

The definition case of information warfare term: waging wars or disseminating propaganda?

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Abstract—The article studies the genesis, evolution and practice of the term “information warfare” in the global media space. The study reveals the relationship of contemporary information warfare with forms and methods of military and political publicity of different states, starting from the 19th century. The media space in different historical eras in societies with various power patterns and theories applied to the control of mass consciousness are reviewed. The article examines the root origins of the information warfare concept and its application in the global media field. The terminological analysis allows us to determine the relationship of military operations and military deception with definitions of propaganda, psychological war, and information war over the past hundred years.

Keywords—control of mass consciousness, cyberspace, information warfare, information operation, propaganda, psychological warfare, psychological impact

I. INTRODUCTION

The term “information warfare” entered the scientific and global media use only in the last quarter of the 20th century; however, the old term “propaganda” or publicity found widespread starting from the First World War [1]. It should be mentioned that the trendsetters in the evolution of propagandistic and information theories in the wartime were British researchers who turned to this study during the First World War [2]. It was the Entente states, Great Britain and France, in the first place that provided unprecedented propaganda aimed at the foe: during 1914-1918, about 30 million leaflets, newspapers, and pamphlets were disseminated over German troops and cities. After accelerating communication technologies, new information warfare theories have been developed. Researchers of information confrontation methods note that they are based on works of mass consciousness control for many centuries repeatedly tested by military and political leaders, which in the first half of the twentieth century was called ‘psychological warfare’.

The modern concept of information warfare (in the previous terminological interpretation “psychological warfare”), frequently used in Western-European research and practice is based on the works and

practical experience of Chinese military officers and politicians, in particular, the outstanding general, writer and philosopher Sun Tzu, who lived in the eighth century BC in the ancient Chinese kingdom Qi.

For many centuries, Sun Tzu’s “The Art of War”, an influential work of military strategy, remained the most significant war treatise in Asia. Chinese, Japanese, and Korean commanders studied this work as the compulsory theory. Many of Sun Tzu’s strategies have played an important role in the military history of Japan since the eighth century and significantly affected the unification of Japan in the early modern era. It remained popular among the Imperial Japanese armed forces during the Russo-Japanese War and World War II in the 20th century. Japanese publishers produced more than 100 editions of “The Art of War” and applied Sun Tzu’s ideas to many ways of Japanese life, including business.

Sun Tzu was among the first military strategists who summed up the background of information (psychological) affect on a foe: “So to win a hundred victories in a hundred battles is not the highest excellence; the highest excellence is to subdue the enemy’s army without fighting at all. To win one hundred battles is not the supreme art of war [3].

In this case Sun Tzu understood the operations associated with the use of special information by the participants of hostilities: ‘Warfare is the art of deceit. Therefore, when able, seem to be unable; when ready, seem unready; when nearby, seem far away; and when far away, seem near. If the enemy seeks some advantage, entice him with it. If he is in disorder, attack him and take him. If he is formidable, prepare against him. If he is strong, evade him. If he is incensed, provoke him. If he is humble, encourage his arrogance. If he is rested, wear him down. If he is internally harmonious, sow divisiveness in his ranks. Attack where he is not prepared; go by way of places where it would never occur to him you would go. These are the military strategist’s calculations for victory they cannot be settled in advance’.

Sun Tzu's "The Art of War" has been translated from Old Chinese into 29 foreign languages over the last millennium. It should be mentioned that the treatise translations quickly performed in countries participated in warfare.

At the start point of the 18th century, the treatise was translated into Manchu and Mongolian languages. Its introduction to Europe began in 1782 when Joseph Amiot, a French Jesuit Father living in China, acquired a Manchu copy of it and translated it into French.

The early high-quality English and German translations were made almost at the same time in 1910. Over the last hundred years, 17 original translations in different editions have been published in English alone. The treatise was first translated into Russian and commented only in 1940-s by an academician Nikolai Konrad, who wrote: "Both in the 19th and 20th centuries both in China and Japan, Sun Tzu's work is studied by military experts on a par with the old classics of military scientific and theoretical thought of other nations. The study of Sun Tzu's treatise has always been an essential element of higher military education in these countries".

It is acknowledged that during the liberation struggle of the Chinese nation against Japanese invaders in 1930-40s, Mao Zedong successfully exploited ideas of Sun Tzu's treatise in his theoretical works "Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War" 1936, "Problems of Strategy in Guerilla War Against Japan" (1938), "On Protracted War" (1938)

Ho Chi Minh, a Vietnamese revolutionary leader translated Sun Tzu's work for his officers to study. Some Vietnamese commanders became avid practitioners of Sun Tzu's ideas and stood behind victories over French and American forces in Vietnam as war strategists.

II. HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE MATTER

The principal and the very first work on the explored topic was the book of the American political expert and psychologist Paul Linebarger "Psychological Warfare", where the author summarised his work experience in the US propagandistic institutions engaged in psychological warfare. In the first edition of the book which was published in 1948, the author reviews forms and methods of psychological warfare during the two World Wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945. The second edition of 1954 was supplemented by an analysis of propagandistic campaigns during the Korean War of 1950-1953.

Interestingly, in his work 'Psychological Warfare' P. Linebarger studies methods of dealing with the enemy's mass consciousness on unique historical precedents – from wars in Ancient Greece to conflicts in Ancient China, from war conflicts in Medieval Europe to epochal conquests of Genghis Khan, from public protests of The Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England to the antimonarchical rebellions of the French Revolution.

Special note must be made of the fact that in his work the author used hundreds of original documents (including classified ones) from intelligence agencies archives, Departments of Defence, various governmental structures and departments of the United States and Great Britain, to which he had access during his military service. Among them, in particular, there were issues of bulletins of CINCPAC-CINCPOA. – the Commander of the US Pacific Armed Forces. – US Navy, 1944; reports and dispatches of operations in the Western European Campaign, 1944-1945; transcripts of meetings of the Political War Executive and many others [4, 5], Secret Report of the Political War Executive, London, 1942 [6].

In the introduction to the first edition, P. Linebarger wrote: "I have talked about psychological warfare with all sorts of people, all the way from Mr. Mao Tse-tung in Yen-an and Ambassador Joseph Davies in Washington to an engineer corporal in New Zealand and the latrine-coolie, second class, at our Chungking headquarters. [...] From all these people I have tried to learn, and have tried to make this book a patchwork of enthusiastic recollection. Fortunately, the material is non-copyright; unfortunately, I cannot attribute most of these comments or inventions to their original proponents. Perhaps this is just as well: some authors might object to being remembered [...] my obligation to the War Department General Staff officers detailed to Psychological Warfare stands forth. By sheer good fortune, the United States had an unbroken succession of intelligent, conscientious, able men assigned to this vital post, and it was my own good luck to serve under each of them in turn between 1942 and 1947..." [7].

Thus, the author claimed that almost all methods, forms and technologies of psychological warfare in the USA were developed by units of military officers and analysts who had education in human psychology, political psychology, applied psycholinguistics, psychology of propaganda and mass communications.

In the post-war period the topic of psychological warfare attracted dozens of researches from numerous countries. The majority of works are devoted to the analysis of special operations of the countries of the anti-Nazi coalition against Hitler's Germany during the Second World War: for example, Ellic Howe, "The Black Game: British Subversive Operations Against the Germans During the Second World War"; Ewan Butler, "Amateur Agent: A story of "Black" Propaganda during World War II"; Edward Boehm, "Behind Enemy Lines: WWII Allied/Axis Propaganda"; Michael Balfour, "Propaganda in War 1939-1945: Organizations, Policies and Publics in Britain and Germany"; Allan M. Winkler, "Politics of Propaganda, The Office of War information, 1942-1945"; John Taylor "Bletchley Park's Secret Sisters: Psychological Warfare in World War II".

A number of works cover general and independent concepts of propaganda and psychological warfare: among them, for example, Georgiy Pocheptsov, "Information warfare: Fundamentals of military communication research"; Philip Taylor, "Munitions of

the Mind: War Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Nuclear Age”; Macdonald Scot “Propaganda and Information Warfare in the Twenty-First Century: Altered Images and Deception Operations”.

Much less research studies individual information operations during various military and political conflicts. Among such products, for example, are “War and the Media: Propaganda and Persuasion in the Gulf War” by Philip Taylor; “Villages of the Moon: Psychological Operations in Southern Afghanistan” by Mervyn Roberts.

In present times, hundreds of works by contemporary researchers are devoted to Sun Tzu’s concepts, which cause continuous scientific discussions in many countries around the world. Thus, over the past few years, more than 40 publications citing “The Art of War” by Sun Tzu have been published in the leading military publishing house of the National Defense University (the USA) only [8]. One of the latest examples is “Goeconomy”, the article by a colonel J. Troxel, published in February 2018 in the US war magazine “Military review” [9].

Currently, the treatise “The Art of War” is included in the compulsory curriculum of many military higher education institutions in the USA, Europe and Asia [10]. For example, in the US Army War College (Carlisle, Pennsylvania) in the compulsory program “Military Strategy”, 4 academic hours are allocated to the study of Sun Tzu’s treatise with the obligatory use of 8 tutorials [11]. This top military university was founded in 1901, and currently, it is one of the leading universities in the US Department of Defence system. Senior officers graduated from this university subsequently commanded armies and fronts during the largest military campaigns of the 20th century [8] In the Naval War College (Newport, Rhode Island), there are 6 lectures allocated to study of Sun Tzu’s treatise [12]. One of the most well-known contemporary scholars in the military-strategic heritage of ancient China, professor Andrew Wilson (USA), teaches a course in Sun Tzu’s “Art of War” at seven US senior war service colleges. He was invited to lecture on Sun Tzu’s strategy to military universities of more than 20 countries around the world [13].

When studying the Sun Tzu’s treatise, special emphasis is given to the methods of information impact on a foe that is what in the middle of the 20th century was introduced as “psychological war”.

We should mention that the works of Western-European commanders and war theoreticians like Carl von Clausewitz (Prussia), Joseph Joffre (France), and Russian war strategists – Alexander Suvorov, Mikhail Kutuzov, Pyotr Rumyantsev and Pavel Nachimov (the Russian Empire), contained many original ideas on the weakening of the war enemy’s spirit. Many of them noted that spiritual weapons, not destroying the enemy psychically, can make him weak and indecisive [14]. However, these views did not progress towards the development of military-propagandistic concepts in the years that followed.

III. TO THE HISTORY OF THE TERM “PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE”

As far back as the early 1900s in the battlefields, for example, of the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, the Philippine-American War of 1899-1902 and the Russian-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the incipient methods of publicity were applied, but already during the First World War of 1914-1918, the term ‘propaganda’ and the main propagandistic technologies have been decisively incorporated in the media practice.

According to Encyclopædia Britannica’s definition, ‘propaganda’ is dissemination of information – facts, arguments, rumours, half-truths, or lies – to influence public opinion. However, this definition appears to be too general. Indeed, any information producer seeks to determine the views of individuals and groups. It is more reasonable to define ‘propaganda’ as a piece of information prepared in a special way aimed at promoting a certain view and behaviour towards some events in individuals and groups.

It is admitted that the “psychological warfare” term was introduced into media practice by the British military theoretician and historian J. Fuller in 1920. In his book, “Tanks in the Great War, 1914-1918”, he wrote: “To-time we stand upon the threshold of a new epoch in the history of the world—war based on petrol, the natural sequent of an industry based on steam. That we have attained the final step on the evolutionary ladder of war is most unlikely, for mechanical and chemical weapons may disappear and be replaced by others still more terrible. Electricity has scarcely yet been touched upon and it is not impossible that mechanical warfare will be replaced by one of a wireless nature, and that not only the elements, but man’s flesh and bones, will be controlled by the ‘fluid’ which to-day we do not even understand. This method of imposing the will of one man on another may in its turn be replaced by a purely psychological warfare, wherein weapons are not even used or battlefields sought or loss of life or limb aimed at; but, in place, the corruption of the human reason, the dimming of the human intellect, and the disintegration of the moral and spiritual life of one nation by the influence of the will of another is accomplished” [15].

Some researchers consider that there is no direct association between J. Fuller’s idea and the concept of “psychological warfare”, which the American military officers started to implement steadily in their strategic and tactical plans on the eve of the Second World War. The earliest practice of the term “psychological warfare” in the USA was indicated in January 1940 several months after the beginning of the Second World War, when in the popular American magazine “Current History and Forum” appeared an unsigned article entitled “Psychological Warfare and How to Wage It” [16]. The publication of the article in the leading national magazine, which specialized in the current international politics, revealed the fact that the US military officers had almost started to execute their

plans to expand psychological warfare against Nazi Germany.

The “psychological operations” term was first practiced at the beginning of 1945, when the captain (later Admiral) of the US Navy Ellis Zacharias used this concept for designing an operation aimed at an early surrender of Japan: “All psychological operations will be coordinated both as to times and trends in order to avoid reduction of efficiency of this main operation.” [17].

As far as the permanent formation of the term “psychological” in the USA and Great Britain military units is concerned, it happened on February 14, 1974, when General D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Allied Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), established the Psychological Warfare Division of at his headquarters. It was headed by an American Brigadier General Robert McClure – a qualified expert in military propaganda [18].

IV. THE GENESIS AND EVOLUTION OF THE TERM “INFORMATION WARFARE”

The term “information warfare” was first used in 1976 by Dr. Thomas Rona, an American physicist of Hungarian origin in the report he made for “Boeing”, where he worked at one of the company’s enterprises in Seattle. The report was commissioned by the US Department of Defense and presented on July 1, 1976, entitled “Weapon Systems and Information War” [19]. T. Rona indicated that information (related to cyberspace) infrastructure was becoming a key component of the American economy. At the same time, it was becoming a soft target in both war and peacetime.

This report can be considered as the first publication where the term “information warfare” is used, but in the notion of confrontation in cyberspace, but not in the media space [20].

The report publication by T. Rona, who later became an Advisor in Science in the Administration of R. Reagan and J. Bush Sr. kick-started the active use of this scientific term first in the US and then in numerous global mass media. Consulting various military production companies Thomas Rona played an important role in the advancement of the “information warfare” concept, the war within or by cyberspace techniques.

Later on, this term began to be actively used after the Gulf War (2 August 1990 – 28 February 1991), where the USA and its allies first used new information technologies for combatting with Saddam Hussein’s regime. In particular, satellite communication systems were widely exploited by the coalition forces, the newest high-precision weapons, which were controlled by computer software, were used. The Global Positioning System and the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) provided communications links between air, ground, and naval forces.

Before Coalition forces fired the first shots against Iraq in the Gulf War, the 4th Psychological Operations

Group was formed at the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), with a total of about 800 soldiers. The Group was in charge of all psychological operations carried out in favour of the multinational forces and provided both with radio and print assets for developing leaflets, posters, newspapers, radio broadcast. In the Gulf War radio propaganda was a powerful technique of psychological impact. Coalition air forces disseminated more than 30 million copies of publicity leaflets with texts denouncing Saddam Hussein’s regime over Iraq. Later on, 70% of Iraqi POWs confirmed that those leaflets had provoked them to surrender. The combination of various forms of propaganda with continuous bombarding significantly demoralized the Iraqi troops and contributed to their large-scale surrender during the multinational forces ground attack.

The supremacy of the coalition troops in the Gulf War enhanced the doctrine of the American commanders that the symbiosis of cyberspace and information warfare is powerful. In this respect, the term “information warfare” was officially introduced into the documentary use by a directive TS 3600.1 of the US Department of Defence, of December 21, 1992. The top-secret directive was signed by the US Deputy Secretary of Defence D. Atwood and was mailed to the recipients in the amount of 69 copies. In subsequent years, in 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996 in particular, various structures of the US Department of Defence attempted to promote the “information warfare” concept in various documents, but considering the high secrecy of the matter, they failed to do it [21].

The final registration of the term culminates in 1998 when the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry Shelton officially presented the “Joint Doctrine for Information Operations” in the form of a 136-page printed report. In this doctrine the term “information warfare” was defined for the first time as “*information operations conducted during time of crisis or conflict to achieve or promote specific objectives over a specific adversary or adversaries*” [22, 23].

Let us draw attention to the fact that the epigraph to the first chapter of this collective paper of the US military became the quote from Sun Tzu’s treatise: “Therefore, the best military policy is to attack strategies; the next to attack alliances; the next to attack soldiers; and the worst to assault walled cities.

The pages of the report frequently contain the Sun Tzu’s aphorisms: “Warfare is the art of deceit”; “It is necessary to find out who the enemy has sent as agents to spy on us”; “Now, in the morning of the war, the enemy’s morale is high; by noon, it begins to flag; by evening, it has drained away”.

It was due to the need to distinguish between the concepts of “information operation” and “information warfare”, which were presented by us as follows:

An information operation is actions taken to make it more difficult for enemy information systems to collect, process, transfer and store information while

defending their own information and information systems.

Information war is a complex influence (a sequence of information operations) on the opponent's state and military administration system, its military-political leadership that in the peacetime would lead to the acceptance of decisions favorable for the party of the information influence, and during the conflict would completely immobilize the operating of the enemy's management infrastructure.

Having reviewed the definitions of "the originator of the term", in our research we would like to highlight some historical examples of proto-information warfare relevant to Russia.

V. HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF INFORMATION WARFARE

For Kievan Rus' a commonplace example of the propagandistic impact on the enemy is the announcement of his war campaigns by Svyatoslav, a Grand Prince of Kiev. His famous appeal 'I want to come at you!' inspired enemies with fear and emphasized his own bravery. Such a method of psychological warfare as a public statement of objectives is highly impressive [24].

The history of warfare referred to imposing an image alien to Russia dates back to 1514, back then they were not referred to as "information warfare", since the history of the term is younger than the historical events themselves. But we can detect the contemporary features of warfare already from this year (that is, almost 500 years ago).

For example, during the Muscovite-Lithuanian war (1512-1522) in 1514 in the Battle of Orsha Russia suffered a serious defeat from the Lithuanian troops, but this event was unimportant for the outcome of this war. However, Polish diplomats presented this event as a turning point in the struggle of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth against the "Muscovite heretics"; Muscovia was considered as a barbaric enemy state. Thus, the Poles used a "selective abstraction" technique (when the evaluation of one detail is interpreted as the evaluation of the entire event). The communication channels were "flying leaflets" with information about heavy casualties of the Muscovite troops. These leaflets were published in printing houses of some European cities [25].

In 1561, the Polish authors again used the "paralleling technique", comparing the retrieval of Livonia with the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian Pharaoh (Ivan the Terrible was compared with Herod, the Pharaoh, and etc.). It was the time when the word "tyrant" became a household name to identify the subsequent rulers of Russia [24].

The elector of Saxony Augustus I used the "paralleling technique" as well. He compared the threat from Russians to the danger from the Turks, representing his notes with a picture of Ivan the Terrible dressed as an Ottoman sultan and with a harem of 50 wives [24].

In 1799 the Russian commander Alexander Suvorov practiced the technique of psychological pressure during the Italian and Swiss expeditions of Austro-Russian army. He addressed the civilian population and soldiers of the Piedmont region with some proclamations, where he urged to shake off the yoke of the French invaders and join the Austro-Russian troops. In one of these documents, on May 8, 1799, he wrote: "The glorious Austro-Russian army is going to the aid of your legitimate monarch. It wishes for the triumph of the Holy Faith and the defeat of the immorality propagated by the French. Brave communities of Piedmont, raise your banners and join the courageous army I am commanding. Suvorov".

As a result, the Piedmont inhabitants joined the Suvorov's army not only individually and in groups, but they even surrendered by entire military garrisons [26].

A new information warfare unfolded in Great Britain against the Russian Emperor Paul I, who made an anti-British alliance with France, to which the British press set up a flare and used *the technique "conclusion without right cause"*. On January 27, 1801 the English newspapers reported that a representative came to London, who claims the overthrowing of Paul and the appointment of the Regency Council headed by the Grand Prince Alexander. That is to say, the English political establishment persisted in saying what it wanted in terms of a past event [24].

A psychological operation on the eve of the French invasion of Russia in 1812 is acknowledged as one of the most impressive for a good reason. The rapid progress of newspaper business at the start point of the 19th century provided targeting to newspapers. Napoleon assigned enormous importance to newspapers. His saying is acknowledged: "Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets" [27]. The Napoleonic press widely used the methods of news blackout and false narrative. To conceal his plans about invasion to Russia, Napoleon prohibited newspaper editors to print anti-Russian articles.

Napoleon Bonaparte used a variety of techniques and channels of communication. For example, in 1812 he is believed to have published a book "On the growth of the Russian Empire from its emergence to the beginning of the 19th century", with the help of a French writer and historian Charles-Louis Lesure, containing the falsified 'The Will of Peter the Great'. The nature of the "Will", left by the Russian emperor to his heirs to the throne, was that Russia would maintain a long-term alliance with England against Poland, Sweden and Germany, in order to conquer Europe and the whole world [28].

Napoleon also identified a target group – the peasants, that is, a poorly educated audience that is vulnerable to suggestion. In compliance with the choice of the audience, the channel of communication – rumors - was identified. Napoleon put about a rumor that he, a missing son of Catherine II, was going to Russia to restore his rightful sovereignty, in order to free the peasants afterwards [29].

The Crimean war of 1853-1856 is one of the most remarkable periods of information warfare, since the foreign press covered the events in its publications that were of obvious anti-Russian nature. For example, the Battle of Sinop (30 November, 1853), where the Admiral Pavel Nachimov destroyed the Turkish fleet, was presented as an ordinary battle. That is to say, it was a technique of reverse “catastrophizing”. In the French press, when describing the battle, the word “un combat” was used, which means an ordinary armed conflict. In the British press, the battle was presented as a “treacherous attack by Nachimov”, while the leading newspaper “The Times” in the issue of December 20, 1853, reported: “There is no doubt of the dreadful carnage at Sinope. Upwards of 4,000 Turks perished.” [30].

We present the analysis of some historical examples in order to show how the founders of mass consciousness control theories use the same comparative-historical methods when representing information and psychological warfare of different times and peoples. It is as a result of such studies that new technologies of modern information warfare emerge.

VI. CONCLUSION

We came to the conclusion that the information warfare concepts are based on old, many times tested methods of propaganda and control of mass consciousness. Today these methods are gaining unprecedented scale, due to the rapid globalization of the media space. The principal objective of any information warfare exists in the word “warfare” – causing damage to an object or its complete destruction.

We have already discussed in the section *Historiography of the matter* that modern researchers of the information warfare concepts had and now have access to the original classified studies and sources on the explored topic. Based on the material studied, we came to the conclusion that the overwhelming amount of scientific research on information and psychological warfare is based on the use and analysis of working papers of the US and Great Britain special military and intelligence services. These papers were produced in 1930-1940s, during their struggle against the totalitarian-militaristic regimes of Germany, Italy, USSR and Japan.

Using the concept of information warfare terminological conditionality, we can conclude that it is possible to predict the emergence of the new information warfare and analyze its development and results.

We also emphasize that no information warfare has ever been a key factor in the victory of one of the parties in any armed conflict, although it is possible that it could happen in the future. It should also be understood that the enemy’s accusations in the information warfare conduct are traditionally a part of their own information warfare.

What will be more effective in this war – a lethal weapon or a specially prepared selection of letters of the alphabet – this will be judged by the history of human civilization, one of the greatest books of which says: “In the beginning was the Word”.

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