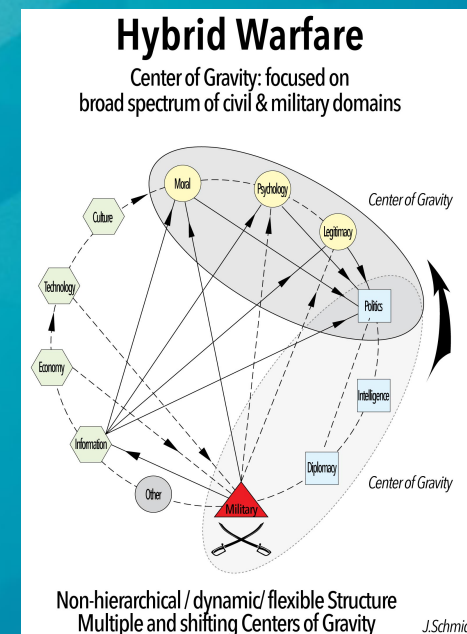


# The European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats COI Strategy & Defence

## Challenges of Hybrid Threats / Warfare



Dr. Johann Schmid, Director COI Strategy & Defence,  
Hybrid CoE, Helsinki (FIN)  
CODE Conference 2020; Workshop 5, 11. Nov 2020



„War is a true Chameleon that slightly adapts its characteristics to a given case.“

Clausewitz (1832), On War, I, 1, p. 101.





# Why to focus on Hybrid Threats / Warfare?

**„Ukraine Battlefield 2014“ = wake-up call!**  
**=> *War became „hybrid in our minds“!***



- **Dangerous:** HW seems to offer cheap political „success“ by smart recourse to limited, deniable, manageable use of force + at supposedly limited political risk + cost.
- **Provides offensive options!** => offensive use very likely!
- **Challenge for MS, EU, NATO Art. 5:** could be bypassed in a „downward or horizontal escalation mode“ => subversion, infiltration, destabilization + extension of the battlefield!
- **Very likely that HW will shape the face of conflict/war in the 21st!**





# I. What is Hybrid Warfare

**Starting Point: Six basic tenets!**



= 5. Strategy

= 6. War



Carl von Clausewitz  
1780-1831

3. = old  
empowered  
by new!

= 4. specific  
style  
of warfare

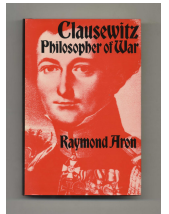
**1. Nothing new in essence! 2. But empirical manifestation!**

„War is more than a true **chameleon** that slightly adapts its characteristics to the given case.“

(Clausewitz (1832), On War, I, 1, p. 101)



# Concept / Analytical Framework: => understanding Hybrid Warfare



General Statement: All war is hybrid!

But there is also a specific hybrid way of conducting war = HW in the narrower sense!

**Three key characteristics:** => threefold hybridity!

1. **Field of Decision:** => focus on broad spectrum of non-military centres of gravity
2. **Conduct of Operation:** => concept of interfaces
3. **Employment of Means + Methods:** => creative and tailored combination

One more thing: **Hybrid orchestration! How combined?**

from 3. ➡ 2. ➡ 1.

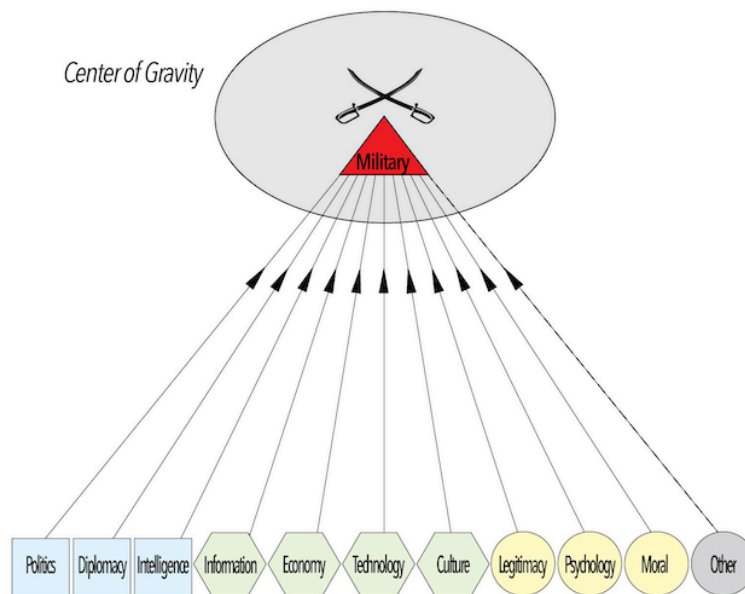




First key characteristic: => Field of Action + **Decision**  
 => Spectrum of non-military **centres of gravity**!

## Military-Centric Warfare

Center of Gravity: focused on military decision

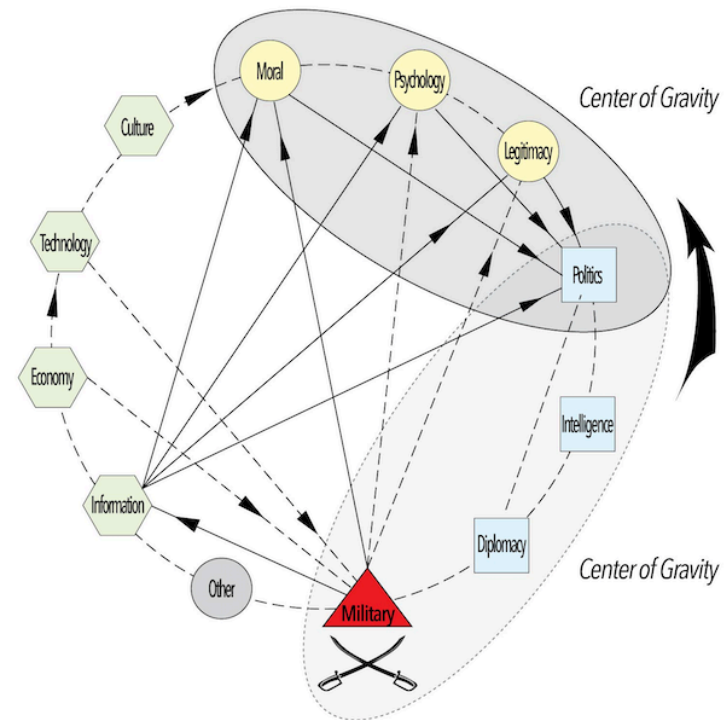


J.Schmid

Hierarchical Structure

## Hybrid Warfare

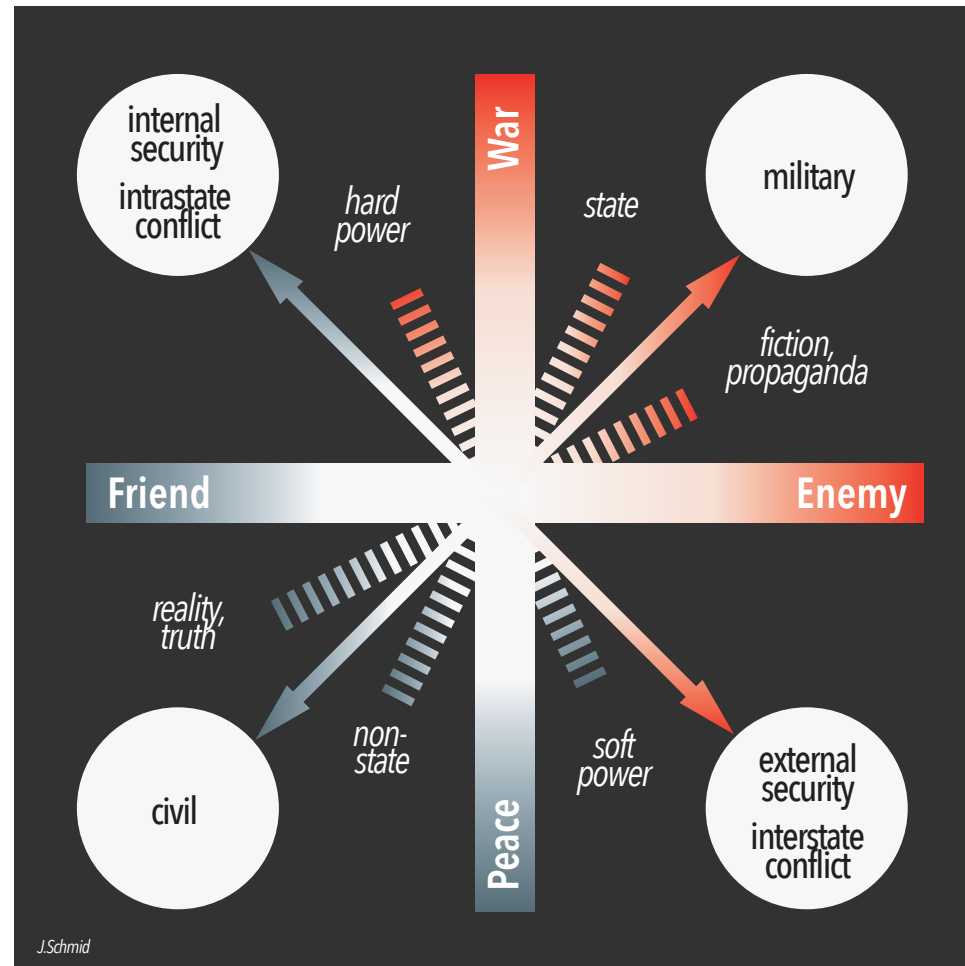
Center of Gravity: focused on broad spectrum of civil & military domains



Non-hierarchical / dynamic / flexible Structure  
 Multiple and shifting Centers of Gravity

Compare: Schmid, Johann (2020): **Der Archetypus hybrider Kriegführung. Hybride Kriegführung vs. militärisch zentrierte Kriegführung.** In: Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift (ÖMZ), Heft 5/2020, ISSN 0048-1440, S. 570-579.

Second key characteristic: => **Conduct of Operations**  
=> in the shadow/grey areas of **interfaces!**



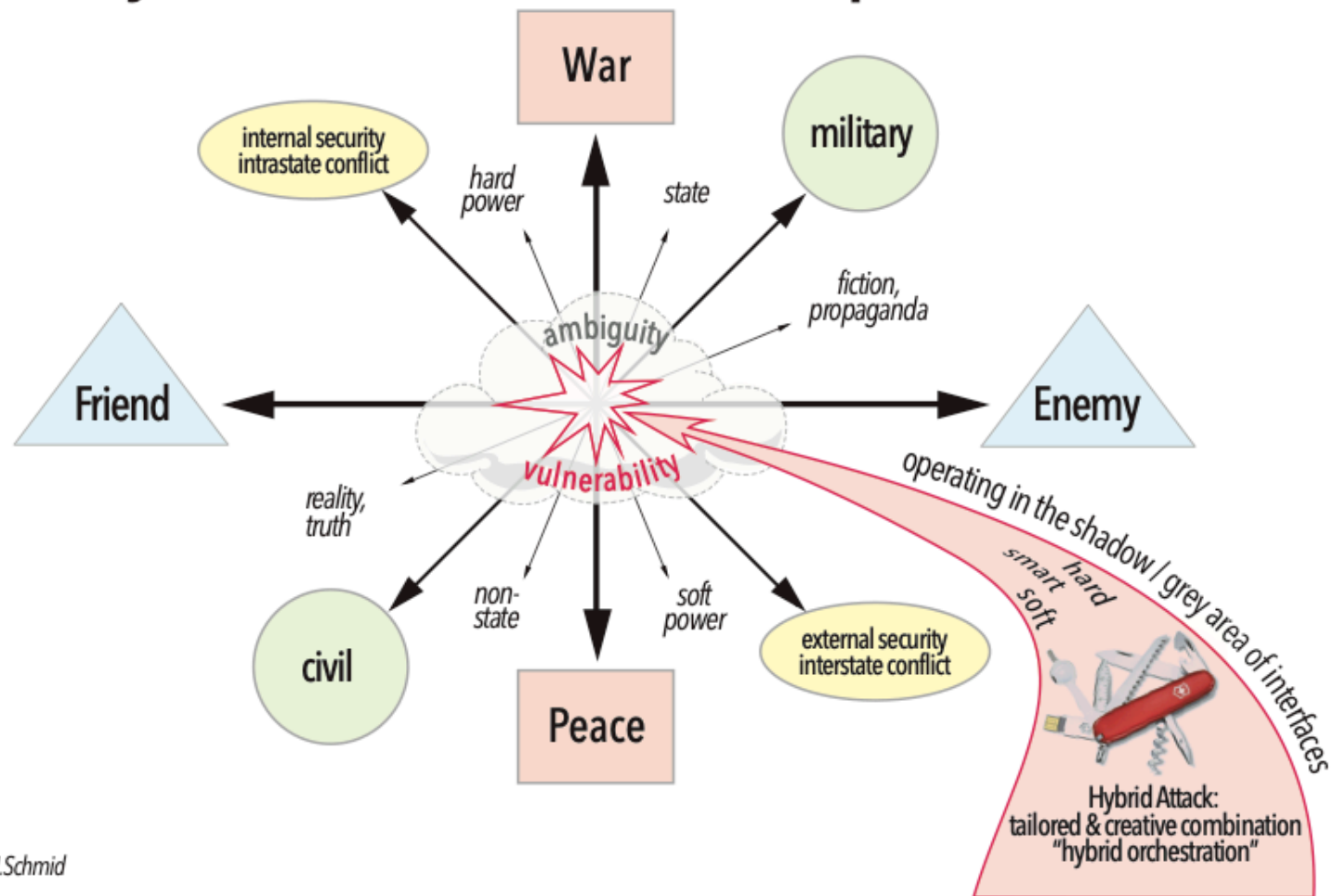
Compare: Schmid, Johann (2019): **The Hybrid Face of Warfare in the 21st Century**. Maanpuolustus, # 127, Helsinki, 7. March 2019, (p. 12-17), ISSN: 0357-2080.

<https://www.maanpuolustus-lehti.fi/single-post/The-Hybrid-Face-of-Warfare-in-the-21st-Century>



Third key characteristic: Employment of **Means & Methods** => **creative combination/orchestration** (soft + hard + smart)!

## Hybrid Warfare and the Concept of Interfaces

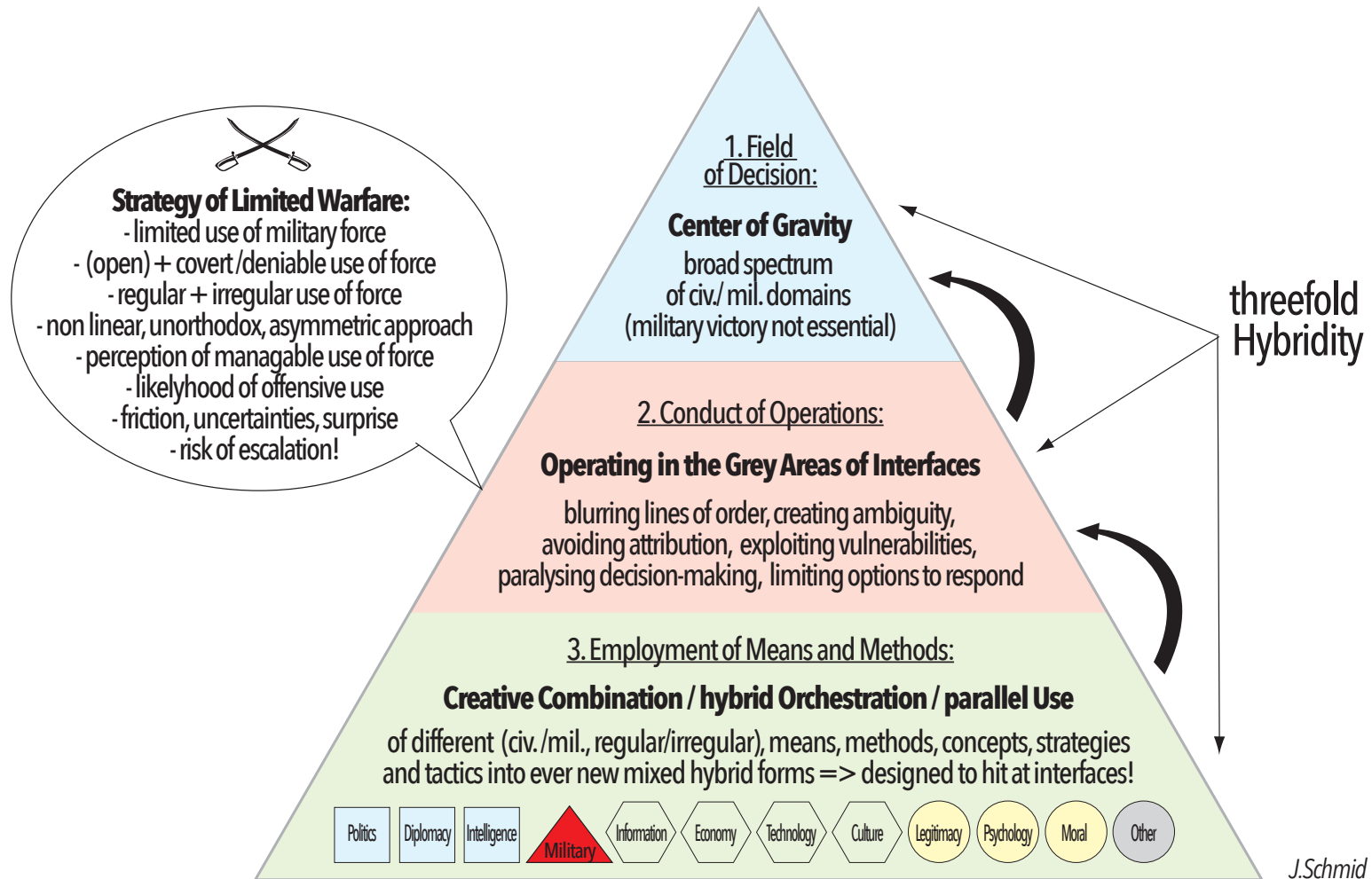


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Compare: Schmid, Johann (2019): COI S&D Conception Paper: **Hybrid Warfare – a very short introduction** (Helsinki, May 2019), ISBN: 978-952-7282-20-5.

# The "paradoxical" Trinity of Hybrid Warfare

Three key characteristics / tendencies & their hybrid interaction / orchestration



Compare: Schmid, Johann (2019): **The Hybrid Face of Warfare in the 21st Century**. Maanpuolustus, # 127, Helsinki, 7. March 2019, (p. 12-17), ISSN: 0357-2080.

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# Challenges: Hybrid Warfare - a three-fold Strategic Challenge

1. Danger of losing a war/conflict before even recognizing that a hybrid attack is taking place!
  2. Defender confronted with a form of conflict/war that has parameters/mechanisms that are difficult to see through!
  3. HW makes use of surprise, initiative and creativity  
=> provides offensive options in particular!
- => Becomes a political challenge by promising (easy) political success at supposedly manageable military risk and limited political cost/damage
- => Might increase the likelihood of its' offensive use!



# Implications + Recommendations

## 1. Multidomain Situational Awareness

- Focus on single domains not sufficient! Connect the dots!
- Consider vertical + horizontal Escalation
- Consider approaches below the threshold of recognition

## 2. Protection of vulnerable Interfaces

- => Ability to operate in the “grey areas” of interfaces
- Internal-external security; real/physical-virtual/cyber world
- cyber-information domain
- Preparation: clarification of responsibilities/leadership

## 3. Ability to “outthink” hybrid opponents

- What kind of multi-vector attacks can be expected?
- What about own vulnerabilities?
- Modelling + simulating own vulnerabilities as well as the “hybrid Swiss pocket-knife” of potential opponents!





# Perspectives on Conflict & War in the 21. century.

“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.

The focus of applied methods of conflict has altered in the direction of the **broad use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian, and other nonmilitary measures** -- applied in coordination with the **protest potential of the population**.

All this is supplemented by military means of a concealed character, including carrying out actions of **informational conflict** and the actions of special-operations forces. (...)”.

**Gerasimov, Valery Vasilyevich**, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, speech in front of Russian offices, February **2013**.



# Final Inspiration: Why should peace-loving nations/organizations care about war?



*Carl von Clausewitz  
1780-1831*

„War serves the purpose of the defense more than that of the aggressor. It is only aggression that calls for defense, and war along with it. **The aggressor is always peace-loving; he would prefer to take over our country unopposed.** To prevent his doing so one must be willing to make war and be prepared for it.“

(Clausewitz, On War, VI, 5, p. 444).

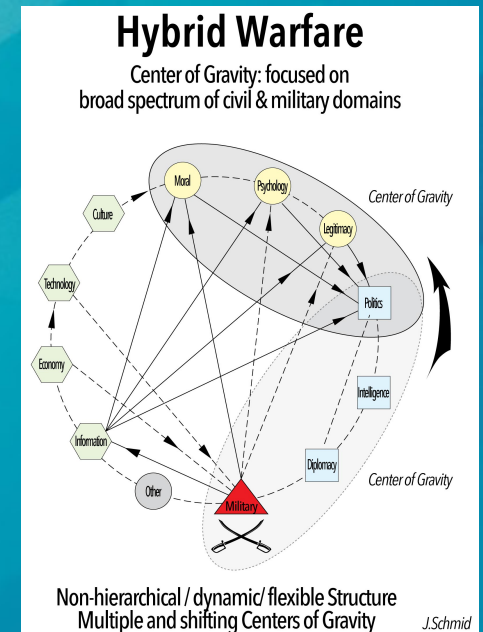


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