

Propagation of the Effects of Certain Types of Military Psychological Operations in a Networked Population

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Abstract : In modern asymmetric conflicts, the Armed Forces generally have to intervene in countries where the internal peace is in danger. They must make the local population an ally in order to be able to deploy the necessary military actions with its support. For this purpose, psychological operations (PSYOPs) are used to shape people's behaviors and emotions by the modification of their attitudes in acting on their perceptions. PSYOPs aim at elaborating and spreading a message that must be read, listened to and/or looked at, then understood by the info-targets in order to get from them the desired behavior. A message can generate in the info-targets, reasoned thoughts, spontaneous emotions or reflex behaviors, this effect partly depending on the means of conveyance used to spread this message. In this paper, we focus on psychological operations that generate emotions. We present a method based on the Intergroup Emotion Theory, that determines, from the characteristics of the conveyed message and of the people from the population directly reached by the means of conveyance (direct info-targets), the emotion likely to be triggered in them and we simulate the propagation of the effects of such a message on indirect info-targets that are connected to them through the social networks that structure the population.

Keywords : military psychological operations, social identity, social network, emotion propagation

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