

Taiwan's Multidomain Cognitive War

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Abstract: This article examines the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) multidomain cognitive warfare, with a focus on how the CCP wages it against Taiwan. The CCP's cognitive warfare seeks cognitive dominance—*mind control*—consistent with the brutally repressive, totalitarian nature of its regime. It is, first and foremost, the CCP's way to maintain uncontested Communist party rule. Further, it is the CCP's way to expand its hegemony

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globally, its way of internal governance, its way of occupation of annexed lands, and its way of fighting kinetic combat. Although the CCP's cognitive warfare poses an existential threat to Taiwan and democracies worldwide, there is no commonly accepted definition for this unique threat. Accordingly, this article provides a definition on which to develop a holistic, strategic, and successful counterstrategy. Also addressed here is the CCP's elevation of cognitive warfare as its "ultimate [warfare] domain"; cognitive warfare's inextricable linkage with the CCP's broader political warfare; algorithmic social media warfare—the "main battlefield"; cognitive warfare's deep historic roots in China; CCP advances in lethal and nonlethal neurocognitive weapons, dubbed *NeuroStrike*; the central roles of purges, brutal repression, academic infiltration, and artificial intelligence in achieving CCP cognitive dominance; and Russia-China collaboration in cognitive domain operations.

Keywords: cognitive warfare, political warfare, multidomain operations, social media warfare, mind control, systems destruction warfare, the Three Warfares, propaganda, *NeuroStrike*, neurocognitive warfare

The cognitive domain has become the ultimate domain in which great powers compete and engage in military confrontations. . . . The battle for brain control will soon become the key to cognitive domain warfare and the highest battle for control during warfare.

~ *Qiushi*, 20 June 2020¹

Introduction

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is engaged in a world war to achieve its goal of global hegemony—a war largely fought *inside the heads* of its targeted adversaries. The CCP’s immediate objective in this war is the annexation of Taiwan (officially the Republic of China, or ROC). While simultaneously preparing the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) to invade Taiwan, the CCP hopes to annex the island nation without bloody and costly kinetic combat. Accordingly, the CCP seeks to conquer the people of Taiwan through *brain control* by defeating them in their *cognitive domain* so that they will not only capitulate without a fight but will also “offer food and drink to welcome the conquering army” and welcome the invaders as liberators.²

The CCP views this contest for brain control as “the highest battle for control in warfare.”³ To achieve brain control, the CCP engages in what Taiwan calls *multidomain cognitive warfare* (MDCW). With its attack on cognition, the CCP seeks to impact what the American Psychological Association defines as “all forms of knowing and awareness, such as perceiving, conceiving, remembering, reasoning, judging, imagining, and problem solving.”⁴ Specifically, the CCP employs cognitive weapons that combine high-technology-driven psychological warfare and algorithmically driven disinformation, propaganda, and misinformation with coercion, violence, weaponized news media, corruption, seduction, covert operations, engineered social media, weaponized law, election interference, and military intimidation.

The CCP’s desired result of these cognitive attacks is to annex Taiwan—to take it not so much *without struggle* but *without Taiwan fighting back*. The center of gravity in the fight for Taiwan is the *will of the people of Taiwan*. The

CCP fully understands that “no matter what the nature of war and the purpose, it is ultimately a contest of human will” and therefore seeks to destroy Taiwan’s *will to fight*.⁵ The *mind* of every person on Taiwan is a battleground on which the CCP seeks *mind dominance*.⁶ This dominance entails the CCP getting into Taiwan’s “head”—its cognitive apparatus—and disabling it from the inside by means that include neurocognitive attacks called *NeuroStrike*. Cognitive warfare is pivotal to that strategy as part of the CCP’s broader multidomain systems attacks.

In fact, the CCP now recognizes the cognitive realm as a *unique domain* of warfare. It frames cognitive domain operations as the next evolution in warfare, “moving from the natural and material domains—land, maritime, air, even electromagnetic—into the ephemeral, namely the human mind.”⁷ Consequently, the CCP currently has an unprecedented ability to shape the cognitive battlefield to destabilize sociocultural, economic, political, and military systems. According to Josh Baughman, an analyst at the U.S. Air Force’s China Aerospace Studies Institute, “This type of warfare . . . aims to influence how, not what, people think, feel, and act, altering the cognitive space from individual to population levels.” The scope of this warfare includes technology such as social media, the metaverse, smartphone applications, wearable technology, virtual reality, artificial intelligence (AI) (especially generative AI), digital twins, and brain-computer interface technology that play significant roles in Communist China’s MDCW operations.⁸ It also includes NeuroStrike, as well as exploitation of longstanding cognitive development foundations such as formal education and media.

Taiwan’s leaders have chosen to publicly identify this existential threat and to fight in the cognitive domain. The U.S. government is increasingly

aware of the increasing threats in the cognitive domain as well, as reflected in the comments of U.S. Navy admiral Samuel J. Paparo Jr., commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, who has highlighted the “volatility” of the cognitive domain as part of three strategic “meta-trends” shaping modern warfare, and recent annual U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) reports on military and security developments involving the People’s Republic of China (PRC).⁹

In an era of increasing moral relativism, it is always essential to restate why it matters that the CCP seeks this unprecedented ability for mind control. The author has encountered academics whose reaction to learning about CCP cognitive warfare is to shrug and say, “All countries do it—so what? Why pick on China?” This response reflects, at best, willful blindness and intellectual dishonesty. The nature of the regime pursuing cognitive domain operations matters—and it matters greatly!

The CCP is an *expansionist, militarily and economically powerful, brutally repressive, genocidal, totalitarian regime*. The *Communist* nature of the regime matters greatly as well, as Communism is in and of itself “one of history’s most destructive ideologies,” and regimes that practice it have taken the lives of more than 100 million people globally, according to U.S. president Donald J. Trump’s proclamation for Anti-Communism Week 2025.¹⁰ Chinese Communism is responsible for a large percentage of these 100 million lives that were lost, as the CCP imposed its ideology across China and elsewhere.

In fact, the PRC’s fundamental institution is *Communist totalitarianism*, according to Dr. Chenggang Xu, a senior research scholar at Stanford University’s Center on China’s Economy and Institutions. Xu writes that this foundation is explicitly stated in China’s constitution, which declares that the

Communist party leads everything, implying control of everything to include all land in China and all financial institutions. Further, the PRC's constitution provides the Communist party monopoly political powers in all branches of the government and in every corner of society, with its authority enforced through what it calls the "people's democratic dictatorship."¹¹

There is no evidence that the PRC's Communist regime has any intention of liberalizing to, say, close its Uighur concentration camps and allow the Chinese people such basic freedoms as freedom of speech and religion as well as democracy. Based on CCP general secretary Xi Jinping's speeches and CCP Central Committee policy documents, the PRC's future looks grim. One such document is the April 2013 "Notice on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere," better known as "Document 9." In this document, the CCP has categorically rejected values such as democracy and universal human rights. Specifically, to "uphold" the party's leadership, the socialist system, and Marxism, Document 9 prohibits basic concepts such as "Western constitutional democracy, universal values, civil society, neoliberalism, Western principles of journalism, and even doubting the socialist nature of socialism with Chinese characteristics." Those in the PRC—and increasingly abroad—who fail to comply with this prohibition are harshly repressed.¹² A regime that outlaws basic democracy and human rights cannot be allowed to achieve cognitive domain supremacy—to win, as *Qiushi* phrases it, "the battle for brain control."¹³

This article provides a general overview of the concepts of cognitive domain operations and cognitive warfare; how they frame the human mind as a transnational battlefield to create *cognitive contagions* and *alternate realities* that can lead to societal destruction; and cognitive warfare's

inextricable linkages in support of CCP political warfare. The article also briefly traces how the CCP has evolved the concept of the newest warfare domain—the cognitive domain—from ancient foundations into the existential threat it now poses to Taiwan.

Cognitive Warfare Overview

The concept of cognitive warfare is not new, and it is a subset of the more widely understood and much broader concept of *political warfare*.¹⁴ Like political warfare, cognitive warfare is the CCP's way of expanding its hegemony globally, its way of internal governance and repression, its way of occupation of annexed lands such as Tibet and East Turkestan (a.k.a. Xinxiang Uyghur Autonomous Region), and its way of fighting kinetic warfare. However, while there are many descriptions of what cognitive warfare does, there is no commonly accepted definition of the term. For the purposes of this study, then, *CCP cognitive warfare* is defined as follows:

The systematic strategic attack on target populations to achieve whole-of-society mind superiority by employing weaponized neuroscience and communication combined with nonkinetic neurocognitive weapons, as well as the enhancement of internal cognitive defenses and capabilities, in order to achieve CCP objectives during both peacetime and combat operations.

Cognitive warfare is now fundamental to the CCP's vision of victory across the traditional multidomain spectrum as it conducts *system-of-systems warfare*. The cornerstone of its system-of-systems warfare is *systems destruction*, which aims to paralyze an enemy—not necessarily to destroy it

but to incapacitate and dismantle vital functions of an adversary's operational system. This doctrine, known as *systems destruction warfare*, shifts the focus from attrition to disruption.¹⁵ Cognitive warfare is a critical component of systems destruction warfare: the human mind is the key node in a system and therefore a major target in the system destruction of an adversary. It is equally important to *system survival* which focuses on cognitive domain operations protection of the CCP and its operational forces.¹⁶

The role of cognitive domain operations in system survival presents special requirements for the CCP's armed wing, the PLA. Before risking full-scale armed confrontation, the CCP must ensure that the PLA can achieve its cognitive warfare objectives. These include maintaining friendly morale, generating domestic and international public support, weakening the enemy's will to fight, and shaping the adversary's strategic assessments.¹⁷ Even more fundamentally, the CCP must be certain of the PLA's political loyalty. This imperative is codified in the CCP's 2017 phrase, "The Three Whethers," the first of which asks "whether the PLA can maintain the party's absolute leadership."¹⁸ Sustained purges of senior PLA leadership demonstrate Xi Jinping's ongoing concerns about the military's vulnerability to cognitive warfare. Xi appears willing to accept short-term disruption in exchange for greater party control.¹⁹

According to the DOD, the PRC laid the foundations of this warfare in its Military-Civil Fusion Development Strategy that initiated programs such as the China Brain Project (2016–2030), or more formally "Brain Science and Brain-Inspired Intelligence," instituted in 2016. Its scientists have investigated a wide variety of military applications of brain research, to include neurocognitive warfare capabilities that exploit adversaries using

neuroscience and psychology.²⁰ The PLA has taken the lead on much of the research underlying cognitive warfare, but overall CCP political warfare operations reflect a whole-of-government approach in shaping the information environment.²¹

Cognitive warfare can best be understood as a “technologically-driven update” of the core foundations of the PLA’s political warfare concept, according to the Jamestown Foundation. In the CCP construct, political warfare encompasses strategic psychological warfare, public opinion (media) warfare, and legal warfare (lawfare).²²

The technology employed includes modern internet technologies and communication platforms, AI, big data, brain science, synthetic media (to include “deepfakes”) and other neuroscience developments. According to Dr. Samantha Hoffman of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, the “Chinese party-state engages in data collection on a massive scale as a means of generating information to enhance state security—and, crucially, the political security of the CCP—across multiple domains.” It has a very ambitious vision for harnessing a broad suite of current and emerging technologies, including devices that might be seen as relatively benign, such as language translation technologies. In a pioneering 2019 study, Hoffman asserts that by leveraging state-owned enterprises, Chinese technology companies, and partnerships with foreign partners (including Western universities), the CCP is building a massive global data-collection ecosystem. This ecosystem gives the party control over large data flows, which serve “military and other state security intelligence.” When the data is combined with AI processing based on research by its 2020 Cognitive Research Institute, the result can be used to

shape, manage, and control thinking and to export the CCP's governance model globally.²³

Of particular concern, the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) reports that PRC AI firms are already world leaders in voice and image recognition, video analytics, and mass surveillance technologies. Further, ODNI assesses that the PLA likely plans to use large language models to generate information deception attacks, create fake news, imitate personas, and enable attack networks.²⁴

Technological advancements also account for today's pervasive influence of social media and digital platforms. These channels facilitate the rapid and mass dissemination of narratives and enable precise manipulation of public opinion. Under the central direction of the CCP, these massively influential platforms are combined with AI for microtargeting, generating hyper-realistic disinformation to include deepfakes, analyzing psychological profiles, and automating influence campaigns on an unprecedented scale.²⁵ As important, the CCP has developed technologies to control much of this cognitive infrastructure, to include search engines, news aggregators, and social media platforms. Consequently, it employs them to not only spread disinformation and propaganda but to actively undermine shared truth and erode democratic consensus.²⁶

While new technology helps distinguish cognitive warfare from traditional means of influence and information, contemporary CCP cognitive warfare reflects more than just new technology. First, the CCP's version integrates all "warfares" (political, cyber, hybrid, information, narrative, etc.) to achieve cognitive effects. *Cognitive dominance* is the primary objective, and

this objective distinguishes cognitive warfare from mere information dissemination or information warfare.

Most importantly, the *society-wide destruction* outcome sought by the CCP makes its cognitive warfare a novel threat. It focuses on influencing *whole societies*, not just specifically military targets. It employs primarily “gray” propaganda to destabilize as well as to coerce opposing states and societies to submit to the PRC. The concept is designed to assist the enemy to “destroy himself from within” by influencing the general population through various attacks on the human brain. This malign influence of the general population is a particularly insidious threat, writes Robin Burda of the Hague Center for Strategic Studies, because in democracies “the people hold significant power and can change the direction of politics in elections.”²⁷

As noted by Alina Bârgăoanu and Flavia Durach, two Romanian scholars on the frontline of Russia’s cognitive warfare, “this new type of warfare is waged by means of disinformation, propaganda, influence operations, and hostile information campaigns all at the same time. Above all, this new type of warfare is waged in a completely changed communication and information ecosystem, where every major issue in a society can be weaponized thanks to the very connectivity of that new ecosystem.”²⁸ The focus on weaponization of “every major issue” to create division and disintegration in societies is, in effect, systematic inducement for those societies to commit national suicide.

Weaponized Neuroscience and NeuroStrike

There is another crucially important difference between cognitive warfare and other types of influence operations that affect human cognition,

according to Dr. Tzu-Chieh Hung of Taiwan's Institute for National Defense and Security Research and Dr. Tzu-Wei Hung of Academia Sinica. That difference is that *only* cognitive warfare is specifically dedicated to brain control by incorporating *weaponized neuroscience* into various practices.²⁹

A 2024 DOD report states that the CCP's use of cognitive domain operations "combines psychological warfare with cyber operations to shape adversary behavior and decision making." Further, it states that the goal of CCP cognitive domain operations is to achieve "mind dominance, which (is) the use of information to influence public opinion to affect change in a nation's social system, likely to create an environment favorable to China and reduce civilian and military resistance to PLA actions." Citing authoritative PLA documents, the DOD assesses that the PLA "probably intends to use CDO as an asymmetric capability to deter U.S. or third-party entry into a future conflict, or as an offensive capability to shape perceptions or polarize a society (and) *bring about psychological pressure and fear on an opponent and force them to surrender.*"³⁰

The DOD report also states that the PRC seeks to leverage other emerging technologies such as AI, big data, and brain science for cognitive domain operations, as the PRC "perceives that these technologies will lead to profound changes in the ability to subvert human cognition."³¹

Among the new technologies that will lead to profound changes in the ability to subvert human cognition is NeuroStrike, which U.S. analysts describe as a "transformative change in the nature of military engagement." NeuroStrike entails the use of lethal and nonlethal neurocognitive nonkinetic weapons to impair cognition, reduce situational awareness, and cause long-term neurological degradation. The resultant ability to impair judgment,

disrupt cognitive processes, or manipulate emotions could decisively influence military confrontations.³²

The employment of weapons that can externally impact the cognitive domain of one's adversaries is not a new concept. According to investigations by the U.S. Congress and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the United States' "best men and women in national security" have been targeted and neutralized in such attacks in Russia, the PRC, Cuba, Taiwan, and other countries. The United States and other affected governments imposed no costs on those committing these attacks, which emboldened adversaries such as the PRC to pursue similar lines of attack, according to congressional testimony by the DIA officer in charge of that agency's investigation.³³

The PRC's cognitive interference technologies are used to conduct attacks against an adversary's psychological well-being through lethal and nonlethal means. They include light waves, electromagnetic waves, and microwaves that can "cause psychological damage, confusion, and even hallucinations, changing the other's cognition, and ultimately causing the enemy to act in violation of their own interests."³⁴ Even though NeuroStrike and neurocognitive warfare in general are strategically significant, there has been insufficient discussion of this particularly insidious threat. Analysts suspect that this is because NeuroStrike is seen as nonkinetic and less harmful than nuclear weapons, hypersonics, and space-based platforms.³⁵

Cognitive Contagions and Alternate Realities

Cognitive warfare penetrates the processes of perception, judgment, and belief formation. As detailed by Dr. Jeremiah Lumbaca at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, it involves the deployment of *cognitive contagions*.

These contagions are ideologically charged constructs that spread virally across digital and social networks, influencing beliefs, emotional reactions, and ultimately behavior. Citing research by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Lumbaca asserts that the ultimate result of effective cognitive warfare may be that, by exploiting cognitive biases over long periods of time, these contagions modify the thinking habits of the target with lasting and irreversible effect on both cognitive personality and on the way the target processes information.³⁶

Traditional disinformation campaigns rely on pushing falsehoods or misleading narratives, writes Lumbaca, but cognitive contagions embed particular patterns of thinking that may ultimately create imagined alternate realities. These patterns may include *logical fallacies*, *emotionally charged heuristics*, and *cognitive shortcuts* that allow the contagions to self-propagate within communities. Rather than transmitting what Lumbaca characterizes as “standalone” messages, “they act more like ideological malware, replicating and adapting to embed themselves in the mental frameworks of individuals and groups.” Emotionally resonant slogans can stoke fear or indignation, bypass rational analysis, and lodge deeply within a person’s worldview. With skillful cognitive warfare tactics to repeat these slogans along with real or manufactured social reinforcement, such beliefs can become difficult to dislodge. This leads to an *epistemic closure*, where new information is rejected if it contradicts the engineered narrative.³⁷

Digital environments are ideal incubators for these contagions. In this realm, information overload pushes users toward “mental shortcuts” where echo chambers reinforce existing views and social media algorithms prioritize engagement over accuracy. Lumbaca reports that psychographic targeting,

enabled by troves of user data, allows these cognitive contagions to be tailored with precision to individual psychological profiles. The result is a potent blend of personalization, repetition, and emotional provocation that erodes critical thinking and reshapes the architecture of public perception.³⁸

The Nexus of Cognitive and Political Warfare

Cognitive warfare is a subset of political warfare, and at all levels these two warfares are inextricably intertwined. At a critical point in the first Cold War (1947–91), U.S. State Department official George F. Kennan defined *political warfare* as “the employment of all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives.”³⁹ By definition, then, cognitive warfare is a subelement of political warfare, and it directly fulfills the CCP’s general political warfare goals and objectives. By employing political warfare as its preferred instrument of national power to achieve its objectives, the CCP seeks not so much to *win without fighting* than to set the conditions so that its opponents *will not fight back*.

To fully comprehend the CCP’s cognitive warfare against Taiwan, one must understand the broader political warfare ecosystem that it supports. This section briefly describes CCP political warfare, to include its general goals as well as strategic culture and stratagems. It then addresses CCP political warfare goals regarding Taiwan, as well as its objectives, strategies, tactics, techniques, and tools, and desired long-term outcomes.

The CCP’s political warfare differs from Kennan’s original 1948 definition in that it includes *low-intensity kinetic conflict* such as hybrid warfare, insurgencies, proxy armies, revolutionary war, and terrorism. The CCP has a doctrinal foundation for its political warfare in the form of the “Three

Warfares.”⁴⁰ It is designed to coerce and subdue opponents while remaining below what would be considered an armed attack under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter or what might be deemed an act of war. Regarding this foundational doctrine, beginning in the early 2000s, the CCP enacted a series of domestic laws that lay the legal groundwork for the PRC’s multiprong campaign to expand its influence in the Indo-Pacific region. Among the first of these laws were the 2003 Political Work Regulations that incorporated the Three Warfares doctrine—public opinion, psychological, and legal warfare—as the pillars of the PRC’s political warfare and of the PLA’s strategic planning. Over time, the Three Warfares concept serves as a guide to help understand another form of the CCP’s low-intensity conflict: hybrid warfare.⁴¹

One of the CCP’s key weapons in its political warfare arsenal is the *united front*. Under the principle of “uniting with friends and disintegrating enemies,” Mao Zedong described the united front as a “magic weapon” that could match the military power of the Chinese Red Army, the precursor to the PLA, and the Communist party.⁴² The CCP adopted the concept from the Soviet Union in the 1920s and employed it successfully during the Chinese Civil War (1927–49). In fact, the united front was so important to the CCP’s victory over the Nationalist forces in 1949 that its existence was enshrined in the preamble to the 1954 PRC Constitution.⁴³ Cooption of non-Communist forces remains its essence today, and it plays a major role in cognitive domain operations to destroy adversaries.⁴⁴

Like the CCP’s cognitive warfare, the united front in practice is *defensive* as well as offensive. It is designed to protect the CCP’s totalitarian *China Model*, with a specific focus on protecting the PRC from “cultural infiltration of

Western values that are deemed subversive, such as rule of law, democracy, freedom of speech, and human rights.⁴⁵

The CCP has four general *strategic* goals for its PRC political warfare operations, according to Ross Babbage with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. These goals are as follows:⁴⁶

- Maintain uncontested Communist party rule. To achieve that aim, the CCP employs sophisticated political warfare operations to suppress domestic dissent and reinforce party loyalty as well as to undermine the CCP's international rivals.
- Achieve Xi Jinping's "China Dream" to "restore China to what it sees as its rightful place as the preponderant power in the Indo-Asia-Pacific [region], in both its continental and maritime domains." To this end, writes Babbage, the CCP propagates a powerful narrative that emphasizes the Politburo's determination "to overcome the 'century of China's humiliation' and restore the nation's power, wealth, and influence."
- Build the PRC's "influence and prestige" so that it will be "respected as equal, if not superior, to the United States." To this end, the CCP conducts political warfare operations to "push the United States and its democratic allies from their predominant role in the Western Pacific and Eastern Indian Ocean" and to "build strategic strength in hitherto non-aligned parts of Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and South America."
- Export the CCP model of totalitarian (tight authoritarian) political control coupled with a managed but relatively open economy. The CCP's political warfare narrative is that the PRC's approach to

governance and development is a far more attractive option to that offered by the liberal democracies of the West. Specifically, according to Princeton University professor Aaron L. Friedberg, “China now seeks to present itself as providing an alternative model for development to that offered by the West, one that combines market-driven economic growth with authoritarian politics.”⁴⁷ Furthermore, Babbage assesses that part of Xi Jinping’s vision is the “fostering of a growing group of like-minded revisionist countries that, over time, may constitute an international partnership, alliance, or even a China-centered empire.”⁴⁸

Political Warfare against Taiwan

The CCP has well-established political warfare goals, objectives, strategies, and hoped-for outcomes that guide, and are inextricably intertwined with, its cognitive warfare against Taiwan. The CCP’s primary goal is to “unify China” by bringing Taiwan under Beijing’s control as either a province or a special administrative region.

Since the early 1920s the CCP has waged protracted political warfare against the ROC. The political warfare it wages today against Taiwan is a continuation of that 100-year war, and it is designed to achieve what the CCP calls *peaceful unification*. Specifically, the CCP employs political warfare to divide and demoralize the people of Taiwan by eroding the coherence of Taiwan as a functioning state, undermining belief in and support for democracy, and capturing elites who are willing to serve the CCP’s interests. If the CCP is successful, Taiwan faces extinction as a sovereign entity, loss of its hard-fought freedom, and brutal repression of its people. Further, Taiwan’s

fall would have devastating consequences for many countries both in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region and globally.⁴⁹

A key CCP intermediate objective is to effect regime change from the current Democratic Progressive Party-led administration to a pro-Beijing Kuomintang regime. To achieve regime change, the CCP interferes with Taiwan's elections and works to ensure that Taiwan's economic and diplomatic efforts fail. Ultimately, Beijing seeks to destabilize Taiwan's leadership, demoralize its populace, and destroy its sovereign status to the point that Taiwan either willingly joins the PRC or becomes so weak internally that it cannot (or will not) defend itself against military assault.

In general, the CCP employs a wide range of strategies, tactics, techniques, and tools to achieve its goals and objectives. Those listed below are employed routinely against Taiwan and globally, but the list should not be construed as covering the full range of the CCP's malign influence and interference operations. The list includes cognitive warfare, united front operations and liaison work, the Three Warfares (media warfare, legal warfare, and psychological warfare), hybrid warfare, economic enticement and coercion, digital colonization with surveillance state technologies, narrative warfare, academic infiltration, violence, elite capture, espionage, propaganda, disinformation, misinformation, establishment of political parties, and coercive diplomacy to isolate Taiwan from the global community.

The CCP also employs active measures. Per the author's discussions with Taiwan and U.S. officials and based on reports by credible news media and other organizations, these measures include assassination and forced suicide, destructive and life-endangering cyber warfare, blackmail, deception, targeted violence by organized crime organizations, establishment of proxy

armies such as the New People's Army in the Philippines and the United Wa State Army in Myanmar, fifth column paramilitary units in Taiwan and elsewhere, coerced censorship and self-censorship, hostage taking, and coerced confessions.⁵⁰ The PRC also employs military intimidation and maritime and law enforcement. This coercion includes PLA live-fire training exercises in the Taiwan Strait, PLA Navy transit of Taiwan's waterways, PLA combat and surveillance overflights of Taiwan's territorial waters, and China Coast Guard incursions into Taiwan's waters and harassment of Taiwan's people.

However, despite political and cognitive warfare successes in recent years, the CCP has failed to "win the hearts and minds" of the Taiwanese populace to engineer its hoped-for annexation of Taiwan, according to J. Michael Cole at the Global Taiwan Institute. Consequently, the CCP has generally abandoned that strategy and is now "intensifying efforts to corrode and undermine Taiwan's democratic institutions, create social instability, further isolate Taiwan internationally, and hollow out Taiwan's economy by attracting its talent."⁵¹

Taiwan political warfare officials report that the PRC's primary political warfare themes highlight the many economic and cultural ties shared between the people of the PRC and Taiwan. These themes include the following:

- There is only "One China," and both sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to China.
- The peoples of the PRC and ROC are kin and must be reunited.
- Taiwan's "secessionist" position is doomed to fail.

- The current Taiwanese leadership is provoking the CCP to take forceful action against it, to include military attack.
- It is best to join the PRC now since it is at its strongest, while Taiwan is economically stagnant, politically divided, and diplomatically isolated.
- The PRC is strong, while the United States is weak and unreliable.

Ultimately, the PRC hopes that its political warfare will achieve the following long-term outcomes:

- Taiwan is absorbed into the PRC and comes fully under CCP control, thereby fulfilling PRC ruler Xi Jinping's "China Dream" of national reunification.
- The CCP finally resolves the Chinese Civil War on its own terms with the destruction of the ROC as a political entity.
- The PLA exploits Taiwan's natural resources and strategic location as well as the ROC's national defense technologies, expertise, and manpower to enhance PRC control of the South China Sea and support the defense of the Chinese mainland. Of equal importance, Taiwan provides the PRC the regional power projection platform necessary to break through the chokehold of the first island chain into the Pacific.
- The influence of the United States in the region becomes seriously—if not fatally—compromised.
- Taiwan's democratic system of government, which presents an existential challenge to CCP political authority, is discredited and effectively destroyed.

- The PRC achieves unchallenged political, military, economic, diplomatic, and cultural dominance, initially throughout the region and ultimately globally.

The Evolution of a New Warfare Domain

Cognitive warfare adds a new domain to the traditionally delineated domains of air, land, sea, space, and the cyberspace/electromagnetic spectrum. Its purpose is not to control what people know, but to shape how they know it. As practiced by both the PRC and Russia, it designed to alter the mind's orientation process that underpins judgment and action to fragment societies and achieve strategic effects below the threshold of armed conflict. According to Dr. J. William DeMarco of the U.S. Air Force's Air University, in cognitive warfare "the center of gravity is no longer fleets or factories but the shared grasp of reality itself."⁵²

As cognitive warfare is a subset of political warfare, it is not a new concept. In fact, the battle for the cognitive domain has existed to some degree since the dawn of human conflict. The strategic culture that underlies the CCP's cognitive warfare extends back to at least 500 BCE, as reflected by Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu's oft-quoted prescriptions on how to "render others' armies helpless without fighting."⁵³

The CCP's *Qiushi* magazine provides one perspective on the history of cognitive warfare:

In primitive societies, tribal leaders usually used the sound of drumming and the tune of stepping to boost morale of their soldiers and mentally deter their enemies. . . . In the Cold Weapon era and earlier years . . . people realized that

acknowledging the justice of war and the public's support of the war impacts the war's result. Thus, people widely used war diatribes and notices to expose the enemy's guilt to stimulate their soldiers' fighting spirits. After the Second Industrial Revolution, broadcasting became an important means of information dissemination. More channels of cognitive domain combat were developed. . . . After the Third Industrial Revolution, cognitive domain warfare was no longer limited to media propaganda carried on voice or text, but also involved video, images, virtual reality, cognitive control, and other diverse means. Modern cognitive domain combat gradually became highly intense and widespread, and was used on a much larger scale, level, and efficacy. Since the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies, especially the maturity of computer speech synthesis and image processing technologies, has offered the capability of creating video with fake human faces and voice. The military can use it to fool the enemy. In summary, throughout the continuous evolution of technology – from single text and voice, to radio, video, and Internet – more and more media can be used to influence the enemy's thinking, judgement, and cognition, thus creating new modes of cognitive domain combat.⁵⁴

Well before the founding of the PRC in 1949, emperors in what is now called China employed mind control, often violently, in pursuit of strategic objectives, war aims, internal governance, and occupation. In particular, the

bloody Warring States period (~475–221 BCE), which led to the unification of the seven feuding states under the Qin Dynasty, plays an immensely important role in defining the CCP's current approach to strategy cognitive warfare and related stratagems. A central and continuing theme from this era is an emphasis on devising strategies for "overturning the old hegemon and exacting revenge."⁵⁵ China expert Michael P. Pillsbury writes that the strategies used by Xi Jinping and his predecessors are largely based on the following stratagems:

- Induce complacency to avoid alerting your opponent.
- Manipulate your opponent's advisors.
- Be patient—for decades or longer—to achieve victory.
- Steal your opponent's ideas and technology for strategic purposes.
- Military might is not the critical factor for winning a long-term competition.
- Recognize that the hegemon will take extreme, even reckless action to maintain its dominant position.
- Never lose sight of *shi* . . . [which includes] deceiving others to do your bidding for you [and] waiting for the point of maximum opportunity to strike.
- Establish and employ metrics for measuring your status relative to other potential challengers.
- Always be vigilant to avoid being encircled and deceived by others.⁵⁶

For example, Emperor Qin Shi Huang imposed the first totalitarian state in China in 221 BCE, ruling with an iron fist and regulating every aspect of his subjects' lives. He instituted a regime that would later be copied by

Communists throughout the world, assigning political commissars to spy on governors and military leaders to make sure they did not diverge from or criticize his policies.⁵⁷ According to China expert Steven W. Mosher, the emperor “built his cult of personality to imbue himself with a godlike image and establish total supremacy both internal and external to his empire, [he] attempted to eradicate thought itself.” Under Qin’s version of mind control, severe punishment was the order of the day: “for major capital crimes, the offender and his entire family were annihilated. For even the most minor infractions, millions were sent to forced labor projects such as building imperial highways and canals.” This thought eradication included Qin’s order for “the burning of all books in the Imperial Archives except his own memoirs. Private ownership of books was prohibited. Soon, pyres of burning books lit up cities at night, but three million men were branded and sent to labor camps for owning books nonetheless.”⁵⁸

Violence remains central to the CCP’s cognitive warfare, and it includes internal mass murder and genocide. It is not surprising, then, that CCP cognitive warfare includes targeting Taiwan’s elected officials and other government officials for violent attacks. This targeting includes the plot by PRC embassy officials in Prague to physically attack then-vice president-elect Hsiao Bi-khim during her visit to the Czech Republic in March 2025 and physical assaults on Taiwanese diplomats by PRC diplomats during an October 2020 Taiwanese National Day celebration in Fiji, which resulted in the hospitalizing of one Taiwanese diplomat.⁵⁹

Nor is it surprising that the PRC employs cognitive warfare against current and former members of Taiwan’s military to persuade them to violently overthrow and assassinate Taiwan’s democratically elected officials

and military leaders when the PLA attempts to invade Taiwan. The exposure of such treasonous actions by once-trusted senior officers is another cognitive warfare tactic that the CCP employs to demoralize the people of Taiwan and encourage “Taiwan skepticism” in U.S. leaders’ minds.⁶⁰

Soviet Influence, Chinese Adaptation

In nearly all aspects, the Soviet Union initially provided the model for Chinese Communist policy, organization, and operations. Mao and his followers learned operational arts such as political and cognitive warfare from the Moscow-led Communist International (Comintern). As the Chinese Communists adapted those Soviet operational arts to China’s unique historical context, they merged Western revolutionary theory and practice with their own version of what might be termed “total war with Chinese characteristics.”⁶¹ For example, the CCP adopted Soviet concepts such as the united front that were not inherently Chinese in origin, and it built on Comintern teachings to develop its own formidable cognitive warfare capabilities. Due in large part to these Comintern foundations and subsequent interactions with the Soviet Union, today “the CCP possesses capabilities to control the information, thoughts, and actions of both its own population and those of foreign countries unimaginable to early despotic emperors and the 20th century’s most barbaric dictators,” according to journalist Yi-Zheng Lian.⁶²

In addition to assimilating and expanding the united front concept, the CCP’s concept of cognitive warfare is largely rooted in the Soviet concepts of *reflexive control*. Soviet mathematician Vladimir Lefebvre defined reflexive control as a process of transferring the bases for decision making from one

opponent to another. During the course of 40 years, the Soviet Union (and later the Russian Federation) developed the concept. According to *The Washington Times* national security correspondent Bill Gertz, the concept seeks to “convey to a partner or adversary tailored information that will lead to a target voluntarily making a (desired) predetermined decision.” Gertz reports that reflexive control includes “disinformation, camouflage and other strategic tools used against either the minds of enemy leaders and troops or through computer-based decision-making processors, such as those now emerging through artificial intelligence.” It works by “distracting the enemy, overloading information systems, creating exhaustion by tricking adversaries into useless operations and using the power of suggestion to introduce disinformation that will affect an enemy legally, morally or ideologically.” The Soviet concept of reflexive control provides a theoretical and practical foundation for the CCP’s contemporary cognitive warfare, under a broader rubric of what Beijing calls “intelligentized warfare.”⁶³

According to DeMarco, technology has “supercharged” the original concept of reflexive control, with attention-based algorithms on TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram rapidly delivering short and effective content to achieve emotional impact. He writes, “Shocking and divisive material is propelled to the most vulnerable audiences, bypassing traditional filters of trust and reputation.” It is both easy and common now to inject deepfakes and AI-generated content, whose true value lays less in deception than in corroding the “very idea of truth.” If anything can be faked, then anything “inconvenient” can be dismissed as fake, and this breeds a “cynical exhaustion” that leads people to stop trying to discern reality at all. The result,

says DeMarco, is that “societies fracture into tribes, each clinging to its own internally consistent story.”⁶⁴

Contemporary Russia-PRC Collaboration

Nearly four decades into the post-Soviet era, Russia and the PRC increasingly align cognitive domain activities, to include cyber and social media strategies, according to Dr. Tamás Matura, a senior fellow with the Democratic Resilience program at the Center for European Policy Analysis. The two countries have employed the capabilities to mutually reinforce each other’s narratives in geopolitical crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Regarding Ukraine, Tamás Matura cites content analysis of Chinese-language reports on the war that reveals a pattern of selective reporting, where Western military aid to Kyiv is portrayed as escalating the conflict while Russia’s responsibility downplayed or omitted. By crafting a media environment that minimizes Russia’s responsibility for the war, China effectively shapes public perception in favor of Moscow, especially among audiences in the Global South where Chinese media have significant reach.⁶⁵

Of particular concern to Taiwan, both nations have engaged in cognitive domain operations to undermine pro-democracy movements across Asia, with Russian president Vladimir Putin repeatedly publicly supporting the PRC’s claim of sovereignty over Taiwan. Together, the PRC and Russia exploit the openness of democratic societies to undermine public trust in institutions, influence electoral processes, and weaken democratic alliances. According to Matura, this cooperation, aided by the use of advanced technologies such as AI to generate and disseminate disinformation,

complicates detection and mitigation efforts, which poses formidable challenges to Taiwan and democracies globally.⁶⁶

Specifically, Russia has been a pioneer in the use of troll farms and bot networks to manipulate online discourse, and the PRC has adopted similar tactics. The PRC uses its own bot networks to promote state narratives and to suppress dissent. In support of cognitive operations, both nations deploy AI-generated content to create fabricated news stories, deepfake videos, and social media posts designed to distort reality. Russia now disseminates disinformation through Western AI chatbots and is therefore able to manipulate AI models rather than target human readers directly. It is likely that the PRC will employ this capability as well. Other cooperation between Russia and the PRC includes mutual amplification of each other's disinformation campaigns to increase their credibility and reach; targeted disinformation aimed at influencing elections in democratic nations, undermining support for Western-led institutions, and fueling polarization; and leveraging alternative platforms such as Telegram and WeChat in localized networks in the Global South.⁶⁷

In addition to leveraging social media platform, Russia and the PRC have run an application called "China-Russia Headlines" together to convey mutually supporting narratives, spread disinformation, disseminate propaganda, and post news content. Also, Russia's Gazprom and the PRC's China Central Television signed a memorandum of cooperation to "jointly promote technological innovation in the media sector," which includes AI tools. This cooperation was praised by the deputy minister of propaganda of the Central Committee of the CCP.⁶⁸

Technology for Totalitarian Mind Superiority

By 2011, PLA researchers recognized the increasing potential of cognitive warfare in an evolving technological era and expanded its conceptual framework. They developed new concepts for its application, from shaping public opinion in peacetime to influencing decision making in wartime. Specifically, they focused on consolidating internal support, undermining enemy resolve, and winning over neutral parties. By 2014, Chinese Communist scholars introduced the concept of “brain supremacy,” marking a shift from *information warfare* to *intelligence warfare*. This evolution emphasized securing an advantage in cognitive speed and processing, often termed *intelligence supremacy*.⁶⁹

The goal is to achieve *mind superiority* by using psychological warfare to shape and control the enemy’s cognitive thinking and decision making. In support of cognitive domain operations, the PLA is developing technologies for “subliminal messaging, deep fakes, overt propaganda, and public sentiment analysis on Facebook, Twitter, LINE, and other platforms.” Articles in PLA publications indicate that such actions may entail the PLA blackmailing or tarnishing the reputations of politicians and coopting individual influential civilian social media users “to extend the reach of Chinese propaganda while obfuscating its Party origins.”⁷⁰

A U.S. presidential report to Congress provides additional insight on other cognitive warfare weapons used by the PRC, such as propaganda: “China’s party-state controls the world’s most heavily resourced set of propaganda tools. Beijing communicates its narrative through state-run television, print, radio, and online organizations whose presence is proliferating in the United States and around the world.” Through its wide

array of options, to include coopting foreign news media and united front operations, the CCP imprint its narratives into the minds of its target audiences on issues such as Taiwan's sovereignty and claims to the South China Sea.⁷¹

Implications for Taiwan

As Taiwan evolves its understanding of MDCW and develops the capability to counter and defeat it, it is fighting on multiple fronts. It is fighting a war to defend Taiwan within its borders, to stymie the CCP's efforts to annex it through mind control of its citizens. This task is daunting, for reasons detailed in this study. But in reality, Taiwan must do much more. To set the conditions that will allow it to annex Taiwan, the CCP is targeting the United States and other countries central to Taiwan's defense.

What happens, asks Baughman, if through sustained CCP cognitive domain operations enough U.S. citizens, politicians, and influential people begin to believe that Taiwan is "simply a territory of China?" If Americans accept the CCP's false narrative that Taiwan's future is an "internal matter" for only Beijing to decide? For now, most Americans support the United States helping to defend Taiwan against a PRC invasion, but in time, suggests Baughman, "this mindset could be eroded through China's technologically driven cognitive domain operations."⁷²

As it fights to defend itself from existential CCP cognitive attack, Taiwan must accelerate its cognitive warfare capabilities and even help take the fight globally.

¹ "Cognitive Warfare Has Entered the Era of Combat for Brain Control," *Qiushi*, 2 June 2020.

² Wen-Ping Liu, *Cognitive Warfare against Taiwan during the Xi Jinping Era: Action and Countermeasures* (Taipei: Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau, 2023), 4.

³ “Cognitive Warfare Has Entered the Era of Combat for Brain Control.”

⁴ “Cognition,” American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology, last updated 19 April 2018.

⁵ Yang Cunshe, “Take the Pulse of Combat in the Quasi-Cognitive Domain,” *PLA Daily*, 16 August 2022.

⁶ *Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China, 2023: Annual Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2023), 158–59.

⁷ Nathan Beauchamp-Mustafaga and Michael S. Chase, *Borrowing a Boat out to Sea: The Chinese Military’s Use of Social Media for Influence Operations* (Washington, DC: SAIS Foreign Policy Institute, Johns Hopkins University, 2019), vii, 10.

⁸ Josh Baughman, “The People’s Liberation Army at the Nexus of Mind and Technology to Shape the Cognitive Battlefield,” in *Human, Machine, War: How the Mind-Tech Nexus Will Win Future Wars*, ed. Nicholas Wright, Michael Miklaucic, and Todd Veazie (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2025), 223–24; and Bill Gertz, “Brain Control Warfare: China’s Bleeding-Edge Strategy for Winning without Firing a Shot,” *Washington Times*, 5 June 2025.

⁹ Adm Samuel J. Paparo, USN, “The Future of Deterrence in the Indo-Pacific,” Honolulu Defense Forum, 11 January 2026. For the most recent annual U.S. Department of Defense report, see *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China, 2025* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2025).

¹⁰ Donald J. Trump, “Anti-Communism Week, 2025,” proclamation, White House, 7 November 2025.

¹¹ Chenggang Xu, “The Origins of China’s Institutions and Totalitarianism,” Hoover Institution, 30 April 2025.

¹² “Document 9: A ChinaFile Translation,” ChinaFile, Asia Society Center on U.S.-China Relations, 8 November 2013.

¹³ “Cognitive Warfare Has Entered the Era of Combat for Brain Control.”

¹⁴ In Taiwan, *cognitive warfare* is the predominate term used to describe the PRC’s immense malign influence and interference operations. *Political warfare* is the term traditionally used by many U.S. officials and researchers, as reflected in early Cold War-era U.S. State Department documents and works such as John Dotson, *The Chinese Communist Party’s Political Warfare Directed against Taiwan: Overview and Analysis*, GTI “Counter Ideological Work and Political Warfare” Research Series: Paper #1 (Washington, DC: Global Taiwan Institute, 2024); and Kerry K. Gershaneck, *Political Warfare: Strategies for Combatting China’s Plan to “Win without Fighting”* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.56686/9781732003125>. In addition to the term *political warfare*, European researchers often use *influence operations* to entail cognitive warfare, as reflected in Paul Charon and Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer, *Chinese Influence Operations: A Machiavellian Moment* (Paris: Institute for Strategic Research, Ministry for the Armed Forces, 2021).

¹⁵ Joel Wuthnow, “Systems Destruction Warfare and the PLA,” Institute for National Strategic Studies, March 2023.

¹⁶ Baughman, “The People’s Liberation Army at the Nexus of Mind and Technology to Shape the Cognitive Battlefield,” 223–25.

¹⁷ Mark Stokes and Russell Hsiao, *The People’s Liberation Army General Political Department: Political Warfare with Chinese Characteristics* (Arlington, VA: Project 2049 Institute, 2013), 3–7.

¹⁸ Dennis J. Blasko, “PLA Weaknesses and Xi’s Concerns about PLA Capabilities” (testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 7 February 2019).

¹⁹ “Xi Jinping Is Obsessed with Political Loyalty in the PLA,” *Economist*, 6 November 2023.

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- ²² Nathan Beauchamp-Mustafaga and Jackson Smith, "Cognitive Domain Operations against Vietnam Hint at Broader Ambitions," Jamestown Foundation *China Brief* 24, no. 13 (2024).
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- ²⁴ *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2024*, 37–39; and *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community, 2025* (Washington, DC: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2025), 13.
- ²⁵ Jeremiah Lumbaca, *Cognitive Warfare to Dominate and Redefine Adversary Realities: Implications for U.S. Special Operations Forces*, JSOU Report 25-23 (MacDill AFB, FL: Joint Special Operations University Press, 2025), 4.
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- ²⁷ Robin Burda, *Cognitive Warfare as Part of Society: Never-Ending Battle for Minds* (Hague: Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, 2023), 2–3.
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- ³¹ *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China, 2023*, 158.
- ³² L. J. Eads et al., *Warfare in the Cognitive Age: NeuroStrike and the PLA's Advanced Psychological Weapons and Tactics* (Washington, DC: CCP Biothreats Initiative, 2023), 2–13.
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⁴³ The concept of the *united front* was originally formulated by Vladimir Lenin in his 1920 essay " 'Left-Wing' Communism: An Infantile Disorder," in *Collected Works*, vol. 31 (USSR: Progress Publishers, 1964), 17–118. According to Paul Charon and Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer, Lenin "criticized the communists who refused to take advantage of the platform offered by the democratic life in parliamentary regimes in the name of ideological purity." They go on to explain that "the United Front is one of the 'three magic weapons' theorized by Mao Zedong in 1938, with the other two being armed struggles and the construction of the Party." See Charon and Jeangène Vilmer, *Chinese Influence Operations*, 29, 35–36.

⁴⁴ Lyman P. Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends: The United Front in Chinese Communist History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967), 3; and *Hearing on Strategic Competition with China, before the House Committee on Armed Services*, 115th Cong. (2018) (testimony by Aaron L. Friedberg), hereafter Friedberg testimony.

⁴⁵ Charon and Jeangène Vilmer, *Chinese Influence Operations*, 38–39.

⁴⁶ The examination of the four strategic goals is derived primarily from Ross Babbage, *Winning without Fighting: Chinese and Russian Political Warfare Campaigns and How the West Can Prevail*, vol. I (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2019), 24–25.

⁴⁷ Friedberg testimony.

⁴⁸ Babbage, *Winning without Fighting*, 25.

⁴⁹ The analysis of PRC political warfare in this section is based on the following sources. For detailed insight into the devastating ramifications of PRC annexation of Taiwan to the people of Taiwan and major democracies, see David Santoro and Ralph Cossa, eds., *The World after Taiwan's Fall*, vol. 23, *Issues & Insights* (Honolulu, HI: Pacific Forum International, 2023). For in-depth examinations of PRC political warfare against Taiwan, see J. Michael Cole, *Democracy under Fire: China's Political Warfare against Taiwan during President Tsai Ing-Wen's First Term* (Ottawa: Macdonald-Laurier Institute, 2020); Gershaneck, *Political Warfare*, 98–49; and Kerry K. Gershaneck, *Media Warfare: Taiwan's Battle for the Cognitive Domain* (Washington DC: Center for Security Policy, 2021).

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⁵¹ Dan Southerland, "Unable to Charm Taiwan into Reunification, China Moves to Subvert Island's Democracy," *Radio Free Asia*, 25 May 2018.

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- ⁵⁴ "Cognitive Warfare Has Entered the Era of Combat for Brain Control."
- ⁵⁵ Michael P. Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower* (New York: Henry Holt, 2015), 31–51.
- ⁵⁶ Pillsbury, *The Hundred-Year Marathon*, 35–36.
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- ⁵⁸ Mosher, *Hegemon*, 20–25.
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- ⁶⁵ Tamás Matura, "Sino-Russian Convergence in Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference: A Global Threat to the U.S. and Its Allies," Center for European Policy Analysis, 30 June 2025, 1–15.
- ⁶⁶ Matura, "Sino-Russian Convergence in Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference," 1–25.
- ⁶⁷ Matura, "Sino-Russian Convergence in Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference," 8.
- ⁶⁸ Matura, "Sino-Russian Convergence in Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference," 16–17.
- ⁶⁹ Cdr Jeremy (Yen-ming) Chen, ROC Navy, "The Challenges Taiwan Faces in Cognitive Warfare and Its Impact on U.S.–Taiwan Relations," *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs* (Spring 2025): 89–101.
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