

Federal State Budgetary Institution of Science

**INSTITUTE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL RESEARCH – BRANCH OF THE FEDERAL CENTER OF
THEORETICAL AND APPLIED SOCIOLOGY OF THE RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

Manuscript

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**INFORMATION WARFARE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS: DIGITAL
REALITY TRENDS**

Summary of a doctorate of political sciences thesis in
23.00.02 — Political Institutions, Processes and Technologies

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Moscow

2021

Rationale of the thesis research.

In recent years, digital technologies have objectively become an important factor of political processes dynamics. On the Internet new, more and more perfect practices of information warfare are being tested, which leads to a qualitatively new decomposition in the communications between the government and society.

The nonlinearity of the development of political processes is expressing in the disproportionality of their cause-and-effect relationships. These days it is becoming more and more apparent. From the point of view of ensuring the security of the state, the main problem generated by such nonlinearity is to reduce the possibilities for a qualitative forecast of events in the political sphere and, accordingly, the effectiveness of political decision-making.

In this regard, it seems important to understand the key political problems of compliance of information policy of Russia with the destructive activities of foreign political actors. There is a clear need to develop a proactive national strategy aimed at adapting forms and methods of responding to modern challenges and threats in the information sphere, as well as at anticipating socio-political and military-political risks caused by trends of the digital reality.

Scientific status of the issue.

The provisions and conclusions stated in the research are based on fundamental and applied studies related to the problems of information warfare in politics and military sphere. Such studies can be divided into several groups.

The first group includes works that serve as a general theoretical base for research in the field of information warfare. These works highlight the essence and content of activities to provide informational impact on society. This group includes in particular the works of Sun Tzu, N. Machiavelli, A.V. Suvorov, K. f. Clausewitz, G. Lasswell, P. Linebarger, E.E. Messner and other authors.

The second group contains scientific researches that reveal various forms and technologies of information warfare, taking into account the ongoing digital revolution. These include the works of N.I. Turko, I.N. Panarin, S.A. Modestov,

M.A. Kochubei, A.V. Manoilo, G.F. Sidnenko, A.V. Brega, A.A. Bartosh, A.A. Smirnov, A.D. Shutov and other researchers.

The third group of works is devoted to the formation of digital reality and the introduction of information and communication technologies into human life. This section includes the works of S.V. Rogachev, G.V. Osipov, V.K. Levashov, L.N. Timofeeva, O. F. Shabrov, L. E. Ilyicheva and other scientists.

The fourth group of works contains scientific researches with forecasts of development of modern political process in the context of strengthening non-military confrontation between states and non legitimate political actors. In this context it is important to mention the works of N. Rubini, A.-M. Slaughter, G. Kissinger, G. Friedman, E. Graham, J. Mearsheimer, A. Acharia and other authors.

The goal of the thesis – is to uncover by means of comprehensive political analysis of scientific works and modern political practices the dynamics of information warfare in political process, taking into account modern digitalization trends, as well as to develop recommendations for improving information policy of the Russian Federation under the modern challenges and threats.

Achieving this goal involves the solution of the following **objectives**:

- to analyze the dynamically changing political nature and content of information warfare through the prism of a systematic approach;
- to uncover the potential of post-nonclassical rationality to study modern trends of information warfare in the political process;
- to describe the theoretical and practical aspects of information warfare in the history of political relations;
- to reveal the object-subject composition of modern information warfare in the political processes;
- to analyze the trends of information warfare in the context of the rapid digitalization of socio-political reality;
- to determine the role of information warfare in the political process in the light of the breakthrough development of digital technologies;

- to summarize domestic and foreign researches in the field of social mass manipulation under the ongoing digitalization socio-political reality;
- to determine advanced information and analytical platforms through the prism of forced digitalization;
- to identify the opportunities of using memetic technologies and artificial intelligence in information warfare;
- to predict the probabilistic socio-political risks of the application of perspective information warfare practices in the context of modern digitalization trends;
- to analyse the role of information warfare in the military conflicts transformation and identify the prospects for their development;
- to formulate current and probable challenges and threats to national security of Russia in the field of information security, and to propose a possible set of political measures to neutralize them.

The object of the thesis – information warfare in the political process.

The subject of the thesis – information warfare in the political process under the formation of digital reality.

The theoretical and methodological background of the research is represented by ideas and provisions, categories and laws of political science. The methodological basis of the study was a systematic approach, which, focusing on a comprehensive analysis of information warfare as a phenomenon of science and modern political practice, helped to define the priority socio-political and military-political risks caused by the activities of states and illegitimate political actors in digital era.

In addition, the problem of research demanded a wide application of military-political analysis. The author relied on a historical method during the studying the features of information confrontation in the history of political relations. The analysis of social behavior under forced digitalization led to using the tools of economic science («the nudge theory» by R. Thaler and K. Sunstein) and psychology («the

five-factors model» by G. Allport and R. Cattell), as well as the social physics concept proposed by A. Pentland and potential of military memetics.

In the thesis there are also widely used analysis, synthesis, deductive and inductive methods.

The empirical background of the thesis is formed by Russian and foreign regulatory legal acts in the field of security. In the thesis there are given the results of generalization of statistical data from relevant government agencies, as well as analytical reports of foreign think tanks (for example, RAND Corporation, Council on Foreign Relations, Chatham House, Atlantic Council etc.). There are also used research data and results of public opinion polls of international and national sociological centers.

The research results proposed for the defense and constituting scientific novelty are as follows:

First. The influence of the factor of digital technologies on the transformation of the content, dynamics and object-subject composition of information warfare is analyzed. The author theoretically substantiated the necessity to study modern political processes through the prism of post-non-classical rationality with the disclosure the opportunities of digital technologies in the context of the increment of political science methodology.

Second. The potential of interdisciplinary concepts that form the theoretical basis of information warfare in digital reality is comprehensively studied (in particular the concept of social physics by A. Pentland, the nudge theory by R. Thaler and K. Sunstein, the five-factors model by G. Allport and R. Cattell, and the potential of military methetics). As a result there are presented an interconnected set of social manipulation practices used on the Net platforms.

Third. The main factors that determine the strengthening role of information warfare in modern political processes are presented and disclosed. These factors are a) the broadening use of new information and communication technologies in political practice, b) the inclusion in the information warfare of new, often illegitimate

political actors, c) increased rivalry between weakening and rising states, that includes the creation a set of new instruments of information warfare.

Fourth. The most significant trends of information warfare in the context of rapid digitalization are identified and substantiated. There are: a) increasing the role of artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies in information warfare, b) intensifying rivalry in cyberspace, c) expanding the use of memetic technologies, d) exacerbating political struggle for the controlling popular internet platforms created for social communication.

Fifth. On the basis of a politological analysis of modern foreign researches and laws there are uncovered the perspective directions of information warfare practices under fast digitalization of socio-political reality: a) collecting, storing, processing and analyzing big data, b) data visualization technologies, c) high humanitarian technologies, d) sociocultural intelligence, e) open sources analysis, f) activity on social networks, g) structured methods of information analysis.

Sixth. The political risks of increasing role of information warfare are identified. They includes: a) emergence of cyber addiction among certain socio-demographic groups with socio-economic and political consequences of such addiction, b) strengthening role in modern political processes protest social movements, which try to self-organize due to digital technologies, c) erosion of the state control mechanism over the functioning social media, d) increasing competition between state and non state political actors for digital technologies with the subsequent undermining the system of strategic stability.

Seventh. By means of military-political analysis there are predicted ways of transformation modern political and military conflicts in the light of modern digitalization trends. An increased risk of uncontrolled improvement of information warfare practices with increased information rivalry between legitimate and illegitimate political actors are revealed.

Eighth. Possible challenges and threats to Russia's security in the field of information sphere are substantiated in the light of the reduced predictability of the forms of political processes. Under the influence of qualitatively new factors a set of

possible measures to improve the national information warfare system in the context of rapid digitalization is formulated.

Scientific-theoretical and practical significance of the thesis.

In the thesis there are given comprehensive political analysis of the political essence of information warfare in the light of emerging trends of digitalization. The results of this research can serve as a basis for new studies in the area of information warfare. They broadly expand the conceptual and categorical apparatus of political science, taking into account the theoretical justification of information confrontation in the context of forming digital reality.

The provisions and conclusions of the thesis can be used in the lawmaking activities of Russian state agencies in the improving information policy under the forced digitalization of socio-political reality. Also they may be useful to the Russian state authorities for in-depth analysis of the factor of information warfare in modern political rivalry, as well as identifying prospects for improving the practices of information warfare, taking into account the accelerated development of digital technologies. Moreover, the provisions and conclusions set out in the thesis can be used in educational process in teaching courses in political science, security theory and special disciplines in higher and higher military educational institutions.

Approbation of the thesis and results published. From 2011 to 2021 the author presented two collective monographs and more than 50 scientific articles on the topic of the thesis with a total volume of about 30 a.s., including 25 articles with a volume of 16.7 a.s. in the peer-reviewed scientific journals recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation. Two collections of materials of scientific conferences were published under the editorship of the author.

The provisions and conclusions set out in the thesis were tested at international, scientific and practical, interagency conferences and round tables in the period 2011–2020; found their reflection in teaching activities in the Military University of Ministry of Defense of Russian Federation in the period 2011–2015; since 2020 they have been used by the specialized divisions of The Commonwealth of Independent

States Anti-Terrorism Center and the National Defense Management Center of the Russian Federation.

Thesis structure is determined by the goal, objectives, underlying logic of the research. The presented thesis compositionally consists of introduction, four chapters, twelve paragraphs, conclusion and list of references. List of references contains 418 titles.

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