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МЕНТАЛЬНЫЕ ВОЙНЫ НОВОГО ТИПА
A NEW TYPE OF MENTAL WARFARE

Аннотация: Актуальность рассматриваемой темы заключается в неоднозначности понимания термина «ментальная война», а также в недостаточной изученности данного феномена. Ментальная война представляет собой сложный механизм технологий воздействия на сознание людей, их поведение. При этом, сущность понятия «ментальная война» не является новым, поскольку информационно-психологические способы воздействия на массы людей применяются человечеством достаточно давно. В то же время, ментальная война, как социальный феномен до конца не исследован. Это связано с тем, что объектом войны нового типа является политика определенного государства, для проведения которой требуются большие усилия, сложность и длительность операционных действий с целью переформатирования менталитета.

Abstract: The relevance of the topic under consideration lies in the ambiguity of understanding the term "mental warfare", as well as in the lack of knowledge of this phenomenon. Mental warfare is a complex mechanism of technology influencing people's consciousness and their behavior. At the same time, the essence of the concept of "mental warfare" is not new, since information and psychological methods of influencing the masses of people have been used by mankind for a long time. At the same time, mental warfare as a social phenomenon has not been fully investigated. This is due to the fact that the object of a new type of war is the policy of a certain state, which requires great efforts, complexity and duration of operational actions in order to reformat the mentality.

Ключевые слова: ментальная война, менталитет, ментальность, информационное противоборство, манипуляция.

Keywords: mental warfare, mentality, mentality, information warfare, manipulation.

The expansion of technical possibilities for receiving, transmitting and distributing information contributed to the formation of information spaces that influenced the way of thinking and behavioral patterns of individuals. As a result, at the turn of the XX – XXI centuries, a new phenomenon arose and became widespread – mental warfare. Mental warfare is based on the formation and change of information spaces and on information warfare [1, p. 35].

Today, we can observe the informational impact in the media – in the formation of contexts, interpretations, and a shift in emphasis aimed at society. This phenomenon can be defined as a "cultural accoupation" that changes the mentality of society.

Information and psychological technologies have an impact on all spheres of human life. Information and psychological technologies make it possible to solve military and political tasks of

changing the ruling regime in a particular country not by destroying the armed forces or the economy, but by influencing the moral and psychological state of society. In modern conditions, its effect on human consciousness brings more success than conducting military operations.

It is mental wars that are aimed at changing the psyche and consciousness of the masses. Both in Russia and abroad, much attention is paid to this problem, although the terminological aspects of this area themselves are still far from being so unambiguous and indisputable. Various authors interpret the concepts of "mental warfare", "information warfare", "information warfare", etc. in different ways, discussing this issue on the pages of various publications. These theoretical disputes are caused by the difference in theoretical and methodological positions, as well as the multidimensionality of the research object itself, which is in the process of formation.

At the same time, the main problem is the lack of knowledge in the field of practical application of mental warfare and the lack of a unified theoretical approach that fully reveals this phenomenon.

It is worth emphasizing that the phenomenon of "mental warfare" is not new. Since ancient times, people have already noted the value of information and considered it as a tool to influence the behavior of groups of people through their consciousness.

Mental wars have been waged by states for a long time. An example is the use of psychological techniques and means of deception by the Mongol leader Genghis Khan in combat operations in order to defeat the enemy. Today, we can observe the informational impact in the media – in the formation of contexts, interpretations, and in the combination of accents aimed at society. This phenomenon can be defined as a "cultural accoupation" that changes the mentality of society.

Over time, the rulers of ancient civilizations began to use information as a nonviolent way to control the masses of people. Thus, the information confrontation became more and more sophisticated, taking into account the peculiarities of the human psyche. The information impact increased with the development of scientific and technological progress. With the advent of radio, it became possible to quickly report certain events that took place in different parts of the world, and thus it became possible to give "correct" information in order to direct the course of events in the right direction.

"Non-violent" ways of controlling the masses, associated with the impact on state and public institutions, the population, its historical memory, mentality, the system of traditional values, goals and meanings of existence, are of great importance in forming an individual's correct understanding of the event provided.

A number of works emphasize that mental warfare is a new type of interstate confrontation, the purpose of which is to destroy self-awareness, change the mental, civilizational basis of the enemy's society. There is a clash not only of armies and fighting sides, there is a struggle mainly between two opposing civilizations based on different principles [15, p. 656].

Today, given the events taking place related to relations between Russia and the West in the face of the United States and a number of European countries, we can say that many means are used, thanks to which it is possible to influence not only the attitudes of individuals, but also to influence the mentality of large social groups with the help of specially selected and correct information.

The term "mental warfare" is closely related to such concepts as "mentality" and "mentality", which do not have an unambiguous interpretation [2, p. 52]. Most scientists tend to believe that the term "mentality" is broader than the concept of "mentality". Mentality is defined as a concept of a higher order, which includes several types of mentality (social, political, etc.).

Thus, the term "mental war" has an ambiguous origin. There are still discussions on this topic in the scientific community.

In practical terms, the main purpose of mental warfare is the destruction of the enemy's self-awareness, changing the mental civilizational basis of society. This is one of the main functions that defines the specifics of mental warfare. Also, a feature of the new type of war is that it is waged without declaration, that is, it is latent in nature, and its consequences do not immediately manifest themselves [3, p. 61].

There are two goals of the war. The first is a strategic goal. It represents a reboot of historical self-awareness, the education system, and upbringing. All this is being implemented on a generational scale. The second goal is operational, it involves an attack on the established lifestyle and norms of behavior. These goals are being implemented in stages. Another feature of the new type of war is its total character [4, p. 122].

The peculiarity of a new type of war is its total character. Despite the fact that the battle fronts of this war are of different scales, they are synchronized and systematic. The "unnoticed" mental impact significantly facilitates its existence, while its scale and destructiveness allow us to characterize this phenomenon as a "mental intervention". This "mental intervention" is characterized as a fundamentally new type of strategic confrontation, brought to life by the information revolution, introducing the information space and a number of other areas (primarily economics) into the range of possible spheres of confrontation [14, pp. 108-113]. This type of strategic confrontation can make the use of military force unnecessary.

Some researchers interpret mental warfare as operating in the field of how people think and how they make decisions. One of the possible tools of mental warfare is the creation and transmission of fictitious messages that can be directed at both a mass audience and individual consciousness. Moreover, knowledge and representation systems are called as the goals of the information war [16, pp. 75-82].

Thus, a new type of war, destroying the mentality of the society of the enemy state, has an impact on its psychological and informational components. Mental warfare is an information and psychological warfare aimed at radically changing the enemy's worldview with the help of "non-violent" ways of influencing him. Therefore, in general, we can say that at the strategic level, the methods of mental warfare should affect the process of choosing an opponent, and, accordingly, his behavior.

Mental warfare is based on various methods of manipulation, deception, covert actions, misleading the enemy, distorting, changing and managing facts when the enemy makes decisions unfavorable to him based on misconceptions about the current situation and its development.

In particular, a new type of war is based on the principles of installation, infection of imitation, persuasion, suggestion, as well as suppression, which generate a devastating effect on the consciousness of the population of the enemy state. "The striking effect in mental warfare is achieved by the use of mental weapons, which is a set of ways and means of cognitive and psychological violence against the victim state, providing a multi-purpose deformation of consciousness and blurring ("erasing") of the national identity of the people. It is based on the technology of infecting people's consciousness with viral content on the principle of a "chain reaction". Thus, people who have become infected with viral content share it with their close environment not directly, but through their emotional attitude towards it, thereby transmitting the information received in the form of a so-called "emotional code". Emotions transmitted by the "infected" cannot be a lie, since the subconscious mind of a person who is responsible for emotions is not capable of lying. And this fact ensures that other people no longer trust the information itself, but its interpretation, transmitting it in the language of emotions and feelings (in the form of a special emotional state generated by the action of the virus). As a result, through the media and social channels of the Internet, and then directly through the infected people themselves, there is a persistent and continuous suggestion to society of the sentiments, assessments, opinions needed by the enemy, which the targeted population unknowingly accepts as a given without understanding their essence.

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Mental warfare is divided into three levels. The first is tactical, which contains information warfare, affects public sentiment and/or opinion. The second is the operational level. This is a cognitive war, it affects social attitudes, ideas about the "correct" behavior of an individual [6, p. 103]. And the third level is strategic. Its purpose is to influence the deep foundations of the culture of the attacked society. Actually, this is the basis of mental warfare [7, p. 36].

Next, it is necessary to mention the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. To destroy it, the mechanism of mental warfare was used, when through various forms of information influence (radio, samizdat, films, etc.), propaganda of a different lifestyle and behavioral patterns was carried out.

Currently, the information war is in its active phase. The Internet plays a special role as the main platform for conducting military operations. The methods that were used in the last century to destroy the USSR are relevant and are still used [9, p. 63]. However, modern technical capabilities make it possible to carry out even more extensive manipulations with public consciousness than it was before [10, p. 98].

We can say that since the 90s of the 20th century, communication processes have reached a new level.

A new type of war is based on the principles of installation, infection of imitation, beliefs, which generate a damaging effect on the consciousness of the population of the enemy state [11, p. 112]. Based on these principles, mental warfare is based on various methods of manipulation, deception, covert actions, misleading the enemy, etc., when the enemy makes decisions unfavorable to him, based on misconceptions about the current situation and its development [12, p. 145].

In conclusion, it should be noted that the principles on the basis of which the enemy's goals are realized in mental warfare are presented as clear and simple, but the purpose of using these principles is not always obvious. Mental warfare implies conducting covert operations against the enemy state, the intent of which will be revealed when certain consequences occur [13, p. 243].

To date, the use of mental warfare technologies has been very successful in achieving various goals to crush the enemy state. These methods of warfare look more harmless against the background of various kinds of military operations that lead to human losses, which affects the state of the army and, accordingly, the entire population of the country. It has already been mentioned in this paper that a new type of war is latent in nature and its results are visible by the manifested effect with the help of information and cognitive influences on the enemy's population.

Technologies for the realization of the goals of mental warfare include two components: informational and psycho-emotional.

The information component is a reformatting of the information field, knowledge, facts and information. All media are subject to regulation and deformation, ranging from news to analytical and sociological data, from study programs in higher education institutions and schools, to television programs and available archival data. Thus, there is a change in the value structure, the destruction of accepted patterns of behavior and the formation of new values. That is, a change in the mental foundations of society comes to the fore, which generally leads to the destruction of national identity. At the same time, national identity is built and reproduced through interactions that arise within the framework of cultural meaning, which means a stock of shared values, experiences, expectations and interpretations that form a "symbolic semantic world" or a "picture of the world" of a particular society [1, p. 218.]. One of the most important aspects of cultural identity is a "cultural memory". I. Assmann defines "cultural memory" as cumulative for each society and epoch, a special stability of the reuse of texts, images and customs, by supporting which they (societies) stabilize their own image and transmit collectively shared knowledge, preferably (but not exclusively) about the past, which supports the consciousness of unity and the peculiarities of the group [2, pp. 9-19.]. Archives and communication (rituals, written sources, songs, museums, etc.) do not act as neutral media or means of transmitting information, but act as giving form and semantic core and thereby significantly determine the cultural memory of a group or society. Thus, cultural memory constitutes the history of the country and traditions in terms of actual needs and life circumstances. In this case, many authors prefer to talk about historical memory, considering historical memory as an element of political struggle and a means to build identities. It is believed that "the concepts of 'historical memory' and 'identity' are inseparable from each other, there are relations of close interconnection and interdependence between them, since the preservation of memory is the most important condition for the self-determination of individuals and the strengthening of the unity of social groups" [3, pp. 181-192.].

Reformatting cultural and historical memory is far from the only type of information attack. Modern countries face many types of information impact, which are difficult to deal with. This

difficulty lies in the fact that they are not of a military nature, and for this reason the State does not have an adequate system for responding to them. These can be all kinds of information attacks usingAccording to the mass media, this may be a psychological impact on the entire population in order to undermine confidence in leaders and their actions [17, p. 317]. As a result, many countries have new points of vulnerability that did not exist before.

As some researchers note, "manipulations with collective memory are the most effective strategies in the field of 'identity politics', allowing you to create, destroy or correct certain images of the past, thereby changing the image of yourself and others in the social community. At the same time, we are talking not only about cynical politicking in favor of imperious and selfish aspirations. The implementation of an effective policy in the field of memory and identity is sometimes absolutely necessary in the interests of establishing civil or interethnic peace, resolving ethnic conflicts, and overcoming periods of civil wars, dictatorships, repressions, and totalitarian regimes" [5, pp. 29-57].

In general, the technology of realizing the goals of mental warfare rests on two simple operations:

- selection of news from a certain angle for subsequent transmission to its population or the enemy,

- increase or decrease the significance of the event in accordance with the chosen point of view.

These operations rely heavily on a reliable event, which increases the effectiveness of the impact accordingly. The second component of reliability can be considered the high professionalism of specialists working in this field. For example, the American corporation Alphabet, which owns the Google search engine, after Russia began conducting a special military operation, began offering news about them, social media accounts and articles in Wikipedia instead of official Russian sites.

The psycho-emotional component is based on the manipulation of consciousness, moods and emotions of society and an individual, in order to change the ideological and psychological structures of their consciousness and subconscious, transform emotional states, stimulate certain types of behavior using various methods of explicit and implicit psychological coercion. The spectrum of psychological impact covers such areas as need-motivational, intellectual-cognitive, emotional-volitional, communicative-behavioral. The main means of information and psychological impact are the media, literature, art, the education and upbringing system, and various communication channels. All this leads to a certain type of behavior, a system of assessments and self-assessments. In this sense, the psycho-emotional component of information warfare operates in the field of how people think and how they make decisions. As one of the possible tools, the researchers call the creation and transmission of fictitious messages, which can be aimed at both a mass audience and individual consciousness and are highly emotional in nature. At the same time, great importance is attached to the emotional images and imagination of the mass audience, since it is imagination and emotional images that become as important a factor in mental warfare as information in general.

Ultimately, taking into account the informational and psycho–emotional component of mental warfare, it is necessary to identify several fundamental rules that are used to manipulate consciousness:

- avoidAbstract ideas, appeal to emotions;
– constantly repeat several ideas using stereotypical phrases;
– stop on one side of the argument;
– constantly criticize the enemies of the state;
– to single out one enemy for personal vilification, etc.

Thus, the mechanisms of informational and psychological influence are based on the ability to manipulate the consciousness of an individual and society as a whole through specially selected information. The information itself can be objective and biased, unreliable, distorted. The elements of the content of the directed information meet the criterion of reliability on a formal basis, but in connection with the use of special types, the quality of distorted, biased information actively used in information and psychological warfare.

Information has a number of qualities that, together with the mental abilities of the subject, can affect other components that can lead to victory over the enemy. Nowadays, not only the information itself plays a deterministic role in the confrontation, but those means that multiply enhance its impact. The information revolution has provided new opportunities to influence the outcome of the confrontation, both spatially and temporally.

At the end of this work, it can be concluded that mental warfare is a complex mechanism of technologies influencing people's consciousness and their behavior. At the same time, the essence of the concept of "mental warfare" is not new, since information and psychological methods of influencing the masses of people have been used by mankind for a long time. At the same time, mental warfare as a social phenomenon has not been fully investigated. This is due to the fact that the object of a new type of war is the policy of a certain state, which requires great efforts, complexity and duration of operational actions in order to reformat the mentality.

The Concept of National Security of the Russian Federation, approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 24 dated 10.01.2000, identified the following threats in the information sphere: "the desire of a number of countries to dominate the global information space, ousting Russia from the external and internal information market; the development by a number of states of the concept of information wars, providing for the creation of means of dangerous influence on information spheres other countries of the world; violation of the normal functioning of information and telecommunication systems, as well as the safety of information resources, obtaining unauthorized access to them" [Information security system: official website. URL: http://www.nationalsecurity.ru/library/00002/00002concept3.htm. (date of access: 10/21/2023)].The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020, which replaced it, also notes the increased vulnerability of all members of the international community in the face of new challenges and threats. Based on the assessment of trends in the development of the modern world and Russia, the document concludes: "The global information confrontation will intensify, threats to the stability of industrial and developing countries of the world, their socio-economic development and democratic institutions will increase."

Thus, the main problem that any mental war solves is the change ("flashing") of the mass consciousness of the society that is being affected. This is always a non-standard and non-traditional problem, since mass consciousness is one of the most conservative elements of society and is very difficult to influence.

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