). The sudden inability of agents to ‘go on’ by relying on the unspoken know-how unleashes an upsurge of anxiety expressed in regressive modes of behaviour followed by attempts to re-establish routines and regain cognitive control over the changed environment (ibid.: 64). In these ‘faithful moments’ as Bahar Rumelili calls them, ‘anxieties can no longer be controlled’ and ‘ontological security comes under immediate strain’ (Rumelili 2015b: 11).

The distinction between discursive consciousness, practical consciousness and unconsciousness is of paramount importance here (Giddens 1984: 41–45). Discursive consciousness is the ability of actors to verbally express their actions. Practical consciousness, crucial for the maintenance of ontological security, is tacit knowledge about how to ‘go on’ without a need to express it discursively. Between practical and discursive consciousness there is a free flow of information. When asked to give discursive expression of something that is based on background knowledge, such as driving a car or practising table manners for example, agents are more or less able to do it but they do not need much knowledge to carry out a competent performance. Finally, unconsciousness includes cognitions that are ‘either wholly repressed from consciousness or appear in consciousness only in distorted form’ (ibid.: 5). Unlike practical and discursive consciousness, the unconscious mind is therefore separated from the previous two with a bar of repression.

The starting point of this book is that critical situations can also affect collective agents. However, in contrast to individual experience of anxiety that does not have to be expressed discursively, I posit that when collective actors are concerned, anxiety outbursts are performed through a public discourse on fundamental questions. Several studies on ontological security in IR have made a passing reference to this feature of ontological security as the ability to ‘bracket out’ fundamental questions in order to ‘go on’ with daily unfolding of international life (Kinnvall 2004: 759; Krolikowski 2008: 111; Steele 2008: 51). However, none of these studies have delved deeper into what these questions were, their relationship with critical situations and how all this could be translated into the field of world politics. In the rest of this section, I intend to bridge this gap. The first fundamental question is related to ‘existence and being’ that, according to Giddens, is about an ‘ontological framework of external reality’ (Giddens 1991: 48). This awareness ‘of being against non-being’ lies at the core of human freedom that generates anxiety. Giddens writes that answers to this fundamental question (like all others) are lodged at the level of practical consciousness. In pre-modern contexts, it was tradition that provided answers to this existential question and creates a sense of firmness of the world. In the context of high modernity, individuals can try to rely on tradition but this will not provide them with safe ground. Consequently, they have to continuously reflexively reorder their activities in light of new information.2

This book posits that collective actors in world politics also need to have trust in the continuity of their external environment. The society of states, with all its traditions and institutions, offers one such ontological framework for states (Bull 1977). To be ontologically secure in world politics, polities need to possess a practical understanding of what to expect from international society and build a sense of place in the existing order. To feel at home in international society is a precondition of states’ ontological security. The importance of home and dwelling to freedom from anxiety and ontological insecurity has been well documented in psychology and social theory (Dupuis and Thorns 1998; Padgett 2007). For individuals, home provides ‘a site of constancy in the social and material environment’ (Kinnvall 2004: 747). For polities, feeling at home in international society provides a sense of place in the international order and therefore a certain degree of cognitive control over their regional and international environment.

Bracketing out the fundamental questions is accomplished through routinisation of what the English School calls the primary institutions of international society. Here I have in mind ‘deep and relatively durable social practices’ such as diplomacy or international law that define legitimate behaviour and build the shared identity of states (Buzan 2014: 17). But the trust in durability of the secondary institutions of international society, such as security regimes or international organisations, can also inoculate states from existential anxieties. ‘States invest in international security institutions’, argue Berenskoetter and Giegerich, ‘because they enable states to gain (and sustain) ontological security by negotiating a shared sense of international order with friends’ (Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2010: 410). Taking part in these durable practices of international society provides constancy and thus helps contain—although falling short of fully overcoming—the chaos that is lurking below the surface of everyday unfolding of world politics.

Critical situations are generated by radical (real or perceived) ruptures in established routines of international society. As a result, the agent becomes disoriented, overwhelmed by ‘the anxiety of meaninglessness’ and ‘the loss of ultimate concern’ (Tillich 2000: 47; Rumelili 2015b: 12). Power transitions in the international system can engender ontological uncertainty even for the most powerful states that are fully integrated into the international society (Chacko 2014). However, states that are suspended in the outer tier of the society of states are much more vulnerable to ontological insecurity (Neumann 2010; Ejdus 2017). Even memories from past exclusion can provide fuel for the construction of critical situations. As Zarakol forcefully claimed, intersubjective pressures and stigmata exerted in the past by the ‘civilised’ society of states become with time an integral part of late entrants’ self-identity with significant consequences for their ontological (in)security (Zarakol 2010). ‘Rogue states’ such as North Korea, entirely ostracised from international society, face even greater intersubjective pressures. Ontologically vulnerable actors can try to routinise their subaltern position in the world through victimisation narratives and build their self-identity upon this feature. However, their anomic position and the relentless lack of trust in the world will occasionally fuel erratic outbursts of anxiety followed by defensive measures. These may wrongly appear to an outside observer as irrational behaviour, but they are in fact a form of ontological self-help.

### Perm---2AC

#### Perm do both---the alt fails, our securitization is good, no impact, and only the perm solves

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Tragedy is largely absent from the existing normative debate on securitization. Instead, the debate has become organized around whether securitization is a “negative” or “positive” concept. In the classic formulation, the Copenhagen School points to how “[n]ational security should not be idealized. It works to silence opposition and has given power-holders many opportunities to exploit ‘threats’ for domestic purposes” (Buzan et al. 1998, 29; Williams 2003). Securitization has negative effects when it functions as “a political technology that consistently favors the interests of the powerful and enables violence and exclusion” (McDonald 2015, 154). Correspondingly, Wæver admits a “‘bias’ for desecuritization” or de-escalation, although he quickly notes that this is “not always better than securitization” (Wæver 2011, 469). At the same time, a number of approaches point to cases where securitization is ethically desirable. In her compelling consequentialist argument, for example, Floyd asks “whether the consequences of, and the gains from, the securitization are preferable relative to the consequences and gains from a politicization” (2007, 338). Relatedly, Roe contends that “the extent to which securitization necessitates a lack of openness and deliberation has been overexaggerated” and suggests it may even elicit unappreciated forms of cooperation (2012, 250).

The problem with the negative/positive debate is that it appears to impose moral certitude where there often is none. Registering securitizing moves as clearly positive or negative can be difficult because their effects can be mixed and temporally distant. The difficulty in making this determination may also be an indicator of the uncertainty surrounding securitizing moves. In the end, because the outcomes of security claims are uncertain, we cannot know in advance whether they will lead to positive or negative consequences. Instead, we should entertain a distinctly tragic vision of securitization that councils an ethic of self-limitation. The core of this tragic vision is a recognition that the powerful allure of using security talk to “gain control” over a situation will always be present (Wæver 1995, 54). However, we should also recognize that this control is always illusory because it presumes all of its effects can be predetermined. The tragedy of securitization is that the failure to recognize how contingency imposes limits on action lures political actors into a false sense of certainty and the conviction that they can determine the future. This leads to a hubristic adoption of “misplaced certainty,” such as when Vice President Dick Cheney declared in August of 2002 that “there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction” (quoted in Mitzen and Schweller 2011, 3). A similar situation emerged when Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld subsequently claimed in November that the Iraq conflict could be “[f]ive days or five weeks or five months, but it certainly isn’t going to last any longer than that” (Esterbrook 2002). A similarly misplaced certainty is evident in US General Stanley McChrystal’s assurances to the Obama administration in 2009 that a surge in troops and resources were critical to stave off American defeat in Afghanistan (Woodward 2009). More recently, it is visible in President Donald Trump’s 2018 assertion that he was “100 percent right” on the weaknesses of the Iran nuclear deal (CNN 2018).

Yet, tragedy cuts both ways. Blanket opposition to securitizing moves can also have unanticipated effects. Ironically, the desecuritization of an issue may not just result in its repoliticization, but in its disappearance from public view (Floyd 2010, 57–58). Viewing security discourse as negative also underplays how the management of threats can serve as a focal point for democratic cooperation among different political actors (Roe 2012, 250, 257–58). The point is not that every security discourse and the practices it justifies has catastrophically perverse consequences. Instead, the goal is to highlight a sensible restraint over the limits of seeing into the future, how this shapes choice, and the dangers of hubris that follow. When properly adapted to this constructivist context, the tragic vision of securitization can be an important tool in cultivating prudence and restraint (cf. Lebow 2003, 364).

The problem with this tragic vision is that it points to processes that are never entirely in our possession. Whether in the form of background knowledge (Pouliot 2008), habits (Hopf 2010), or routines (Mitzen 2006), much of social life occurs without conscious deliberation and reflection. These forms of unthinking action impair reflexivity and limit actors’ ability to see how the world might be different and thus how outcomes can be uncertain. In some cases, this can be benign, such as the unreflexive amity between Canada and the United States that allows these countries to “escape” from the traditional security dilemma (Collins 2014, 572–73). But just as practices of amity can be habitual, so too can enmity. The hawkish US senator may designate Iran’s nuclear program as threatening because that is what hawkish US senators do, and there is no perceived way to be hawkish otherwise. The result is that the uncertainty surrounding securitizing moves becomes concealed under an unthinking veil of common sense. The tragedy of securitization then is not only that political figures often exceed their limitations by ignoring how contingency can derail securitizing moves—it is that these limitations often never even register

This means overcoming the tragedy of securitization require a certain degree self-reflexivity. This is similar to what Booth and Wheeler describe as the “security dilemma sensibility,” or an actor’s ability and willingness to reflect upon their actions, including one’s own role in provoking insecurity in others (2008, 7). By sensitizing leaders to how uncertainty is an endemic feature of political life, and how their actions can be interpreted in unintended ways, security competition can be mitigated, at least in part (Booth and Wheeler 2008, 265). Yet, these moments of self-awareness and reflection are difficult precisely because there are powerful forces that demand simplicity and closure: namely our desire for a stable sense of self or what is widely referred to as ontological security (Mitzen 2006). Reflecting on the uncertainty of international politics can erode one’s sense of identity and agency, ultimately leading to a “deep, incapacitating state of not knowing how to get by in the world” (Mitzen and Schweller 2011, 29). Booth and Wheeler’s security dilemma sensibility may have the laudable goal of alerting leaders to the role of uncertainty in political life, but this confronts the problem that many would prefer that it remain hidden.

The consequence is that this tragic aspect of the securitization dilemma takes on an intractable character. Either unwilling or unable to “know one’s limits,” as Herz would say (1950, 179), the role of uncertainty becomes hidden and security claims appear as a reliable strategy for control and influence. Like the classic realist dilemma, the securitization dilemma is pervasive because it is often invisible. The compelling need for a logic of selflimitation—of a careful and reflective use of security language and how it can be derailed by contingency— is obscured because of an aversion to recognizinguncertainty. It is this specter of a need for reflection and restraint that may not be realized, I suggest, which demands that we rethink the role of the analyst in provoking reflexivity among power-holders.

Conclusion: Rethinking the Role of the Analyst

Motivated by the absence of unintended and perverse consequences in constructivist theorizing of security, this article has pursued a reconceptualization of the security dilemma. Viewing the dilemma as a logic of limitation shaped by choice, uncertainty, and tragedy, the argument focuses on transposing this logic to the constructivist context of securitization theory. By showing how the choice to engage in the social construction of threats is complicated by uncertainty and the tragic failure to recognize one’s own limits, the dilemma analytic helps us to understand how securitization can be both a potent instrument for mobilization, as well as a volatile source of unpredictability. Moreover, this conceptual lens lays the foundation for an ethical imperative of self-limitation among securitizing actors—albeit one made difficult given the desire for simplicity and closure. Far from a rebuke of constructivist theorizing, the argument shows that taking the social character of security seriously means appreciating how political claims are always vulnerable to being derailed by different types of contingency.

This reconstructive move has important implications for studying the social construction of security. First, while the initial influence of realism on securitization theory is well-documented (Floyd 2010; Gad and Peterson 2011), few attempts have been made to show how engaging with these realist roots can yield new insights.22 Here, the reconstruction of the security dilemma demonstrates how returning to realist themes can yield a fresh insights. Second, the argument pushes scholars studying securitization to expand their universe of outcomes beyond the reductive binary of success and failure and to consider cases of perverse and unintended consequences. Not only are these outcomes relatively common, they undercut the prevailing image of securitization as a reliable technology of control. Third, the securitization dilemma shows why uncertainty is more of an enduring problem for social action than constructivists typically acknowledge. Contra earlier arguments where learning and socialization effectively mitigate the problem of uncertainty (Wendt 2006, 208–9), this perspective stresses how contingency means that social acts like securitizing moves can have unpredictable effects.

The most important result of this reconstruction, however, may be in how taking the tragic element of the dilemma seriously reorders the political role of the analyst. Rather than assessing the validity of a particular security discourse, or exposing its socially constructed nature, this perspective asks the analyst to provoke reflexivity on behalf of power-holders over the risks associated with securitization. While this entails a bias toward deescalation and desecuritization, unlike other approaches this is not achieved through overt references to any liberal, democratic, or emancipatory ideal. Instead, it is packaged for power-holders as a strategy of self-preservation. Here, the analyst presents the move to securitize as a risk-laden and potentially self-defeating strategy. The analyst points to a series of precedents showing how such a strategy can produce perverse consequences: how today's tough talk can become tomorrow's liability; how audiences can interpret threatening messages in unexpected ways; and how today's framing of security can lead to perverse consequences tomorrow. By foregrounding the problem of uncertainty, the analyst works to accentuate and impress upon actors the dilemmatic quality of securitizing moves.

Yet, the problem with presenting the move to securitize as a risk is that it may become accepted. Ironically, framing an escalation in enmity as possible but dangerous is precisely what may legitimize such a move in the eyes of risk-insensitive actors. This is Huysmans’ (2002) now familiar normative dilemma of writing security. The indeterminacy of language means that political actors may interpret advice in unpredictable ways. Frustratingly, this may include the precise opposite of the analyst's intention. This situation is likely inescapable, but it may be mitigated. What I suggest is that analysts should strive to cultivate a deeper subjectivity of risk sensitivity, comparable to Booth and Wheeler's security-dilemma sensibility, among political actors.

Key to this argument is how visions of the future satisfy the human desire for certainty. As Berenskoetter argues, “visions depicting the self in an imagined future order serve as anxiety controlling mechanisms” (2011, 654). Visions of the future inoculate actors against the anxiety of uncertainty by providing a narrative of where they are going and how to get there. Indeed, normative debates on securitization are already loaded with such visions. The impulse to securitize is underpinned by a utopian future where the security frame can finally mobilize a response to an otherwise intractable problem. Conversely, the impulse to desecuritize is sustained by a dystopian future defined by unrestrained authoritarian politics. A tragic vision of the future does something different: it presents a future where the only thing we can know decisively is that it is indeterminate and attempts to conclusively control it are vulnerable to failure. The very recognition of fundamental limits on human freedom (Steele 2007, 281–82) becomes transformed into a source of ontological security. This tempers the human need for cognitive closure by reconfiguring it into what Herz understood as a “fundamentally humble posture toward the value and precariousness of life” (Sylvest 2008, 442). An actor with a greater sensitivity to indeterminacy may still pursue securitizing moves, but with a cautious awareness that they are volatile acts best pursued sparingly. The analyst does not simply educate political leaders by pointing to the indeterminacy of the world; she seeks to make political subjects more sensitive toward it by crafting visions of a precarious future.

Finally, this tragic vision cannot, and should not, escape its own need for reflexivity. Its scholarly proponents need to engage in their own process of self-reflection, focusing on how their knowledge and interests are themselves historically situated. The ethic of restraint is a value, and not necessarily the value for all historical circumstances. A recognition of the social construction of security “facts” must be sobered by a recognition of the social construction of security “values” (Hamati-Ataya 2012, 685).