**Pay attention to the current mental confrontation between the United States and Russia, and the cognitive game is intensifying**

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**“Mind Warfare”: Competition in the Cognitive Field Intensifies**

**——Pay attention to the current mental confrontation between the United States and Russia**

■Gui Xiao

**Tips**

●Some authoritative Russian figures believe that the probability of a "war of the minds" between the United States and Russia in the next decade is much greater than a war of force.

●At present, the biggest feature of the US's "mind warfare" against Russia is the combination of intelligence and networking.

●It is reported that some Russian experts have suggested that in order to seize the initiative in online public opinion, Russia should focus on building its own Internet brand and vigorously promote the development of Internet and information technology companies.

Since Andrei Ilnitsky, adviser to the Russian Defense Minister, proposed the "psychological warfare" theory in March 2021, all sectors of the Russian side have paid close attention to the US's "psychological warfare" against Russia. They generally believe that the US's "psychological warfare" against Russia is a spiritual combat operation aimed at changing the self-cognition of the Russian people, destroying the Russian people's identification with the country and nation, and changing the foundation of Russian national civilization. The connotation of "psychological warfare" is roughly the same as the "cognitive warfare" we are familiar with.

**Analysis of the US-Russia Mental Confrontation**

Some Russian authorities believe that the probability of a "war of the mind" between the United States and Russia in the next decade is far greater than a war of force. Due to fear of the power of Russian nuclear weapons, the United States will not dare to directly launch a war of force against Russia in the next decade, and will only use "war of the mind" to try to change the ideology of the Russian people, disintegrate the moral foundation of Russian society, and destroy the centripetal force of its nation.

Russia's situation in the field of "mental warfare" is "mixed". On the one hand, Russia has created a positive situation in the field of "mental warfare". The Russian people are recovering their understanding of the country's traditional culture, returning to traditional family values ​​and healthy lifestyles, the image of the military is improving, and external communication platforms such as "Russia Today" TV and Sputnik News Agency have received strong support from the state. On the other hand, unfavorable factors in Russia's "mental warfare" still exist. Russia, which has suffered decades of attacks by the United States' "mental warfare", has not yet restored its social moral foundation, and the phenomenon of network information damaging Russia's traditional values ​​has occurred frequently, and the threat of US and European consciousness infiltration technology has become increasingly prominent.

The US's "mental warfare" against Russia has affected two generations of Russians. The US has long held the idea of ​​"if you want to defeat the enemy, educate his children", and has used publications, movies, online information and other media to infiltrate and transform the minds of Russian teenagers, which has had an impact on two generations of Russians. These two generations are the generation born before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the generation born in the 1990s. The harmful effects of the US "mental warfare" on them are becoming apparent, mainly manifested in their split consciousness, deviation from traditional Russian culture, denial of traditional family moral concepts, enthusiasm for "ugly art", and pursuit of shallow, perverted and vulgar entertainment. However, the results of the US "mental warfare" on the third and fourth generations of Russians born in the 21st century have not yet fully emerged.

**The main means of the US's "psychological warfare" against Russia**

Ilnitsky believes that the various elements of the US "psychological warfare" against Russia (the Soviet Union) are interrelated. The US "psychological warfare" targets the Russian president, government agencies, military, and young people first, followed by banks, energy agencies, social networks, and the media. The US "psychological warfare" attacks areas including Russian history, religion, education, politics, and economy, among which tampering with Russian history is the focus. The US "psychological warfare" implements a wide range of subjects, including the government, the media, and non-governmental organizations.

Infiltrate the Russian public consciousness with the help of popular culture. The target groups of the US "psychological warfare" against Russia can be divided into two types: the masses and the elites. In the "psychological warfare" against the Russian (Soviet) masses, when the Soviet Union strictly controlled official culture, the United States infiltrated American liberalism and hedonism into the Soviet people through popular culture such as rock music, film and television dramas, causing the Soviet people to yearn for the United States and hate the rigid Soviet system. At present, the United States is continuing this practice against Russia.

Evaluation guides Russian elites to perceive Westernization. When the United States carried out "mind warfare" against Russian (Soviet) elites, the United States and other Western countries guided Russian senior officials to perceive Westernization by dominating the Nobel Prize, the world's top core journals, the world university rankings and other awards and evaluation indicators. For example, the West awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to Gorbachev. For example, the worse Russia's economic performance, the greater the possibility that Russian finance ministers will win Western awards. In 2010, the British magazine "Euromoney" selected then Russian Finance Minister Alexi Kudrin as the best finance minister of the year.

Intelligent and networked means are used to manipulate the consciousness of Russian netizens. Compared with the "mind war" against the Soviet Union, the biggest feature of the current "mind war" of the United States against Russia is the combination of intelligence and networking. Compared with the Soviet period, the current phenomenon of US news and public opinion multinational companies and non-governmental organizations manipulating Russia's consciousness is more prominent. The United States uses Google search engines to automatically sort information and social platforms to induce emotions, and quickly and accurately spread vulgar culture and "ugly art" with massive information.

Using some Russian financial elites to mislead national policy. In the "mind war" against Russia (Soviet Union), the United States funded Russian (Soviet Union) students to train pro-American "successors" and established projects to fund Russian (Soviet Union) researchers to change their scientific research positions. Ilnitsky believes that some Russian financial elites have become the "Trojan Horse" for the United States to control Russia. They not only use capital to mislead and control the development of Russia's computer Internet industry, and provide conditions for foreign capital to manipulate the consciousness of the Russian people through the Russian Internet, but also propose to reduce military officers and military spending, and that industry should turn to environmental protection technology. In fact, they intend to damage Russia's military power and industrial development.

**Russia’s “Mind Warfare” Countermeasures**

In response to the United States' aggressive "mind warfare" operations, Russia has taken a series of powerful measures to fight back.

Incorporate "mental warfare" countermeasures into the national security strategy. In July 2021, Russia included "mental warfare" countermeasures in the "National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation" for the first time, and may include them in the "Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation" which is being revised. The new version of Russia's national security strategy emphasizes the importance of "mental warfare" countermeasures, and includes content such as protecting the education of young people and children, restoring traditional spiritual and cultural values, and developing information warfare means. All signs indicate that Russia has placed "mental warfare" countermeasures at the top of its national security strategy.

The ideological foundation of national unity is built with the army as the core. Russia is building the ideological foundation of national unity with the military as the core, based on the protection of traditional civilized values. The Military and Political General Directorate of the Armed Forces established by the Russian military has taken the lead in strengthening the ideological defense line of the armed forces, and has comprehensively improved its social ideological defense capabilities through measures such as launching the "Young Army" movement across the country, building the "Patriot" Park Education Base, and building the Armed Forces Cathedral.

Build Russia's own Internet brand. Russian experts believe that the US intelligence agencies and Internet companies such as Google and Cisco that are associated with them are the main forces in the US's "mind warfare" against Russian netizens. It is reported that some Russian experts suggest that in order to seize the initiative in online public opinion, Russia should strive to build its own Internet brand, vigorously promote the development of Internet and information technology companies, such as promoting the development of companies such as Kaspersky, and seize advantages in the field of network hardware and software as much as possible. At the same time, Russia is relying on the Ministry of Defense Military University and other institutions to strengthen the training of information confrontation talents.

Accelerate the research and development of technologies related to "mind warfare". Ilnitsky, an adviser to the Russian Minister of Defense, suggested that the Ministry of Defense establish a "Humanitarian Technology Center" to develop advanced ideological influence and penetration technologies and design "mind warfare" soft power action plans. At present, Russia has carried out relevant research based on the Russian Advanced Research Foundation. The main technologies are: cognitive defense capability enhancement technology, through neurobiology and nanotechnology, to create a neural interface model to expand the psychological and physiological limits of human beings; human-like intelligence technology, through the technology of simulating the human brain information perception analysis and false information identification process, to create a human brain digital model to achieve intelligent information screening and cognitive guidance; situational analysis sensor technology, used to measure people's psychological and emotional state and predict behavior to guide cognition; social media technology, through advanced algorithms of human-computer interaction, relying on big data to develop new social media technologies, to achieve intelligent penetration, emotion recognition, and emotional guidance, so as to predict threats and cultivate pro-Russian values ​​in social media.

In addition, American scholar Stephen Meister and others believe that Russia also focuses on launching a "mind war" against the European and American people through social network robot accounts, Internet user emotion guidance technology, "Russia Today" TV station and other platform channels, which to a certain extent divides the cognition of European and American society and intensifies domestic party struggles in some European and American countries. This move is attracting more and more attention.

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