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Cognitive security –an essential variable in the resilience of societies in Southeastern Europe

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Central question

- Why is cognitive warfare important to the Southeastern societies?

What is cognitive warfare (CogWar)

CogWar as an extension of Information Warfare and Psychological Operations (PsyOps).

„Deliberate manipulation of reality through the presentation of biased information, often digitally altered.” (Claverie and du Cluzel, 2022).

Coordinated kinetic and non-kinetic, military and non-military activities designed to shape the IE to create cognitive superiority.

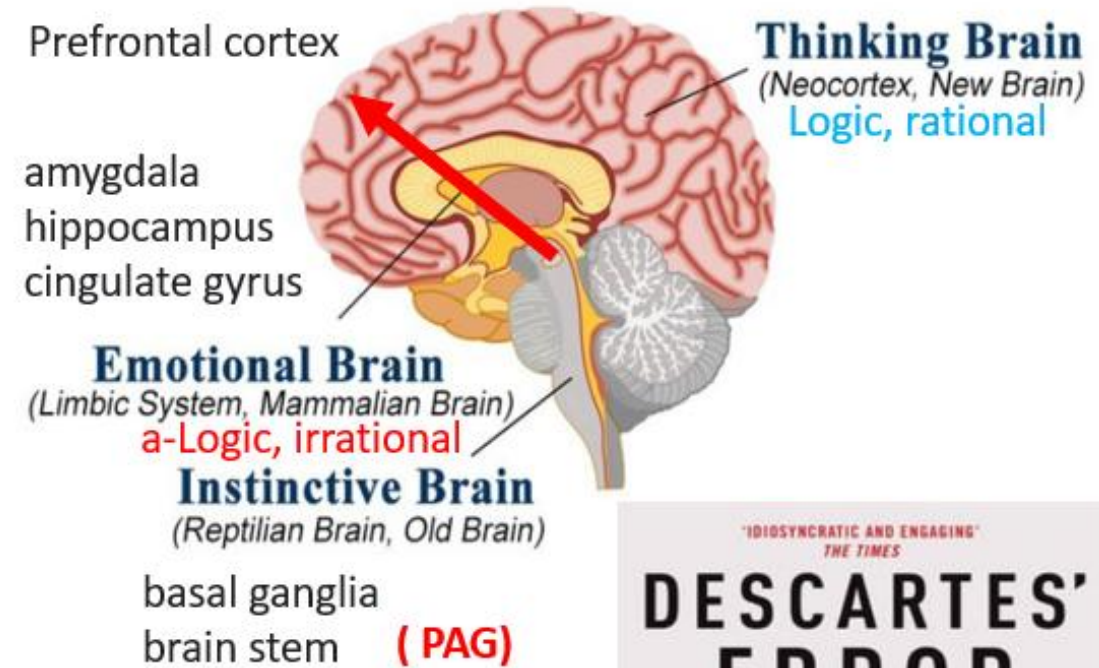
What is CogWar?

- political warfare
- propaganda
- (weaponized) narratives
- deception
- disinformation
- malinformation
- cultural warfare

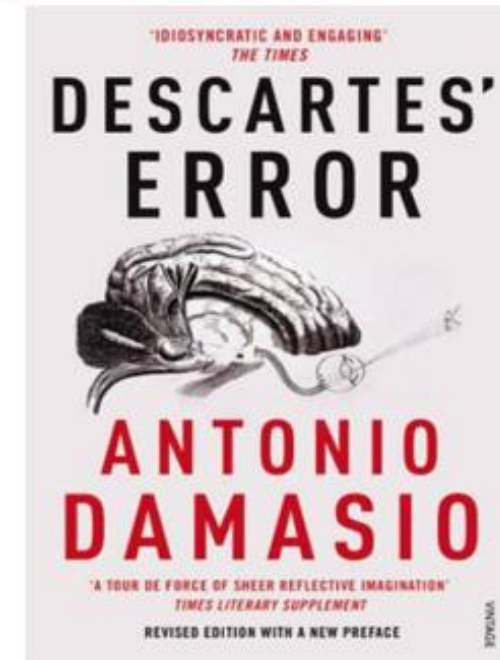
Human "vulnerabilities"

Cognitive biases
Affects
Belief system
Imaginary (phantasmatic) reality
Irrational/Unconscious

Triune model of brain



Cognitive biases...?



NOU

MARIO
VARGAS
LLOSA

ÎN DIALOG CU

GABRIEL
LIICEANU

CHIPURI ALE RĂULUI
ÎN LUMEA DE ASTĂZI

FICTIUNEA
CA NECESITATE
VITALĂ

HUMANITAS
fiction



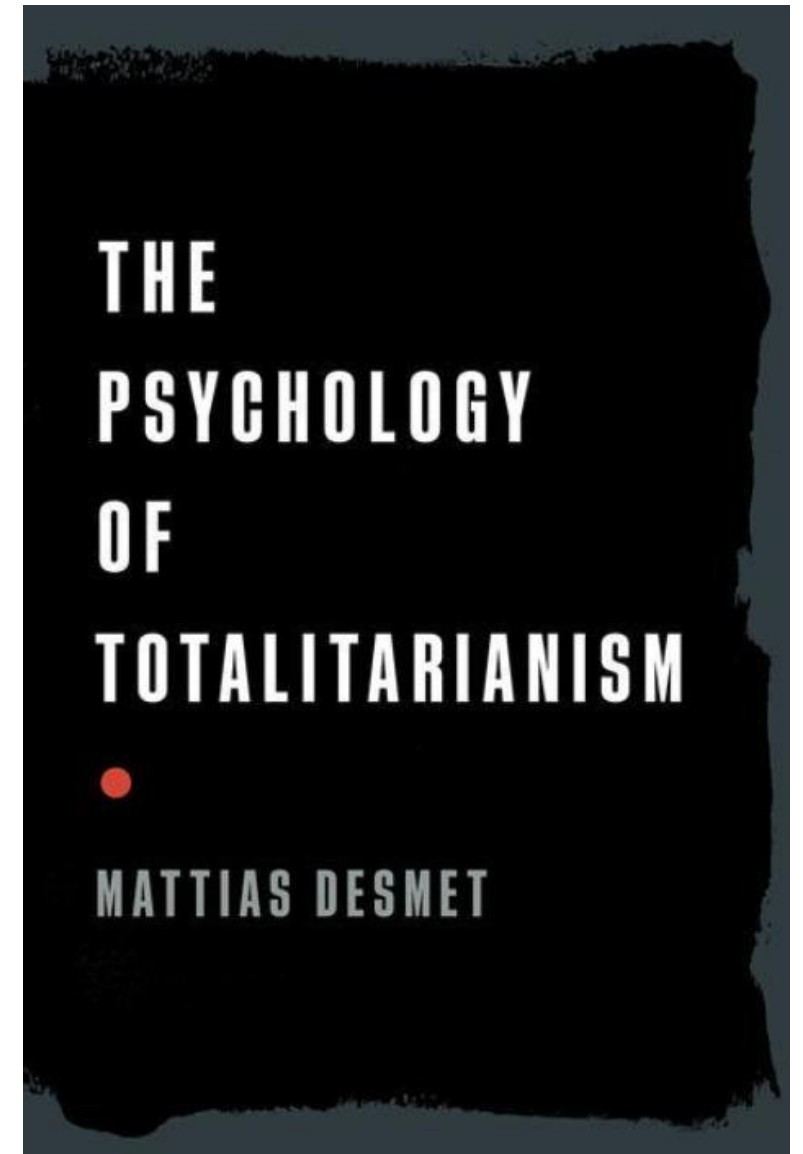
The Myths We Live By
Mary Midgley

„Myths are everywhere. Far from being the opposite of science, however, Midgley argues that myth is a central part of it.

Myths are neither lies nor mere stories but a network of powerful symbols for interpreting the world. ”

Why cognitive warfare?

- Accesible, low cost / high reward , deniable
- Socio-cultural features of the current society
- Major advancement in the field of psychology
- Technology



NATO CogWar approach

Cognitive Warfare: Strengthening and Defending the Mind

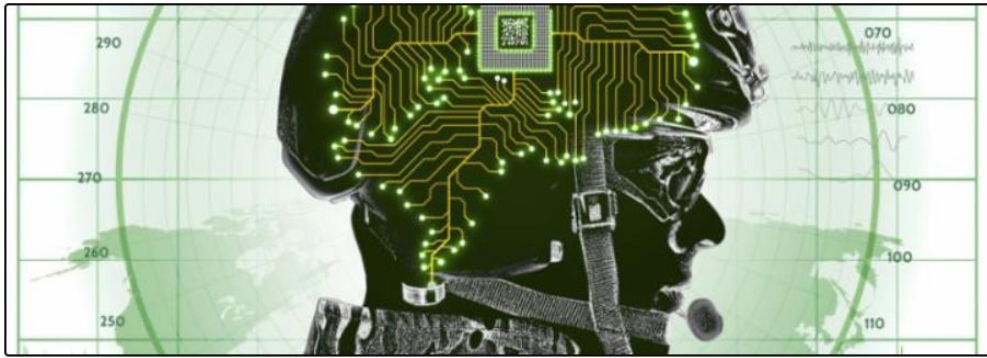
Form of non-kinetic warfare.

Adversaries target NATO decision-making process and freedom of action through offensive CogWar activities.

How to defend:

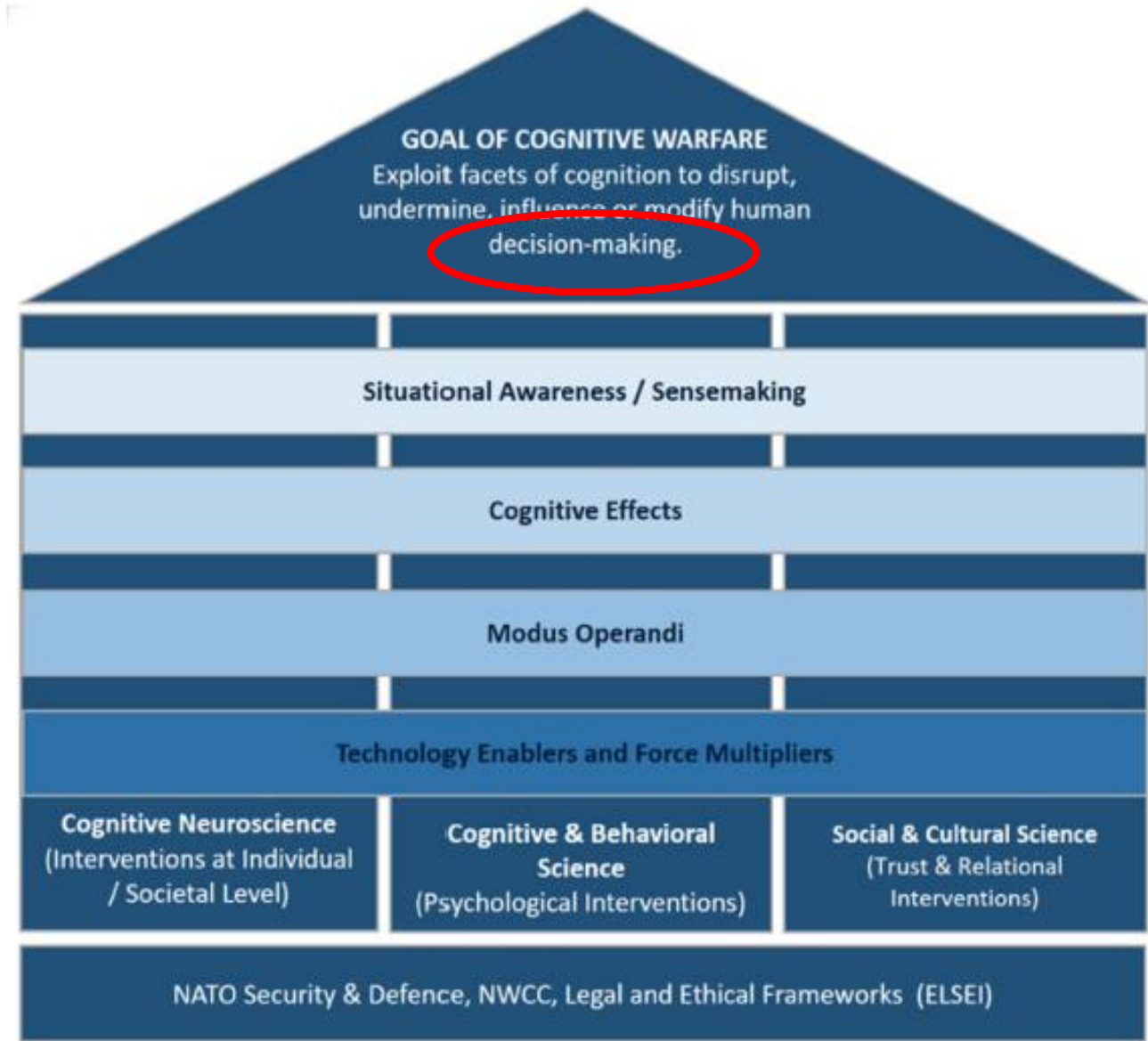
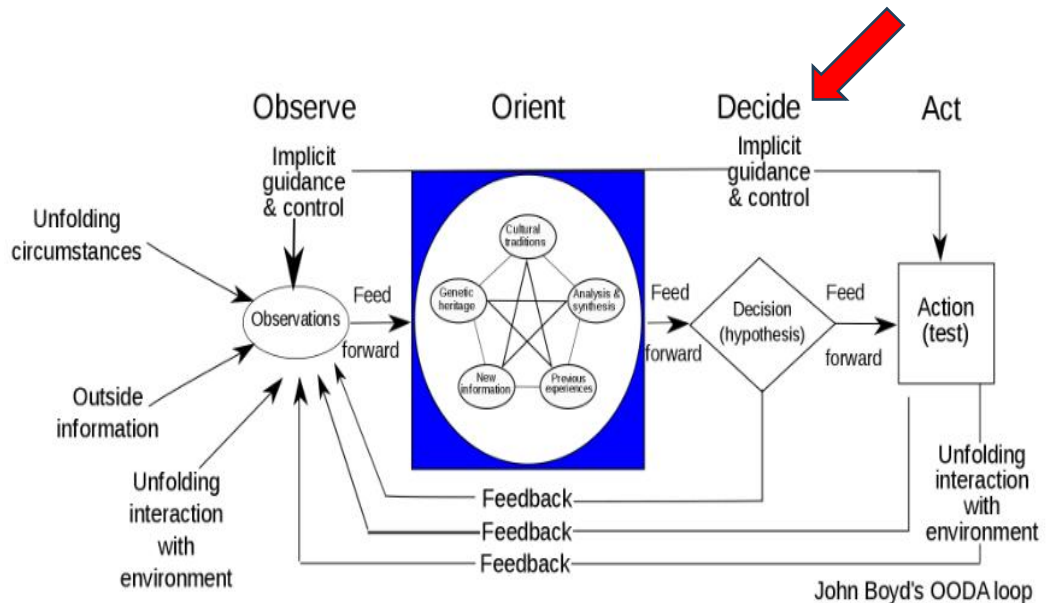
- Discovering cognitive attacks.
- Assessing vulnerabilities to cognitive attacks.
- NATO must establish organizations to liaise with tech companies.





The Cognitive Domain is a new space of competition, beyond the land, maritime, air, cybernetic and spatial domains.

The mind is a computer that processes symbols (computational theory of mind (CTM)/ computationalism)



The House Model Developed by HFM-ET-356.
Mitigating and Responding to Cognitive Warfare. Technical Report, 2023.

EU CogWar approach



Most important narratives against EU (NATO) aim to:

- undermines democratic values and political integrity
- alters the image as a security provider
- creates dissensions between states
- portrays leadership as elitist and isolated from citizens' real needs and concerns

Cooperation with NATO to combat Cog War attacks as part of larger hybrid threat.

EU CogWar approach - Tackling FIMI



Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference - **(FIMI)** is a mostly non-illegal pattern of behaviour that threatens or has the potential to negatively impact values, procedures, and political processes.

Target : political institutions , public opinion

Forms:

- Political disinformation (undermines trust in institutions or the democratic process)
- Health disinformation
- Environmental disinformation
- Security disinformation (disrupt the public order)

National approaches to CogWar - Sweden

Psychological
Defence Agency



Swedish Psychological Defence Agency
(Myndigheten för psykologiskt försvar, MPF)

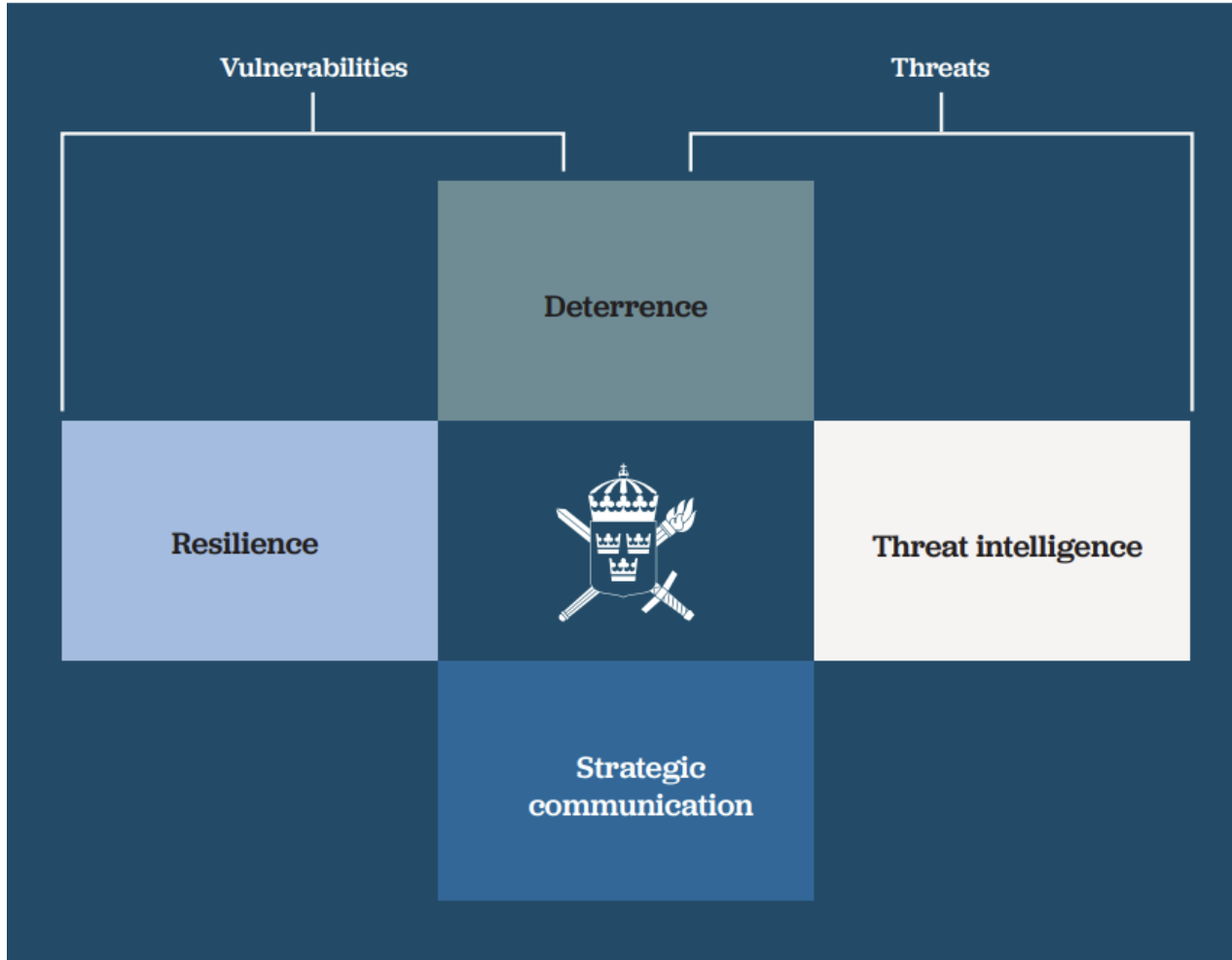
**PSYCHOLOGICAL
DEFENCE AGENCY**

We defend and safeguard our open and democratic society
and the free formation of opinions.

Our mission

The agency's main task is to lead efforts to coordinate and develop the operations of agencies and other actors within Sweden's psychological defence. We offer support to agencies, municipalities, regions, companies and organisations, and help to strengthen the resilience of the Swedish population.

National approaches on CogWar -Sweden



Resilience - Coordinated efforts to foster societal resilience and reduce vulnerabilities in people, systems, and institutions.

Threat intelligence - Coordinated efforts to understand and track external threats

Deterrence - Coordinated efforts to defend society and, where possible, shape the behaviour of external threat actors.

Strategic communication - Coordinated efforts to understand and counteract vulnerabilities and threats through engagement in the Information environment.

CONCLUSIONS

Analyzing CW isolated from the larger cultural and civilizational milieu could be a source of misunderstanding.

Adversaries have a complex/holistic understanding of human psyche and social fabric. We have a technological driven perspective and a compartmentalized approach.

NATO/EU/national states should use StratCom narratives to *shape social imaginary* in a way that can support cognitive resilience against CogWar.