

Hybrid War is one of the most significant strategic developments that the US has ever spearheaded, and the transitioning of Color Revolutions to Unconventional Wars is expected to dominate the destabilizing trends of the coming decades. Those unaccustomed to approaching geopolitics from the Hybrid War perspective might struggle to understand where the next ones might occur, but it's actually not that difficult to identify the regions and countries most at risk of falling victim to this new form of aggression. The key to the forecast is in accepting that Hybrid Wars are externally provoked asymmetrical conflicts predicated on sabotaging concrete geo-economic interests, and proceeding from this starting point, it's relatively easy to pinpoint where they might strike next.

The series begin by explaining the patterns behind Hybrid War and deepening the reader's comprehension of its strategic contours. Afterwards, we will prove how the previously elaborated framework has indeed been at play during the US' Wars on Syria and Ukraine, its first two Hybrid War victims. Next part reviews all of the lessons that have been learned thus far and applies them in forecasting the next theaters of Hybrid War and the most vulnerable geopolitical triggers within them. Subsequent additions to the series will thenceforth focus on those regions and convey why they're so strategically and socio-politically vulnerable to becoming the next victims of the US' post-modern warfare.

## Patterning The Hybrid War

The first thing that one needs to know about Hybrid Wars is that they're never unleashed against an American ally or anywhere that the US has premier preexisting infrastructural interests. The chaotic processes that are unleashed during the post-modern regime change ploy are impossible to fully control and could potentially en-



Illustration: OrientalReview.org

# Hybrid Wars 1. The Law Of Hybrid Warfare

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By Andrew Korybko

gender the same type of geopolitical blowback against the US that Washington is trying to directly or indirectly channel towards its multipolar rivals. Correspondingly, this is why the US won't ever attempt Hybrid War anywhere that it has interests which are "too big to fail", although such an assessment is of course contemporaneously relative and could quickly change depending on the geopolitical circumstances. Neverthe-



less, it remains a general rule of thumb that the US won't ever intentionally sabotage its own interests unless there's a scorched-earth benefit in doing so during a theater-wide retreat, in this context conceivably in Saudi Arabia if the US is ever pushed out of the Mideast.

## Geostrategic-Economic Determinants:

Before addressing the geo-economic underpinnings of Hybrid War, it's important to state out that the US also has geostrategic ones as well, such as entrapping Russia in a predetermined quagmire. The "Reverse Brzezinski", as the author has taken to calling it, is simultaneously applicable to Eastern Europe through Donbass, the Caucasus through Nagorno-Karabakh, and Central Asia

through the Fergana Valley, and if synchronized through timed provocations, then this triad of traps could prove lethally efficient in permanently ensnaring the Russian bear. This Machiavellian scheme will always remain a risk because it's premised on an irrefutable geopolitical reality, and the best that Moscow can do is try to preempt the concurrent conflagration of its post-Soviet periphery, or promptly and properly respond to American-provoked crises the moment they emerge. The geostrategic elements of Hybrid War are thus somewhat inexplicable from the geo-economic ones, especially in the case of Russia, but in making the examined pattern more broadly pertinent to other targets such as China and Iran, it's necessary to omit the "Reverse Brzezinski" stratagem as a prerequisite and instead focus more on the economic motivations that the US has in each instance.

The grand objective behind every Hybrid War is to disrupt multipolar transnational connective projects through externally provoked identity conflicts (ethnic, religious, regional, political, etc.) within a targeted transit state.

This template can clearly be seen in Syria and Ukraine and is the Law of Hybrid Warfare. The specific tactics and political technologies utilized in each destabilization may differ, but the strategic concept remains true to this basic tenet. Taking this end goal into account, it's now possible to move from the theoretical into the practical and begin tracing the geographic routes of various projects that the US wants to target. To qualify, the multipolar transnational connective projects being referred to could be either energy-based, institutional, or economic, and the more overlap that there is among these three categories, the more likely it is that a Hybrid War scenario is being planned for a given country.

## Socio-Political Structural Vulnerabilities:

Once the US has identified its tar-



A Ukrainian serviceman operates a drone during a training session outside Kiev, November 6, 2014 (Foto: Nato.int /© REUTERS)

get, it begins searching for the structural vulnerabilities that it will exploit in the coming Hybrid War. Contextually, these aren't physical objects to be sabotaged such as power plants and roads (although they too are noted, albeit by different destabilization teams), but socio-political characteristics that are meant to be manipulated in order to attractively emphasize a certain demographic's "separateness" from the existing national fabric and thus 'legitimize' their forthcoming foreign-managed revolt against the authorities. The following are the most common socio-political structural vulnerabilities as they relate to the preparation for Hybrid War, and if each of them can be tied to a specific geographic location, then they become much more likely to be used as galvanizing magnets in the run-up to the Color Revolution and as preliminary territorial demarcations for the Unconventional Warfare aspect afterwards:

- \* ethnicity
- \* religion
- \* history
- \* administrative boundaries
- \* socio-economic disparity
- \* physical geography

The greater the overlap that can be achieved among each of these factors, the stronger the Hybrid War's potential energy becomes,

with each overlapping variable exponentially multiplying the coming campaign's overall viability and 'staying power'.

### Preconditioning:

Hybrid Wars are always preceded by a period of societal and structural preconditioning. The first type deals with the informational and soft power aspects that maximize key demographics' acceptance of the oncoming destabilization and guide them into believing that some type of action (or passive acceptance of others' thereof) is required in order to change the present state of affairs. The second type concerns the various tricks that the US resorts to in order to have the target government unintentionally aggravate the various socio-political differences that have already been identified, with the goal of creating cleavages of identity resentment that are then more susceptible to societal preconditioning and subsequent NGO-directed political organizing (linked in most cases to the Soros Foundation and/or National Endowment for Democracy).

To expand on the tactics of structural preconditioning, the most commonly employed and globally recognized one is sanctions, the implicit goal of which (although not always successful) has always been to "make life more difficult" for the average citizen so that he or she becomes

more amenable to the idea of regime change and is thus more easily shepherded into acting upon these externally instilled impulses. Less known, however, are the more oblique, yet presently and almost ubiquitously implemented, methods of achieving this goal, and this surrounds the power that the US has to affect certain budgetary functions of targeted states, namely the amount of revenue that they receive and what precisely they spend it on.

The global slump in energy and overall commodity prices has hit exporting states extraordinarily hard, many of which are disproportionately dependent on such selling such resources in order to satisfy their fiscal ends, and the decrease in revenue almost always leads to eventual cuts in social spending. Parallel with this, some states are facing American-manufactured security threats that they're forced to urgently respond to, thus necessitating them to unexpectedly budget more money to their defense programs that could have otherwise been invested in social ones. On their own, each of these 'tracks' is designed to decrease the government's social expenditure so as to incubate the medium-term conditions necessary for enhancing the prospects of a Color Revolution, the first stage of Hybrid Warfare. In the event that a state experiences both limited revenue intake and an unexpected need to

hike its defense budget, then this would have a compound effect on cutting social services and might even push the Color Revolution timeframe forward from the medium- to short-term, depending on the severity of the resultant domestic crisis and the success that the American-influenced NGOs have in politically organizing the previously examined identity blocs against the government.

## About:

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