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The Rise of Hybrid Warfare

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Cover Page Footnote

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INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-first century, wars are not declared or waged conventionally; instead, conflicts are instigated by clandestine agents using military, non-military, media,[1] cyber tools, information operations, NGOs, nonstate actors, intelligence agencies, economic tools, propaganda,[2] ambiguity,[3] terrorism,[4] and insurgency or rebel movements.[5] In hybrid warfare, the lines between peacetime and wartime[6] and between combatants and civilians[7] are blurred. Further, systemic aggression is imposed on the targeted state using gray zones,[8] nonlinear warfare, unrestricted warfare,[9] unconventional warfare, and color revolutions to avoid attribution and possible retribution against the aggressor.

The threat posed by hybrid warfare is real.[10] Hybrid warfare employs a wide array of power tools, including: political, economic, military, asymmetric, civil. Additionally, it includes informational tools such as: diplomacy, terrorism, proxies, and economic attacks to persuade populations or to divide societies.[11] Hybrid warfare targets the vulnerabilities of a society and system while deliberately exploiting ambiguity to avoid detection. It is usually detected only when it is fully functional and capable of inflicting harm.[12] Some researchers believe that lawfare (in which law is used as a tool of aggression) is also a branch of hybrid warfare.[13] However, it can also be argued that lawfare has a domain of its own. For example, geopolitically, Russia is mirroring Western lawfare threats.[14] By contrast, hybrid warfare operations are employed by nations around the world. Presently, the most notable effects of hybrid wars can be seen in Syria, Ukraine, and Hong Kong. There are a plethora of cases where an aggressor using

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[1] James K. Wither, *Making Sense of Hybrid Warfare*, 15 CONNECTIONS: Q. J. 73, 76 (2016), https://connections-qj.org/article/making-sense-hybrid-warfare [hereinafter Wither].

[2] Karl Hickman et al., Conference Proceeding at the Swedish Defence University: Hybrid Threats and Asymmetric Warfare: What to Do? 15, 20–21 (Feb. 2018).

[3] DR. PATRICK J. CULLEN & ERIK REICHBORN-KJENNERUD, MCDC COUNTERING HYBRID WARFARE PROJECT: UNDERSTANDING HYBRID WARFARE 12 (Jan. 2017); *See also* COLONEL BERND HORN, ON HYBRID WARFARE 16 (Dr. Emily Spencer eds., 2016) [hereinafter HORN].

[4] Manon van Tienhoven, Identifying 'Hybrid Warfare' 13 (2016) (unpublished Master in Public Administration thesis, Leiden University) (on file with author) [hereinafter Tienhoven].

[5] *See* VIKRANT DESHPANDE & SHIBANI MEHTA, *Contextualising Hybrid Warfare*, *in* HYBRID WARFARE: THE CHANGING CHARACTER OF CONFLICT 26–28 (Vikrant Deshpande ed., 2018) [hereinafter DESHPANDE & MEHTA].

[6] *See* Wither, *supra* note 1, at 74.

[7] *See* Hickman, *supra* note 2, at 5.

[8] *See* HORN, *supra* note 3, at 12–14.

[9] *See* DESHPANDE & MEHTA, *supra* note 5, at 29–32.

[10] JAN JAKUB UZIĘBŁO, UNITED IN AMBIGUITY? EU AND NATO APPROACHES TO HYBRID WARFARE AND HYBRID THREATS 4 (Bassotti et al. eds., May 2017) [hereinafter UZIĘBŁO].

[11] ROBERT JOHNSON, *The Evolution of Hybrid Threats Through History*, *in* SHIFTING PARADIGM OF WAR: HYBRID WARFARE 3–5 (Yücel Özel & Ertan İnaltekin eds., 2017).

[12] *See* CULLEN, *supra* note 3, at 10.

[13] *See* Hickman, *supra* note 2, at 18.

[14] *Id.*

hybrid warfare has either admitted its involvement in the hybrid operations or declassified its plans for hybrid wars.

Pakistan is a victim of hybrid warfare. Thus, Pakistan is incentivized to understand hybrid warfare to learn how it has been attacked historically. Also, comprehending hybrid warfare will help Pakistan grasp why it is destabilized in the present. Finally, understanding this type of warfare will mitigate future attacks against Pakistan.[15] Therefore, Pakistan must learn about its weaknesses, such as its vulnerabilities related to the CPEC, blasphemy, "ethnic, religious, and geographical difference," and socioeconomic problems that can be exploited by a hybrid warfare aggressor, who may use color revolutions and unconventional warfare to disrupt, control, or influence the regime or system to satisfy its geostrategic interests.[16] As a response to hybrid warfare, nations should follow three steps: detect, deter, and respond.[17]

This Article has five Parts. Part I defines hybrid warfare. It includes hybrid warfare definitions by John McCuen, NATO, and Frank Hoffman. Part II then describes the theoretical framework of hybrid warfare. This Part has 11 subparts. Part II(A) explains the theory of global dominance in respect to hybrid warfare planning. Part II(B) demonstrates the Russian stance on hybrid warfare in geopolitics. Part II(C) defines Lind's predictions regarding compound and hybrid threats. Part II(D) explains the pillars of hybrid warfare, which include color revolutions and unconventional warfare. Part II(E) explains Warden's five rings as targets of hybrid warfare. Part II(F) explains Hart's theory of indirect warfare in relation to hybrid warfare. Part II(G) explores John Boyd's OODA loop theory. Part II(H) explains chaos theory in relation to hybrid warfare. Part II(I) describes the United States' full spectrum dominance strategy in hybrid warfare. Part II(J) describes the notion of insurgency in accordance with a leaked U.S. field manual for creating or fighting an insurgency. Finally, Part II(K) explains the theory of leading from behind under hybrid warfare.

Thereafter, Part III provides a list of tools that are essential to a hybrid warfare toolkit. After listing the elements and tools of hybrid warfare, Part III(A) explains the role of propaganda in hybrid warfare. Part III(B) defines the role of funding and cyberattacks in hybrid warfare. Part III(C) explores the role of proxies in hybrid warfare. Part VI gives a list of case studies and false flag attacks planned or executed in hybrid warfare, where aggressors have either admitted to their plans and activities or were apprehended during the act. This Part includes details and summaries of hybrid warfare cases, attacks, and operations that are admitted by Russia, the United Kingdom, Israel, Turkey, Indonesia, Macedonia, Italy, and the U.S. Finally, Part V discusses the strategies and recommendations for fighting or responding to hybrid threats. This segment contains a discussion of the elements of detecting, deterring, and responding to hybrid threats.

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[15] ANDREW KORYBKO, APPLICABILITY OF HYBRID WARFARE TO PAKISTAN: CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE RESPONSES 207–08 (People's Friendship U. of Russ. ed., 2015).

[16] *See id.* at 208–21.

[17] SEAN MONAGHAN, DR. PATRICK CULLEN & DR. NJORD WEGGE, MCDC COUNTERING HYBRID WARFARE PROJECT: COUNTERING HYBRID WARFARE 3–4 (Mar. 2019) [hereinafter MONAGHAN].

I. Defining Hybrid Warfare

Hybrid warfare has been defined a number of times. Most of the definitions revolve around actors, tactics, dynamism, complexity, ambiguity, simultaneity,[18] and the avoidance of attribution and retribution. NATO views hybrid warfare as a kind of warfare that uses conventional and unconventional means, propaganda, misinformation, proxies, and psychological operations in a targeted state.[19]

A. John McCuen's Definition

John J. McCuen, in his 2008 paper "Hybrid Wars," describes hybrid warfare as "spectrum wars with both physical and conceptual dimensions: the former, a struggle against an armed enemy and the latter, a wider struggle for control and support of the combat zone's indigenous population, the support of the home fronts of the intervening nations, and the support of the international community."[20] McCuen sees hybrid warfare as using a variety of tools to persuade the domestic population of a targeted state.

B. NATO's Definition

There is no official definition of hybrid warfare by NATO; however, it has defined hybrid warfare in its public pronouncements as

> warfare . . . where a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures are employed in a highly integrated design. The adversary tries to influence influential policymakers and key decision makers by combining kinetic operations with subversive effort. The aggressor often resorts to clandestine actions, to avoid attribution and retribution.[21]

NATO sees hybrid warfare as a range of clandestine efforts to influence policymakers and key players in a targeted state while avoiding attribution and retribution.

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[18] *See* Uziębło, *supra* note 10, at 7.

[19] *See id.* at 14–15.

[20] *See* Gurmeet Kanwal, *The Changing Character and the Taxonomy of Conflict, in* Hybrid Warfare: The Changing Character of Conflict 16 (Vikrant Deshpande ed., 2018) [hereinafter Kanwal] (quoting John J. McCuen, *'Hybrid Wars', in* Mil. Rev. 107, 108 (Mar.-Apr. 2008)).

[21] Brigadier General Nadeem Ashraf, The Pursuit of Hybrid Warfare: Muddling Towards Clarity and Implementation 7 (Jan. 4, 2017) (unpublished strategy research report, on file with the U.S. Army War College) [hereinafter Ashraf] (quoting Katie Abbott, Understanding and Countering Hybrid Warfare: Next Steps for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization 8 (Mar. 23, 2016) (research paper, University of Ottawa); *See also Security: EU Strengthens Response to Hybrid Threats*, Euro. Commission (Apr. 6, 2016); Andrés B. Muñoz et al., *Articles on NATO Current Challenges*, 37 NATO Legal Gazette 5, 11, 25 (Oct. 2016).

C. *FRANK HOFFMAN'S DEFINITION*

W. Nemeth coined the term "hybrid warfare" in 2002 to describe the existence of hybrid threats,[22] while Frank Hoffman established the use of the term to refer to post-Cold War conflicts.[23] Hoffman describes hybrid warfare as the employment of a full spectrum of tools, tactics, and coercions.[24] He believes that hybrid threats incorporate

> a full range of different modes of warfare including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder. Hybrid wars can be conducted by both states and a variety of nonstate actors. These multi-modal activities can be conducted by separate units, or even by the same unit, but are generally operationally and tactically directed and coordinated within the main battle space to achieve synergistic effects in the physical and psychological dimensions of the conflict. These effects can be gained at all levels of war.[25]

Hoffman also refers to hybrid warfare as compound warfare. He explains that in compound warfare, regular and irregular forces are used in a unified direction.[26] He describes compound warfare as

> wars that had significant regular and irregular components fighting simultaneously under unified direction. … Compound wars offered synergy and combinations at the strategic level, but not the complexity, fusion, and simultaneity we anticipate at the operational and even tactical levels in wars where one or both sides is blending and fusing the full range of methods and modes of conflict in the battlespace. Irregular forces in cases of compound wars operated largely as distraction or economy of force measures in a separate theatre or adjacent operating area including the rear echelon. Because, it is based on operationally separate forces, the compound concept did not capture the merger or blurring modes of war identified in past case studies such as Hezbollah in the second Lebanon war of 2006.[27]

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[22] *See* UZIĘBŁO, *supra* note 10, at 5.

[23] Graham Fairclough, *The Mouse, the Tank and the Competitive Market: A New View of Hybrid War, in* SHIFTING PARADIGM OF WAR: HYBRID WARFARE 9 (Yücel Özel & Ertan İnaltekin eds., 2017).

[24] FRANK G. HOFFMAN, CONFLICT IN 21ST CENTURY: THE RISE OF HYBRID WARS 8 (Potomac Inst. for Pol'y Stud. ed., 2007) [hereinafter HOFFMAN].

[25] *See* HOFFMAN, *supra* note 24, at 8. *See also* Ashraf, *supra* note 21, at 5; HORN, *supra* note 3, at 8–9.

[26] *See* HOFFMAN, *supra* note 24, at 20.

[27] *See* KANWAL, *supra* note 20, at 17. *See also* Frank G. Hoffman, *Hybrid Warfare and Challenges*, 52 JOINT FORCES Q. 36 (1st Quarter, 2009).

Overall, the key objectives for hybrid warfare are to avoid direct confrontation, to destabilize a targeted state, and to hinder its policymaking.[28] In this regard, a full spectrum of tools is employed to introduce chaos and ambiguity to spread confusion, while avoiding attribution and retribution against the perpetrators.[29] All efforts are synchronized to either change a regime or to influence or coerce it into conditions that are favorable to the aggressor.[30]

II. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF HYBRID WARFARE

A Chinese military strategy analyst, Sun Tzu, noted thousands of years ago that the most efficient way to fight an enemy is to break his resistance indirectly without actual fighting.[31] In this way, a nation saves the resources that could have been exhausted in a direct confrontation, while it uses its resources to fight an irregular war. Moreover, indirect warfare destabilizes the enemy and puts it in a defensive position, making it vulnerable to other attacks.[32]

At present, all of the superpowers of this world (including the U.S., Russia, and China) have nuclear capabilities; for this reason, conventional warfare is not an option for these nations. Moreover, the costs and expenditure involved in fighting conventionally are too high. For instance, the U.S. has spent more than 760 billion USD in its war in Afghanistan,[33] and the end is nowhere in sight. Therefore, hybrid warfare and clandestine ways of waging wars are gaining ground as attractive options for destabilizing an enemy without exhausting many resources.

In the past, conventional wars were fought with missiles, fighter jets, bombs, and soldiers. Currently, hybrid warfare is indicated by attempts at regime change, soft coups, color revolutions, rising anti-state rebels, insurgents, "nonstate actors guised among civilians," spies, "propaganda in media and social media," surgical strikes, and proxy fights.[34] These hybrid warfare tactics not only enable an aggressor to use nonmilitary forces against a targeted state without being held accountable in accordance with the rules of international law; they also allow it to destabilize a target without exhausting many resources or disturbing their political relations.

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[28] Gergana Mitalova, *Comprehensive Institutional Approach to Developing Capabilities to Counter Hybrid Threats: Legal and Doctrinal Limitations*, 39 INFO. & SECURITY: AN INT'L J. 127, 132. (2018); *See also* Ashraf, *supra* note 21, at 8.

[29] JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, JOINT OPERATING ENVIRONMENT, JOE 2035: THE JOINT FORCE IN A CONTESTED AND DISORDERED WORLD 6 (2016); *See also* Zdzisław Śliwa et al., *Russian Ambitions and Hybrid Modes of Warfare*, 7 Est. J. of Mil. Stud. 86, 96 (2018); *See also* Ashraf, *supra* note 21, at 8.

[30] *See also* Ashraf, *supra* note 21, at 11.

[31] SUN TZU, *Attack by Stratagem, in* ON THE ART OF WAR 8–12 (2000) (c. 500 B.C.E.) (ebook).

[32] ANDREW KORYBKO, HYBRID WARS: THE INDIRECT ADAPTIVE APPROACH TO REGIME CHANGE 9 (People's Friendship U. of Russ. ed., 2015) [hereinafter KORYBKO].

[33] Reality Check Team, *Afghanistan war: What has the conflict cost the US?*, BBC (Feb. 28, 2020), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-47391821.

[34] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 8-10.

A. *GLOBAL DOMINANCE THEORY*

In 1890, Alfred Thayer Mahan developed a theory in his work *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, in which he said that if certain regions of the sea are controlled by a power, its effects can influence other parts of the world.[35] His works have since influenced U.S. policies and naval strategies. In 1904, in the paper "The Geographical Pivot of the History," Halford Mackinder developed Mahan's work and applied it to certain geographical locations.[36] He referred to these intrinsic areas as "the Heartland." Today these areas are Russia and Central Asia. [37] Mackinder theorized that control over the Heartland translated into control of the "World Island of Eurasia." Furthermore, he argued that Eastern Europe was the gateway to this Heartland. Mackinder wrote in 1919 that "who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; Who rules the World-Island commands the World."[38] However, if we critically evaluate these two strategies for gaining global dominance, geographically, each differs tremendously from the other.

Later, Jozef Pilsudski, a Polish leader, proposed that fracturing non-Russian states into different ethnic groups by externally influencing a rebellion against the Russian center could possibly defeat Russia. [39] Ultimately, Poland was unsuccessful in executing this plan. However, Pilsudski pioneered the idea of destabilizing a nation by creating a rebellion against the center state and by diving the nation into different ethnic groups. This idea was later used by others. Great Britain applied a similar theoretical framework of "destabilizing a nation by dividing it into religious identities" to rule in pre-partition Hindustan through the East India Company. In Hindustan (present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), the British divided a nation into two different religious groups: Hindus and Muslims. This hybrid operation is referred to as the "divide and rule"[40] theory. If we look at the present-day effects of the successful application of this theory, India and Pakistan are still arch-nemeses, fighting over their differences in religious beliefs as different identities that cannot make peace with

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[35] A. T. MAHAN, THE INFLUENCE OF SEA POWER UPON HISTORY 1660-1783, 28 (2007) (ebook).

[36] Sir Halford J. Mackinder, *The Geographical Pivot of the History (1904)*, 170 GEOGRAPHICAL J. 298, 300–321 (Dec. 2004).

[37] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 14–15.

[38] SIR HALFORD J. MACKINDER, DEMOCRATIC IDEALS AND REALITY: A STUDY IN THE POLITICS OF RECONSTRUCTION, xviii, 106 (Nat'l Def. U. Press ed., 1942); *See also* ELDAR ISMAILOV & VLADIMER PAPAVA, *The Heartland Theory and the Present-Day Geopolitical Structure of Central Eurasia*, *in* RETHINKING CENTRAL EURASIA 84, 86 (Cent. Asia-Caucasus Inst. & Silk Road Stud. Program ed., 2010); *See also* Matt Rosenberg, *What Is Mackinder's Heartland Theory?*, THOUGHTCO., (Sept. 10, 2018), https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-mackinders-heartland-theory-4068393.

[39] Predmetsky Rosenborg, *Geopolitics of Eurasia: A Brief Introduction*, MEDIUM (Sept. 7, 2019), https://medium.com/@predmetskyrosenborg/geopolitics-of-eurasia-a-brief-introduction-429ed796a64b (last visited Oct. 2, 2019). *See also* Jacek Reginia-Zacharski, *Ukrainian Issues in Geopolitical Thought of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries*, 18 INT'L STUD. INTERDISC. POL. & CULTURAL J. 5, 18–19 (2016).

[40] Shashi Tharoor, *The Partition: The British Game of "Divide and Rule"*, AL JAZEERA (Aug. 10, 2017), https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/08/partition-british-game-divide-rule-170808101655163.html.

each other, while both of them still praise and look up to the United Kingdom (the invader) as an ideal.

After Pilsudski, Nicholas Spykman used Mackinder's crescents (the Inner Crescent: Europe and Southern, Southwestern, and Eastern Asia; the Outer Crescent: Britain, South and North America, Southern Africa, Australasia, and Japan)[41] and referred to these collectively as Rimland. Spykman believed that the Rimland (Asia Minor, Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, South East Asia, China, Korea, and East Siberia, excluding Russia) was more important than the Heartland because of its growing industries and manpower, and said that "*Who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia; Who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world.*"[42]

Later, Saul Cohen added to Spykman's analysis of the Rimland and established that geopolitically, the Shatterbelts region is more prone to conflicts; this is the region where most of the world powers are fighting to protect their interests because of the Shatterbelts' diverse characteristics. [43] This was identified by Cohen as present-day Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.[44] More recently, in 1997, Zbigniew Brzezinski, in his book *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, used Pilsudski's peripheral destabilization and the ideas of Rimland and Shatterbelts to describe how the United States can keep its dominion over the world by exploiting the "Eurasian Balkans."[45] He noted

> [the] Eurasian Balkans form the inner core of that oblong (portions of southeastern Europe, Central Asia and parts of South Asia, the Persian Gulf area, and the Middle East). . . [and] not only are its political entities unstable, but they tempt and invite the intrusion of more powerful neighbors, each of whom is determined to oppose the region's dominion by another. It is this familiar combination of a power vacuum and power suction that justifies the appellation Eurasian Balkans.[46]

In sum, Mackinder identified Russia as at the center of the Heartland of the World Island. In turn, Cohen and Spykman located its vulnerabilities. Pilsudski provided methods to break it up through destabilization, and Brzezinski used all of these learnings to provide a geostrategy for the U.S. to maintain its dominance. Thus, Korybko is of the view that the American strategy is to penetrate the Russian core through destabilization to retain its global hegemonic dominance.[47] For Korybko, the American strategy for destabilizing cores in

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[41] Ismailov & Papava, *supra* note 38, at 85.

[42] NICHOLAS JOHN SPYKMAN, AMERICA'S STRATEGY IN WORLD POLITICS: THE UNITED STATES AND THE BALANCE OF POWER xxvii (2007).

[43] SAUL BERNARD COHEN, GEOPOLITICS OF THE WORLD SYSTEM 43–44 (2003) [hereinafter COHEN].

[44] *See id.* at 43–44.

[45] ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, THE GRAND CHESSBOARD: AMERICAN PRIMACY AND ITS GEOSTRATEGIC IMPERATIVES 133 (1997).

[46] *Id*. at 123–124.

[47] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 18.

Eurasia is not to repeat its experience in Libya for financial and political reasons. Instead, it aims to destabilize peripheral states like Kazakhstan and Ukraine through civil conflicts, regime change movements, and insurgencies or antigovernment movements through propaganda.[48] For example, it should not be a surprise to discover eventually that the anti-China rebellion in Hong Kong is funded or fueled by Western powers to serve their strategic interests and to maintain global dominance. In these strategies, the introduction of chaos ensures an attack on the targeted society and the success of the aggressor in hybrid warfare. Such destabilization creates a deadlock for a targeted state putting it into a strategic defensive position.[49]

B. *THE RUSSIAN STANCE*

Korybko has noted that, usually, in hybrid war operations, humanitarian intervention or the responsibility to protect are not employed because they use the conventional use of force to destabilize nations and they do not serve the interests of the perpetrator superpower's interests. However, he theorized that, in our complex geopolitics, operations are more likely to be conventional when they are distant from the real core targets of the U.S.—Russia, China, and Iran—and are more likely to be unconventional when moving toward these core states.[50] For example, since Libya was politically distant from Iran and Russia, direct means to change the regime were used, and, because Syria was politically closer to Russia and Iran, indirect means (e.g., color revolutions and unconventional means) to change its regime were employed.[51] Russia is more of a core target than Iran; therefore, in the future, it is expected that the environment in Ukraine will more closely resemble the Syrian situation. However, it is pertinent to note that the key goal of an adaptive approach for the U.S. is to achieve the Libyan outcome in Ukraine.[52]

By contrast, Korybko's analysis of this theoretical framework is so centered on Russia as a core target of American strategies for destabilization that it misses out on other global powers that are gaining ground for global dominance, such as China. It also lacks any insight into the destabilization and liberalization strategies or installation of puppet governments in oil-rich countries, such as Saudi Arabia. Likewise, Korybko's analysis of Syria serves only one dimension of the American interest in destabilizing Russia, while it misses the financial benefits of dominating oil-rich countries and the U.S.'s wider relationship with the Muslim world and its political relationship with Israel. Similarly, while Korybko also sees China as a core target of the U.S., he does not provide any helpful analysis of U.S. global strategies to retain its global dominance in respect to China's Silk Road project or its ally Pakistan.

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[48] *Id.*

[49] *Id.*

[50] *Id.* at 11.

[51] *Id.*

[52] *Id.*

C. *LIND'S PREDICTIONS*

In 1989, William Lind proposed that the next generation of warfare will be more fluid, decentralized, and asymmetrical by using nonstate actors.[53] Lind also predicted that information warfare and psychological operations will replace conventional methodology of fighting a war. Lind said, "Psychological operations may become the dominant operational and strategic weapon in the form of media [or] information intervention… A major target will be the enemy population's support of its government and the war. Television news may become a more powerful operational weapon than armored divisions."[54] Lind correctly predicted the rise of unconventional warfare and misinformation or antigovernment propaganda. Lind also anticipated the blurring of the line between civilian and military through the use of nonstate actors—utilized today in hybrid warfare through unconventional warfare and color revolutions.

D. *PILLARS OF HYBRID WARFARE*

Hybrid warfare comprises two basic pillars: color revolutions and unconventional warfare. Part II(D)(1) will explain color revolutions and Part II(D)(2) will discuss unconventional warfare.

1. *Color Revolutions*

In color revolutions, psychological operations, information operations, and propaganda are employed to convey a designed (usually anti-government) message to mass audiences.[55] At this stage of hybrid warfare, many characteristics are identifiable: (1) the vulnerabilities of a society or state are targeted, (2) networks are developed, (3) the media and other information outlets are positioned to influence targeted masses, (4) local separatist movements are supported, (5) politicians and other key establishment actors are bribed, (6) dissatisfaction with central authorities is induced, (7) local oligarchs and armed bands are contracted, (8) anti-state interest movements, marches, or protests are designed and commenced, (9) infrastructure and institutions are targeted and violence is provoked, (10) misinformation and psychological operations are started, (11) monopolies in the media are established and domestic conventional forces are disabled, and (12) parallel sovereignty and a parallel state are erected.[56]

The chief purpose of such activities is to destabilize the government and to influence the regime or subvert the authority of a chosen government. This message instigates violence and convinces its participants to fight against the system, which is also referred to as 'neocortical warfare.' The higher the number of its participants, the higher the chances of its success. In order to recruit more

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[53] William S. Lind et al., *The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation*, MARINE CORPS GAZETTE 22–26 (Oct. 1989) [hereinafter Lind et al.].

[54] *Id.*

[55] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 52–53.

[56] *See* HORN, *supra* note 3, at 26–34.

participants, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are exploited as network-centric warfare, which also enables the movement to spread the manufactured virus deep in the roots of a system and among the general public's subconsciousness. The affected population behaves like a swarming hive, manipulated as weaponized chaos and used to destabilize a targeted state in the form of rebellion, insurgency, and revolutions.[57] The destabilization of Syria and the Arab Spring are examples of such color revolutions.[58] Color revolution techniques involve public movements, protests, marches, social or civil disobedience, boycotts, anti-corruption movements, anti-state movements, nonviolent seizures, parallel sovereignty and government claims, state mocking, false identities, and guerilla warfare. In addition to these nonviolent techniques, violent unconventional techniques can also be used by insurgents or rebels.[59]

2. *Unconventional Warfare*

Unconventional warfare is the next stage of color revolutions. In this stage, terrorism and unpredictable force are used, key government institutions are disabled, the territories of a state are occupied, armed forces are prominently positioned, and guerrilla warfare is commenced against a targeted state.[60] The main aim of such activities is to influence the regime of the targeted state by employing nonstate actors or to destabilize a state. For instance, during protests by these movements, it is easy to introduce undercover agents of nonstate actors to instigate protesters into violence. Some of the most renowned uses of nonstate actors involve their employment as mercenaries, terrorists, and anti-state rebels. [61] These nonstate actors use Warden's five rings, Hart's indirect approach, Boyd's OODA loop, and the chaos theory to paralyze a targeted victim.[62]

It is difficult for law enforcement authorities of a targeted state to identify the place and time of such violence, owing to its ambiguity. By contrast, during identified instances of violence, international and domestic media are controlled in a way to only highlight the casualties and injuries caused as collateral damage by a victim state in its efforts to restrain violence and ensure security. A government, in making such efforts, is painted as a draconian human rights abuser, as a means to increase political support among the international community to change the regime of the targeted state. [63] The leaked U.S. Government Agencies paper, *Special Forces Unconventional Warfare, 2010*, known as TC 18-01, can be seen as a field manual of unconventional warfare. It prescribes and describes detailed ways of how unconventional warfare is

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[57] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 52–53.

[58] *Id.* at 50.

[59] *Id*. at 44–49.

[60] *See* HORN, *supra* note 3, at 30–34.

[61] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 56-57.

[62] *See id.* at 57–61.

[63] *See id*. at 19.

planned, managed, and executed using social media platforms.[64] Compared to color revolutions, unconventional warfare is more expensive and violent.[65] Notable examples of such unconventional warfare are the Ukrainian coup, the EuroMaidan coup, and the Syrian War, and it is predicted that such movements will continue to be planned and executed in the future.[66]

E. WARDEN'S FIVE RINGS

Colonel John Warden theorized that in a clandestine war against a target state, there are five target levels stacked in layers upon each other. At the very core is (1) the leadership of a country. Beyond this level are (2) system essentials, (3) infrastructure, and (4) the population. The outermost layer is (5) fielded military.[67] Warden sees all these targets in an enemy state as a bullseye target. He says that the closer you hit to the core of these targets, the more benefits you gain.[68] For instance, if you hit the leadership, the ripple effects will felt at the population level. But, if for example, you hit the fielded military, then infrastructure will not be affected.[69]

Warden believed that the centers of gravity (COGs) can be located in any target, and these COGs can be found at operational and strategic levels. For example, the COG for infrastructure can be roads. However, all five rings must be targeted in an enemy state to get the best results, with the "leadership as its core" and the "outer layers" proximity with the core depicting the importance of that target.[70]

For convenience and effectiveness, population, infrastructure, and system essentials are the main targets in unconventional warfare and color revolutions, whereas the outermost layer—fielded military—and the innermost layer—leadership—are often seen as difficult targets, because of a desire to avoid direct confrontation. Nonetheless, the main goal of targeting leadership remains intact. For instance, color revolutions target societies to instigate destabilization. When a population is instigated into a rebellion or insurgency, it overpowers the institutions and then tries to strike at the core of the system, i.e., its leadership. In this situation, if the leadership chooses to defend itself through fielded military or police forces, a goal is partially achieved. As a result, a civil conflict between the insurgency and the governmental forces will erupt, destabilizing the

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[64] SPECIAL FORCES UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE: TRAINING CIRCULAR 18-01 (Nov. 2010), https://nsnbc.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/special-forces-uw-tc-18-01.pdf (last visited Oct. 2, 2019).

[65] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 73.

[66] *See id.* at 69.

[67] GARY M. JACKSON, WARDEN'S FIVE-RING SYSTEM THEORY: LEGITIMATE WARTIME MILITARY TARGETING OR AN INCREASED POTENTIAL TO VIOLATE THE LAW AND NORMS OF EXPECTED BEHAVIOR? (2000). *See also* JOHN BOYD & JOHN WARDEN, AIR POWER'S QUEST FOR STRATEGIC PARALYSIS 25 (1995); Col. John A. Warden, *The Enemy as a System*, 9 AIRPOWER J. 40–55 (Spring 1995); Col John A. Warden, *Strategy and Airpower*, 29 AIR & SPACE POWER J. 65 (Spring 2011).

[68] *Id.*

[69] LTC Tan Kian Seng, *The Strategic Merits of Airpower*, 41 POINTER, J. SING. ARMED FORCES 56, 57–58 (2015) [hereinafter Seng].

[70] Seng, *supra* note 69, at 57–58.

nation. By contrast, if the leadership does not choose to fight the insurgency and steps down, the regime is changed in the form of a puppet government favored by the instigator, accomplishing the goal completely. The low-scale effects of such instigation can be seen today in Ukraine and Hong Kong, while its full-fledged influence to change the regime can be seen in Syria.

In these regime changes, rebellions, and insurgency attempts, media and the elites or oligarchy of the targeted country also play an important role, since the elites and media of a country can influence the population. For instance, the elites can influence the media and even institutes in certain subjects. Also, they can influence populations and their perspectives regarding leadership. Similarly, the media, through propaganda and anti-state campaigns, can also sway populations and institutes into abandoning its leadership. Likewise, the elites and media campaigns can change the perspective of a population towards supporting a favored candidate or a puppet leader for the leadership of a targeted state. This can be achieved by targeting the COG of a population. Depending on the characteristics of a state, the COG of a population can range from religious preferences to patriotism or family. For instance, if a campaign chooses to target the family in a situation where the population places family at its core, then the chances of success of such a campaign are high. However, if the campaign chooses to target religion as a core COG of society where people do not place religion at its inner core, then the chances for the success of such a campaign are low. Therefore, an aggressor of hybrid warfare first studies the characteristics of a targeted population, and then makes its moves.[71]

F. *HART'S INDIRECT WARFARE*

In 1954, Liddell Hart, in his work *The Strategy of Indirect Approach*, wrote that indirect approaches (whether the use of asymmetrical warfare or psychological operations) of a war are more efficient than direct approaches of war.[72] Hart said:

> In strategy the longest way round is apt to be the shortest way home. More and more clearly has the fact emerged that a direct approach to one's mental object, or physical objective, along the line of natural expectation for the opponent, has ever tended to, and usually produced negative results . . . the dislocation of the enemy's psychological and physical balance has been the vital prelude to a successful attempt at overthrow. . . . This dislocation has been produced by a strategic indirect approach, intentional or fortuitous. It may take varied forms.[73]

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[71] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 21–22, 36–37.

[72] COL. ANTHONY A. WOOD & B.H. LIDDELL HART, THE STRATEGY OF THE INDIRECT APPROACH AND THE COUNTER-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN (1990).

[73] Predmetsky Rosenborg, *Hybrid/Unconventional Warfare: 4 Generations, 5 Rings*, MEDIUM (Sept. 23, 2019), https://medium.com/@predmetskyrosenborg/hybrid-unconventional-warfare-4-generations-5-rings-a946f0066975.

In color revolutions and unconventional warfare, strategies of hybrid warfare, an indirect approach that Hart refers to, is utilized. No direct military confrontation is employed against a targeted state to fight the leaders, to change the regime, to instigate a revolution, or to propagate misinformation through the media. From an international law perspective, indirect approaches of hybrid warfare also save the aggressor from the applicability of international laws regarding the use of force as defined in the UN Charter, and from the applicability of the humanitarian laws inscribed in the Geneva Conventions. In the indirect approach, because no formal military action is used against the target and the nature of operation is maintained below the threshold of force or armed attack, the attribution of such aggression is difficult.[74] For these reasons, the most asymmetric attacks by nonstate actors, insurgents, or rebels in a targeted state are not attributed to an aggressor of hybrid warfare.

The ICJ in the *Nicaragua Case* established that there is no attribution to a state unless effective control of nonstate actors by that state is established; this is known as "the effective control test."[75] In other words, the attribution of an armed attack to a state is vital to give rise to any responsive use of force in self-defense.[76] Therefore, the employment of the indirect approach is more feasible for an aggressor because it does not attribute the attack to the aggressor. Similarly, in cases of propaganda and misinformation by the media, a targeted nation can be destabilized and chaos instigated without actually employing any direct use of force. The situation is similar for the application of humanitarian law in hybrid warfare. In internal conflicts, such as insurgencies, civil wars, or rebellions, international humanitarian law (IHL) is applicable[77] but difficult to enforce. IHL in such situations is usually enforced upon the targeted state or the victim state, which restricts the ways that the government can use force on its own people. However, the use of force by nonstate actors, such as insurgents and rebels, is largely unaccounted for by IHL. IHL is applicable to nonstate actors, but insurgents, mercenaries, and rebels employed in hybrid warfare do not make agreements with governments, other countries, or international organizations owing to fears of legitimizing NSAs.[78] For these reasons, outlaws freely employ methods of using force that flagrantly violate all IHL. For example, bomb blasts, mass shootings, and suicide attacks in mosques, schools, and hospitals are rampant in the societies of victims of hybrid warfare. These are

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[74] Christopher Paul, *Confessions of a Hybrid Warfare Skeptic: What Might Really Be Interesting but Hidden Within the Various Conceptions of Gray Zone Conflict, Ambiguous Warfare, Political Warfare, and Their Ilk*, SMALL WARS J. (2016), https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/confessions-of-a-hybrid-warfare-skeptic (last visited Oct. 3, 2019).

[75] Military and Paramilitary Activities in and Against Nicaragua (Nicar. v. U.S.), Judgment, 1986 I.C.J. 14, ¶¶ 105–15 (June 27).

[76] Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo (Dem. Rep. Congo v. Uganda), Judgment, 2005 I.C.J. 168, ¶ 146. (Dec. 19).

[77] Tatiana Londoño-Camargo, *The Scope of Application of International Humanitarian Law to Non-International Armed Conflicts*, 130 VNIVERSITAS 207 (2015).

[78] Ida Gjerdrum Haugen, Armed Groups and International Humanitarian Law: A Study on Parallel Legal Agreements, Armed Groups and Compliance with International Humanitarian Law 26, 65 (Nov. 10, 2011) (unpublished Master Thesis in Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Oslo) (on file with the author).

orchestrated by insurgents, mercenaries, rebels, and terrorists without any legal ramifications or IHL enforcement. For example, rebels and terrorists not only routinely target innocent civilians,[79] but they also attack other countries across borders using missiles, drone attacks, and terrorist attacks.[80] By contrast, if a victim state chooses to retaliate against these outlaws, the media is very quick to highlight violations of IHL committed by victim governments.[81] In sum, IHL is easily enforced against victim states of hybrid warfare, while aggressors and their employed outlaws enjoy the inapplicability and non-enforcement of the same rules.

G. *JOHN BOYD'S OODA LOOP*

In his OODA loop theory, John Boyd explained that observing, orienting, deciding, and acting are the vital progressive steps to take the correct retaliatory action against an attack.[82] His framework was initially designed to help fighter jet pilots. Later on, Robert Greene, a strategist, added that this can also be used in designing warfare, as well as in other situations.[83] The idea of unpredictability was at the center of this theory: If one's actions are unpredictable, the enemy or the target will not be able to orient itself and make the correct decision.[84] Modern color revolutions and unconventional warfare employ this unpredictability framework by not crafting any foreseeable designs or plan of actions. Nevertheless, the message to increase recruitment for any color messages is plain and simple.[85]

H. *CHAOS THEORY*

In his 1992 *Chaos Theory and Strategic Thought*, Steven Mann argued that the linear and mechanistic strategical framework proposed by Hart and Clausewitz is validated by conventional warfare, but it had reduced multifaceted circumstances into a small number of simple variables: military, economics, and

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[79] Cyanne E. Loyle, *Understanding Nonstate Actor Behavior the Determinants of Mass Atrocities*, 9 SIMON-SKJODT CTR. FOR PREVENTION OF GENOCIDE 1 (Feb. 2018).

[80] *September 11 Terror Attacks Fast Facts*, CNN (Sept. 2, 2019), https://edition.cnn.com/2013/07/27/us/september-11-anniversary-fast-facts/index.html.

[81] Armin Rosen, *Massive and Systematized Violence: The UN Released a Horrifying Report on Assad's Human-Rights Abuses*, BUS. INSIDER (Feb. 8, 2016), https://www.businessinsider.com/massive-and-systemetized-violence-the-un-just-released-a-horrifying-report-on-assads-human-rights-abuses-2016-2.

[82] CHET RICHARDS, BOYD'S OODA LOOP (IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK), J. ADDAMS & PARTNERS INC. 3–4, 5 (March 21, 2012), https://fasttransients.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/boydsrealooda_loop.pdf (last visited May 17, 2018) [hereinafter RICHARDS]. *See also* H. WILLIAM DETTMER, OPERATIONALIZING SUN TZU: THE O-O-D-A LOOP, GOAL SYSTEMS INT'L, 2–3 (2006) [hereinafter DETTMER].

[83] Robert Greene, *OODA and You*, POWER SEDUCTION & WAR (Feb. 24, 2007), http://powerseductionandwar.com/ooda-and-you/.

[84] *See* RICHARDS, *supra* note 82. *See also* DETTMER, *supra* note 83.

[85] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 23.

politics.[86] Instead, he believes that warfare has other, nonlinear variables, such as the environment, technological development, social pressures, religion, ideology, nonstate actors, and global corporations, to name a few.[87] For him, chaos is the application of these nonlinear dynamics to a society or war. Within this framework, he sees the implantation of ideology into a targeted population to direct people's conflict energy in a favorable direction in the interest of the strategist. This acts as the human virus in society's software.[88]

In hybrid warfare, aggressors and strategists design their human virus in accordance with what is required to penetrate the system of a targeted nation. This virus can either point toward a desired candidate—to achieve political triumph by installing a puppet at a later stage—or it can be a religious vulnerability that produces chaos in society. This virus in the software will multiply itself quickly by propagating its ideas, forming swarms to overwhelm the targeted system, and will then enjoy the blessings of the native elites and the national and international media. Similar to the OODA loop, the nonlinear nature of this virus makes it unpredictable, rendering it nearly impossible to be identified, attacked, or wiped out by the system. Such deliberate introduction of chaos in a society is known as either constructive[89] or creative chaos.[90] The Arab Spring's color revolutions and the destabilization in Syria and Iraq through nonstate actors employed this kind of constructive or creative chaos in a grand strategy of hybrid warfare.[91] In its initial stage, in the form of color revolutions, this virus of chaos spreads in a society to overwhelm the social system. At a later stage, it coerces a targeted government to step down. However, if the government chooses not to step down and instead to fight this virus, then unconventional warfare is unleashed. Combined, the color revolutions and unconventional warfare form the hybrid warfare which in turn creates systematic chaos. In practical terms, fully-fledged hybrid warfare as a mixture of color revolutions and unconventional warfare can be seen in both Syria and Ukraine.[92]

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[86] Steven Mann, Chaos Theory and Strategic Thought 54, 56–57 (1992) [hereinafter Mann].

[87] *See* Mann, *supra* note 86.

[88] *See id.* at 66.

[89] Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, *Iraq and Syria are Burning, "Constructive Chaos" and America's Broader Strategy to Conquer Eurasia*, Global Res. (June 23, 2014), https://www.globalresearch.ca/iraq-and-syria-burning-a-collection-of-articles-about-constructive-chaos-at-work/5388270.

[90] Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, *Plans for Redrawing the Middle East: The Project for a "New Middle East,"* Global Res., (Nov. 18, 2006), https://www.globalresearch.ca/plans-for-redrawing-the-middle-east-the-project-for-a-new-middle-east/3882. *See also Constructive Chaos Theory: When Terrorism Is of Much Avail to US*, Alwaght (Oct. 13, 2016), http://alwaght.com/en/News/70585/Constructive-Chaos-Theory-When-Terrorism-is-of-Much-Avail-to-US.

[91] *See* Korybko, *supra* note 32, at 25.

[92] *See id.*

I. *US Full Spectrum Dominance Strategy*

In the U.S. strategy manual *Joint Vision 2020*,[93] the U.S. aims to employ full-spectrum dominance over communication, military operations, norms, geopolitics, and human rights rhetoric.[94] The manual says that the U.S.'s strategic goals are to enable its forces to defeat enemies and to be able to control any military situation.[95] It also prescribes ways such as color revolutions to claim geopolitical and social dominance.[96] In these color revolutions, a large number of people are recruited to "challenge a system" and "introduce chaos in a society" to achieve social dominance by exploiting a number of aspects of the native population: religion, ideology, psychology, and information. By contrast, under unconventional warfare in full-spectrum dominance, unconventional and nonlinear techniques are used to overwhelm the five rings of a targeted state. In this regard, the armed forces of the victim state have no clue about where to station its units, because they are unaware of the OODA loop applications in unconventional warfare, due to the employment of ambiguity.

J. *Insurgency*

The *U.S. Special Forces Foreign Internal Defense Tactics Techniques and Procedures for Special Forces, FM 31.20-3, 2003* provides insurgency strategies to be applied in different countries. It outlines foco insurgency, mass-oriented insurgency, and traditional insurgency, in addition to providing counterinsurgency techniques. Foco insurgency is described as

> [an] Armed cell that emerges from hidden strongholds in an atmosphere of disintegrating legitimacy. In theory, this cell is the nucleus around which mass popular support rallies. The insurgents build new institutions and establish control on the basis of that support. For a foco insurgency to succeed, government legitimacy must be near total collapse. Timing is critical. The foco must mature at the same time the government loses legitimacy and before any alternative appears. The most famous foco insurgencies were those led by Castro and Che Guevara. The strategy was quite effective in Cuba because the Batista regime was corrupt and incompetent. The distinguishing characteristics of a foco insurgency are the deliberate avoidance of preparatory organizational work. The rationale is based on the premise that most peasants are intimidated by the authorities and will betray any group that cannot defend itself. The development of rural support as demonstrated by the ability of

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[93] JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, JOINT VISION 2020: AMERICA'S MILITARY–PREPARING FOR TOMORROW (May 30, 2000) [hereinafter JOINT VISION].

[94] F. WILLIAM ENGDAHL, FULL SPECTRUM DOMINANCE: TOTALITARIAN DEMOCRACY IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER (2009).

[95] *See* JOINT VISION, *supra* note 93, at 58.

[96] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 29-30.

the foco insurgency to strike against the authorities and survive.
The absence of any emphasis on the protracted nature of the
conflict.[97]

Foco insurgency is a light version of mass-oriented insurgency, which is
oriented toward political, apolitical, or religious insurgent mass population
movements. The aim of such an insurgency is to build an armed system outside
the prevailing system. This insurgency not only opposes a system but also aims
to destroy it. Mass-oriented insurgencies employ nonstate actors in the form of
guerrilla fighters. They operate through active and inactive bases. They are
composed of two wings, one political and the other military, with the aim to
"introduce violence in a society" and "desterilize a state and its institutions."
They claim legitimacy and operate parallel to a government. They employ
propaganda, start revolutions with political considerations, and enjoy
recruitment, funding, and intelligence. Mass-oriented insurgencies basically
operate from distant, rural areas to avoid law enforcement agencies and only
choose to confront the system by stealth ambush or surprise to overcome the
imbalance in strengths. In their first phase, such insurgencies gather people's
support. In their second phase, they recruit guerilla fighters, and in their third
phase, they mobilize attacks on the system. The third phase is undertaken when
the insurgency has decided to overwhelm the government or its institutions.[98]
By contrast, traditional insurgency

> normally grows from very specific grievances and initially has
> limited aims. It springs from tribal, racial, religious, linguistic,
> or other similarly identifiable groups. The insurgents perceive
> that the government has denied the rights and interests of their
> group and work to establish or restore them. They frequently
> seek withdrawal from government control through autonomy or
> semi-autonomy. They seldom specifically seek to overthrow the
> government or control the whole society. They generally
> respond in kind to government violence. Their use of violence
> can range from strikes and street demonstrations to terrorism
> and guerrilla warfare. These insurgencies may cease if the
> government accedes to the insurgents' demands. The
> concessions the insurgents demand, however, are so great that
> the government concedes its legitimacy along with them.[99]

The *FM 31.20-3, 2003 U.S. manual* also provides details of how to
undertake counterinsurgency operations, including psychological operations,

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[97] *US Special Forces Foreign Internal Defense Tactics Techniques and Procedures for
Special Forces, FM 31.20-3, 2003*, WIKILEAKS 121-10-1-12 (June 13, 2008),
https://wikileaks.org/wiki/US_Special_Forces_Foreign_Internal_Defense_Tactics_Techniqu
es_and_Procedures_for_Special_Forces,_FM_31.20-3,_2003 (last visited Oct. 2, 2019)
[hereinafter FM 31.20-3].
[98] *Id.* at 1-10–1-12122.
[99] *Id.*

and it outlines how intelligence is gathered during these situations by using in-field operatives.[100]

K. THE LEAD FROM BEHIND THEORY

Due the multi-polar dynamics of this world and nuclear parity, superpowers cannot initiate or undertake direct conventional warfare to change a regime or pursue their interests. Previously, in the unipolar international dynamics involving Iraq and Afghanistan, it was possible to "go it alone."[101] But this quick, unipolar policing of the world is winding down.[102] In this "leading from behind" strategy, battle action is done by other allies, by NATO allies,[103] or by proxy state or nonstate actors. The leader instigates things and lets the others do its dirty work.[104] In extreme examples, the real leader does not even participate in the ground battles but provides material and political support to its allies and proxies. Such tactics are used to avoid the collateral consequences of war and decrease the costs of waging a war. The opposite of fighting "leading from behind" wars is conventional war, such as with the invasions of Afghanistan, Panama, and Iraq. By contrast, the Libyan, Ukrainian, and Syrian wars can be considered wars that employed the leading from behind tactic.[105] Allies in such war tactics can also serve as territory for training insurgents, anti-government insurgents, rebels, proxies, nonstate actors and mercenaries (such as when Jordan gave medical and training support to nonstate actors fighting in Syria),[106] and to channel material support, such as arms, weapons and finances.[107]

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[100] *Id.* at 131-10–1-12.

[101] *UK and US Would "Go It Alone on Iraq*," THE TELEGRAPH (Oct. 18, 2002), https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1410560/UK-and-US-would-go-it-alone-on-Iraq.html.

[102] Matt Smith, *U.S. to Face 2030 as 'First Among Equals,' Report Projects*, CNN (Dec. 11, 2012, 5:32 AM), https://edition.cnn.com/2012/12/10/us/intelligence-2030/.

[103] Dick Zandee, *The Future of NATO: Fog over the Atlantic?,* CLINGENDAEL INST.: STRATEGIC MONITOR 2018-2019, https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2018/strategic-monitor-2018-2019./the-future-of-nato/ (last visited Oct. 3, 2019).

[104] Roger Cohen, Opinion, *Leading from Behind*, N.Y. TIMES (Oct. 31, 2011), https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/01/opinion/01iht-edcohen01.html?_r=0.

[105] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 26.

[106] *CIA and the US Military Operatives Train Rebels in Turkey and Jordan – Report*, RT (June 21, 2013, 7:45 PM), https://www.rt.com/news/usa-cia-train-syria-rebels-087.

[107] Mark Marzzetti et al., *Behind the Sudden Death of a $1 Billion Secret C.I.A. War in Syria*, N.Y. TIMES (Aug. 2, 2017), https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/02/world/middleeast/cia-syria-rebel-arm-train-trump.html. *See also* Mark Mazzetti, *C.I.A. Study of Covert Aid Fueled Skepticism about Helping Syrian Rebels*, N.Y. TIMES (Oct. 14, 2014), https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/15/us/politics/cia-study-says-arming-rebels-seldom-works.html; C. J. Chivers & Eric Schmitt, *Arms Airlift to Syria Rebels Expands, With Aid from C.I.A.*, N.Y. TIMES (March 24, 2013), https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/25/world/middleeast/arms-airlift-to-syrian-rebels-expands-with-cia-aid.html.

III. TOOLKIT OF HYBRID WARFARE

The toolkit of hybrid warfare has two parts: (1) the operations by a tool to increase its vertical potency, and 2) the employment of multiple tools to diversify it into a horizontal escalation.[108] The list of hybrid warfare tools includes: the use of propaganda, domestic and international media, social media, fake news, strategic leaks, funding of organizations, political parties, protests, oligarchs, religions, cyberwarfare and cyber tools, economic leverage, proxies/nonstate actors, unacknowledged war (silent warfare), lawfare, and paramilitary organizations and asymmetric warfare, while targeting vulnerabilities in a targeted state to achieve certain objectives (such as destabilizing a nation).[109] Hybrid warfare can also use conventional capabilities (military and firepower) in addition to irregular tactics (rebellion, insurgency, proxies, and nonstate actors), terrorism (unpredictable violence), criminal activities (such as the smuggling of weapons, drugs and other illicit things, and the use of domestic gangs), political means (diplomacy), economic means (loans, sanctions, and wrecking of an economy), information means (propaganda, misinformation, leaked information, and other information operations), and social means (domestic population and psychological operations).[110]

A. PROPAGANDA AND MEDIA

Propaganda is employed through fake news and leaked information. Also, material collected through espionage is advanced through information operations using domestic and international media channels and social media outlets, to shape the political discourse or to form the popular narrative of a society.[111] A social narrative can be changed even by altering the subconscious minds of the general public through a designed seed or virus in movies. For example, a certain ethnic or religious group can be shown as uncivilized or terrorist by repeatedly painting its roles in movies as villains, such as Muslims being shown as terrorists[112] and Russians as spies[113] and warlords. Similarly, certain ideas can also be programmed to be seen as normal to instigate violence in societies. For example, many movies are themed around the propagation of

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[108] GREGORY F. TREVERTON ET AL., ADDRESSING HYBRID THREATS 45 (Swedish Defence University 2018) [hereinafter TREVERTON ET AL.]. *See also* CULLEN, *supra* note 3, at 8–9.

[109] *See* TREVERTON ET AL., *supra* note 108.

[110] *See* Tienhoven, *supra* note 4, at 18–21.

[111] *See* TREVERTON ET AL., *supra* note 108, at 46.

[112] Abid Zafar & Maria Amjad, *Portrayal of Muslims in the Bollywood Movies*, PAK. J. OF ISLAMIC RES. 9, 95 (2018). *See also* Nadra Kareem Nittle, *Common Muslim and Arab Stereotypes in TV and Film*, THOUGHTCO. (June 23, 2019), https://www.thoughtco.com/tv-film-stereotypes-arabs-middle-easterners-2834648.

[113] Tom Brook, *Hollywood Often Resorts to National Stereotypes when Portraying Movie Villains – but Why Would They Want to Alienate Part of Their Audience? Tom Brook Investigates*, BBC (Nov. 5, 2014), http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20141106-why-are-russians-always-bad-guys.

revolution,[114] where outlaws fighting against law and order are shown as heroes, because the leaders are corrupt. Such seeds help the aggressor to increase recruitment to its cause to fight a regime by first painting a targeted regime as draconian and corrupt and then urging people to rise up as rebels to overturn a targeted regime. Similarly, social media campaigns against a targeted regime can propagate leaked information or fake information to instigate protests in a country.

Propaganda, social media outlets, domestic media, and international media are exploited to mislead the public into achieving certain interests. For example, the U.S. media repeatedly broadcast news on the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime in Syria (when, in fact, the U.S. has admitted the use of chemical weapons by U.S.-supported rebels[115]) and made it appear that Assad is a tyrannical leader who is killing his own people,[116] while not focusing on the ground realities of U.S. interests in changing the Syrian regime[117] and U.S. support to Syrian rebels,[118] so that the American people approve the Syrian invasion and support the U.S. cause.[119] By contrast, fake news is generally published on social media because publication on social media does not require verification and it has a huge audience. Sometimes, even conventional media outlets pick up and publish fake news from social media.[120] In Pakistan, fake news revolves around atrocities against minorities and ethnic groups, dirt on politicians, against the military, "against India," and blasphemy. Such propaganda can easily instigate violence and protests across Pakistan. Strategic leaks of stolen files and leaked information about properties owned abroad, personal affairs, and sensitive conversations are also used in election campaigns to oust a targeted regime and to install a puppet regime in a targeted state.[121]

B. *FUNDING AND CYBERATTACKS*

The aggressors in hybrid warfare choose to fund think tanks, political parties, movements, protests, NGOs, and organizations that suit their interests.

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[114]   *See   Best   Revolution   Movies*,   IMBD   (July   29,   2013), https://www.imdb.com/list/ls056597120, for a list of movies around the theme of revolution and armed rebellion in Hollywood.

[115] *US Admitting Syrian Militants Use Chemical Weapons "Welcome" Overdue Corrective*, SPUTNIK NEWS (Oct. 21, 2017), https://sputniknews.com/analysis/201710211 058422305-usa-terrorists-use-chemicals-syria/ [hereinafter SPUTNIK NEWS].

[116] Armin Rosen, *Massive and Systematized Violence: The UN Released a Horrifying Report on Assad's Human-Rights Abuses*, BUS. INSIDER (Feb. 9, 2016), https://www. businessinsider.com/massive-and-systemetized-violence-the-un-just-released-a-horrifying-report-on-assads-human-rights-abuses-2016-2.

[117] *See 57 Years Ago: U.S. and Britain Approved Use of Islamic Extremists to Topple Syrian Government*, WASHINGTON'S BLOG (July 7, 2014), https://washingtonsblog.com/ 2014/07/57-years-ago-u-s-britain-approved-use-islamic-extremists-topple-syrian-government.html.

[118] *US Admitting Syrian Militants Use Chemical Weapons "Welcome" Overdue Corrective*, *supra* note 115.

[119] *Id.*

[120] *See* TREVERTON ET AL., *supra* note 108, at 49.

[121] *See id.* at 50.

Such funding can also be made to destabilize a targeted state or to acquire political leverage against a targeted regime.[122] Cyberattacks, cyber espionage and hacking by using proxy servers are also used as cyberwarfare under the category of hybrid warfare, to collect information, acquire sensitive files, and destroy or disarm the weapons of a targeted state.[123] This is done so that these perpetrators do not have to face retribution or attribution. Cyberattacks are even capable of destroying centrifuges in a nuclear reactor,[124] incapacitate radar systems,[125] and disable government websites and communications.[126]

C. *Economic Leverage*

Economic sanctions, IMF loans, foreign aid, and international finance are employed as tools to influence the policies of a targeted state's government. For instance, the U.S. enjoys great influence over IMF loans and has also often used economic sanctions as a geopolitical tool to influence nations. However, it is pertinent to note that economic sanctions and economic leverage understand the vulnerabilities of a targeted state. For instance, the *U.S. Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action for Iran* succeeded in forcing Iran to sign a nuclear deal with the U.S. because Iran's economy was dependent on foreign buyers of oil and it was linked with the global economic structure. By contrast, U.S. economic sanctions did not work well against North Korea for two reasons: first, because it was not dependent on the world economically, and, second, because China helped North Korea and acted as an escape from such economic sanctions.[127]

Economic sanctions, foreign aid, and loans from international organizations can hardly be considered a modern tool of hybrid warfare because they have been employed for so many years. What is new is that the global strategic balance, which has been dominated by the U.S. for the last couple of decades, is shifting toward a multipolar global economic society, where China is rising as a new financing giant. In instances where the U.S. targets a nation with economic sanctions and stops its aid, China comes to the rescue. For example, China helped North Korea survive U.S. economic sanctions.[128] Similarly, China planned to invest 62–100 billion USD in Pakistan[129] when Pakistan's economy was struggling to get international loans, and to invest 400 billion USD in Iran[130]

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[122] *See id.* at 50–53.

[123] Andrew F. Krepinevich, Cyber Warfare A Nuclear Option? (2012). [hereinafter Krepinevich]. *See also* Fred Schreier, *On Cyberwarfare* (DCAF Horizon, Working Paper No. 7, 2012) [hereinafter Schreier].

[124] *See* Krepinevich, *supra* note 123, at 132–135.

[125] *See generally* Schreier, *supra* note 123.

[126] *See generally* Krepinevich, *supra* note 123.

[127] *See* Treverton et al., *supra* note 108, at 56–58.

[128] *See id.*

[129] *Chinese Investment in CPEC Will Cross $ 100 Billion*, CPEC News Deck (Oct. 2, 2018),   http://www.cpecinfo.com/news/chinese-investment-in-cpec-will-cross-$-100-billion/NDg1Mw==.

[130] Kenneth Rapoza, *Drone Wars: China Has $400 Billion at Stake in Iran Oil*, Forbes (Sept. 16, 2019), https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2019/09/16/drone-wars-china-has-400-billion-at-stake-in-iran-oil/#335d36f468a3.

when it was struggling under U.S. economic sanctions.[131] In this way, China brings a balance to the unipolar exploitation of economic leverage.

D. *PROXIES*

Proxies or nonstate actors, including mercenaries, terrorist organizations, separatists, insurgents, and rebels, are used in asymmetric warfare against a targeted state to fight for the aggressors' national interests. Such strategies and tools have been widely employed by the U.S. government in Syria to change the Assad regime. [132] Oftentimes, such support for nonstate actors has gone unacknowledged to avoid retribution and the attribution of war crimes, war aggressions, and the use of force. These clandestine means of employing nonstate actors is referred to as asymmetric warfare,[133] and not acknowledging the support or control of such groups to avoid consequences is termed unacknowledged war.[134]

IV. CASE STUDIES

Practically, in hybrid warfare, an instigator of war stirs things up by creating false flag attacks on a targeted state or on itself.[135] The instigator then blames other countries or groups for materially supporting, orchestrating, or allowing the use of it's for these attacks. Such false flag attacks are justified to wage war against a targeted state. In situations where a false flag attack is made against the instigator, several targeted states can be blamed. Then, the instigator, by utilizing different timelines, is to be able to wage wars against these actors. In doing so, the instigator achieves strategic goals and benefits financially from their target. The strategic goals can range from stopping other nations from acquiring nuclear technologies to gaining control of another state's oil reserves. The financial gains in such situations either benefit the invader in the form of captured federal reserve,[136] or in the form of looted natural resources.[137] The

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[131] Keith Johnson, *Trump Sanctions Iran Again, Inching Toward Economic Blockade*, FOREIGN POL'Y NEWS (Sept. 18, 2019), https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/09/18/trump-sanctions-iran-again-inching-toward-economic-blockade-saudi-oil-rouhani. *See also Iran Sanctions*, U.S. Dep't of State, (Feb. 29, 2020) https://www.state.gov/iran-sanctions.

[132] Nour Malas & Jay Solomon, *U.S. Blesses Syria Regime Change as Embassy Hit*, WALL ST. J. (July 12, 2011), https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303812104576 439713197868294.

[133] Raymond Mharapara et al., *Asymmetric Warfare: Experiences, Perspectives, Inkling and Challenges with a Focus on Zimbabwe*, 3 AUSTRAL: BRAZILIAN J. STRATEGY & INT'L REL. 97, 100 (Jan–June 2014).

[134] *See* TREVERTON ET AL., *supra* note 108, at 58.

[135] Washington's Blog, *53 Admitted False Flag Attacks*, GLOBAL RES. (Feb. 24, 2015), https://www.globalresearch.ca/53-admitted-false-flag-attacks/5432931.

[136] Eamon Javers, *NY Fed's $40 Billion Iraqi Money Trail*, CNBC (Oct. 25, 2011), https://www.cnbc.com/id/45031100.

[137] Dahr Jamail, *Western Oil Firms Remain as US Exits Iraq*, AL JAZEERA (Jan. 7, 2012), https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/12/2011122813134071641.html.

sale of ammunition, missiles, bombs, warplanes, tanks, and other forms of weapons used in hybrid warfare also creates profits by forming military-industrial complexes,[138] where the continuation of warfare around the world translates into increased revenues and business. Furthermore, false flag attacks on another state also provide both strategic and financial gains to an instigator. When a war is instigated by strategic hybrid warfare through false flag attacks, (1) the targeted states are destabilized without having to undertake direct confrontation, and (2) huge profits are made by selling weapons to one or both parties to the conflict.[139] There are many instances of false flags attacks, operations, or plans for hybrid operations that are admitted by governments.

A. RUSSIA

For example, the Russian parliament admitted that in 1940, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin ordered secret Soviet forces to execute 22,000 Polish army officers to falsely blame this on the Nazis.[140] Similarly, in 1999, the KGB was involved in the bombings of apartment buildings and blamed Chechnya to justify its invasion of Chechnya.[141] Nonetheless, the perpetuators were apprehended and sentenced to life imprinsoment.[142]

B. THE UNITED KINGDOM

Likewise, the British government admitted that between 1946 and 1948, its Secret Intelligent Service (SIS) attacked five ships of Jews who were fleeing the Holocaust and trying to reach Palestine, and had a pseudo-Palestinian group claim responsibility.[143] Similarly, in 1957, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and President Dwight Eisenhower approved a CIA and MI6 plan to stage a false

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[138] Jonathan Turley, *Big Money behind War: The Military-Industrial Complex*, AL JAZEERA (Jan. 11, 2014), https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/01/big-money-behind-war-military-industrial-complex-20141473026736533.html.

[139] *Id.*

[140] Tom Parfitt, *Russian Parliament Admits Guilt Over Polish Massacre*, GUARDIAN (Nov. 26, 2010), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/nov/26/russian-parliament-guilt-katyn-massacre.

[141] David Satter, Project on Systemic Change and International Security in Russia and the New States of Eurasia: The Shadow of Ryazan: Who Was Behind the Strange Russian Apartment Bombings in September 1999? 2, 5 (Apr. 19, 2002) (unpublished manuscript) (on file with The Johns Hopkins School of Advanced Int'l Studies: Russian & Eurasian Studies); *See also* Julius Strauss, *Moscow Bombers Jailed as Doubts Rise*, THE TELEGRAPH (Jan. 13, 2004), http://web.archive.org/web/20060209100406/http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/01/13/wrus13.xml [hereinafter Strauss].

[142] *See* Strauss, *supra* note 141.

[143] Marcus Dysch, *Operation Embarrass? You Bet: Britain's Secret War on the Jews*, JC NEWS (Sept. 21, 2010), https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/operation-embarrass-you-bet-britain-s-secret-war-on-the-jews-1.18403. *See also History of MI6 Detailed in New Book*, BBC (Sept. 21, 2010), https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-11378601.

flag attack in Syria to topple the Syrian regime.[144] Likewise, a Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament, Tom Brake, said that during the 2009 G20 protests, he saw police use undercover officers to incite the crowds to violence.[145] Moreover, the Snowden files revealed that a British spy unit, referred to as the Joint Threat Research and Intelligence Group, had goals to destroy, degrade, and disrupt enemies and targets by promoting misinformation and cutting off their communication.[146] In such operations, forged emails, messages, and communication are developed to stage that the target is involved[147] in terrorist activity.[148] Further, the intelligence forces even employ sex and honey traps to lure their targets.[149]

C. ISRAEL

Israel also admitted responsibility for the bombings of several diplomatic facilities in Egypt, including U.S. buildings in 1954, and blaming locals. The Israeli spies involved were later arrested and confessed to their crimes.[150] Similarly, government officials also admitted that in 2005, undercover Israeli officers threw stones at Israeli military officers to instigate violence by Israeli officers toward a peaceful Palestinian demonstration against the Israeli wall to justify an armed crackdown against the protest.[151]

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[144] *57 Years Ago: U.S. and Britain Approved Use of Islamic Extremists to Topple Syrian Government*, WASHINGTON'S BLOG (July 7, 2014), https://washingtonsblog.com/2014/07/57-years-ago-u-s-britain-approved-use-islamic-extremists-topple-syrian-government.html.

[145] Jamie Doward & Mark Townsend, *G20 Police Used Undercover Men to Incite Crowds*, THE GUARDIAN (May 10, 2009), https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2009/may/10/g20-policing-agent-provacateurs.

[146] Glenn Greenwald, *Exclusive: Snowden Docs Show British Spies Used Sex and Dirty Tricks*, NBC (Feb. 7, 2014), https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/edward-snowden-interview/exclusive-snowden-docs-show-british-spies-used-sex-dirty-tricks-n23091.

[147] *Id.*

[148] *What Exactly Are the Spy Agencies Actually DOING with Their Bag of Dirty Tricks?*, WASHINGTON'S BLOG (July 15, 2014), https://washingtonsblog.com/2014/07/spy-agencies-dirty-trick-powers-revealed-snowden.html.

[149] *See* Greenwald, *supra* note 146.

[150] *Israel Honors 9 Egyptian Spies: After 50 years, President Katsav Presents Three Surviving Members with Certificates of Appreciation at Jerusalem Ceremony*, YNET NEWS (Mar. 30, 2005), https://www.ynetnews.com/Ext/Comp/ArticleLayout/CdaArticlePrint Preview/1,2506,L-3065838,00.html#n. *See also* Joel Beinin, *Egyptian Jewish Identities: Communitarianisms, Nationalisms, Nostalgias*, 5 SEHR (Feb. 27, 1996); *Israel Military Intelligence: The Lavon Affair (Summer 1954)*, JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBR., https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-lavon-affair (last visited Oct. 2, 2019).

[151] Haggai Matar, *Commander Admits: Undercover Israeli Officers Threw Stones at Soldiers in Bil'in,* +972 MAG. (May 7, 2012), https://972mag.com/commander-admits-undercover-israeli-officers-threw-stones-at-soldiers-in-bilin/44802/. *See also* Chaim Levinson, *Undercover Israeli Combatants Threw Stones at IDF Soldiers in West Bank*, HAARETZ (May 7, 2012), https://www.haaretz.com/undercover-israeli-combatants-threw-stones-at-idf-soldiers-in-west-bank-1.5219954.

D. *TURKEY*

In relation to the 1955 bombings in Greece, a Turkish Court found Menderes, the then Turkish prime minister, responsible for bombing the Turkish consulate in Greece. He then blamed Greece and used this incident to justify anti-Greece violence. [152] Additionally, in 2014, leaked recordings of high Turkish officials revealed that Turkey was planning to stage a false flag attack on its own soil to justify a Syrian invasion. In that case, the Turkish national intelligence chief Hakan Fidan said: "I'll make up a cause of war by ordering a missile attack on Turkey; we can also prepare an attack on Suleyman Shah Tomb if necessary."[153]

E. *INDONESIA*

Indonesian fact-finding investigations found that some of the riots of 1998 were self-provoked by the state Indonesian military.[154]

F. *MACEDONIA*

In 2004, Macedonian officials claimed that there was an attack on Macedonian soil by Pakistani militants who were planning terrorist attacks on embassies and other sensitive installations, when in fact the murdered people were illegal militants and had nothing to do with terrorism or armed attacks.[155]

G. *ITALY*

Italy admitted that during the 2001 G8 summit, it planted Molotov cocktails and orchestrated the stabbing of a police officer to justify police brutality against the ongoing protests.[156] Additionally, the Italian prime minister, an Italian judge and the head of Italian counterintelligence, all admitted that Italy was involved with NATO secret sleeper cells (Gladio Army) working with the Pentagon, the CIA, and MI6 all over Europe to carry out terrorist attacks. This was done to blame the communists and to increase the support of populations against communism.[157] These attacks included the murder of the Turkish Prime Minister

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[152] LOIS WHITMAN, DENYING HUMAN RIGHTS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY: THE GREEKS OF TURKEY 8 (1992).

[153] *Officials in Turkey 'Lift Twitter Ban'*, BBC (Apr. 3, 2014), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26873603.

[154] U.S. DEP'T OF STATE, BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, H.R. AND LAB., INDONESIA COUNTRY REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES FOR 1998 (1999).

[155] *Macedonia Faked 'Militant Raid'*, BBC (Apr. 30, 2004), http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3674533.stm.

[156] *Media Advisory: Media Missing New Evidence About Genoa Violence*, FAIR (Jan. 10, 2003), https://web.archive.org/web/20030207160903/http://www.fair.org/activism/genoa-update.html. *See also Genoa Police Admit Fabrication*, BBC (Jan. 7, 2003), http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2636647.stm.

[157] DANIELE GANSER, NATO'S SECRET ARMIES: OPERATION GLADIO AND TERRORISM IN WESTERN EUROPE 1 (2005) [hereinafter GANSER].

(1960), bombings in Portugal (1966), the Piazza Fontana massacre in Italy (1969), terror attacks in Turkey (1971), the Peteano bombing in Italy (1972), shootings in Brescia, Italy and a bombing on an Italian train (1974), shootings in Istanbul, Turkey (1977), the Atocha massacre in Madrid, Spain (1977), the abduction and murder of the Italian Prime Minister (1978), the bombing of the Bologna railway station in Italy (1980), and shooting and killing 28 shoppers in Brabant county, Belgium (1985).[158] Overall, Gladio is considered responsible for terrorist attacks in Italy[159] and secret wars in the U.S., the U.K., Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Greece, and Turkey.[160]

H. UNITED STATES

In total, the U.S. government, through intelligence agencies like the CIA, has employed unconventional warfare fifty times[161] to change regimes and invade other countries. Of these fifty instances, it has only admitted to seven.[162] For instance, in 2013, the CIA declassified files in which it admitted having had a role in the 1953 Iranian coup.[163] Likewise, the CIA admitted to its 1950s staging of bombings in Iran and having the bombers identified as communists to make the population turn against its own government.[164] Moreover, Senator George Smathers admitted to having given plans to President Kennedy in the 1960s to stage a false flag attack on the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo to justify the U.S. invasion in Cuba.[165] Similarly, in 1962, the U.S. military planned Operation Northwoods to stage a false flag attack on U.S. civilian airplanes to be able to justify a U.S. invasion in Cuba by blaming Cubans for the attack.[166] In 1961, the "Vice President [Lyndon Johnson], [Attorney General] Bob Kennedy, Secretary [of Defense Robert] McNamara, Dick Goodwin [who was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs], [head of the

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[158] *Gladio Chronology*, PARALLEL HIST. PROJECT ON NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT, http://web.archive.org/web/20051130122600/http://www.isn.ethz.ch/php/documents/collecti on_gladio/chronology.htm (last visited Oct. 2, 2019).

[159] *See* GANSER, *supra* note 157, at 3–4.

[160] *Id*. at 2. For more details on Gladio: Secret Army of NATO, see the BBC's 1992 Operation Gladio documentary.

[161] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 55.

[162] J. Dana Stuster, *Mapped: The 7 Governments the U.S. Has Overthrown*, FOREIGN POL'Y (Aug. 20, 2013, 3:00 AM), https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/08/20/mapped-the-7-governments-the-u-s-has-overthrown.

[163] Malcolm Byrne, *CIA Admits It Was Behind Iran's Coup*, FOREIGN POL'Y (Aug. 19, 2013, 1:00 AM), https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/08/19/cia-admits-it-was-behind-irans-coup.

[164] James Risen, *Secrets of History: The CIA in Iran*, N.Y. TIMES (Apr. 16, 2000), https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/mideast/041600iran-cia-index.html.

[165] *From the Archive, 18 August 1970: Kennedy Talked of Possibility of Killing Castro*, GUARDIAN (Aug. 17, 2012), https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2012/aug/17/john-f-kennedy-fidel-castro.

[166] *Timeline: 9/11*, BBC (Feb. 14, 2007), http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/conspiracy_files/6338551.stm (last updated Feb. 14, 2017). *See also* Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the Secretary of Defense on Justification for US Military Intervention in Cuba (Mar. 13, 1962).

Joint Chiefs of Staff] General Lemnitzer, Wyn Coerr, and Ted Achilles" proposed to blow up the U.S. consulate to the Dominican Republic to be able to invade the country.[167] Moreover, with regard to the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Incident, the U.S. NSA admitted that it fabricated evidence regarding the incident to make it appear that the Vietnamese attacked the U.S. ships, so that the Vietnam War could be justified.[168] Furthermore, in 1974 and 1976, the Church Committee of Congress published fourteen reports on the CIA, the NSA, and the FBI, in which it admitted U.S. involvement during the 1950s and 1970s in carrying out terrorist attacks and blaming political activists; it also admitted U.S. involvement in "attempts to assassinate foreign leaders, particularly Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, Cuba's Fidel Castro, Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic, the Diem brothers of Vietnam, and General Rene Schneider of Chile. It also contains findings on the development of a general 'Executive Action' capability by the CIA."[169]

Moreover, in 1976, Jimmy Carter gave the green light to the military of Argentina to continue its Dirty War, in which more than 20,000–30,000[170] people (including antigovernment activists and innocent people) were kidnapped, tortured, and killed.[171] In this regard, Patricia Derian commented that "It sickened me . . . that with an imperial wave of his hand, an American could sentence people to death."[172] Moreover, the *1994 US Manual FM 31-20-3*

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[167] CIUDAD TRUJILLO, FOREIGN RELATIONS, 1961–1963, VOLUME XII, AMERICAN REPUBLICS: THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC (1961). *See also Nine Months Before Operation Northwoods, Government Leaders Suggested False Flag Terror in the Dominican Republic*, WASHINGTON'S BLOG (Feb. 19, 2010), https://washingtonsblog.com/2010/02/nine-months-before-operation-northwoods-government-leaders-suggested-false-flag-terror-in-the-dominican-republic.html.

[168] John Prados, *Tonkin Gulf Intelligence "Skewed" According to Official History and Intercepts: Newly Declassified National Security Agency Documents Show Analysts Made "SIGINT Fit the Claim" of North Vietnamese Attack*, The National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 132 (Dec. 1, 2005), https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB132/press20051201.htm). *See also Report Reveals Vietnam War Hoaxes, Faked Attacks*, RAW STORY (Jan. 8, 2008), http://web.archive.org/web/20080203204207/http://rawstory.com/news/afp/Report_reveals_Vietnam_War_hoaxes_f_01082008.html.

[169] *Church Committee Reports*, ASSASSINATION ARCHIVES & RES. CTR., https://www.aarclibrary.org/publib/contents/church/contents_church_reports.htm (last visited Oct. 2, 2019). *See also Church Committee Reports*, MARY FERRELL FOUND., https://www.maryferrell.org/php/showlist.php?docset=1014 (last visited Oct. 2, 2019).

[170] David Corn, *New Memo: Kissinger Gave the Green Light for Argentina's Dirty War*, MOTHER JONES (Jan. 14, 2014), https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2014/01/new-memo-kissinger-gave-green-light-argentina-dirty-war/.

[171] Martin Edwin Andersen, *How Much Did the US Know about the Kidnapping, Torture, and Murder of Over 20,000 People in Argentina?*, NATION (Mar. 4, 2016), https://www.thenation.com/article/how-much-did-the-us-know-about-the-kidnapping-torture-and-murder-of-over-20000-people-in-argentina/. *See also* Martin Edwin Andersen, *Kissinger and the 'Dirty War'*, NATION (Oct. 31, 1987), http://thenation.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/11197743.pdf.

[172] *Id.* For details on Argentina's Dirty War, see *"Never More" Report: Argentina, National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP)*, FUNDACIÓN ACCIÓN PRO DERECHOS HUMANOS, http://www.derechoshumanos.net/lesahumanidad/informes/argentina/informe-de-la-CONADEP-Nunca-mas-Indice.htm (translation provided by author).

(unclassified but sensitive), updated in 2004, prescribes ways for its special forces to stage terrorist attacks and false flag operations and to conceal human rights abuses and use psychological operations (propaganda) to destabilize regimes in Latin America.[173]

Furthermore, CIA director George J. Tenet asserted that the U.S. had plans to invade Iraq long before the 2001 events of 9/11, and the White House used "crap" to justify the Iraq invasion.[174] The treasury secretary, Paul O'Neill, confirmed the assertion that Bush was determined to invade Iraq long before the 9/11 attacks took place.[175] Memos in 2001 by Donald Rumsfeld suggested ways to start Iraqi invasion, for the sole purpose of changing a regime; the suggestions ranged from Saddam's connection to 9/11 or an anthrax attack to weapons of mass destruction.[176] The memos included plans to destroy missile sites, cut off all communications, destroy the Republican Guard, advance on oil fields, seize the Western desert, secure the border, cut off Baghdad, and deploy forces in Iraq to change the regime.[177] The U.S. relied on the claim that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, and that Iraq was behind the 9/11 attacks. After the 9/11 reports, Bush and Dick Cheney admitted to the media that there was no evidence to prove that Iraq was behind the 9/11 attacks.[178] Similarly, intelligence reports such as the Chilcot Report concluded that the intelligence did not establish "beyond doubt" that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction.[179] Moreover, Tyler Drumheller, the former chief of the CIA Europe division, revealed that Bush and Cheney and the national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, were personally told by the CIA director, George J. Tenet, that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction.[180] Richard Durbin, a Democrat and member of the Intelligence Committee, also admitted that he knew that the American people were misled about the Iraq invasion, but he kept quiet because he was sworn to

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[173] *See* FM 31.20-3, *supra* note 97.

[174] Karen DeYoung, *Tenet Details Efforts to Justify Invading Iraq*, WASH. POST (Apr. 28, 2007), http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/27/AR2007042700 550.html?nav=most_emailed.

[175] *O'Neill: Bush planned Iraq invasion before 9/11*, CNN (Jan. 14, 2004), https://edition.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/01/10/oneill.bush.

[176] John Prados, *Rumsfeld Confirms Archive Analysis*, UNREDACTED (Feb. 8, 2011), https://unredacted.com/2011/02/08/rumsfeld-confirms-archive-analysis. *See also* Washington's Blog, *Secret Memo by Donald Rumsfeld Proves Iraq War Started on False Pretenses*, GLOBAL RES. (Feb. 20, 2013), https://www.globalresearch.ca/secret-memo-by-donald-rumsfeld-proves-iraq-war-started-on-false-pretenses/5323576.

[177] *See* Prados, *supra* note 176.

[178] *Cheney Blasts Media on al Qaeda-Iraq Link*, CNN (June 18, 2004), https://edition.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/06/18/cheney.iraq.al.qaeda.

[179] Andy McSmith & Charlie Cooper, *Chilcot Report: Blair Didn't Tell Truth about WMDs, the Deal with Bush or the Warnings of Fallout – How Britain Went to War in Iraq*, INDEPENDENT (July 6, 2016 11:11 AM), https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/chilcot-report-inquiry-tony-blair-iraq-war-weapons-of-mass-destruction-evidence-verdict-a7122361.html.

[180] Aaron Rupar, *60 Minutes: CIA Official Reveals Bush, Cheney, Rice Were Personally Told Iraq Had No WMD in Fall 2002*, THINKPROGRESS (Apr. 24, 2006, 12:26 AM), https://thinkprogress.org/60-minutes-cia-official-reveals-bush-cheney-rice-were-personally-told-iraq-had-no-wmd-in-fall-2002-9d3bf033c619.

secrecy.[181] The CIA claimed that it warned the White House that the documents it was using to justify the Iraq invasion were forged.[182] Paul O'Neil said that: "I never saw anything that I would characterize as evidence of weapons of mass destruction. … I never saw anything in the intelligence that I would characterize as real evidence."[183] This all supports that the intelligence and justification for invading Iraq were fixed on U.S. policy.[184] Additionally, it demonstrates that the Iraq invasion was launched on a false pretext and claims that Iraq was involved in the 9/11 or an anthrax attack, and that it possessed weapons of mass destruction.[185] In reality, the evidence shows that Republican Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel admitted the U.S. had fought for the benefit of big oil.[186]

Similarly, in the Syrian War, the official stance of the White House was not that it was using force in Syria pursuant to armed attack in its territory, in self-defense, or pursuant to UNSC authorization by the United Nations Security Council (the only two exceptions to the prohibition on the use of force under UN Charter).[187] Instead, it says that the US was using force in Syria to "to further its important national interests,"[188] and to deter the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian state.[189] The U.S. admitted to having supported and trained Syrian rebels[190] and nonstate actors to change the Assad regime.[191] Under international

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[181] Sean Lengell, *Durbin Kept Silent on Prewar Knowledge*, Wash. Times (Apr. 27, 2007), http://web.archive.org/web/20070429045319/http://washtimes.com/national/20070 427-124842-1706r.htm.

[182] *White House 'Warned over Iraq Claim*,' BBC (July 9, 2003), http://news. bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3056626.stm.

[183] Dave Moniz & Peronet Despeignes, *O'Neill: Iraq Planning Came before 9/11*, USA Today (Jan. 12, 2004, 9:43 PM), https://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/washington/2004-01-11-oneill-iraq_x.htm.

[184] Daniel Schorr, *The Downing Street Memos*, NPR (June 19, 2005, 12:00 AM), https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4709618.

[185] *U.S. Officials Guilty of War Crimes for Using 9/11 As a False Justification for the Iraq War*, Washington's Blog (Oct. 24, 2012), https://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/ sociopolitica/sociopol_bushimpeachment64.htm.

[186] *Top REPUBLICAN Leaders Say Iraq War Was Really about Oil*, Washington's Blog (Mar.19, 2013), https://washingtonsblog.com/2013/03/top-republican-leaders-say-iraq-war-was-really-for-oil.html. *See also Six Years Ago, Chuck Hagel Told the Truth About Iraq*, Huffington Post (Jan. 5, 2013, 7:59 AM), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/chuck-hagel-iraq-oil_b_2414862; Antonia Juhasz, *Why the War in Iraq Was Fought for Big Oil*, CNN (Apr. 15, 2013), https://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/19/opinion/iraq-war-oil-juhasz/index.html.

[187] U.N. Charter art. 39–41, 51.

[188] *Letter to Congressional Leaders on United States Military Operations in Syria*, White House (Apr. 8, 2017), https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/letter-president-speaker-house-representatives-president-pro-tempore-senate.

[189] *Remarks on United States Military Operations in Syria*, White House (Apr. 13, 2018), https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/statement-president-trump-syria.

[190] Tara McKelvey, *Arming Syrian Rebels: Where the US Went Wrong*, BBC (Oct. 10, 2015), https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33997408.

[191] Nour Malas & Jay Solomon, *U.S. Blesses Syria Regime Change as Embassy Hit*, Wall St. J. (July 12, 2011), https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB1000142405270230381210 4576439713197868294. *See also*, *House Approves US Arms for Syrian Rebels*, Al Jazeera (Sept. 17, 2014), http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/17/congress-arming-syriarebels.html; Mark Hosenball, *Exclusive: Obama Authorizes Secret U.S. Support for Syrian Rebels*, Reuters (Aug. 2, 2012), https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-syria-obama-

law, armed support to rebels and nonstate actors—and effective control of nonstate actors in case of the use of force by them in the sovereign territory of a country—can be considered aggression and the use of force,[192] which is prohibited under the UN Charter.[193]

V. COUNTERING HYBRID WARFARE

To counter hybrid warfare, a victim state should react in a series of three stages. First, it should detect that hybrid warfare has been waged against it, and assess its own vulnerabilities. Second, it should deter hybrid warfare; third, it should respond to the threat posed by hybrid warfare.[194] Though with some variations, NATO also includes elements of detect, deter, and defend in its strategy to fight hybrid warfare.[195]

A. *DETECT*

The first step in countering hybrid warfare is for a victim state to detect the vulnerabilities[196] of its own society. In doing this, a state should examine its system, its social structure, its defense, its legal framework, any sensitive sentiments of the population that can be exploited by aggressors, and any gray areas from which hybrid warfare can operate. Thereafter, to detect hybrid warfare, warning intelligence (which is composed of military and intelligence capabilities) should be employed to acquire information regarding possible hybrid warfare attacks, media and social media campaigns, movements, propaganda, and information operations working toward an enemy's interest, by using indicator-based methods.[197] Pakistan should detect its national vulnerabilities and should link them to the hypothesis that such vulnerabilities can be used to advance enemy interests. In this regard, it can develop warning indicators and devise counter actions to restrain them. For example, the U.S. has started to collect information on its own citizens to analyze indicators which will enable it to detect hybrid warfare in its early stages. The U.S. government has been doing this by following people's Internet footprints.[198] Similarly, the Finnish and British governments have also devised systems to map out patterns of anomalies, which can detect information warfare, propaganda, and hybrid warfare operations and movements.[199]

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order/exclusive-obama-authorizes-secret-u-s-support-for-syrian-rebels-idUSBRE8701OK20120801.

[192] Nicar. v. U.S., at ¶¶ 191–95.

[193] U.N. Charter art. 2 ¶ 4.

[194] *See* MONAGHAN, *supra* note 17.

[195] *See* UZIĘBŁO, *supra* note 10, at 16.

[196] *See* TREVERTON ET AL., *supra* note 108.

[197] CYNTHIA M. GRABO, A HANDBOOK OF WARNING INTELLIGENCE (1972); *see also* MONAGHAN, *supra* note 17, at 25–26.

[198] *See* USASOC, PERCEIVING GRAY ZONE INDICATIONS 1 (2016).

[199] *See* MONAGHAN, *supra* note 17, at 30.

B. *DETER*

Deterrence weakens hybrid warfare operations. A cost-benefit analysis is done to assess the probabilities of succeeding in a task, which helps to understand what a society can lose or gain by making certain decisions against hybrid operations. It includes a cost analysis of allocated government resources, enemy losses, and the capabilities of a system to fight such threats.[200] First, the victim state should inquire: whom to deter, why to deter, and what to deter.[201] Then it must apply the designed deterrence framework. Deterrence can be achieved either by denial, in which the existence of any threat is denied, to undermine the enemy's efforts, or it can be carried out through deterrence by punishment, in which the enemy is informed of the consequences of its actions.[202] A government should make small-gain goals. These are target assets that are important to further hybrid threats, and focus on key actors in such movements. For these purposes, a victim state can employ political, economic, intelligence, military, social media, informational, and infrastructural means to fight such threats.[203]

C. *RESPOND*

Resilience and deterrence are less effective against hybrid threats and they are discussed and employed in the literature in greater detail. However, unforeseen consequences as a response to hybrid threats are not only unpredictable; they also discourage hybrid warfare and fight it effectively.[204] For instance, levying heavy sanctions, including fines against targeted groups, outlets, and platforms, is an effective and nonviolent way to fight hybrid threats. Such assertive responses prevent further hybrid attacks and help to achieve state-oriented strategic interests. Responses should be proportionate to the attacks. Thus, they should have small, targeted aims, and should set thresholds and periodical reviews to analyze their appropriateness and performance.

After setting thresholds, reviewing systems, and aims to respond, a victim state should devise policy choices about whether it wishes to engage or disengage with a hybrid threat. Engaging with a hybrid threat is done by an assertive response, but such a response has the consequence of validating the effect of a threat. However, by disengaging with a threat, hybrid threats are shown as a nonmalignant threat to an enemy. Then, a state should consider whether it chooses to act internally against domestic outlets and actors or against international adversaries. States should consider the limits of international law and its gray areas, through which an enemy can work. After this, a state must choose whether it should employ overt conventional forces to respond, or covert intelligence to respond. A response can be either coercive, with assertive measures, or it can be inductive, to stimulate cooperation. An inductive response

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[200] *See id.* at 35.

[201] *See* Colin S. Gray, *Deterrence in the 21st Century*, 19 COMP. STRATEGY 255 (2000).

[202] *See* MONAGHAN, *supra* note 17, at 35–36.

[203] *See id.* at 43–46.

[204] *See id.* at 51.

contemplates the inner and outward vulnerabilities of its own state, its own people, and its enemies[205]

In a battle of narratives and hybrid warfare, a responding victim state can also unite its efforts to fight hybrid threats. It can do this by strengthening its national media, controlling fake news or misinformation, supporting quality content and quality content writers and outlets, developing content sharing platforms with partner countries, developing mechanisms to identify misinformation and political trolling, strengthing domestic institutions responsible for counterinformation operations, reviewing media content, and introducing media and digital education and literacy.[206]

CONCLUSION

Hybrid warfare campaigns are primarily initiated in cyberspace, because in the cyber world it is very difficult to locate the origin of a movement, which renders it impossible for the targeted state to respond to aggression. This reality helps the aggressor avoid the targeted state's detection. It also shields the attacker from being held responsible for violations of international law. Hybrid warfare campaigns are nonlinear in both their vertical and horizontal spheres. Therefore, hybrid warfare is unpredictable, which helps it escape detection until it is in full force.[207] Moreover, it is flexible, which allows it to change its course of operation, to escalate easily, to change targets, to de-escalate and efficiently achieve its target objectives—which is to either change a targeted state's regime or to destabilize it. [208] The key objectives for hybrid warfare are to avoid direct confrontation, to destabilize a targeted state, and to hinder its policymaking.[209] In this regard, a full spectrum of tools are employed to introduce chaos and exercise ambiguity to spread confusion, while avoiding attribution and retribution against the actions of perpetrators.[210] All efforts are synchronized to either change a regime or to influence or coerce it into conditions that are favorable to the aggressor.[211]

Hybrid warfare is composed of two basic pillars. One is the color revolution and the other is unconventional warfare. In color revolutions, psychological operations, information operations, and propaganda are employed to convey a designed message (usually antigovernment) to mass audiences.[212] At this stage of hybrid warfare, the vulnerabilities of a society or state are targeted, networks are developed, media and other information outlets are positioned to influence targeted masses, local separatist movements are supported, politicians and other

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[205] *See id.* at 50–57.

[206] *See* HORN, *supra* note 3, at 42–44.

[207] *See* TREVERTON ET AL., *supra* note 108, at 60.

[208] *See id.*

[209] *See* Mitalova, *supra* note 28. *See also* Ashraf, *supra* note 21, at 8.

[210] *See* JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, *supra* note 29. *See also* Zdzisław Śliwa et al., *supra note* 29. *See also* Ashraf, *supra* note 21, at 8.

[211] *See* Ashraf, *supra* note 21, at 11.

[212] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 52–53.

key establishment actors are bribed, dissatisfaction with the central authority is induced, local oligarchs, and armed bands are contracted, anti-state interest movements, marches, and protests are designed and commenced, infrastructure and institutions are targeted, violence is provoked, misinformation and psychological operations are started, monopolies in the media are established, domestic conventional forces are disabled, and a parallel sovereignty or a parallel state is erected and claimed.[213] The chief purpose of such activities is to destabilize a government and change the regime or to subvert the authority of the established government. The message of these actions instigates violence and convinces its participants to fight against the system (neocortical warfare). The destabilizations of Syria and the Arab Spring[214] are examples of such color revolutions. Color revolution techniques involve public movements, protests, marches, social or civil disobedience, boycotts, anticorruption movements, anti-state movements, nonviolent seizures, parallel sovereignty and government claims, state mocking, false identities, and guerilla warfare (in addition to these nonviolent techniques, violent unconventional techniques can also be used by insurgents or rebels).[215]

Unconventional warfare is the next stage of color revolutions. In this stage, terrorism and unpredictable force are used, key government institutions are disabled, the territory of the state is occupied, armed forces are prominently positioned, and asymmetric guerrilla warfare is commenced against a targeted state.[216] The main aim of such activities is to change the regime of the targeted state by employing nonstate actors or to destabilize the state by use of violence. Some of the most renowned uses of nonstate actors involve their employment as mercenaries, terrorists, and anti-state rebels.[217] These nonstate actors use Warden's five rings, Hart's indirect approach, Boyd's OODA loop, and chaos theory to paralyze a targeted victim.[218] Notable examples of such unconventional warfare are the Ukrainian and EuroMaidan coups and the Syrian War, and it is predicted that such movements will continue to be planned and executed in the future.[219]

Within geopolitics and the theoretical framework of hybrid warfare, Mackinder identified Russia as at the center of the Heartland of the World Island. Cohen and Spykman located its vulnerabilities. Pilsudski provided methods to break it up through destabilization, and Brzezinski used all of these learnings to provide a geostrategy for the U.S. to maintain its dominance. So, Korybko is of the view that the American strategy is to penetrate the Russian core and the Chinese core through destabilization to retain its global hegemonic dominance.[220] For Korybko, the American strategy for destabilizing cores in Eurasia is not to repeat situations like Libya for financial and political reasons. Instead, it aims to destabilize peripheral states like Kazakhstan and Ukraine by

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[213] *See* HORN, *supra* note 3, at 26–34.
[214] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 50.
[215] *Id.* at 44–49.
[216] *See* HORN, *supra* note 3, at 30–34.
[217] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 56–57.
[218] *Id.* at 57–61.
[219] *Id.* at 69.
[220] *Id.* at 18.

civil conflict, regime change movements, and insurgency or antigovernment movements through propaganda.[221] In such clandestine wars against a target state, there are five levels of targets stacked in layers upon each other. At the very core is (1) the leadership of the country, and above this (2) the system essentials, (3) infrastructure, and (4) the population. The outermost layer is (5) fielded military.[222] As you hit closer to the core of these targets, you will reap more significant impacts. Such clandestine measures are undertaken by an aggressor, because indirect approaches (whether the use of asymmetrical warfare or psychological operations) of a war are more efficient than conventional approaches of war.[223] Because indirect approaches are difficult to detect, they also save an aggressor from attribution or retribution.[224] Moreover, in cases of propaganda and misinformation by the media, a targeted nation can be destabilized and chaos can be instigated in the target state without actually using any direct use of force and without exhausting many resources. In hybrid warfare,[225] unpredictability is at the center of its movements, because it does not allow its victim to orient itself and respond accordingly.[226] Its nonlinear variables include elements of the environment, technological development, social pressure, religion, ideology, nonstate actors, and global corporations.[227] Within these factors, an ideology is implanted into a targeted population to direct people's conflict energy in a favorable direction, as per the interest of the strategist as a human virus in the society's software.[228]

The list of hybrid warfare tools includes the use of propaganda, domestic media, international media, social media, fake news, strategic leaks, funding of organizations, use of political parties, protests, oligarchs, religions, cyberwarfare and cyber tools, economic leverage, proxies or nonstate actors, unacknowledged war (silent warfare), lawfare, and paramilitary organizations and asymmetric warfare, while targeting vulnerabilities in the targeted state to achieve certain objectives (such as destabilizing a nation).[229] It can also use conventional capabilities (military and firepower) in addition to irregular tactics (rebellion, insurgency, proxies, and nonstate actors), terrorism (unpredictable violence), criminal activities (such as smuggling of weapons, drugs, and other illicit things, and the use of domestic gangs), political means (diplomacy), economic means (loans, sanctions, and wrecking of the economy), informational means (propaganda, misinformation, leaked information, and other information operations), and social means (domestic population and psychological operations).[230]

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[221] *Id.*

[222] *See* JACKSON, *supra* note 67. *See also* BOYD & WARDEN, *supra* note 67; WARDEN, *supra* note 67.

[223] *See* WOOD & HART, *supra* note 72.

[224] *See* Paul, *supra* note 74.

[225] *See* KORYBKO, *supra* note 32, at 23.

[226] *See* RICHARDS, *supra* note 82; DETTMER, *supra* note 83.

[227] *See* MANN, *supra* note 86.

[228] *Id.*

[229] *See* TREVERTON ET AL., *supra* note 108.

[230] *See* Tienhoven, *supra* note 4, at 18–21.

In hybrid warfare, an instigator of war stirs things up by creating false flag attacks on a targeted state or on itself,[231] and blames other countries for either materially supporting, orchestrating, or letting its territory be used for these attacks. Such false flag attacks are then justified to wage a war against a targeted state. In situations where a false flag attack is on the instigator itself, a number of targeted states can be blamed in different timelines to be able to wage war against them for gaining strategic goals and benefitting financially from the attacks. The strategic goals can range from stopping other nations from acquiring nuclear technologies to gaining control of oil reserves in a targeted state, or to changing or influencing a regime. Further, false flag attacks on other states also provide strategic and financial gains to the instigator. For example, targeted states are destabilized without having to undertake direct confrontation and huge profits[232] are made by selling weapons to one or both parties to the conflict. There are many instances of false flag attacks, operations, or plans for hybrid operations that are admitted to by instigator governments.

To counter such hybrid threats, a victim state should act in three ways. First, it should detect that there is hybrid warfare waged against it and it must also detect its own vulnerabilities. Second, it should deter hybrid warfare; third, it should respond to threats posed by hybrid warfare.[233] A government should make small goals, should target assets important for enemy movements, and focus on its key actors. A victim state in hybrid war aggression should also discern intent, capability, and attribution of such operations, and detect the vulnerabilities of its enemy to be able to exploit them.[234] A victim should be unpredictable toward its enemy as well and should set thresholds on its responses. Unforeseen consequences and hybrid responses to hybrid threats are not only unpredictable but also effective and discourage hybrid warfare.[235] For instance, levying heavy sanctions, including fines, against targeted groups, outlets, and platforms is an effective and nonviolent way to fight hybrid threats. As a response in a battle of narratives, or hybrid warfare, a victim state can also unite its efforts to fight hybrid threat. It can do so by strengthening its national media, controlling fake news or misinformation, supporting quality content and quality content writers and outlets, developing content sharing platforms with partner countries, "develop[ing] [a] mechanism to identify misinformation and political trolling," "strengthen[ing] domestic institutions responsible for counter information operations and review media content," and introducing media and digital education and literacy.[236]

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[231] WASHINGTON'S BLOG, *supra* note 135.

[232] Turley, *supra* note 138.

[233] *See* MONAGHAN, *supra* note 17.

[234] *Id*. at 41.

[235] *Id*. at 51.

[236] *See* HORN, *supra* note 3, at 42–44.