

INFLUENCE WARFARE TRADECRAFT

Consonance and resonance:

Consonance: Identify stabilizing civil-society native networks whose goals are in consonance with those of the U.S. government.

Resonance: Enable consonant networks / allow an environment for consonant networks to thrive. This is done as subtly, silently, invisibly, and distantly as possible. Consonant systems and leaders' influence often, in whole or in part, is due to their seeming independence from governments or outside interference.

This is sometimes dubbed national security by undisclosed proxy.

By, with, and through squared: Train or educate—formally or informally—government and military entities to conduct influence campaigns by, with, and through their own civil society or provincial governance systems to train or educate consonant systems.

Slow burn: Thousand-subtle-pricks approach. Each tactic is indirect, subtle, and unthreatening and will unlikely raise alarms and is often legal in the target country. Each tactic may offer a degree of deniability of direct interference. In its totality, there may be strategic effects eventually.

Deception of influence campaigns: Hide all ways, means, and ends while conducting influence. OPSEC is rarely enough.

Exploit foundational narratives: Use adversaries' foundational narratives to undermine said narratives.

First and Flood: Some governments and non-state actors elect to flood communication channels with messages. This blunt approach when coupled with search engine optimization and trolling may perhaps help to 'bury' maligned webpages and social media accounts. When multiple means of communication are combined the goal may be to try to 'win' the story—be first and be overwhelming forcing others to be reactive (reactive narratives may well, then, further the reach of the initial message).

Kairos: In America English, "a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment." However, in ancient Greek, the term has to do with 'getting it just right' on balance. Not too much. Not too little. Not too soon. Not too late.ⁱ In terms of influence warfare, the phenomenon is applied to adept balance of timing, subtlety, use of networks, use of narratives, and pivoting of the subconscious of the target audiences to earn intended effects with minimal destabilizing effects. It can also be applied to when to strike an enemy in war—best to strike while the enemy state or military is weak or in preparations.

ACTIONS

Subterfuge: "It is almost impossible to maintain [secrecy] but often can be better achieved through the use of misleading rumors than through tight security. To provide the enemy with several stories..." (H. Van Dach). Layered deception of state interests, identities, strengths, weaknesses, capabilities, goals, and intentions may be vital to some aspects of national security.

Komproamat: Compromise adversarial leaders by ensuring seeming private meetings with publicly maligned foreigners (even one low-level former government contractor may be enough to later publish exaggerations of untoward relationships and influence).

Dietrologia: Exploit, exacerbate, and evidence deeply held conspiracies and wide rumors.

Glasnost: Surgical anti-malign-influence and anti-disinformation campaign built off of trust with civil societies—may include healthy robust competition between a government and private entities to include news services, educational institutes, and think tanks for checks and balances.

Black/grey/white propaganda: Includes strategies comprising many tactics such as fake news, disinformation, and flooding the information environment. White psychological warfare products/actions are attributable to the real source, such as an official statement. Grey psychological warfare includes purposefully abstruse attribution—may seem to derive from any benign source or have unknown attribution. Black psychological warfare products/actions purposefully appear to disseminate from a fictional or actual source concealing the identity of the true source.

This may include subtly amplifying narratives of influencers or building narratives that start with a deep understanding of the targets' foundational narratives, subconscious biases, outlooks, and predictions. And should abide by as many narrative-strategy best practices as possible.

Trust building/partnership programs: Trust is earned through action over time. Trust cannot be surged. Education exchanges, cultural exchanges, security-force-assistance, development, stabilization, and inter-military training missions can emphasize, overtly and substantially, developing professional and personal relationships between participants. Through long-term relationships and trust—both sides affecting the outlook of the other (subconscious and conscious)—alliances can be built and strengthened.

Visa programs: Quietly work with allies to allow 'fellow-traveler' influencers to gain followers or influence others across borders without that person or others knowing of government actions.

Szalámitaktika: Salami tactics—influence to exacerbate factions within enemy camps or instigate enemies to fight one another. And/or *divide et impera* (divide and conquer/rule).

Institutional sabotage: Indirectly encourage or cause slow foreign bureaucracies. Can also encourage apathy/malaise. Find dissenting or questioning factions within the adversary government or industrial complex. Ensure they have access to tradecraft literature, especially under the guise of 'management and business best practices' (ironically), so that they can subtly slow or degrade government and industry apparatus over time.

Example:

Astrourfing: Governments, institutions, or individuals implement plans under the false premise of a something that appears to be a grassroots movement to affect wide audiences. Protagonists hide and deny their involvement.

AGENTS OF SUBVERSION

Fifth columns: Civil society/government networks in an adversarial state that will work against that state and/or for an outside power.

Fellow travelers: Individuals abroad who happen to already be working towards your government's goals. May wish to avoid overt relationship (especially if fellow traveler's influence derives from her independence) and instead subtly, silently, invisibly, and distantly support/amplify. "Vladimir Lenin...used [the] pejorative phrase [useful idiots] to describe fellow-traveling Western intellectuals who

defended and promoted, in the name of equality and justice, Lenin's totalitarian program.” (Colonel Eric E. Hastings, USMC, Ret).

Third options: Unaffiliated third parties (contractors or mercenaries not paid or hired directly by a government and not formally affiliated with a government) of a state that will act directly on the state’s behalf abroad.

Agent provocateurs: Agents infiltrate into or pretend to be with an opposition network to discredit that opposition → conduct or spur actions that would lead to arrest or public outrage.

Private investors: Private investment/donation to secondary parties that will eventually support fellow-traveler influencers. Investors should only have informal and perhaps unknown relationships with the protagonist government. And funds should be funneled or ‘cleaned’ through as many intermediaries as possible before landing in the lap of unwitting agents of influence (grants, fellowships, donations, etc.).

¹ Souza Mendes, Dr. Paula Marchesini, Johns Hopkins University, interview, 27 June 2020.