

## Practicing “active measures” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the Russian attack on the American democracy

Octavian Manea<sup>1</sup>

**Motto:** “The Russians didn’t have to hack election machines; they hacked American minds.”  
(Clint Watts)

*This paper aims to contextualize the Russian interference in the American elections as a special type of political warfare that an autocracy can use to disrupt a democracy. It builds on the insights of the so-called Gerasimov doctrine that, to a certain extent, previewed the forthcoming normalization of “societal cohesion attacks” and “the weaponization of everything”. As the whole IRA episode suggests, a major component of the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be about influencing the cognitive domain where “hacking the minds” of strategic societal audiences is the big prize.*

The discussion about the Russian interference in the 2016 American elections and beyond remains a highly divisive, even “nuclear”, issue. For Donald Trump, it is as he often says a “hoax”, a plot of the “13 angry Democrats” (the Special Counsel’s team) and of the “deep state” to derail his term at the White House. For the Democrats, however, it is an opportunity to publicly question the legitimacy of Donald Trump’s presidency. Yet, the inconvenient truth is that the Russians attempted to “sow discord”, manufacture dissent, and amplify polarization through targeted “*political and electoral interference operations*.”<sup>2</sup>

The uncomfortable assessments of the public servants at the top of the U.S. intelligence community that investigated the Russian interference during the 2016 election cannot be avoided.

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<sup>1</sup>Octavian Manea is a journalist specialised in Euro-Atlantic security topics. This policy paper is elaborated within the project “Understanding the EasternNeighborhood. A unique platform for comprehensive debates and analysis on Russian affairs”, implemented byESGA between February 2018 –January 2019. All the views and opinions belong to the author and do notnecessarily represent those of the ESGA Partners.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Mueller’s IRA Indictment, p. 5, <https://www.justice.gov/file/1035477/download>

James Comey, the contested FBI director fired by Donald Trump because he failed his loyalty tests, concluded in the book published last year that “*President Putin ordered an extensive effort to influence the 2016 presidential election. The effort, which came through cyber activity, social media and the Russian state media, had a variety of goals: undermining public faith in the American democratic process, denigrating Hillary Clinton and harming her electability and potential presidency, and helping Donald Trump get elected.*”<sup>3</sup> At the same time, General James Clapper, former DNI (Director of the National Intelligence) embraced Comey's diagnostic but also warned: “*this was the most aggressive and most direct and most assertive campaign that the Russians ever mounted in the history of our elections to interfere and to somehow influence the outcome. (...) never, had I seen anything as direct, aggressive and as multidimensional as what the Russians did in the election of 2016,*” said the former Cold Warrior.<sup>4</sup>

### **Gerasimov meets Wael Ghonim**

The *Facebook Revolutions* are rare instances that gave everyone a glimpse into the future. For some, their significance was about dignity, rights of the people and the need to structurally reform the governance framework in the Middle Eastern and Northern African space. But for others, they essentially previewed the forthcoming “digital tsunami” unleashed against the U.S. democracy during the 2016 elections, the weaponization of the social media: “*my theory is the Russians identified this with the Arab Spring. They saw this as the first time where a population could be mobilized just through social media and information sources to move in a specific direction and achieve something without much military cost at all*”, said Clint Watts, a former FBI Special Agent on a Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF).<sup>5</sup>

It may not be by accident that in his, now infamous, 2013 speech, General Valery Gerasimov reflected on the broader lessons of the *Arab Spring* and questioned the extent to which they were

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<sup>3</sup> James Comey, *A Higher Loyalty. Truth, Lies and Leadership*, Macmillan, London, 2018, p. 222 (ebook)

<sup>4</sup> Interview with James Clapper, former Director of National Intelligence, PBS Frontline, August 9, 2017, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/interview/james-clapper/>

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Clint Watts, a research fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute and a senior fellow at the Center for Cyber and Homeland Security at The George Washington University, PBS Frontline, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/interview/clint-watts/>

indicative for waging the wars of the future. To him, such trends were pointing out that “the rules of war” shifted in favor of the “weapons” that don’t necessarily bang: *“the role of nonmilitary means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness.”* In particular, he emphasized ways in which the “protest potential” of key societal audiences can be enabled, amplified and channeled from outside in a certain direction through non-military measures, including informational ones. As Molly K. McKew has pointed out *“they are, in fact, the actual war. (...) the objective is to achieve an environment of permanent unrest and conflict within an enemy state.”*<sup>6</sup>

In the end, this is what the *Facebook Revolutions* were all about. The digital activists used the virtual world created by the electronic platforms to connect, organize and ultimately mobilize the people who *“shared a deep common anger”* in the physical world. In a nutshell, this was the story of the revolution that Egyptians waged against the regime of Hosni Mubarak as it has been told by Wael Ghonim. He is the digital activist that understood the deep sentiment of moral outrage and injustice felt by many Egyptians and one that later became instrumental in mobilizing people through the “Kullena Khaled Said” (“We Are All Khaled Said”) Facebook page. The latter was built around a symbol that could instantly resonate deeply among the Egyptians angered by the regime: the image of Khaled Said –a young Egyptian that on June 6<sup>th</sup> 2010 was beaten to death by secret police officers in Alexandria. For the online world, Khaled Said was the reflection of *“Egypt’s condition”*. The Facebook page spoke the language of a major constituency –the people angered, enraged, disaffected by Mubarak regime; it aimed to build solidarity, a community of purpose and incrementally mobilize to exert pressure in the offline world through a very diverse tactical choreography- silent stands, sit-ins, occupation of public spaces, but also noisy peaceful demonstrations to attract attention. It was not long before everyone realized that *“we were finally ripe for revolution”*. Ghonim documented his experience in a book suggestively titled *Revolution 2.0*. He saw the Internet as the key *“vehicle to bringing forth the first spark of change”*, the glue able

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<sup>6</sup> Molly K. McKew, “The Gerasimov Doctrine”, *Politico*, September/October 2017, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/09/05/gerasimov-doctrine-russia-foreign-policy-215538>

to bond together the like-minded activists and mobilize the energy to knock-out a dictatorship frozen in another time.<sup>7</sup>

He understood that the mix between the information revolution and social movement would create the potential for electronically enabled protests opening the path for *Revolution 2.0*, fundamentally altering the power of the people as well as the ability of the individual to exert public pressure. At the time, Ghonim thought about the Internet as a “liberating tool”. But after the depression of the Arab Spring, he revised his optimism concluding that: “*the hardest part for me was seeing the tool that brought us together tearing us apart. The Internet is just a tool that will be easily used by anyone because it is just a tool.*” Fundamentally, it gives the advantage to the dark forces that thrive in a polarizing environment, but also to those agendas interested in cultivating divisions and widening organic societal cleavages. There is no accident that Islamists and extremists were among the first to acknowledge the endless opportunities that the informational environment provided in “shaping and swaying opinions”, “stoking fears” but also in “capturing audiences”: “*if social media is a smoking gun, Islamists and extremists are proving to be the most expert at loading the bullets.*”<sup>8</sup>

While Gerasimov’s remarks were trying to capture what, at the time, was perceived as a Western enabled type of political warfare (in this reading the Colored Revolutions were the first exhibit), this doesn’t mean that Russia couldn’t learn, optimize and borrow similar tactics from across the spectrum of conflict. Especially for a great power with a long history of practicing the art of “active measures” (an umbrella term for what the former Soviet Union understood as a broad set of activities – ranging from disinformation, manipulation, overt propaganda, subversion, support for like-minded proxy groups, to incitement and terrorism – designed to advance Russian influence<sup>9</sup>) deeply ingrained in her DNA. After all, it was within her organic traditions.

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<sup>7</sup> The paragraph is developed based on Wael Ghonim’s book *Revolution 2.0*, HarperCollins Publishers, London, 2012, pp. 51, 59, 85, 160.

<sup>8</sup> Harook K. Ullah, *Digital World War. Islamists, Extremists and the Fight For Cyber Supremacy*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2017, p.3

<sup>9</sup> Fletcher Schoen and Christopher J. Lamb, “Deception, Disinformation, and Strategic Communications: How One Interagency Group Made a Major Difference”, Institute for National Strategic Studies, NDU, 2012, p. 8, <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratperspective/inss/Strategic-Perspectives-11.pdf>

At the nexus between Gerasimov and Ghonim a methodology of multidimensional digital warfare is brought to life, one “*that looks more like hacking an enemy’s society than attacking it head-on*”<sup>10</sup>. The immediate outcome was the Russian insidious interference in the 2016 election with the purpose of massively influencing the cognitive terrain and reshaping the perception of key electoral constituencies “*by selectively amplifying targeted disinformation and misinformation on social media—sometimes using materials acquired by hacking—and forging de facto information alliances with certain groups in the United States.*”

### **An ecosystem ripe for digital subversion**

There are key traits in the surrounding environment, in both online and offline worlds, that make more likely for the Kremlin to practice political subversion on a massive scale with the tools of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**The first** significant variable is the rise of the new tribalism, widely spread across the political spectrum. The insidious use of identity politics became the landmark of the “brave new world” shaped by Brexit and by the American elections. Both were symptomatic for the maturization of deeper trends inside the Western world. It is less about “economy is stupid” and more about a crisis of identity (“who we are”): “*identity politics has become a master concept that explains much of what is going on in global affairs. (...) Across the ideological spectrum, identity politics is the lens through which most social issues are now seen*”, as Francis Fukuyama captured the spirit of our times. Both Brexit and Trump campaigns were run as “projects of fear” fueled by a profound skepticism of a generic other that valued immigration, globalism and international institutions and were premised on the need to return to a much more narrowly focused national sovereignty rooted in a mythological golden past.

It should not be forgotten that the tribalization of the right—the retreat in the exclusive comfortable embrace of the ethnic/religious group— was significantly incentivized by the “Talibanization” of the left—the often aggressive and militant promotion of narrow minority

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<sup>10</sup>Molly K. McKew, “The Gerasimov Doctrine”, *Politico*, September/October 2017, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/09/05/gerasimov-doctrine-russia-foreign-policy-215538>

identities<sup>11</sup>. Today these trends reinforce each other naturally, but at the same time, the fears of the conservatives as well as the sensibilities of the fringe minority groups can be easily augmented from outside by an interested foreign power. It is not by accident that Russia focused its online influence efforts by targeting some of the most tribalized segments in the American society across political preferences, to accelerate polarization and diminish the weight of the moderate political center. *"It was almost like they were trying to bring those two audiences together, the extreme right and almost anarchist or extreme left of the political spectrum in the United States,"* concluded Clint Watts, a senior fellow at the Center for Cyber and Homeland Security at The George Washington University.

A **second factor** is related to our increasingly wired existence, especially its very specific pathologies. More and more people live a wired life that provides a myriad of details about their tastes, preferences, optics and opinions. The digital behavior –the patterns and routines– becomes a proxy for guesstimating who they are, what makes them tick and who are the most likely influencers. We tend to cluster in virtual communities of like-minded fellows, read and share what our group is consuming and stick to a more or less fixed menu of preferences. In other words, like in the real world, people tend to congregate in *"digital tribes"*, form similar bubbles predisposed to see the world through the lens of their own *"identity politics"*, realities that are reinforced by confirmation bias and *"group-think"* dynamics.<sup>12</sup>

All these predispositions and tendencies are ultimately consolidated and augmented by the fact that *"social media"* ends up rewarding tribalization, sensationalism, highly intense emotions display and inflammatory discourse.<sup>13</sup> This is an insight that Wael Ghonim has taken from the famous psychologist Daniel Kahneman. He who pointed out that the human brain has two operating systems – one we use more often (fast thinking) and that is highly irrational and emotionally volatile and one that we should use more often (slow thinking), which is more process oriented, calculated

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<sup>11</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "Against Identity Politics. The New Tribalism and the Crisis of Democracy", *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2018, p. 101.

<sup>12</sup> Clint Watts, *Messing with the Enemy: Surviving in a Social Media World of Hackers, Terrorists, Russians, and Fake News*, HarperCollins Publishers, 2019, New York, p. 433.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Wael Ghonim, Arab Spring activist, PBS Frontline, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/interview/wael-ghonim/>

and rational. “*What social media does is it basically puts system one on steroids. It just gets you very emotional. It basically hacks into your emotional self*” concludes Ghonim. While the superficial thinking system is on fire, your critical thinking is reduced to silence.

In this context, it is no surprise that stirring “tribal ego” against “tribal ego” at an industrial scale (using the arsenal of computational propaganda – “automation and algorithms”<sup>14</sup>) has become a Russian preferred way of attacking the American democracy. In the end, this is also how political parties run their electoral campaigns, mobilizing core loyal constituencies and harnessing the grievances of the undecided groups. From this perspective, the remarks made by the retired general Michael Flynn, an insider of the Trump campaign, remain anthological: “*we have an army of digital soldiers cause this was an insurgency, folks, cause it was run like an insurgency. This was irregular warfare at its finest, in politics.*”<sup>15</sup>

A burgeoning new literature notes the impact that such variables have on changing the character of how contemporary wars are waged. Shaping and changing perceptions are taking the primacy of place; they are becoming center-stage. An irregular warfare practitioner himself, Sean McFate argued in his latest book (*The New Rules of War. Victory in the Age of Durable Disorder*) that Western armies should no longer be captive to a mindset shaped profoundly by the WW2-centric big-war paradigm: “*conventional war is dead. There are new rules for war. There are other ways to win, and they do not involve bullets. (...) Influence is more potent than bullets. (...) Shaping people’s perception of reality is more powerful than mobilizing a carrier strike group.*”<sup>16</sup> Modern warfare becomes a huge strategic communication effort, where the distribution of messages and the narratives projected are the main lines of effort. In short, less armed politics and more PR and stagecraft. “*The new wars are not won by missiles and bombs, but by those able to shape the storylines that frame our understanding, to provoke the responses that impel us to action, to connect*

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with Sam Woolley, director of research for the Computational Propaganda Project, PBS Frontline, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/interview/sam-woolley/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2MgTd3LgB0>

<sup>16</sup> Sean McFate, *The New Rules of War. Victory in the Age of Durable Disorder*, HarperCollins Publishers, 2019, New York, pp.: 124, 125, 130 (ebook).

with us at the most personal level, to build a sense of fellowship and to organize to do it all on a global scale, again and again.”<sup>17</sup>

This trend was vividly captured by graphician Dan Perjovschi in his exhibition hosted by the Lombard Freid Gallery in New York (October-November 2012): World War ONE - World War TWO - WWW.



<sup>17</sup> P.W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking, *LikeWar. The Weaponization of Social Media*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, 2018, p. 21.

## Into the universe of Putin's Chef

There is an increasing consensus that the *Internet Research Agency* (IRA), created by Yevgeny Prigozhin (better known as Putin's Chef), was a game changer in the way it weaponized the Internet and launched a form of “subversive blitzkrieg”<sup>18</sup> (as Sean McFate put it) against the United States.<sup>19</sup> At the core of the whole effort was a multi-layered “cross-platform strategy”<sup>20</sup> (instrumentalizing Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) that leveraged the power of “social bots” designed to “*amplify narratives or disinformation streams*” as well as to “*dominate, manipulate groups pages and disseminate political advertisements*”.<sup>21</sup>

Robert Mueller's indictment published in February last year provides a unique window into the Russian online warfare. It portrays IRA as an organization designed for “*electoral interference operations*” that aimed to influence the political environment in the US using “*fictitious U.S. personas on social media platforms and other Internet-based media.*” Early on, the organization developed groups on Facebook and Instagram that targeted all the corners of the US political system through multiple platforms: “United Muslims of America”, “Army of Jesus”, “Heart of Texas”, “South United”, “Blacktivist” or “Secured Borders”. It is suggestive that by 2016 the online outreach of these platforms was in the hundreds of thousands of followers.<sup>22</sup>

Overall, a detailed assessment of the IRA behavior shows what can be called “*a strategic alignment*”<sup>23</sup> with the basic electoral logic of the Trump campaign: keep the disgruntled minorities out (de-energized), Jill Stein in (so boosting her electoral likeability) and Bernie Sanders' supporters down, while mobilizing traditional Republican constituencies.

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<sup>18</sup> Sean McFate, *The New Rules of War. Victory in the Age of Durable Disorder*, HarperCollins Publishers, 2019, New York, p. 219 (ebook).

<sup>19</sup> David Sanger, *The Perfect Weapon. War, Sabotage and Fear in the Cyber Age*, Crown Publishing, New York, 2018, p. 275 (ebook).

<sup>20</sup> Philip N. Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, “The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018”, *Oxford Computational Propaganda Project*, 2018, p.8.

<sup>21</sup> Frank Hoffman, “Examining Complex Forms of Conflict: Gray Zone and Hybrid Challenges”, PRISM, Volume 7, No.4, November 2018, <https://cco.ndu.edu/News/Article/1680696/examining-complex-forms-of-conflict-gray-zone-and-hybrid-challenges/>

<sup>22</sup> Robert Mueller's IRA Indictment, p. 14, <https://www.justice.gov/file/1035477/download>

<sup>23</sup> Kathleen Hall Jamieson, “How Russia cyber attacks helped Trump to the US presidency”, *The Guardian*, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/oct/22/russia-cyber-theft-trump-us-election-president-clinton>

The U.S. Department of Justice indictment suggests that a key line of effort was to incentivize key audiences to remain somehow neutral, to vote neither for Trump or Hillary, but for a third-party candidate like Jill Stein, the presidential candidate of the U.S. Green Party (she is famous for participating, together with retired general Mike Flynn, to a 2015 gala dinner at Vladimir Putin’s table). One such example is the Instagram account “Blacktivist” that on November 3, 2016 promoted a post that pleaded for a third candidate: *“Choose peace and vote for Jill Stein. Trust me, it’s not a wasted vote”*. This type of effort focused on boosting the profile of third-party candidates could have been decisive. As an insider of the Clinton campaign concluded in hindsight: *“we lost Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin—three states of our Blue Wall—by about eighty thousand votes. Six hundred and sixty thousand votes were cast in those three states for third-party candidates. Winning those three states would have got us to two hundred and seventy-eight electoral votes.”*<sup>24</sup> Compared with her previous electoral season, the numbers of Jill Stein improved significantly in 2016: 31,072 (vs. 7,665) in Wisconsin, 51,463 (vs. 21,897) in Michigan, 49,941 (vs. 21,341) in Pennsylvania – all swing states won by Donald Trump by small margins.<sup>25</sup>

Another focused effort of IRA was to try to push minorities, either African American or Muslims, to boycott the electoral process, demobilize them and especially not to vote for Hillary Clinton: *“American Muslims [are] boycotting elections today, most of the American Muslim voters refuse to vote for Hillary Clinton because she wants to continue the war on Muslims in the middle east and voted yes for invading Iraq.”*<sup>26</sup>

Operating a budget estimated at millions of dollars, IRA bought and spread online advertisements that targeted Hillary Clinton and promoted Donald Trump: *“Hillary Clinton Doesn’t Deserve the Black Vote”*; *“Hillary is a Satan, and her crimes and lies had proved just how evil she is”*; *“JOIN our #HillaryClintonForPrison2016”*. Occasionally, some of the pro-Trump legitimate rallies were boosted through IRA advertisements: the one organized in August 2016 - “Florida Goes Trump” - was supported by such “rogue” advertisements that reached around 59,000 users (while

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<sup>24</sup> Jane Mayer, “How Russia Helped Swing the Election for Trump”, The New Yorker, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/01/how-russia-helped-to-swing-the-election-for-trump>

<sup>25</sup> Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Cyber-War. How Russian Hackers and Trolls Helped Elect a President*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 115.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Mueller’s IRA Indictment, p. 18, <https://www.justice.gov/file/1035477/download>

8,300 responded to it).<sup>27</sup>

On the other side, the messages tailored for the conservative audiences were built on issues intimately related to their core beliefs and to a type of grievances that would resonate with the America First mindset – patriotic, nationalistic, appealing to regional identities, pro-gun and anti-immigration.<sup>28</sup> Samples of the slogans designed to mobilize the conservative audiences in favor of the Trump campaign include: “*Vote Republican, vote Trump, and support the Second Amendment!*”; “*Donald wants to defeat terrorism . . . Hillary wants to sponsor it*”; “*We cannot trust Hillary to take care of our veterans!*” In addition, it amplified the siege mentality of those segments fearful of massive “*economic dislocation and cultural change*”.<sup>29</sup>

Last, but not least, taking a page from the *Facebook Revolutions*, there are a few examples of rallies subtly instigated from afar, remotely controlled, through the IRA Facebook groups. One example is the one staged in Houston, Texas in May 2016, where the group representing “Heart of Texas” clashed with the one mobilized under the banner of “United Muslims of America”.<sup>30</sup> Other examples include the rallies organized in New York - “March for Trump” (June 2016) and “Down with Hillary” – by a similarly controlled Facebook group “Being Patriotic”.

Overall, the magnitude of the IRA campaign, its online outreach to the main electoral audiences, remains staggering. The *Computational Propaganda Research Project* at Oxford estimated that the “*IRA content was shared by about 31 million users, liked by almost 39 million users, garnered almost 5.4 million emoji reactions, and generated almost 3.5 million comments.*”<sup>31</sup> Another useful estimation was provided by Twitter that identified around 3,814 accounts linked to IRA in addition to approximate 50,000 Russian bots that in the final stages of the 2016 election “*retweeted the Republican candidate’s @realDonaldTrump posts almost 470,000*

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<sup>27</sup>Robert Mueller’s IRA Indictment, p. 27, <https://www.justice.gov/file/1035477/download>

<sup>28</sup> Philip N. Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, “The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018”, *Oxford Computational Propaganda Project*, 2018, p. 19.

<sup>29</sup>Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Cyber-War. How Russian Hackers and Trolls Helped Elect a President*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 80.

<sup>30</sup> Jamie Fly, Laura Rosenberg, David Salvo, “Policy Blueprint for Countering Authoritarian Interference in Democracies”, *The German Marshall Fund of the United States*, 2018, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> Philip N. Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, “The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018”, *Oxford Computational Propaganda Project*, 2018, p. 32.

times”.<sup>32</sup> Last but not least, the Facebook advertisements bought by IRA “produced thousands of Facebook and Instagram posts, to which more than 125 million users could have been exposed.”<sup>33</sup> It shouldn’t be forgotten that the whole IRA campaign was complemented and at times worked in conjunction with more classical cyber kompromat efforts – the hack of DNC emails that were later released via Russian proxies (Wikileaks and DC leaks). As Clint Watts concluded: “Russia’s theft and repeated release of emails from the DNC powered and sustained a narrative of corruption, criminality and conspiracy that clouded the Clinton campaign from the start to finish.”<sup>34</sup>

It is in this context that many raise an uncomfortable question: bearing in mind that the American elections were decided by a small margin (80,000 votes), how plausible is that the whole Russian active measures campaign has ultimately tipped the election?

### Conclusion

It is suggestive that the Russian influencing and shaping operations did not stop on November 2016. They continued well beyond into the first half of the Trump Administration insidiously inserting within the organic fault-lines of the American society and amplifying them. In the long run, as the wired existences are becoming the new normal, a future dominated by big-data and online profiling makes all of us even more vulnerable to digital subversion: “as governments and corporations succeed in hacking the human operating system, we will be exposed to a barrage of precision-guided manipulation, advertisement and propaganda.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Cyber-War. How Russian Hackers and Trolls Helped Elect a President*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 70.

<sup>33</sup>Frank Hoffman, “Examining Complex Forms of Conflict: Gray Zone and Hybrid Challenges”, PRISM, Volume 7, No.4, November 2018, <https://cco.ndu.edu/News/Article/1680696/examining-complex-forms-of-conflict-gray-zone-and-hybrid-challenges/>

<sup>34</sup>Clint Watts, *Messing with the Enemy: Surviving in a Social Media World of Hackers, Terrorists, Russians, and Fake News*, HarperCollins Publishers, 2019, New York, p. 317.

<sup>35</sup>Yuval Noah Harari, *21 Lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Jonathan Cape, London, 2018, p.53.

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