The Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy is establishing a network of enhanced reefs enabling China to exert control over the South China Sea. (SatelliteImage©2018DigitalGlobe)

Perils of the Gray Zone
Paradigms Lost, Paradoxes Regained

By John Arquilla

I n the long years since the 9/11 attacks on America, the wide-ranging "war on terror" has morphed into terror's war on the world. Terrorist incidents have increased seven-fold, with the casualties caused by such attacks more than quintupling.[1] Just as troubling, since the start of the current decade the overall number of wars under way has increased nearly a third—from 31 to 41.[2] There is much overlap between the worst of these conflicts and the number of terrorist incidents, with Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen heading the list in recent years. Paradoxically, the first two of the countries listed have seen extended, very expensive, yet problematic American invasions and occupations. The American military footprint has been light in Syria and Yemen, but these wars have also proved vexing.

If these challenges were not enough, plaguing the lower end of the spectrum of conflict as they do, there are serious threats at the levels of the mid-range and major powers as well. Roguish regional states like Iran and North Korea each pose grave problems. The Islamist regime in Tehran oversees an arc of strategic involvement in wars ranging from Syria to the southern Arabian Peninsula; supports the vibrant, violent Hezbollah organization; and cultivates covert nodes, cells, and networks throughout the world.[3] As for North Korea, Kim Jong Un's vision is focused primarily on continuing his family's totalitarian dynasty. But a key aspect of his strategy includes the development of a robust nuclear deterrent, something seen as highly threatening in capitals ranging from Washington to Beijing.

Mention of Beijing is a reminder of the rise of China, and of its increasingly bumptious policies and actions—from reef enhancement to edgy sea patrols—in the East and South China Seas. The cyber domain is yet another area in which China's behavior can only be described as highly aggressive, given the skill and systematic predations of its corps of hackers—whether they are part of Chinese officialdom or somehow just working at the behest of Beijing. Their ability to make off with vast amounts of intellectual property has resulted in their enjoying a greatly disproportionate share of what then Director, National Security Agency and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command General Keith Alexander called—while he was still in uniform—"the greatest transfer of wealth in history."[4] Needless to say, Russian and/or Russian-backed hackers have enjoyed a healthy share of these spoils as well.

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However, the Russian challenge goes well beyond cybercrime, to include serious acts of political warfare—specifically, of late, attempts to influence democratic elections—across many countries, not least the United States. The Russians have also reasserted their growing power in more muscular though hardly conventional ways as well. Not only in their self-defined "near abroad"—reference should be made here to the bloodless annexation of Crimea and covert combat support to separatist rebels in Donetsk—but also in Moscow's sharp military intervention in the bloody Syrian civil war. Thus, if we are not seeing a recrudescence of the Cold War, without doubt a kind of "cool war" has indeed set in.[5]

Given all the global turmoil, and the seeming inability of American power—even when enhanced by allies—to cope effectively with the wide range of these challenges, it is small wonder that strategists have been casting about in search of fresh paradigms

and more innovative concepts of operations. For it is abundantly clear that "overwhelming force"—the foundation of the grand strategic doctrine that bears General Colin Powell's name—will not suffice against hidden networks, or nations that choose covert, unconventional action as their preferred modus operandi.

In an era featuring few stand-up fights, there is a premium on doctrinal innovation. Yet even while the various aggressors of the world seem to have truly grasped the need for and mastered the process of creativity, the United States and its allies have become mired in older habits of mind, manifesting an all-but-nostalgic longing for the return of traditional conventional warfare. The American defense budget is quite revealing of this mindset, with more than 90 percent of expenditures aimed at shoring up or expanding on conventional combat capabilities. Even the most generous views of support for U.S.

Rehearsal of the parade in honor of Victory Day in Donetsk.

Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), for example—including direct and "enabling" funding—have historically reflected little more than 3 percent of the overall budget allocated to it, along with but 4 percent of monies dedicated to overseas contingency operations.[6] In terms of personnel, USSOCOM's estimated 70,000 service members constitute just 5 percent of the total active duty force.

However, there have been voices raised in recent years, pointing to the costly, problematic interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, the rise in global terrorist networks, and the evidence that mid-level and major powers are flexing their muscles in a mostly unconventional manner—hardly ever distinguishable as familiar traditional warfare. The effort to categorize this challenge has coalesced around a notion of gray zone conflict, a concept defined by strategist Hal Brands as an "activity that is coercive and aggressive in nature, but that is deliberately designed to remain below the threshold of conventional military conflict."[7] A recent report by the International Security Advisory Board—a Federal Advisory Committee established to provide the Department of State independent insight, advice, and innovation—describes the gray zone more narrowly as

> the use of techniques to achieve a nation's goals and frustrate those of its rivals by employing instruments of power—often asymmetric and ambiguous in character—that are not direct use of acknowledged regular military forces.[8]

Whatever the differences in definition between these views—and those arising from myriad other gray zone studies—the emphasis on this zone being unconventional comes through loud and clear.

This prompts two questions: "why do we need the gray zone concept?" and "has the focus on today's so-called gray zone resulted in a dangerous diversion of attention away from the accumulated

body of knowledge about unconventional aspects of conflict developed over the past two hundred years?" The problems posed by irregular warfare in the 19th century, from Carl von Clausewitz's notions of *kleiner Krieg* in the Napoleonic era to C.E. Callwell's "small wars" during the heyday of colonialism, were deeply studied by these two, and many others.[9] As to the anti-colonial guerrilla wars of the 20th century, these were closely examined by insurgents and counterinsurgents alike. Mao Zedong, Che Guevara, and Vo Nguyen Giap were undoubtedly the best guerrilla memoirists, respectively, of Chinese, Cuban, and Vietnamese insurgent movements. The counterinsurgent perspective on the past century has perhaps been best exposited in remarkable works by David Galula, Otto Heilbrunn, and Lewis Gann.[10] These are but a few of the highest peaks in a whole mountain range of studies of irregular warfare. In light of this existing literature, why is the gray zone concept needed?

As to the second question, about diversion of attention away from accumulated knowledge of the subject of conflict "other than traditional conventional warfare," it seems that here too there is much cause for concern. Brands puts the matter succinctly, noting that "exaggerating the newness of the [gray zone] phenomenon risks muddling rather than sharpening our comprehension."[11]

Paradigms Lost

Beyond impairing our understanding of the current landscape of conflict, failure to recall and rely upon relevant security paradigms of the past—in favor of simply ginning up a new term for longstanding practices—has led to a sharp loss of earlier knowledge and insight, consequences of which have surely played a significant role in the unsatisfying course of events described in the opening section of this article. It is with deep concern about the severe price paid by forgetting the substance and power of earlier security paradigms—an inattentiveness that plays

right into our enemies' hands—that I provide the following reminders.

Perhaps the most important insight to recall and reflect on speaks to the very rise of an age of irregular warfare. This was predicted by political scientist Kenneth Waltz more than sixty years ago, when he observed that "mutual fear of big weapons may produce, instead of peace, a spate of smaller wars."[12] Journalist Robert Taber affirmed this view a decade later in his classic *War of the Flea*, which foretold the future dominance of insurgency and terror on the conflict spectrum. As Taber viewed the matter, a traditional military simply had "too much to defend, too small, ubiquitous and agile an enemy to come to grips with."[13] This insight resonated with bright jihadis, especially Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, the deepest strategic thinker that al-Qaeda produced. He used Taber's work in his teachings during the 1990s, when al-Qaeda ran a "university of terror" in Afghanistan.[14] Waltz and Taber had hardly been heeded in the United States, and much too conventional means were applied in Vietnam. A predictable debacle ensued, yet American thought still turned back to conventional war with development of an AirLand Battle doctrine after the communist overrun of South Vietnam in 1975. And it would take more than 30 years—after 9/11 and in the middle of the insurgency in Iraq—before a new counterinsurgency manual was published.[15]

With regard to the notion of a blurriness between peace and war—a key aspect of the justification for the gray zone concept—it is hardly new. Forty years ago Eliot Cohen was writing insightfully about "the blurring of war and peace . . . the struggle to mobilize the populace . . ." and a "new era of warfare [differing] sharply from that which preceded it."[16] As to notions of covert action as means by which to effect regime change and pursue other political objectives, this portion of the gray zone was illuminated, studied, and critiqued long ago. Given that the United States was an eager participant in this

realm, it is hard to see why a new construct for this form of action is necessary. Indeed, a look back at the heyday of covert action, and its often problematic results—in Iran, Guatemala, Cuba, Chile, Angola, and Nicaragua, to name just a few places where Americans plied this craft—might curb the future appetite for this dark mode of statecraft.[17] Conversely, given the high failure rate of covert actions, excessive fear of others using them might be eased.

In addition to covert action—a phenomenon closely associated with the world of intelligence and counterintelligence—the defined gray zone implicitly relates also to aspects of warfighting that extend well-beyond the aforementioned guerrilla operations. These modes of conflict are generally reflected by instances in which a nation chooses to counter or confront a potential adversary by investing in off-design technologies and highly innovative concepts of operations, rather than by imitating the structure and doctrine of the opposing forces. The best current example of such an approach can be found in Beijing's strategy in the East and South China Seas. Instead of relying on aircraft carriers—though the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy now has two of them—Beijing is establishing a network of enhanced reefs, one with potential to exert control over these narrow seas with supersonic anti-ship missiles, brilliant mines, and attack aircraft based on or otherwise using them. By these varied means, Beijing is taking a highly asymmetric approach to dealing with American carrier-based power projection capabilities.

This notion of asymmetric warfare, pioneered more than 40 years ago by Andrew J.R. Mack, is one of those well-developed paradigms in danger of being lost as soldiers and statesmen flock to the gray zone. For Mack, the asymmetry was not only to be found in the concept of field operations but also in the combatants' relative motivations. Key studies that have built upon his thinking, and advanced fresh ideas, have addressed both the

operational and the motivational dimensions.[18] In the world today, these factors are much on display at all levels. Clearly, the Taliban see their campaign in Afghanistan as a total war for control of the state, while the U.S.-led coalition operates with a limited conflict in mind, seeking to "hold the line" with the minimum level of human and material resources expended. At the level of the major powers, Russia has a high level of commitment to holding the Crimea, and to supporting ethnic Russians in Donetsk, while NATO is clearly less determined to see any redress of the situation in favor of Ukraine. As to the United States and Britain, signatories to the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, which guaranteed Ukraine's territorial integrity, both major powers seem to be suffering from selective or strategic amnesia.[19]

As to terrorism, it seems that the gray zone concept is limited in its ability to help us grasp the strategic implications of the shift in this phenomenon from its origins as a form of symbolic violence with some form of extortion in mind to a mode of conflict in its own right. On this point, though, it is clear that much earlier thinking on terrorism as an emerging form of warfare remains highly relevant. Indeed, the Baron von der Heydte—a German paratroop commander during World War II and an international legal scholar after—was among the first to see, in the wake of the Six-Day War in 1967, that terrorism was becoming a form of "war out of the dark" in which "the decision is sought, and ultimately achieved, in a very large number of small, individual operations."[20] To say the least, the Baron was prescient. As was Claire Sterling, who observed back in the 1980s that terrorism was growing via networked forms of organization—and would continue to do so.[21] The challenge in the great post–9/11 war among nations and terrorist networks is to understand the characteristics, including the strengths and vulnerabilities, of networks. The gray zone concept does little to achieve this. Sterling's

ideas do, and can form the basis for a counter-network paradigm. Just as the Baron von der Heydte's formulations provide a foundation for viewing the nature of the current era of conflict.

Thus it seems clear that there are times when, in the words of Winston Churchill, "the farther back you can look, the farther ahead you will see." This is such an era, an age of irregular warfare, terror, covert action, and other asymmetric modes of conflict. To confront and master these challenges, older, deeper, more developed concepts are likely to serve better than just freshly-minted terms. For example, Lewis Gann observed not only how often guerrillas have been defeated, but also the key elements upon which victory or defeat pivot in these wars. Beyond well-known factors like denying havens and inhibiting external support, Gann emphasized the largely psychological nature of guerrilla wars, railed against having counterinsurgent forces with "big administrative tails," and suggested cost-effective ways to improve the ability to gain information critical to finding the hidden.[22] Recent scholarship has powerfully affirmed Gann's views—especially about the frequency with which and conditions under which guerrillas can be and have been defeated.[23]

Otto Heilbrunn should also be mentioned. Almost 50 years ago, he provided an outstanding analysis of the conditions favoring victory by the counterinsurgents over irregulars and, conversely, conditions associated with the likelihood of seeing an insurgent victory. Briefly, Heilbrunn identified three types of insurgencies: terrorist wars (e.g. Palestine); small-unit guerrilla wars (e.g. Malaya, Kenya, Greece, and Algeria); and large-unit insurgencies (e.g. Tito, Mao, and Giap). He went on to argue that terrorist wars generally lead to stalemates—a point he made so long ago, yet which resonates quite powerfully today. Small-unit guerrila wars have been won, more often than not, by the counterinsurgents; whereas guerrillas have won all large-unit conflicts.[24] Heilbrunn's typology

of irregular wars and his analysis of them remain highly relevant, yet his work—and that of others who grappled with these challenges—will all too likely be forgotten or lost in the gray zone. Another example of the risk run by relabeling a longstanding phenomenon.

Paradoxes Regained

As important as it is to take a retrospective view and search out still-valuable paradigms before they become totally lost or simply ignored out of existence, one must also remain attentive to the possibility of reemerging paradoxes. Perhaps the most nettlesome of the paradoxes is revealed by contemplation of the costly, all-too-often counterproductive results of American military interventions and foreign policy initiatives in the years since 9/11. This period, which began a decade after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, should by all traditional measures of power have seen American vital interests well-served and policy goals promptly achieved. Yet results have proved to be very far from satisfactory, with a seemingly endless sea of troubles looming straight ahead. To be sure, part of the problem lies in the rise of irregular modes of conflict—but such challenges have been met and mastered in the past. Curiously, what may be adding to the difficulty in parsing them today is the very concept of the gray zone.

By creating the notion of a space that lies between war and peace, rather than simply recognizing the rise of irregular warfare to a leading position on the spectrum of conflict, American strategists have hobbled themselves, like horses whose tethered legs allow little movement. The failure to see that the gray zone is actually *in and an essential part of* the realm of war conveys huge advantages to insurgents, terrorist networks, and roguish nations. Understanding why this failure of perception has occurred reveals another paradox: how the Marxist worldview—that failed socially, politically, and economically—and a radical

offshoot of Islam—that is overwhelmingly rejected by Muslims—have both come to life owing to the fuzzy thinking about conflict in the United States that has diffused among its allies and friends.

The problem with gray zone thinking is that it confounds the very paradigms that have generally guided the behavior of the world's more progressive, or at least more advanced, nation-states. One foundational body of thought is classical liberalism—not to be confused with today's meaning of the word "liberal"—that grew from the economic thinking of Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Both favored free markets instead of the controls imposed by mercantilist policies. And both saw the rational individual as the prime unit of analysis in commercial affairs. The heirs to their thinking became devoted to the "Manchester Creed," a belief system based on the notion of an enduring harmony of interests. War in this paradigm is a clear aberration. Thus classical liberalism has a hard time with the notion of a gray zone between a harmony of interests and open conflict. Perhaps the best example of the great difficulty this world view has had with creeping aggression of the gray-zone sort is provided by the befuddlement of England, France, and even the League of Nations in the face of Nazi actions and annexations during the 1930s. Edward Hallett Carr, the great historian and analyst of this period, was the first to critique the liberal paradigm as inadequate, noting of this time that it was "no longer possible to believe that every state, by pursuing the greatest good of the whole world, is pursuing the greatest good of its own citizens, and *vice versa*." He concluded that "[t]he inner meaning of the modern international crisis is the collapse of the whole structure of utopianism based on the concept of the harmony of interests."[25]

Despite the travails of World War II and the Cold War, in the half-century between Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 sustained efforts arose to rehabilitate notions of the harmony of interests. "Neoliberal"

thought, which emphasizes the importance of global institutions and agreements, operates under the assumption of harmony. As Robert Jervis has noted, neoliberals believe that the onset of armed conflict is just evidence that "international politics represents tragedy rather than evil."[26] Even the polar opposite of liberal thought, flinty Realism with its emphasis on power calculations in matters of war and peace, makes clear that there are "rules of the game" even at this level that are not lightly disregarded. The father of the realist school of thought, Hans Morgenthau, went so far as to argue "there is the misconception . . . that international politics is so thoroughly evil that it is no use looking for ethical limitations of the aspirations for power." Instead, he noted, it was more proper to focus on "the increasing awareness on the part of most statesmen of certain ethical limitations restricting the use of war as an instrument of international politics."[27]

The structural realists who have come after Morgenthau have seen war as a disturbance—what leading realist John Mearsheimer, echoing Jervis, describes as tragedy—of an equilibrium to be restored by balancing behavior.[28] In sum, classic liberalism and realism, along with their neoliberal and structural realist descendants, remain key, guiding paradigms that tend to see sharp, clearly delineated dividing lines between states of peace and war. The gray zone concept poses a challenge they are not particularly well-suited to address which may help to explain, in part, the difficulty liberal- and realist-oriented policymakers have had in coping with the crises of the post–9/11 era.

By way of contrast, the seemingly defunct Marxist paradigm actually provides a more useful way to think about the low-level conflicts that populate the gray zone and bedevil our time. Like classic liberalism, Marxism draws its basic tenets from economic analysis. But a key difference is that, whereas liberal thought was based on a belief in the harmony of interests, Marxism sees the world, in

the phrasing of Jeffry Frieden and David Lake, as "necessarily conflictual."[29] And it is quite clear that Marxists did not simply see this conflict as limited to the economic realm. For V.I. Lenin a perpetual war was to be fought, often of subversion and various forms of low-level violence. The aim was to meet what he described as "the preliminary condition for every people's revolution . . . the smashing, the *destruction* of the ready-made State machine."[30] His successor Josef Stalin reaffirmed this point in his 1924 monograph, "The Foundations of Leninism," in which he argued "the law of violent proletarian revolution . . . is an inevitable law." The coming of peace, he thought, could happen only "in the remote future, if the proletariat is victorious."[31]

The gray zone construct, as noted earlier in the mention of formal definitions in current use, includes irregular and guerrilla war, as well as acts of terrorism. The Marxist paradigm makes no effort to employ such fine distinctions. Instead, all these phenomena are forms of *war*. Mao Zedong argues this point unambiguously in his writings, affirming that "guerrilla operations must not be considered as an independent form of war. They are but one step in the total war." He returns to this theme repeatedly, linking irregular warfare to overall goals, and finally concluding that "the strategy of guerrillas is inseparable from war strategy as a whole."[32] Vietnam's Vo Nguyen Giap, who was influenced to a significant degree by Mao's thinking, adhered to this notion in his and Ho Chi Minh's long, successful fight against the French and, later, the Americans.

For all the continuing value of Marxist strategic thought today—Russia and China, two heirs of Marx, are showing real mastery of our so-called gray zone—there is another conceptual paradox that has been regained: Islamism. And not just the odd, fringe beliefs so widely and overwhelmingly rejected by the world's Muslims. Rather, the paradox is to be found in the rebirth of the early notion of the obligation to wage perpetual warfare against "unbelievers."

This idea animated the first great sweep of Arab conquests in the 7th century and thereafter, shored up resistance to repeated "crusades," and sparked continuing conflict that was waged for many centuries in the Mediterranean, and at times beyond, by the corsairs of Barbary—who eventually ended up fighting U.S. Marines early in the 19th century. Of this true "long war" mentality Sir John Bagot Glubb, a soldier who did much service with Arab forces, wrote tellingly about how their forebears

> *swept irresistibly forward without organization, without pay, without plans, and without orders. They constitute a perpetual warning to technically advanced nations who rely for their defence on scientific progress rather than the human spirit.*[33]

Could there be any more cautionary, telling explanation of the true antecedents of the zeal and tenacity modern Muslim extremists have shown since the great war between nations and terrorist networks erupted in the wake of the 9/11 attacks on America? I don't think so. Just like the heirs of Marx, today's Islamist fighters see war as a quite unitary construct. A phenomenon that, from very early days, saw the jihadis skillfully blending conventional and irregular modes of conflict. As G.E. von Grunebaum, a leading scholar of Islam from the 7th to the 13th centuries, observed, "guerrilla warfare, apart from several larger expeditions, *continued without interruption.*"[34] Those who oppose the present-day jihadis may try to slice and dice conflict in different ways, based on their habits of mind and institutional biases against treating something other than conventional war as "war." But they do so at their increasing peril.

Conclusion

This article has sharply critiqued the very notion of the "gray zone." It is an intellectual construct that confuses rather than clarifies the spectrum of conflict, and plays into the hands of smart, motivated aggressors who see war in simpler ways. That is, today's aggressors are most willing to accept insurgency, terror, subversion and covert action as war—right alongside increasingly rare occurrences of conventional conflict. The irony of the situation is that the victors in the Cold War, the champions of democracy, modernization and the "new world order," hamstring themselves by dithering over new definitions for old concepts that an earlier generation of their own strategists had thought about deeply and insightfully. Meanwhile, the heirs of Marx and of classical militant Islam—two paradigms long seen as defunct and widely rejected—come to 21st century conflict better prepared, in terms of mindset, for the waging of protracted war in all its many dimensions.

If we must have a fresh definition for war in this era—and I am still far from convinced that we should—let it be "hybrid warfare," the term for present and future conflict that then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates first used in 2009. He was no doubt inspired by "hybrid thinking" going on in the Marine Corps, and the thoughtful 2007 policy study by Frank Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of the Hybrid Wars.* In it, he posed the prospect that "we can expect to face competitors who employ all forms of war and tactics, perhaps simultaneously."[35] At least this term recognizes the irregular as a full-blooded form of conflict, right alongside conventional war. Thus it gives those on the defensive—and make no mistake, the United States and its allies and friends are on the defensive—good reason to sharpen their wits in the face of aggressive actions by major powers and regional states, rogues, and terrorist and insurgent networks. There is a world war under way, waged in hot, cold, and cool modes. The aggressors see no gray zone "between war and peace." They see all as war. So must we. PRISM

Notes

1 The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), and the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) maintained at the University of Maryland all concur broadly with this assertion. In 2001, there were roughly 2,000 terrorist incidents that caused an estimated 14,000 deaths and injuries. By 2015 that number had risen to 15,000 attacks and more than 80,000 total casualties. The upward trend continues.

2 UCDP and PRIO figures for conflicts exceeding 1,000 battle deaths in a given year.

3 Perhaps the broadest depiction of Iran's global capabilities was offered in a hearing before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade on March 20, 2013. See especially I*ran's Global Force Projection Network: IRQC Quds Force and Lebanese Hezbollah* (statement of Will Fulton, American Enterprise Institute Critical Threats Project Iran Analyst and IRGC Project Lead).

4 Josh Rogin, "NSA Chief: Cybercrime Constitutes the 'Greatest Transfer of Wealth in History'," *Foreign Policy Magazine*, July 9, 2012.

5 I borrow and slightly expand the meaning of the term from Frederik Pohl's classic dystopian novel, *The Cool War* (New York: Del Rey Books, 1981), in which many of the world's leading nations engage in protracted, covert conflicts against each other.

6 For details, see Marcus Weisgerber, "Peeling the Onion Back on the Pentagon's Special Operations Budget," *Defense One*, January 27, 2015.

7 Hal Brands, "Paradoxes of the Gray Zone," (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, February 2016). Another thoughtful exposition of the concept can be found in Michael Mazarr, *Mastering the Gray Zone: Understanding a Changing Era of Conflict* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College Press, 2015).

8 International Security Advisory Board, Hon. Gary Hart Chairman, *Report on Gray Zone Conflict* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), 1.

9 Clausewitz's *On War* scarcely touched on the irregular—e.g. see Book Six, Chapter 26, "The People in Arms." But he lectured extensively at the Prussian War College on the guerrilla wars against Napoleon conducted in Spain and in the Austrian Tyrol. Christopher Daase and James Davis edited and translated these lectures in the fine *Clausewitz on Small War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). C.E. Callwell's seminal work was *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (London: University of Nebraska Press, [1896]1996). One of the best general surveys of irregular wars in this era can be found in Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla: A Historical and Critical Study* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1976).

10 See Mao Zedong, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, Samuel B. Griffith translation (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), Ernesto "Che" Guevara, *Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, V. Ortiz translation (New York: Grove Press, 1963), Vo Nguyen Giap, *Big Victory, Great Task* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (New York: Praeger Security International, 1964), Otto Heilbrunn, *Partisan Warfare* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), and Lewis Gann, *Guerrillas in History* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1970).

11 Brands, "Paradoxes of the Gray Zone,"4.

12 Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), p. 236.

13 Robert Taber, *The War of the Flea* (New York: The Citadel Press, 1965), 29.

14 Regarding al-Suri's keen interest in Taber's work, see Brynjar Lia's biography of him, *Architect of Global Jihad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

15 See *U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 and Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5*, jointly published as The U.S. Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

16 Eliot A. Cohen, *Commandos and Politicians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1978), 45.

17 Gregory F. Treverton, *Covert Action: The Limits of Intervention in the Postwar World* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1987) provides an excellent survey of the American practice of covert action from the early 1950s to the late 1980s.

18 See Andrew J.R. Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflicts," *World Politics*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (January 1975), 175–200. Important studies that have built upon this theme include: T.V. Paul, *Asymmetric Conflicts: War Initiation by Weaker Powers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), which explores both successes and failures of asymmetric approaches; and Ivan Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), which argues that conventional strategies for opposing irregular opponents do rather poorly.

19 Ironically, Russia also signed the Memorandum—that extends the guaranty to Belarus and Kazakhstan as well—in return for their and Ukraine's agreement to give up the nuclear weapons they inherited upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

20 Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte, *Modern Irregular Warfare in Defense Policy and as a Military*

Phenomenon, translated by George Gregory (New York: New Benjamin Franklin House, [1972]1986), 3.

[21] See Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network: The Secret War of International Terrorism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981).

[22] Gann, *Guerrillas in History*, 89–90. With regard to information-gathering, Gann advanced the clever idea of reversing the terrorist tactic of using threatening "night letters" aimed at intimidating the populace. Instead, he outlined a means by which the people caught in the middle of a guerrilla war could be encouraged to inform anonymously on the insurgents while retaining secure means for later proof of the valued information they provided.

[23] Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2010), note of the 89 cases from the modern era they examine that the counter-insurgents won slightly more than half of the clearly decided conflicts.

[24] Otto Heilbrunn, "When the Counter-Insurgents Cannot Win," *Royal United Services Institution Journal*, Vol. 114, No. 653, (1969), 55–58.

[25] E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939* (London: Macmillan, 1939), 62.

[26] Robert Jervis, "Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation," in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, eds., *Progress in International Relations Theory* (London: MIT Press, 2003), 289.

[27] Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), 174–80. Morgenthau goes on at some length to condemn the killing of innocents in peacetime and noncombatants in wartime.

[28] See John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001); and Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979).

[29] See Jeffry Frieden and David Lake, *International Political Economy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 9.

[30] V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishing, [1904] Second Edition 1965), 37. Emphasis in the original.

[31] Cited in David McLellan, ed., *Marxism: Essential Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 303.

[32] Mao Zedong, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, 41, 95.

[33] General Sir John Bagot Glubb, *The Great Arab Conquests* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1963), 359.

[34] G.E. von Grunebaum, Classical Islam (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1997), 97. Emphasis added. See further affirmation of this view in Robin Wright, S*acred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam* (New York: Touchstone, 2001).

[35] Cited in Paul Brister, William H. Natter III, and Robert R. Tomes, eds., *Hybrid Warfare and Transnational Threats: Perspectives for an Era of Persistent Conflict* (New York: Council for Emerging National Security Affairs, 2011), 13.

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