JPM718: Presentation Handout

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Reading’s Title: Murray, Williamson and Peter Mansoor, eds. 2012. Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present.

**1. Summary of the Reading**

*What is the reading about? What is the author’s main thesis and conclusions?*

The assigned reading consists of two chapters from an extensive book, first being the introduction –Hybrid Warfare in History, and then the eighth chapter from the book – Small Wars and Great Games, The British Empire and Hybrid Warfare 1700-1970. The introduction of the book offers insight into the main idea behind the content of the book – whether the word ‘hybrid war’ materializes the new type of war in the twenty-first century, an unfamiliar form that combines conventional and irregular forces, or that it is only a word that has recently gained popularity, but in the essence still represents the same- war which is still only war. The book also represents a very useful tool in examining what we know about hybrid wars and how to react to them in the future.

Although Mansoor fully acknowledges the hybrid warfare as a critical challenge to the United States and its allies, the main thesis of his claims, supported by arguments of the eighth chapter and probably by the whole book as well, is that the current buzzword brought up by Washington is not new. Mansoor, however, stresses the complexity of the subject and claims that the conventional and irregular forces engaged in both symmetric and asymmetric combat only need to be understood and addressed correctly by its nature. After careful evaluation of the lessons from the history, he proposes mainly intelligence, civil affairs, psychological operation, and interagency civilian capabilities necessary to fight hybrid wars, which have in essence always been the same.

The eighth chapter written by John Ferris very extensively captures the British experience of hybrid wars on many fronts, mainly Indian peninsula, and African continent, between the years 1700 and 1970. Again, the author underlines the importance of considering hybrid capabilities in fighting hybrid wars in the past and explains that the British were very successful in doing so for centuries by recalibrating the forces from the conventional to the exigencies of irregular war.

**2. Critical Analysis**

*What are the strong and weak points of the argument?*

The strong point of the argument consists of the wording of the argument. The author makes very precisely clear that the war does not need to be called new, if it does not fit the framework of conventional warfare, however, it only needs to be understood by its characteristics and nature and addressed correctly using the historical evidence provided in the book. He also provides a long list of lessons and recorder history that support this argument and are very persuasive.

The weak point of the argument would be that, even though that the Clausewitzian theory does not explain hybrid war as something new, but rather as something that has only manifested itself in different way, he fails to address the severity of the influence that technology has on the warfare. Maybe then the label ´new´, even without the theoretical back up, could help us adequately reflect the unexplored nature and look for new ways of addressing the problem, with the use of historical evidence as well. However, if we deny the emergence of phenomenon as new, we also hinder the reaction to the problem and the ways in which it will be addressed later.

**3. Relation to the Main Reading**

*How does the argument relate to, and/or expand the argument of the main reading to which it is linked in the syllabus?*

Both authors debate the emergence of hybrid wars and the ways in which they are new/different today compared to the previous experience/history. Mansoor and Galeotti provide arguments as to why the hybrid wars are not a novelty and also agree on the fact that if the hybrid wars, however they are fought, are addressed in the rights way and are able to disrupt the enemy’s ability to disrupt, the military strength of the enemy becomes irrelevant.

Mansoor further expands the argument by claiming that ‘new’ hybrid wars are not a western phenomenon only by providing examples from China. Galeotti, on the other hand claims that the Russia’s war is certainly different from the West’s perception of the hybrid war.