

Information Warfare in the Modern Political Theory

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Abstract

The paper discusses the modern political theory and its impact on the small states. It shows the essence of the scientific and technological revolution that has given states rapid opportunities to receive process, store, reproduce, and transmit information, allowing superpowers to further strengthen their position, although similar opportunities have been provided to non-governmental entities as well. As a result, the situation of states and non-governmental organizations has gradually equalized and the global information space has become transparent and self-governing. The work emphasizes that the leading trends in the evolution of the domestic and international communication systems have become a significant leap, with the help of mass information processes from a predominantly vertical model to a predominantly horizontal model.

Keywords: Superstate, Information warfare, Balance of power, Global pandemic, Propaganda

INTRODUCTION

The "information revolution" has limited state violence in the face of military confrontation, softened sharp confrontations between countries, and increased the role of democratic institutions and common independent thought in world affairs. At the same time, new information technologies have created additional opportunities for criminals, including terrorists, activities across the globe.

Information transparency has led to serious changes in the notion of information warfare, which has shattered the traditional interpretation of this influence and added a new "charm"

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to it. The similarities between the traditional and modern concepts of information warfare are revealed in the exploitation of the participating countries without changing the human psyche and with the existence of a common goal, while the difference is in the possibility of achieving it.

It appears to be an indispensable feature of the human psyche - to be easily influenced by others, to be insecure in one's strengths. The goal of information warfare is to influence public opinion. Information wars are mainly aimed at changing the psychological characteristics of society in the desired direction.

The technical revolution has changed the methods of managing information warfare through mass communications. In the past, when states could regulate information flows, the main weapon of information warfare was conceptual indoctrination.

Modern information warfare is usually carried out in conditions of information transparency, especially when any kind of information is freely available to the population. In modern information warfare, image or "brand" indoctrination, which aims to influence mass consciousness in a standard way, has acquired fundamental importance.

In the Georgian scientific space, two different instruments of the recent war are referred to by two names: information or information war. Information In the modern world, it can be said that it is an important resource for gaining power, but it also needs the appropriate tools.

Information warfare can be said to be a kind of propaganda as well as an attack on information technology using the internet on the media. Information warfare can be freely called the first of the modern era, which changes the content and character of modern warfare.



Methods

The paper is based on the following research methods:

- The observation which is considered as a classical qualitative research method, in this case, the situation and event is watched by the researcher to obtain certain information;
- An analytical method, where the researcher does its analysis of a certain issue, fact, event, etc.
- The descriptive method, which describes the recent events;
- The statistical method that is used to gather and analyze certain data and information.

Kremlin Information Warfare against Georgia

The peculiarities of the pandemic of information warfare, which was used quite well by three countries: Russia, China, and Iran, to spread misinformation and aimed at undermining public confidence in Western countries, were revealed. All three states disseminated similar narratives.

The EU Foreign Ministry has released a report alleging that China and Russia are using the global crisis triggered by the pandemic to spread online disinformation.

In pandemic conditions in China, citizen control has been further strengthened. Citizens who dared to oppose the government and send the right messages to the rest of the world were either completely silenced or disappeared without a trace.

US President Donald Trump has said that China has not been able to stop the virus, or has not specifically stopped it. He added: "He has seen evidence that the coronavirus has spread from the laboratory of the Institute of Virology in China." Trump says China does not want Trump to be re-elected president of the United States (Akhalaia, 2020).



Although Sino-US relations have not been favorable in the past, it can be said that the relationship between them is the worst in the current stage, which is related not only to the spread of coronavirus but also to the concentration camps in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and the South China Sea.

Like China, the US is attacked by Tehran, whose actions are very similar to the scenarios taken from Russia and China. Press TV, an English and French-language 24-hour network affiliated with the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), is primarily tasked with connecting US forces to the Coronavirus.

The commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) stated on March 5 stating that there was evidence that the virus was a biological attack weapon in the United States. "We will win the fight against the virus, which may be the product of a US biological attack that spread first to China, then to Iran, and then to the rest of the world," remarked Salami (Mshvidobadze, 2020).

As for the methods used to spread false news, these are traditional and social media, anonymous media outlets, trolls, diplomats, and government officials (Rumer, 2019).

As for the Kremlin information warfare, although it is not new and has been addressed by Russia for years, it has become especially active in the face of the pandemic. No less important is the Kremlin's information warfare against Georgia, which it has been actively using for years. Russia is particularly active in media and social networking. The Kremlin, which sees Georgia's aspirations for democracy and the West as a major threat to its geopolitical interests in the region (Bartles, 2016).

It is interesting what is the purpose of the Kremlin information warfare, first of all, it should be noted that it is to introduce anti-Western sentiment in Georgian society. Portray NATO, the EU, and Western institutions in a negative light. The Kremlin seeks to undermine the values associated with these institutions, such as the rule of law, democracy, human rights,



and other values. The main goal of the Kremlin is to hinder Georgia's integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures (Klein, 2015).

Even in the face of a global pandemic, the Kremlin is actively working and using information warfare against the West and Georgia. The European Union (EU) has said that disinformation about the coronavirus has been spread by pro-Russian media outlets trying to instill panic and fear in the EU population to instill distrust in the European medical system. According to the EU, disinformation from Russia was spread in several languages, including Spanish, French, German, and English. It is also important that the Kremlin spreads conflicting theories about the coronavirus to create chaos. According to the European Union, the Kremlin's main goal is to spread the word that the coronavirus was brought to Europe by migrants and is a biological weapon created by the United Kingdom, the United States, or the Chinese government.

As for the information warfare against Georgia, which has been used effectively by Russia for years, Lugar's laboratory has been the target of Russian disinformation for years. The pro-Russian online media Newsfront published an article titled "Coronavirus did not originate in China! Hello, Lugar's laboratory! "(The mentioned article was also published on Tvm.ge). The allegation was based on a version released in China, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said on March 12 that the coronavirus (CoVid-19) originated not in China, Wuhan Province, but in the United States, and from there spread to the rest of the world.

News frost, which actively supports Russian propaganda, notes that biological weapons are being developed in Lugar's laboratory. As early as 2018, the Commander of the Radiation, Chemical, and Biological Protection Forces of the Russian Armed Forces, General Igor Kirilov, said that the US was using the Lugar Laboratory in Georgia in violation of an international agreement and was creating biological weapons agents. Maria Zakharova, a spokeswoman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said at a briefing that the laboratory in



Georgia was one example of the US setting up a military-medical institute in Russia's border countries where experiments are conducted on civilians and where military personnel violates medical ethics and international norms. Russian President Vladimir Putin also openly supported the campaign, saying that "these studies are linked to recent advances in genetics and confirm that drugs are being developed that can affect people according to their ethnicity" (Kintsurashvili, 2018).

The Lugar Lab has quite important functions. Its importance for our country has been demonstrated quite well by the existing global pandemic. In 2004, the construction of the Richard Lugar Public Health Research Center in Georgia began. A Framework Agreement was signed in 1997, and in 2002 an agreement was signed between the Department of Defense of Georgia and the US Department of Defense on Cooperation in the Prevention of Dissemination of Biological Weapons Technologies, Pathogens, and Experience. The laboratory was put into full operation in August 2013 and was fully transferred to the ownership of the Government of Georgia. From 2018, Georgia will provide its full funding (Chichua, 2020).

Lugar Laboratory activities include epidemiological and laboratory surveillance of infectious and non-infectious diseases, as well as timely detection and research of epidemic outbreaks and public health and other hazards.

Russian propaganda agencies are also active in Georgia, trying to mislead the population through various conspiracy and manipulation methods. The set of really fabricated hypotheses is the misinformation spread by Russia about Lugar Laboratory, which is intended to present it as a destructive and dangerous result of Western states or institutions.

Of the Russian media outlets active in Georgia, Sputnik is the only one operating in the Georgian language, and the Kremlin is a stronghold of a network of pro-Russian NGOs in Georgia, including the Eurasian Choice and the Eurasian Institute. These organizations are distinguished by anti-Western rhetoric, publishing various works, the source of which is



Russian information. It should be noted, however, that none of the pro-Russian TV station or organization has a source of funding on its website.

RT - a Kremlin messenger that broadcasts in more than 100 states and is available in a variety of languages, tirelessly spreads anti-Western propaganda. According to Arab RT, Covid-19 is accompanied by what is an Anglo-Saxon biological weapon, forming a connection to an American laboratory. The interview described by the channel with a Russian biologist and the presence of a UN expert with Igor Nikulin, notes whether the virus will occur naturally since it was not created on the four tabs of AIDS. The interview has more than 1.3 million, as mentioned on the channel, as well as on YouTube (Mshvidobadze, 2020).

Bill Gates and his charity have also been repeatedly targeted by Russian propaganda. Theories have also emerged that the spread of the coronavirus was linked to 5G technology. Such information was spread not only by unreliable sources but also by famous people, for example, Carrie Hilson, singer M.I.A. TV presenter Amanda Holden, boxer Amir Khan, and others.

Disinformation and propaganda related to 5G technology is not a new phenomenon and since 2016 it has been actively disseminating information in various types of information space.

RT has been actively spreading conspiracy theories about 5G since 2019. In January, a video was uploaded to YouTube where RT correspondent Michelle Greenstein argued that 5G technology was harmful and could even kill people. The video had more than 2 million views. The spread of misinformation about this continued in the following months and the issue of 5G connection with the spread of coronavirus was based on this narrative.

The first interview with Dr. Chris van Kerkhoven, a Belgian newspaper, was published by the Belgian newspaper Het Laatste Nieuws, who noted that 5G technology was life-



threatening and linked it to the coronavirus. His comment was soon captured by anti-5G activists and sources as well. The information soon spread to the English-language media, as well as to Facebook pages and YouTube. The following theories have been circulated:

-5G is dangerous;

-5G weakens the immune system and aggravates the course of the coronavirus;

-5G causes the same symptoms as for coronavirus;

-5G networks are used to install emergency created due to coronavirus;

Bill Gates is involved in the development of -5G and the spread of the coronavirus;

The situation around -5G and the coronavirus is part of a Masonic conspiracy (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency 2020).

As a result of widespread misinformation, 5G towers were attacked and raided in more than one country. For example: in the UK, up to 80 5G masts were burned. New York-based organization Blackbird.AI, which investigates disinformation, sees a coordinated campaign to spread conspiracy theories about 5G and coronavirus. They surveyed 50,000 posts on Twitter and Reddit. The non-governmental organization Disinformation Index, which also conducts online disinformation research, agrees, but they are reluctant to name the states and specific individuals behind this disinformation.

Propaganda about the links between the 5G technology and the coronavirus pandemic was also actively disseminated in Georgia by specific individuals or groups. The following sources contributed to the dissemination of this misinformation: geomediatv.ge, iTv.ge, news.ge, Facebook (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency 2020).

What does 5G is, is a 5th generation wireless technology used by mobile devices, smartphones, and other devices when connecting to the Internet? 5G is transmitted through



radio waves as well as 4G LTE and 3G networks that fit into the safe electromagnetic spectrum for humans. It can also be said concerning 5G technology, it cannot cause coronavirus nor its radio waves are cognizable.

Coronavirus, Borderization and Russia

The Kremlin has made good use of the global pandemic conditions for borderization. A statement and information were also uploaded on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, stating that "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs categorically condemns the so-called massacre of the so-called "The start of the illegal border process and the frequent provocations of the Russian Federation over the last two months"(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, 2020).

Under the coronavirus as a global pandemic, Russia continued to lay the barbed wire in both its occupied territories of Tskhinvali and Abkhazia. The borderization process took place in the villages of Kareli municipality, in the villages of Tsalenjikha municipality, as well as in the surrounding areas of Zugdidi and Ganmukhuri.

According to the Foreign Ministry's website, the actions taken by Russia are provocative and aimed at destabilizing the situation using hybrid warfare tools. "Implement the implementation of the EU-brokered ceasefire agreement on August 12, 2008, and withdraw the occupying forces from the territory of Georgia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appeals to the international community to properly assess Russia's destructive steps and take effective measures to stop Russia's increasing attacks on Georgia" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, 2020).

Perhaps more cynical is the attitude of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who said on March 17 that the situation in Russia was under control and that he had sent aid to Italy and the United States, where he had sent medical equipment (according to La Stampa most of them were unusable) and staff. The fact is that Russia used this step for propaganda



purposes. Russia's message to Europe and the United States was defined by the slogan "Love from Russia" as Italian and American media outlets reported that Russia had asked Italy for help in lifting sanctions in exchange for US financial compensation.

The Kremlin's narratives are also actively disseminated in the political spectrum by political parties in Georgia, which portray Georgia's aspirations to the West in vain. An example is the anti-Western Alliance of Patriots, which tries to achieve the desired result with the results of an incorrectly worded, confusing situation. It is by asking this question that the members of the Patriots Alliance are trying to examine the mood of the population. Their members are also represented in the Georgian parliament today, they openly meet with representatives of the Kremlin and deny the results of a survey of all authoritative organizations, according to which the vast majority of the Georgian population supports European and Euro-Atlantic integration. As noted in the Patriots Alliance, a quantitative survey conducted by the NDI and IRI does not fully reflect public opinion.

No specific age, gender, or demographic category has been selected for research by the Patriots Alliance. They use a database of telephone numbers for telephone conversations that are posted on the Internet and have the names of older owners written down. A poll conducted by the Patriots Alliance reveals several shortcomings. Violation of research ethics, inaccuracy in the principles of selection, insecurity of the interests of the respondents, and most importantly, anti-Western propaganda and pro-Russian narrative.

As for the research methodology, they have chosen door-to-door, telephone surveys, and systematic surveys of rallies and public gatherings. After the situation was created due to the global pandemic, they started conducting telephone surveys on a massive scale, where the situation was radically different. Citizens' names in most cases they knew in advance, they did not ask citizens for their numbers. The question, which was asked in print to answer military impartiality, was presented in a telephone conversation as "independent of the army" or "military neutrality."



It is not difficult to understand what this study serves, the purpose of this survey is to try to carry out the Kremlin narrative. Negotiations with Russia and military non-alignment in this study are presented as an alternative that the Georgian people should use as an opportunity to find a way out of the stalemate.

RESULTS

The 2019 report of the State Security Service of Georgia also devotes an important place to the issues of hybrid warfare, where five main tools are outlined, namely: occupation forces and de facto regimes (along with other tools, only the Russian Federation operates with this tool). Information warfare, the so-called Soft power, economic leverage, covert operations (Liluashvili, 2020).

The document also made it clear that the main goal of the propaganda campaign in Georgia is to undermine democratic values, to criticize the West and the North Atlantic Alliance. The main purpose of spreading misinformation is to polarize the population, spread misconceptions, and instill fear in the population to manipulate public opinion.

Georgia is at an important stage of its development today, and Russia is trying to stop the development of its foreign policy from all sides. Information warfare and propaganda are actively used by the Kremlin to halt Georgia's security and democratic development

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