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The evolution of propaganda in modern conflicts: the USA and public opinion in three war case studies.

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Abstract

With the advent of new technologies in the fields of mass media and communication, the concept of war propaganda has changed. This investigation aims at assessing the extent to which the evolution of propaganda has affected its role in times of international conflict. The study will deconstruct methods and dynamics of propaganda campaigns, related to WW2, the Vietnam War, and the Iraq War - the focus will be on observing how US propaganda shapes popular belief, in contrast to its opposition. The extensive research is based on a wide range of sources that provide two main findings. Propaganda has evolved towards the misinformation of the public through the manipulation of mass media in the US; the final finding of the research details that a successful propaganda campaign is crucial for a positive outcome in war.

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1. Introduction

Everyone likes a good story. Stories are what hold humanity together. Unlike in the past, where tales would be passed on generationally and verbally, today we are at disposal of virtually infinite information, through new communication tools that have been developed. When understanding the dynamics of current international relations, history has great value, as it allows for a comprehensive view of the mechanisms of the past, therefore teaching how to foreign and domestic actors relate and manage the outbreak of conflict. What strikes as relevant in assessing the lessons of the recent past, is the methodology of the distribution on knowledge during major multinational combat; what is even more interesting is observing the evolution of means of communication which left governments uneducated on how to make efficient use of these new mass media outlets. This investigation puts a lot of emphasis on the analysis of actions taken by different international actors during wartime, as it further motivated my research in examining the role of means of communication in wartime – propaganda is the focus of this text, the author’s goal is to reveal that propaganda and media today and in the past have been crucial for the outcome of a successful war campaign.

An objective of this paper is to analyse the developments and main events during major wars of modern history, as the explanation will provide a thorough perception of the behaviour of the actors in battle and in the home front. The part of the description of war events is fundamental to the focus of this thesis, as that is the story that we the public have known of decades later, through recorded battles, images or tales. After the researcher exposed the chronological timeline of the conflicts, the investigation stresses the importance of propaganda, as it is the ‘good story’ that is told in the domestic front, in order to maintain stability and increase support for war. The assessment of the data leads to the theory that propaganda and means of mass communication are very valuable for accounting the success of a country at war. This investigation displays the approach of different, opposing governmental institutions, regarding their propaganda campaigns and eventually media coverage in the last two wars analysed; the evaluation of the campaign leads to believe that propaganda has a more important role than it is led to believe.

Everyone likes a good story. This statement has been a motivation for the development of this thesis, as it reflects the objective of executing a successful propaganda

campaign, creating a believable and likeable story for the population, which would then be passed on for generations to come. The research will be divided in chapters that focus on the matters of WW2, the Vietnam War and the Iraq War; following the assessment of the historical accuracy of the events, the investigation continues to detail the mediatic strategies of the United States, compared to relative opposing faction (Nazi Germany, the National Front Liberation, Hussein's regime). By focusing on the United States' propaganda use throughout three wars the document will be able to display the evolution of propaganda through using the state as a constant variable to assess; the opposing faction analysis is also important to the outcome of this research as it creates public opinion competition in the different conflicts. The research will reveal findings that answer the matter of the importance of a successful propaganda campaign during international clashes, and different methods will used by different nations, will be examined, underlying the failures and success in relation to the outcome of the war. The structure of this document creates an organized display of actions taken in war and the information manipulation techniques used; on the last chapter, *Conclusion*, the author leaves the reader with an objective assessment of research methodology as well as limitations to the investigation and overall achievements, concluding that the concept of propaganda has brought a revolution in war dynamics, and has been accurately used as a tool to shape belief in public opinion.

1.1 Literature Review

In order to identify and summarize the findings of this investigation, the researcher will conduct a literature review to categorize the different sources used on this paper. The task for this document is to give an understanding of how different wars have developed in the recent decades, as well as identifying the key actors, and put to test the efficiency of propaganda as a mean for attack. The material for this investigation, was discovered through the internet through the assessment of published journals and articles found on both online data bases and the web; the author decided to complete such research on the internet as he believes that an investigation on the internet allows form further information, moreover in the study there will be present different types of sources, that create a better understating of the use of propaganda. Analysing the current findings, journals, witnesses and articles from the time of conflict depicts

a 360-degree setting, that allows the reader to value the importance of each source in relation to the thesis argument.

To complete the task of explaining the events of the war, the researcher has put his focus to crosscheck data with resources that came from different times, when at war, and in recent years; in the paper this distinction between modern and former-current news articles will be displayed through different citations, moreover during the analysis of the historical periods, the researcher decided to value different encyclopaedias to confirm definite information. In assessing the propaganda, and later media coverage from the time of WW2, the Vietnam War, and the Iraq War the investigation proceeded through the analysis of original material from the propaganda campaigns, documented through images on this study, which allow for an objective opinion regarding the messaging and meaning behind such orchestrated campaigns from two members of the conflict. Going on with the document, in the case of the Iraq War, the research moves towards the breakdown of the shift in propaganda towards mass-media control of information - this is discussed through the use of primary sources that reported events as the US invasion was ongoing, as there is still a lack of a complete picture of the conflict due to its historically recent development.

Most sources used in this dissertation are considered secondary, as these are extracts from academic journals, newspaper articles and opinions from different historians which the researcher deems reliable, however in the examination of propaganda, in the case of Vietnam and Iraq, primary sources are used to assess the effectiveness of the opinion controlling propaganda. For Vietnam there is a detailed journal of a US veteran, that has put his efforts during his retirement to collect material and process it through a thorough study of imagery and moral values. In the case of the Iraq War, in assessing the influence of Western television networks in Iraqi territory, local academic Al Mutar, describes growing up under conflict as well as the methodology of media control from the United States.

The study terminates with a quote from another war veteran, which alludes to the importance of information as a mean to build military strategy and to the evolution it had during recent history. The importance of media in today's relation to war is crucial as the research will show that regardless of the different advantages of one side of the conflict, having the control of popular opinion in the Homefront, according to historical evidence, leads to a successful war campaign.

2. The Second World War

2.1 Developments of World War II

With the last summer breeze of 1939, on 1st September, the German Army, lead by the Nazi-Party, invaded their neighbouring country of Poland, starting a war that would in the years be named the Second World War (*Vasquez, 1996*). The first clash between the two rival forces happened in Westerplatte close to Danzig, where the German battleships annihilated the peninsula; the conflict left few people able to tell the story, however Polish war veteran Ignacy Skowron recalls of terrible events of the clash, addressing the immense military superiority as the German forces were furnished with cutting-edge battleships, supplied with cannons, which shells would destroy houses and trees, moreover during the days following the devastation, German troops were ordered to used flamethrowers to overcome the few that survived(*Easton, 2009*). The news of the devastating attack had reached other European forces, this event was the climax of years of tension and it was only two days after that Britain and France declared war on the Nazi regime. During the same time, the USA decided to stay neutral and not to engage in direct conflict, yet it still played a role in the development of the dispute as President Roosevelt provided crucial military aid to Great Britain, in order to face the German forces. By the end of 1939 Germany marched forward with expansion, coming out successful in different war zones, including weakening mentally and economically Great Britain, forcing them to impose food rationing and advising the population to wear gas masks in the event of an attack, and by dividing Polish territory with the Soviet forces, following a non aggression agreement, stipulated prior to the invasion, the Molotov Ribbentrop Pact (*Lofoco, 2018*).

In 1940 Hitler's forces marched to Scandinavia, leaving Denmark with no chances, due to the lack of superior military, causing the state to surrender - Norway however received assistance from allies Britain and France, but following domestic attacks in France, Norway was also forced to surrender as the foreign aid that kept the afloat terminated(*Robinson, 2011*). In May of the same year, Great Britain had a change in leadership, with Winston Churchill as Prime Minister, a key player in the politics of this massive conflict. The military advancement of the German army, led to a quick conquest of minor European forces, as the Nazi would overthrow them in bellic technology and number of troops; this advantage also managed to tame the French troops and take the capital Paris. After Paris buildings were flashing Nazi

banners, Germany signed an armistice, creating a new affiliated Vichy government, headed by Petain; the Vichy government was responsible to govern Southern and Eastern France, while Germany would still oversee the remaining territory (*Boissoneault, 2017*) . Later the same summer, Churchill and Hitler would send their relative air forces, the Royal Air Force(RAF) and the Luftwaffe, to clash in the British coastline - the battle lasted from July to September, yet Hitler's initial plan was to allow Britain to settle for a peace negotiation, but they refused. The German plan then changed, to weaken the costal shielding and overcome the RAF, however the British air force managed to tackle the attacks through the use of new radars that would detect enemy presence in the sky. During the first month of the battle the Royal Air Force managed to take down a major part of the Luftwaffe's fleet, exactly 155 planes, as the use of such radars allowed for a precise target to attack. German General Goring, however still managed to weaken RAF, through strategic bombing of airplane supply factories in areas close, if not in major cities, including the Capital London - British defence however still allowed the United Kingdom to postpone further German attacks, leading to the end of the conflict, but not completely as the occupation would definitely end in May of 1941 (*Robinson, 2011*) .

Europe came out devastated by the German armies as the War broke out, mainly due to military advancement and this enabled Hitler to control most of the continent's territory. Having seized power in the old continent, following the loss of ally, Italy, in Tobruk and Greece, Germany started to take the expansion to a global scale, starting by aiding Mussolini's forces, and by arriving in Africa in February and in Yugoslavia in April of 1941. In the same year a major operation that would change the dynamics of political and military relationships between Germany and Russia; Operation Barbarossa was an invasion attack started in June of 1941, when Nazi troops operated attacks to their to be former ally, the Soviet Union. This tactical surprise led to Hitler and the Axis members to create a front only few hundred miles from the city of Moscow; the dictator's strategy to further the Arian Lebensraum and to destroy communism still , did not account for the hard living conditions of the Eastern Winter, allowing for a Soviet counter attack later in December (*Carter, 2018*) . On the other side of the world, in the Pacific Ocean, in the same December of the Soviet counter attack, Japanese forces, member of the Axis, decided to strike a US Navy base in Hawaii, as a response to trade embargoes imposed by the American government. The United States suffered major losses following the attack, as the Japanese forces took down over 2'000 Army troops, over 50 civilians, as well as an important size of their fleet. President Roosevelt was always sceptic of joining this conflict, even addressing Churchill at Newfoundland by saying : "I would wage

war, but not declare it “ -- and do everything he could to “force and incident that could lead to war” (Stone, 2016). Such statement explains the US support of France and Britain, and it also allows to comprehend the decision of the United States to join the war against the Axis - few days after the Pearl Harbour attacks, Germany, Japan and Italy declared war to the first non-European major force.

The start of 1942 saw a new alliance composed by the United states, the United Kingdom, China and the Soviet Union - together with Australia, Belgium, El-Salvador, Costa Rica, Cuba, Honduras, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Nicaragua, Panama, Poland and South Africa the countries decided to sign the Declaration of the United Nations, which demanded the signatories not to engage a separate peace with the powers of the rival Axis. The creation of this new ally and the United Nations enabled a more structured defence plan in different continents, as the enemies had already seized major territories in Europe, South East Asia and North Africa (*Britannica, 2017*). This part of the Second world war is considered by different historians as a turning point in the conflict; 1942 saw both the peak of the Axis’ expansion as well as the start of its demise. The Japanese army was terribly weakened by American forces after the Battle of Midway in the Pacific, allowing for more US control over the region. Germany also suffered heavy a back track on two fronts, the first after British forces won at El-Alamein in North Africa, and the second in the Eastern front as Soviet Union’s troops took back Stalingrad(*Hambling, 2017*).

Hitler’s first defeat happened following the Battle of Stalingrad, where his troops were forced to surrender; Germany and its allies had started to receive multiple losses. The North African occupation by the Italians and the Germans ended in 1943, the control of this region from the Allies, allowed US troops to invade and free the Italian island of Sicily in July, proceeding to free the rest of the peninsula in the following months. The fascist Italian government falls after the American occupation, however he manages to create a small fascist republic in the northern region of Italy. The Eastern front saw the Soviet Union seize power in former Nazi conquered cities, such as Kiev and Kharkiv; the win was costly, as the Russian economy was truly weakened by German occupation, also there were very high Soviet casualties prior and during these conflict, amounting for about 5 million soldiers (*Tharoor, 2016*).

The following year, 1944, the Allies started seizing more control over former Axis captured cities all over the world. In Asia, Japanese forces had authority over Burma, Guam and New Guinea, however such authority had started to be challenged followed by Chinese influence, that led to the creation of a strong communist-affiliated resistance, that would cause trouble in the administration of such territories from the Japanese regime (*Kichiku, 2018*). In Southern Europe, more precisely in Italy, the Allies led by the Americans and partnered with Italian resistance Partigiani, moved north to Anzio, where they would meet Italian and German troops; German troops retreated in late May, and in June fascist Rome fell. This was a great victory for the Allies, as it proved that the Germans could be defeated (*Kappes, 2003*). Coincidentally, a day after the liberation of Italy from Mussolini's fascist state, on June 6, Allies' forces of 130'00 troops and a fleet of over ten thousand airplanes travelled to Normandy to proceed with Operation Overlord overseen by US General Eisenhower. The attack caused plenty of casualties from the Allies' troops, as the territorial location made for tough impregnation of German outposts, nonetheless such rude awakening of from US and UK forces, slowly allowed them to seize control of the region, leading to the liberation of Paris months later (*Coffee, 2019*).

The year of the end of the Second World War, 1945, saw Nazi Germany crumble upon all the territories conquered in the prior years. The Soviet Union continued to gain land from the Eastern front, managing to free different concentration camps, including Auschwitz - the liberation causes for a complete understanding of the atrocities executed by the Hitler's National Socialist Party to the European Jewish community. Italy had been freed already, and the Western Allies started to march north to reach the German capital of Berlin, in order to declare the war over and won, however Soviet Union troops reached the capital first on 21 April, portraying the end of the most horrible chapter in our history (*Fuggle, 2018*). The situation on the other side of the world, in the Pacific, was not yet resolved at the time of the downfall of the European dictatorships - British forces pushed the enemy outside of Burma, and American troops freed the Philippines, forcing the Japanese to retreat from the region. There was a plan to decide to invade the Japanese archipelago, however new US President Harry Truman, though that a further loss of troops and strong Japanese resistance, could do more harm than good to the US; it was on 6 August that the first Atomic bomb was launched on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, and three days later one in Nagasaki. Such strike was preferred instead of direct attack, and forced Japan to surrender, as no country could survive such devastating attack.

With the US bombing Japan, history states that the War was over, and new treaties were signed to account for territory and economical agreements, as well as trials for the atrocities committed during the war. This was by no doubt the biggest conflict in our history, amounting for 50 million deaths (*Robinson, 2011*).

2.2 Analysis of American Propaganda During the Second World War

As understood from the evaluation of the development of this war, the United States, joined the conflict once it had already been started, following an incident that frightened the whole country, Pearl Harbour. The attack led to not only the deployment of forces on European and African sites, but also to a true mobilization of media to boost the support and increase the commitment taken by the US Army men. This new structured mediatic relationship between the Government and the citizens, truly had its developments and its creative peak during WW2; through posters, advertising, radio, movies, comic books and televised announcements (*Hasin, 2019*). At first the United States government, was hesitant in creating propaganda campaign to personalize the war, however engagement from the for-profit sector, increased the willingness to produce real war propaganda campaigns.

In 1942, President Roosevelt, following his advisors, formed the Office War of Information (OWI) ; the goal of this committee was to convince the American population that the defeat of the evil totalitarian regime, that was Germany, and to persuade the popular opinion to believe that in the end means justify the ends, meaning that war was necessary (*Little, 2016*) . Roosevelt's effective propaganda campaign is credited to the Writers War Board, which was connected and responsible for spreading content from Hollywood movies, to the radio. There were different methods for this group to subconsciously infiltrate into the American homes.

Posters played a major role in the OWI's campaign; they used such platforms to promote less costly living standards, to invest in war bonds and to save scrap metals for military recycle. These images would be all around urban areas of mid-1900s America, perpetuating the mind of the civilians, into believing that the support from home, was almost if not more important (*Riddle, 2017*).

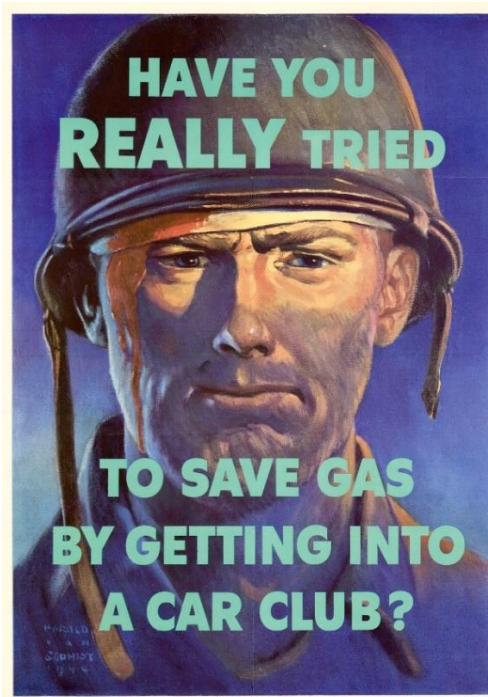


Figure 1 : US promotes car sharing, through image of proud soldier



Figure 2 : promotion of war bonds, with the depiction of American flag and soldier

The propaganda support on the Homefront did not only limit to the methodology displayed above; in order to reach the viable midst of children, war propaganda expanded into comic books - already existing editions, such as Dr.Seuss, would have to include war related themes in order to normalize this phenomena (Gritz, 2017).



Figure 3: Dr.Seuss involved in US propaganda demonizing enemy



Figure 4 : superheroes defeating German troops

Running themes of US war propaganda did not stand exclusive to support the home front, yet it developed posters that portrayed the enemy as a caricature or extremely villainized. The OWI would of course target the Italian, Japanese and German, who were the enemy Axis.



Figure 5 : depiction of enemies as dreadful snakes, holders of chains

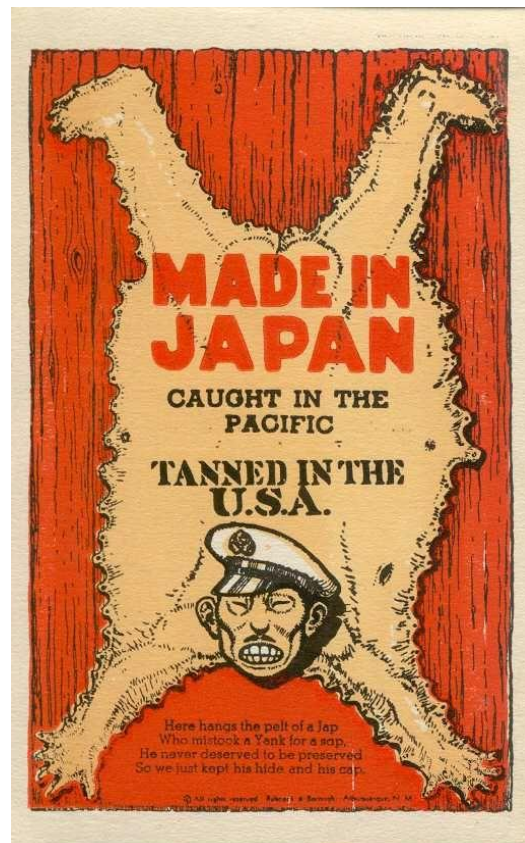


Figure 6: demonization of Japanese culture

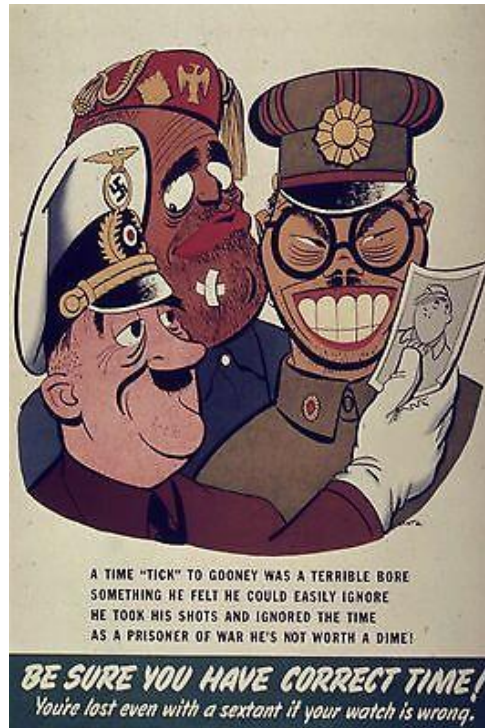


Figure 7 : caricatures of enemy leaders

As displayed in the above pictures, Mussolini Hitler and Hiroto are represented as evil, through the depictions of a snake in that is keeping prisoners in chains, and a racist appealing comment that denigrate the Japanese. Lastly through the portraying the three deformed faces of the Axis leaders, it sends a message to the American homes that the adversary is in bad shape and is ignorant of the wrath of the United States.

The methodology of the US government to transmit the news regarding the conflict, was deceiving ; in order to give the idea that the war was proceeding as planned and turning out as a success, the Writers War Board, would make sure that victories would be overtold, and portrayed as glorious, while on the other hand the committee would be responsible for underplaying the losses, through news censorship, or through strongly advice for the news agencies (Howell, 2007).

The propaganda campaign executed by the US Government during this war, was spread all through different mediums, and was able to capture the attention of the Americans at home, simply because, ironically, they were bombarded with images, movies - to some extent one could attribute domestic war propaganda as one of the variables for the success of the US in the Second World War. True aid came from the behaviour of the citizens at home, as savings

on oil, and the implementation of a system of recycle to build armaments and war supplies - but mostly it gave President Roosevelt and the US trust from the population, and there was little vocal and physical criticism for the war.

2.3. Analysis of Nazi Propaganda During the Second World War

The first war that was illustrated in this document, saw Germany playing the role of the instigator, and major power that created a cross-national alliance that allowed him to further his political ideology. In the context of connection and manipulation of popular opinion, Hitler's regime saw propaganda as an important tool to settle in the mind of its population, and its leader even purposely dedicated its ministry, the Ministry of Propaganda, headed by Joseph Goebbels. The method that the minister took to attract the masses, was principled on a personal approach, and decided that would affect the German citizens through displaying violence and demagoguery, as it fuelled the positive Nazi momentum of the war (*Vanno, 2019*).

The Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (RMVP), which was the original name of the office, started to create an image of an above-all leader, through the deification of Hitler. One of the first objectives of Goebbels' tasks, was to portray the Fuhrer as God-like, by displaying posters around the cities that had Hitler standing proud to be German and victorious; Such designs that augmented the popular opinion of Hitler, were effective, as through picturing a radiant Hitler, in an authoritarian stance was able to change the perception of his identity, and led to the evolution of a cult of personality (*Narayanaswam, 2018*). The images reported below, display such method.



Figure 8: Translation: One population, one leader



Figure 9: Translation: He loves Germany

Like other foreign propaganda campaigns during the Second World War, Hitler's Third Reich, also used media outlets, such as radio and posters, in order to oversimplify war, and to villainy the enemy. Hitler's infamous enemy, was the Jewish community in Europe, and through his propaganda document, Mein Kampf, he had already stressed that the Arian was

superior, and the Jewish community, was the cause for most plagues in the modern and ancient world; the German dictator, saw this European minority as a diseases that was to be eradicated. Before and during the intercontinental armed conflict, the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda, also generated campaigns that would denigrate the Jewish community - such information would lead the German population to believe that the Aryan race was superior, and state that Jews were the enemy, creating also a sense of detachment between the two community (Welch, 2011). Like other countries, the method of Us against them, turns out to be successful in blooming hatred.

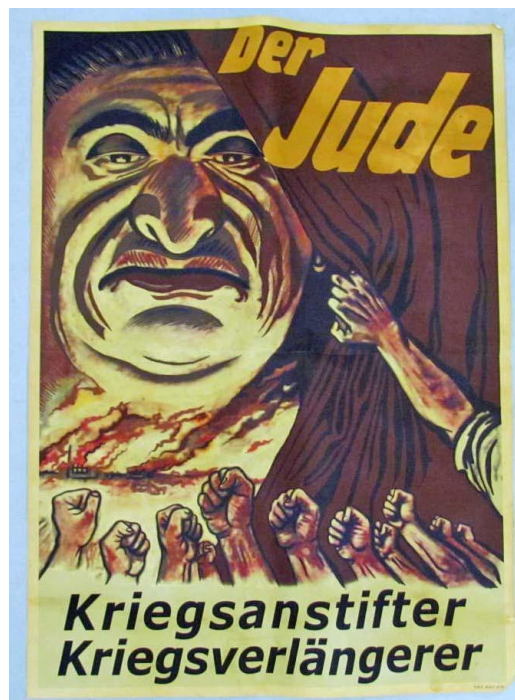


Figure 10: Anti Jewish movie poster

During his rule, Hitler was aware of how valuable this means of communication were to create a link between his leadership and his followers; movies and art exhibitions that were strictly anti-Semitism, were very popular in Nazi Germany. One of the most famous movie production of the Nazi regime, was 'The Eternal Jews' of 1940; this film was directed by Franz R. Friedl , and was attributed to use multiple Hollywood movie techniques to enhance the meaning of the picture. The images of the movies display dark scenes that showed the regular life of a 'miserable' Jew - the techniques used by the director, also included music, which would further relate the audience's emotions, to the pictures shown (Steinberg, 2012). Below is the poster for Friedl's picture, which once again emphasizes the over exaggerated characteristics of a Jewish follower.



Figure 11: Another inaccurate depiction of Jews, creating a sense of repulsion

Having evaluated the methodology of German propaganda during, it is correct to state, that this political move of enhancing propaganda in order to expand the Nazi culture has been effective. Regardless of the terrible depictions of the Jewish community, Hitler's propaganda Ministry action in developing the Nazis cult, managed to embark the millions of people to believe that what was displayed was considered the truth, through the techniques evaluated above.

2.4. Comparison of the Propaganda Campaigns

The global dispute of the mid-20th Century, has brought out of the technological advancement from all the actors of the war, as new armaments and means of connections, like airplanes and radar were shown off during battle - nevertheless, an argument could be made that propaganda campaign also took a radical reach during those same years.

Assessing the methodology of propaganda from the United States, a democracy, and the German Third Reich, a totalitarian regime, one can notice the similarities in the approach. The United States Writers War Board, under the supervision of President Roosevelt, created images and concepts that boosted the morale for the population, during a time of war -

through the creation of such propaganda campaign, the US was able to maintain political stability in the country, and also fabricated a trend of patriotism. On the other hand, we are able to recognize Goebbels' communication tactics in a similar way, forming a strong cult of personality for the Nazi leader, Hitler, which strengthened the support from his citizens - creating a more extreme form of patriotism (*Trueman, 2015*).

The similarities between the two states, in creating a propaganda campaign, also continue in the physical exaggeration of the enemy's perception. Germany's Ministry of Propaganda, as analysed in the previous paragraphs, created posters and also through other media outlets, managed to portray Jews as repulsive, depicting an image of unhygienic and evil. The US on the other hand developed similar propaganda in order to display the true enemy and demonstrating that the United States army was superior. Such political tactics allowed both governments to further the tensions between the two rivals and augmented the concept of us against them.

In evaluating the differences and similarities between the two propaganda campaigns, it comes difficult to deny the identical approach to connect and gain support from the home front.

3. The Vietnam War

3.1. Developments of the Vietnam War

The Vietnam War is a conflict between the United States and its capitalist allies, and North Vietnam, the Viet Cong and its communist allies, which directly and indirectly included major forces such as China and the Soviet Union; the clash between these two spheres of influence spread through different parts of the South East Asian region, most precisely in South and North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and in the South China Sea. Different historians argue regarding the time frame of the Vietnam War, as different events cause doubt in the exact date of the start, yet for the purpose of this thesis, the time frame will be 1954-1975, accounting the outbreak at the start of United State involvement in Vietnam (*Hopkins,2000*).

Until the start of the Second World War, Vietnam was a French colony, that had the purpose to enforce and spread Catholicism, however with the start of the war in Europe in 1939, and the major losses taken by France, the colony was left weakened , and ultimately Japan took control over Indochina. Bao Dai, the former France-affiliated leader, was left to rule by the Japanese, as it posed no threats. With the end of WW2, that devastated Japan, Bao Dai's rule fell under Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Viet Minh, a communist militia that was opposing the Japanese oppression during the prior years (*Szalontai,2018*); on 2 September of 1945 the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was formed, choosing Hanoi as its capital. During the years before the outbreak of the Vietnam war, there was the First Indochina War (1946-1954), that included the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the French oppressors allied with the Kingdom of Laos and Cambodia.

At the same time, the world was developing its first feelings of international post-war tensions between these two spheres of influence, manifesting in anti-communist aids from the US and vice-versa with the Soviet Union and its satellite states; it was an indirect conflict, and it inspired its name, the Cold War. In the first Indochina War, the US had started to display its willingness of involvement, as the aid provided to the French did not only include money and war supplies, but also and mostly military and decision making assistance, ultimately leading to the creation of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) from the US in order to maintain French General Navarre's position (*LePage,2011*). The final outcome of the First

Indochina War was decided in the Geneva accords of 1954, creating two separate states divided by the 17th parallel, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the north and the State of Vietnam in the south - the accords also granted independence to Laos and Cambodia, ending the French colonization (Watt, 1967). A referendum called in 1955 by the State of Vietnam to reunite the two states, the outcome led to the creation of the Republic of Vietnam, which promoted democracy and had its capital Saigon, well connected with western powers. On the other hand the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was focused on imposing land reforms to re distribute to the poor population of the region, during this period terror was used in order to enforce such policies, by killing landowners and catholic opposition (Callahan, 2004). The conflict between these two states, would be named the Second Indochina War, but to the rest of the world the Vietnam War.

Subsequently to years of government and attacks from both sides in their relative states, the Republic of Vietnam started to show its first symptoms of weakening, as the National Liberation Front (NLF), later recognised as Viet Cong started to rise in popularity. This organization was composed by the population of the Republic of Vietnam that did not agree with the roman catholic policies that its leadership enforced, and other communist forces from the South, and was supplied with military aid from the communist North through the Ho Chi Minh Trail, that connected the whole peninsula. An influence of the United States government, prior to its settlement, was the Strategic Hamlet Program of 1946 (Simkin, 1997), where small protected villages were created to protect the residents of the countryside from the spread of the NLF - however this policy was not successful as it eventually led to more popularity amongst the Viet Cong (Friedman, 2004).

By 1962, John F. Kennedy was President in the United States, and had put most of its effort to minimize the communist expansion (Bryant, 2013) - in relation to the Second Indochina War, Kennedy continued the American support in technological aid and support in organization of military action, however the forces of South Vietnam continued to suffer heavy losses due to skilful guerrilla warfare from the NLF; the 1963 Battle of Ap Bac is considered as the first major victory from the Viet Cong, and the start of the demise of the capitalist affiliated government (Dnewbold, 2016). Religious tension between the Buddhist population and the Catholic government and eventually led to a coup from the military and the assassination of the President Ngo Dinh Diem - following the revolt, occupation from the communist affiliated Viet Cong in the South is at its maximum (Ny Post, 2013). To further the

tension, Kennedy is assassinated a few weeks later, and President Lyndon B. Johnson becomes President of the US. Johnson followed in continuing the commitment of stopping communist expansion by trying to tackle it through different methods, such as on site CIA training and naval presence. In 1964, the US Government passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, after US Ship Maddox was involved in different incidents with the Vietnamese forces; this resolution allowed the United States to use their military to contrast the domino effect of communism (*US State Department*).

After the re-election of President Johnson, his policies became more leaning towards war, and started to call for troops to fight it. 'The draft' was a lottery-like system that decided at random who was to add to the military forces to travel to Vietnam - this system however had been criticized for its legitimacy, as trends showed that the draft was not equally distributed which led to doubting the mechanism and the government (*Rutenberg, 2017*). Adding to the decrease of the War's popularity, was the hippie movement, and the liberal thought that was spreading in America during the 1960s. The attack of an American aviation facility in Pleiku, triggered the US Government to issue military action, through Operation Rolling Thunder and Operation Flaming Dart of 1965, which consisted of intense airstrikes, bombing campaign and use of new chemical weapon, Napalm (*Dragon, 2016*).

Later the same year, the first US ground troops arrive at At Da Nang with only 3'000 marines, however by the end of 1965 US troops amounted for 200'000 soldiers. General Westmoreland is attributed to bring back morale to the US troops, following ineffective attacks and losses (*The Guardian, 1965*). The US General made sure to organize a strategy that would bring the American forces from losing, to heavy offense that planned on crushing the Viet Cong and Communist Vietnam territory through the use of their technological advancement (*NY Times, 1971*). With the help of this offensive policy, as well as the creation of the S.E.A.T.O. (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization included: Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Laos, Cambodia), the situation in South Vietnam managed to remain stable, also through a new moderate leader Nguyen Cao Ky. However US troops still found their warfare tactics efficient, even if they had an advantage in technology and military action, as the Viet Cong and other forces, knew the territory better, and could withstand the living conditions of the tropical region. The Cu Chi tunnels were also played a major role in the defeat of American troops; such tunnels would allow NLF militia to travel to United States outposts and attack with the advantage of surprise, leading to multiple successes for the communists (*Warren, 2017*). The

Tet offensive of 1968, was a massive attack from the Viet Cong that spread across all of the southern territory of Vietnam, leaving the American to defend against thousands of troops across 100 cities. The capitalist counter attack was still effective, and was able to push the enemy to Hue, where the bloodiest battle of the Vietnam War occurred; in the meantime Johnson had been addressing the war in Vietnam as successful, however media coverage from Asia, arrived to the western continent, shocking the families of America.

This caused for a reconsideration of credibility of the President and the government, but also developed the imminent popular resentment of the war. It was not only the blood full and possibly meaning less loss of American troops that shocked the population worldwide , but also the behaviour of the same troops, which was accounted and dated for mass civilian casualties (*Bowman, 2018*). An example of such atrocities is the My Lai Massacre, of 16 March 1968, where US troops killed unarmed civilians including elders, women and children - the news however, was only reported to the media in the United States in 1969.

The rise in unpopularity of western involvement in the Vietnam War, led to the Paris Peace Negotiation of 1968 , where US ambassador Harriman and North Vietnamese negotiator Xuan Thuy agreed to stop the bombing of the North Vietnamese region. Nixon takes US Office in 1969, and begins to withdraw troops and substitute them with trained South Vietnamese soldiers (*Ferrel, 2016*). In the same year, Ho Chi Minh dies, and the Politburo of the Communist Party of Vietnam is formed in order to oversee by collective leadership the end of the war. Nixon decided to escalate in the offensive even when the US agreed to terminate bombing, and through Operation Menu, bombed Cambodia to prove that America could win the war anyways (*Lewis, 1971*).

The retaliation developed in multiple conflict on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in 1971. Information was revealed to the US public from the New York Times, through top-security leaks , on data and operations of the prior years in Vietnam - the articles would be named the Pentagon Papers (*West, 2017*). The Easter offensive of 1972, led by Nguyen Hue demonstrated Nixon and the US troops that the North Vietnamese forces are a threat; this caused Nixon to agree to proceed with Operation Linebacker, and Operation Linebacker II, which stopped the Northern offensive through intense bombing on enemy lines and cities in the North, such as Hanoi and Haiphong . This massive strike brought the two enemies to the table once again in Paris in 1973, causing Nixon to suspend the offensive and end the 'Draft' - ending the United

States involvement in the Vietnamese conflicts by March of 1973 (*Kesby, 2012*). Although the representatives and responsible for the peace between the United States and North Vietnam, Kissinger and Le Duc Tho were awarded with a Nobel peace prize, true peace was not really achieved in Vietnam. South Vietnam suffered heavily the absence of American presence in the economic sphere, due to rising oil prices; North Vietnam on the other hand saw an opportunity to seize the territory fought over the years, moreover it was impossible for the United States to join the conflict once again, as it was going under a turmoil of scandals, that led to the resignation of President Nixon. Communist Vietnam committed for a last offensive, called the Spring Offensive, in 1975 - the last offensive turned out to be successful due to the lack of opposition and a confused and uncoordinated South Vietnamese Government. The momentum built by the troops, led them to occupy Saigon on 30 April 1975 (*Moore, 2006*). In 1976 the two states would unify, under the name of Socialist Republic Of Vietnam, with Saigon capital, however renamed, Ho Chi Minh City.

This war is different from other recent conflicts, as it was the first time that the population, played a role in the development of the clash through the expression of the opinion. Media coverage could be attributed as a responsible to end the Vietnam war, as it allowed to see through films and recordings the true atrocities of war, making them question its core values and reasons. The Second Indochina War also revealed the true power of American warfare, attacking with over 2 million tonnes of explosives just in Laos (*BBC, 2016*), which is an astonishing number, considering that only 2 million tonnes of bombs were used during the devastating WW2. The scar of this clash would remain profound in the dynamics of war and its troubling relationship with those who are not involved.

3.2. Analysis of American Propaganda During the Vietnam War

The Second Indochina War, mostly known as Vietnam War, stood in a very different time period from the Second World War; international dynamics had changed and the world was undergoing the tensions of the Cold War clash between the United States and the Soviet Union. The idea that Americans had home of the conflict, was that the US troops were travelling to the South East Asia region in order to free a democratic state (South Vietnam) from the oppression of the Communist North Vietnam - the population was also led to believe

that the country that the US was protecting was a just democracy. As revealed during the evaluation of the developments of the war, the American Government, through different office administrations, has been found to display a different depiction of the situation in Vietnam (Shah, 2003). From the last war analysed, human evolution has brought further lines of promulgation , such as national television and more developed international communication, which allowed for a new outlook from the population.

This war saw the United States Government implicated directly after years of aid given to the so-called democratic ally of South Vietnam - this was caused by the fear of the Domino Theory, which described how if one country fell to the communist regime, all other countries from the region would soon fall to the same ideology. The traditional means of war propaganda, were still used, as posters and commercial would run promoting the US troops in Vietnam through support from family savings, and once again pitting them against us method - however for different causes the citizens of the US were not so easily persuaded. The images below will support the previous statement.



Figure 12: promoting support through medical aimed donations



Figure 13: American soldiers in Vietnam

The case of the Vietnam war, is the first conflict to show major disagreements within the Homefront. During the time period of the War, the United States was undergoing changes in mentality, moving more towards a liberal mindset. This discord from an important part of the population was subsequently voiced through manifestation and posters that went against the politics of the war; topics argued included the unfairness of the Draft, and the unethical fairness of the conflict. (*Johnson, 2011*) The effect that these vocal frictions, turned out to put the US Government is an unpleasant position, as political instability grew. Below are documents that portray the objection of the Vietnam war, following the multiple atrocities committed by the US Army.

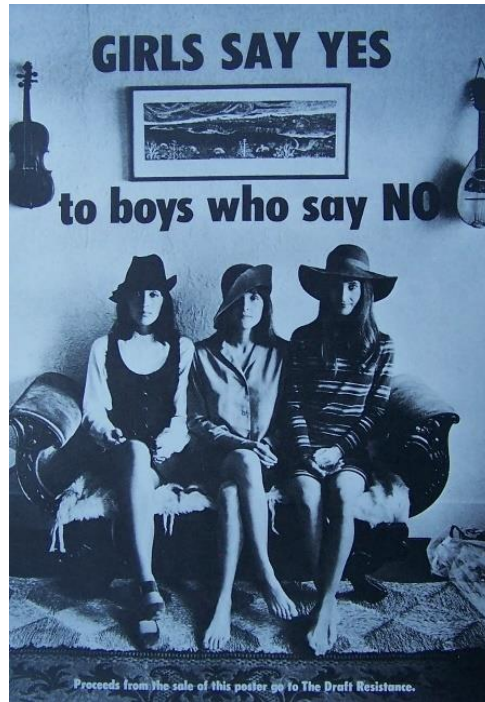


Figure 14: promotion of war rejection through sex appeal

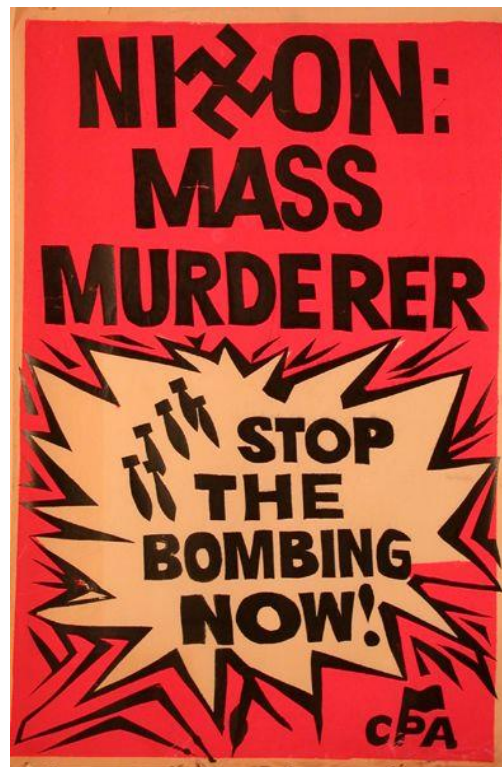


Figure 15: demonization of president Nixon

As previously stated, the Vietnam War saw the coming of news through television and more accurate news updates on journals and radio, due to higher international communication. This increase in information played a major role in the loss of the Vietnam war, historians

agree. The Press during the conflict, never left the US Government chance to hide facts about the situation in Vietnam, as once the media outlets knew about it they would post it, and the US Government would receive even more backlash from its citizen, for reserving information regarding losses, or major strikes on the Viet Congs (case of Pentagon Papers) (*Daham*). Below are extracts from newsreels from the time of the Vietnam War, the purpose of this images is to show what Americans saw at home, disrupting their meal with their family, causing for further discussion at work and school.

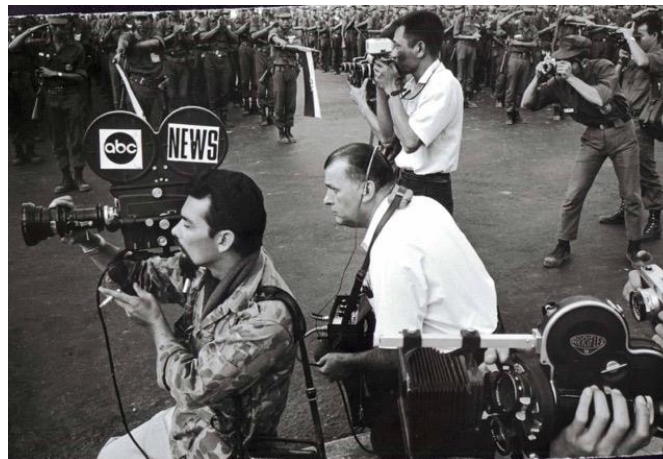


Figure 16: news networks in Vietnam



Figure 17: film being transmitted in US homes

Through this analysis, the evidence researched, observes that the media and press are responsible for attributing a negative image on the US strategy of war - as the news channels continued to broadcast news it increased the repulsiveness of this conflict from the population of Americans, which created more difficulties in managing the war, and ultimately in the loss of the United States (*Ford, 2018*).

3.3. Analysis of National Liberation Front Propaganda During the Vietnam War

Opposed to the division of Vietnam, and in discord with the values of South Vietnam and their supporters, the United States was the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the North, and its key allies for the guerrilla warfare attacks, was the National Liberation Front, or Viet Cong, which the literal translation stands for Vietnamese Communist. The Communist forces, of course were opposed to the principles of capitalism that the US was trying to influence upon the Vietnamese population of the South.

The approach taken by the Viet Cong to mobilize its citizens in the mission of Vietnam unification, was probably more traditional, mainly due the lack of technology to communicate more specifically, like the US was able to do. Both US veterans and reports, state that the Viet Cong were deploying different posters and pamphlets that would encourage the population to engage in the clash.



Figure 18: Demonization of enemy from the NLF



Figure 19: Translation: Johnson's dollars are the blood and tears of American soldiers.

The first image above, displays a Viet Cong leaflet, which would be distributed amongst the residents; from the document, it is safe to state that the National Liberation Front aimed at using the classic technique of us against them, in order to pit the whole population against the foreign invaders. The second document shows a NLF militia member writing: '*Johnson's dollars are the blood and tears of American soldiers*' (Friedman, 2003). Once again, this file, shows a resemblance with propaganda campaign methodology from previous governments during war time, the villainization of the enemy. The two strategies of propaganda although not revolutionary, it allowed for the mobilization of the masses of North Vietnam and increase the volume of the Viet Cong militia, in order to preserve the values of the traditional Vietnamese culture (King, 1965).

In the development of the Viet Cong ethics, the leaders of the NLF would spread leaflets that explained the values of a Viet Cong, to reach the personal interest of the civilians and soldiers.

VIET CONG CODE OF DISCIPLINE

1. I will obey the orders from my superiors under all circumstances.
2. I will never take anything from the people, not even a needle or thread.
3. I will not put group property to my own use.
4. I will return that which is borrowed, make restitution for things damaged.
5. I will be polite to people, respect and love them.
6. I will be fair and just in buying and selling.
7. When staying in people's houses I will treat them as I would my own house.
8. I will follow the slogan: All things of the people and for the people.
9. I will keep unit secrets absolutely and will never disclose information even to closest friends or relatives.
10. I will encourage the people to struggle and support the Revolution.
11. I will be alert to spies and will report all suspicious persons to my superiors.
12. I will remain close to the people and maintain their affection and love.

Figure 20: Viet Cong code of Discipline

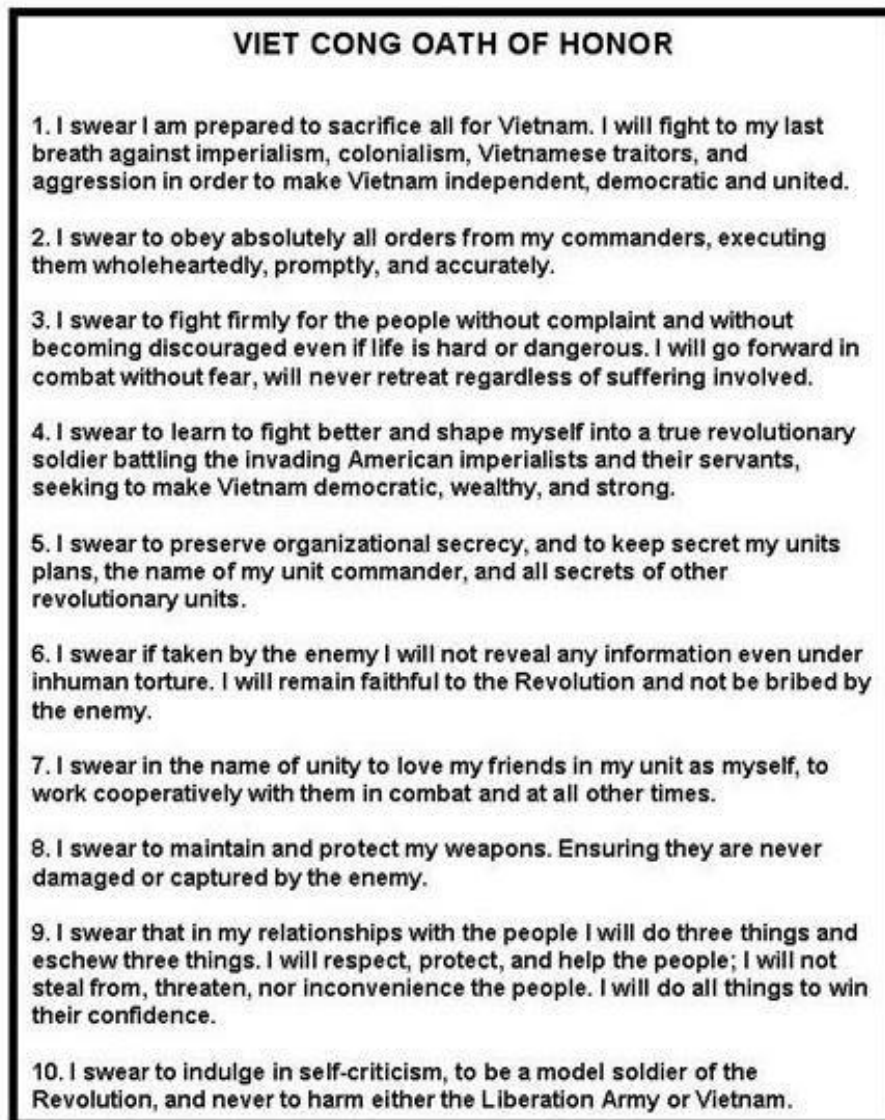


Figure 21 : Viet Cong Oath of Honor

The two charts reported above, is the translated versions of the Viet Cong Oath, and the Viet Cong Code of Discipline. Although it is the first time in this research that similar documents are encountered, it is not a surprise that the National Liberation Front would publish such rules . Such strategy, enables the Vietnamese communist affiliates, to identify within a group and lay the bases for future jurisdiction, while shaping cultural behaviour (*Hunt, 2018*).

Through this evaluation of the NLF 's propaganda during the development of the Second Indochina War it is inevitable to notice familiar patterns, from the past. The Viet Cong

turned out victorious in 1975, with the fall of Saigon ; the locals had major advantages on the US troops even when lacking of technological advancement, which was due the better knowledge of the territory, however would it be incorrect to address the mobilization through propaganda as a mean for success in this conflict?

3.4. Comparison of the Propaganda Campaigns

The Vietnam war has been recognized to be one of the longest and most senseful of the 20th Century, as the developments managed to travel worldwide, and therefore create further complications in conflict. From the part of the Viet Cong, advised by authoritarian regimes, such as the Soviet Union and China, created a more simple and straight forward propaganda, which consisted of pamphlets and posters, however this type of communication managed to reach the masses and eventually reach Saigon in 1975 to create the unified Vietnam the National Liberation Front had envisioned years before.

The United States on the other hand, underwent a more unpopular propaganda during the conflict. Unlike the successful propaganda executed during WW2, the mobilization of the masses on the part of the USA was a failure; through policies such as the Draft which unfairly chose who was to travel to Vietnam to fight the war, and scandals such as the Pentagon papers, popular opinion of the justness of the international clash in the population was not positive. The advent of television and better communication ironically put the Government in more difficulties, as information regarding the unethical choices from US generals and troops in Asia, caused the population to rise against the war, which led to a slow loss for the United States.

In the case of this war, propaganda tactics were different, however the lesser advanced seemed to have prevailed. This could be due to the simplicity of it, and for the fact that the NLF had better control of the information within its borders. The free of censorship in the USA during the Vietnam war, was a great lesson for American propagandists, as the country had to learn the hard way that information must be managed and even kept secret, in order to maintain control over the popular opinion.

4. The Iraq War

4.1. Developments in the Iraq War

The terrible attacks of September 11, 2001 left the United States government and population, debating on the counter measures the country would take against such form of terrorism. Although the American population expected a retaliation from the Bush administration, going to war was not a matter of national pride anymore, as citizens had realized throughout the years the true atrocities of such conflicts (*Kelly, 2018*). Former President Clinton, in fact was very vocal in stressing the importance of nonviolence , and such opinion was shared by other world powers, such as French foreign Minister de Villepin, and Germany's Foreign Secretary - citizens from all over the World were protesting about starting another conflict in the so troubled region of the Middle East (*Ny Times, 2003*). Another issue that was regarded as another reason not to invade Iraq territories, was the presence of petrol and oil refineries, which the United States was allegedly interested to; this boost of personal interest from the Bush administration definitely did not favour his image.

In the summer of 2002, on 10 July, the first American agents landed in Iraq, the Central Intelligence Agency 's (CIA) mission was to orchestrate the arrival of further troops, as well as to begin to build relationship with local agencies that would help with the invasion from different regions . The first success of the Western power, was by creating an alliance with the Peshmerga (Military Forces of Iraqi Kurdistan), who would be responsible for the invasion from the upper side of the state - through this alliance, the joint forces managed to take down a Sunni Muslim Insurgent group, through the strategies developed to execute Operation Viking Hammer. During this mission, it was uncovered that hostile Iraqi forces were in possession of chemical weapons; this discovery triggered European and Western forces to proceed with the invasion (*Rosen, 2015*).

In the early, dusty, Baghdad morning in March of 2003, the Iraqi population woke up in shock, discovering that thousands of soldiers had reached the city. The invasion plan, was organized by General Franks, through the 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', which involved another forty governments, which would supply the invasion with troops (*Cotton, 2010*). The United States troops of course, were in majority, having sent over 200'000 men to the Iraqi desert,

Britain followed with around 40'000 soldiers, and other troops, supplies and advisories from other allies of the 'Coalition of the Willing' - another ally which the US had, were still the rebel Iraqi Kurdish militia, which amounted for thousands of men, and was key to organising strategy, as they were more experienced with the territory, language, and living conditions.

United States General Tommy Franks, under the scope of President Bush, had multiple objectives for this invasion, the first was to put to an end Saddam Hussein's regime and liberate the region of Muslim extremists, also the discovery of weapon of mass destruction in the region made its destruction a primary objective on the mission, as the Iraqi forces could not be trusted with such powerful bellic inventions - it was also made a goal, to discover further WMDs networks, and see if other smaller extremists groups could obtain such firepower. Another objective set by General Franks, was to secure and protect the territories which contained resources for oil production as well as oil fields, for the Iraqi population to have a smooth economic transition following the foreign invasion (*Benjamin, 2018*). The interest that the United States had on the profitable resource of Iraq, surely developed the doubt of the legitimacy of this war.

Following the success in the Al-Faw peninsula, the Western forces, had now protected naval network of communication, by occupying the ports, as well as secured the oil refineries, US, UK, Australian and Polish military forces managed to take control of Nasiriyah and Talil airspaces, which allowed for most control over the Iraqi territory; Baghdad was about to be seized. In early April of 2003, Baghdad and Saddam Hussein's regime fell under over 20 years of rule. The troops from the Coalition of Willing captured members of the Ba'ath Party, eradicating the last of Hussein's leadership. Moreover a group of US troops, took down an immense iron statue that represented the greatness of Hussein; this later would become a symbol of this conflict. The population had shown its gratitude for this foreign interventions, however following the fall of the regime, the cities of Iraq underwent chaos, and disorder.

After the period of the invasion, which lasted a little over one month, on May 1 President Bush addressed hi nation with a nationally communicated speech, in which he would gloat about the accomplishments of his foreign mission in Iraq. Clashes between the two opposing forces may have been over for the public, however in Iraq, Hussein was still alive and plotting to seize power back, moreover in the Sunni Triangle, a region highly populated by Sunni Muslims, Western troops were undergoing various attacks. The attacks intensified

during the following weeks, most specifically in the Salah Ad Din, Al Anbar and Baghdad province, where most of Iraqi population resided. The Iraqi insurgency was attacking through the use of various offensive mechanisms, such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs), rocket propelled grenades, snipers, guerrilla tactics and suicide bombers, all of which would catch both coalition and local opposers. In the meantime the United Nations and the member states, were putting effort in organising a democratic-friendly state that aimed at strengthening international relations, and tried to reach the end of the domestic cultural division. In the summer of the year of the invasion, the Coalition decided to establish a government, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), in the southern region of Iraq, called the Green Zone, and it aimed at restoring a democratic regime, and was responsible to address the executive, legislative and judicial administration (*Dobbins, 2009*).

The insurgency had been preparing, showing off its new arsenal and tactics, during the Ramadan Offensive, an attack to the Coalition, which was left with no choice but to engage to counter attack with airstrikes and heavy artillery, the first time that the Western forces stroke back after the first invasion of March-April 2003. During this offensive, the Coalition had noticed how developed the insurgency was, having structured better communication and spying network, as well as creating barricaded villages to protect for eventual attack and foreign influence, like al-Auja and Abu Hisma (*Clawson, 2004*).

Former Political leader, Saddam Hussein was finally captured by a United States military division on 13 December 2003, following information leaked by his relatives and prior staff members. The capture of the Islamic leader Hussein, led to a slight decrease in insurgency attacks, and it finally seemed that the conflict was coming to an end. The demand for political election and representativeness was increasing, as the Coalition forces started to flee Iraq, however the CPA denied the possibility of elections, which led to further, the diminished offensives from the insurgency; more precisely, the areas of Fallujah and Baghdad were affected (*Juhasz, 2004*).

During the months that followed the invasion, insurgent forces had time to structure their militia, as well as understanding the coalition's objective and warfare techniques; such improvements in organization were proved to the western forces during the Iraq Spring Fighting of 2004, where insurgent groups had joined religious militias like Al-Qaeda to deliver surprise attacks to Coalition territory. It was not only the Coalition members and affiliates

that were attacked, in fact casualties included Iraqi civilians and members of the new Iraqi Security Forces, instituted by the CPA (*Berenson, 2004*). The year of 2004 ends with the First and Second Battle of Fallujah; in the first battle, the insurgency had the best outcome, as they came out victorious, demonstrating the bodies set aflame of Coalition contractors, such news would devastate the population at safe at home, as peace seemed always further. The second battle of Fallujah of November instead saw the retaliation from the American Government, leading to a massive attack (similar to the scale of the Battle of Hue in the Vietnam War), which led to a coalition win, however the ethics of this victory can be morally questions, as US forces deployed chemicals that were used as unfair incendiary tools (*Lamothe, 2014*).

In January of 2005, Iraq had its first democratic election since the invasion, the population elected the Iraqi Transitional Government - nevertheless, members of insurgent groups and people from Sunni background, decided to boycott the vote. Following the start of the new democratic regime, the US announced that American troops would start to flee Iraq, and until the come of spring, Iraq was living in a conflict-less environment (*Dulami, 2005*). In April of the same year, Al-Qaeda and other affiliated military forces attacked Abu Ghraib prison, which was a US outpost - the largest attack on American troops since the end of the Vietnam War. The remaining of the year saw a bloody summer, that took away all the hopes of imminent peace .

The situation by 2006 continued to escalate as insurgency would proceed with spreading terror around the country - the city of Baghdad registered its highest casualty rates - following the development of 2006, attacks on mosques and multiple civilian casualties, the UN declared Iraq in a civil-war. To further tensions between the two main parties involved, former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was executed in December of 2006, as he was found guilty of crimes against humanity - the trial was under Iraqi jurisdiction and lasted over a year (*Santora, 2006*).

In January of 2007, President Bush, decided to address the nation, and explaining the plan for the solution of the conflict dilemma in the middle eastern region. President Bush, together with commander of Multi National Force - Iraq, Petraeus, sent 20'000 US troops, organised employment programs in the cities of Iraq and would take care of reparations, with a cost of around 1 billion USD (*Kennedy-Pipe, 2007*). In the meantime other Coalition of Willing members started to withdraw its troops from the region, such as Denmark, Great

Britain. Until the end of President Bush's Administration, the importance of US troops was portrayed as vital to the peaceful development of Iraq; although numbers speak in favour of Bush and Petraeus, as far as decrease in casualty rates from both sides; however hostilities from the locals were increasing, as the foreign involvement had caused distress among the administration of the population (*Behener, 2007*).

The advent of the Obama administration was good news for both foreign troops and locals in Iraq. 44th US President Barack Obama, had stressed during his campaign his opinion regarding the conflict in the middle eastern region - once in office the United States officials in Iraq, gave the responsibility of the Green Zone to the new Iraqi Government - a political move to boost morale in the Iraqi population, with a new sovereign Prime Minister. Later in February of 2009, Obama addressed his nation, declaring that the start of troops withdrawal would start in 2010 (*Obama, 2009*). During the time between these two dates, violence and clashes continued in Iraq, still involving multiple casualties and American involvement. Obama kept the promise made to both populations, and proceeded with the army withdrawal, with the last of the troops leaving in December of 2010; the United States however, until today still has active US officers considering the embassy and various military training sites (*Traub, 2016*).

The Iraq war is somewhat similar to the Vietnam war, as both conflicts present the strong impact of the United States on domestic organization, as well as military devastation (*Nessen, 2008*). The Iraq War, does have a starting day, as it records the first troops to arrive and a cause for the attack, however to define an end date one would have to choose a particular event such as the final withdrawal of 2010, as even today conflict still revolves the troubled region.

4.2. Analysis of American Propaganda and Media Coverage During the Iraq War

The conflict in Iraq, throughout the years, has turned out to be more belligerent than expected in the launch of the first espionage missions in 2002, executed by the American Central Intelligence Agency. The purpose for this invasion were different; the US a few months earlier was target to the most infamous terrorist attack in modern history, and the Bush administration had been trying to place a face for responsible of these atrocities, and Saddam

Hussein's regime was a reasonable candidate, considering his extreme Islamic affiliation (*Jenkins, 2011*). The cause for the invasion however has been attributed to the evidence that revealed that Iraq was in possession of chemical weapons (*Esterbrook, 2002*).

As analysed during the US propaganda campaign of the Vietnam War, America had understood that information had to be more supervised, in the foreign and domestic reign - this time around America, would use means of mass media to prevent the widespread of sensible information that would affect the popular opinion of the rightfulness of the conflict. The Iraq war staged the preparation of a major global media event, that all the world would lead to follow. on most American news network, the invasion would be regarded as 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' displaying a perception of a benevolent mission, and headlines would state 'War IN Iraq' as if the US was not directly involved, unlike other international headlines would consider it 'War ON Iraq' (*Kellner, 2004*). The misinformation led approach also included President Bush's method of addressing the media, portraying Iraq as a enemy by using speech rhetoric that stressed on the repetition of keywords, such as 'Hussein', 'threat', 'terrorism' to inculcate the image of an enemy to defeat. From this type of the engagement, the reaction from the population was that of realizing that their President was promoting a nationalist ideology (*Kellner, 2004*).

In relation to news networks and newspapers information, there is a misconception that the United States government, as well as the British, were censoring or not allowing intelligence to the news outlets. Nevertheless, during the Iraq war western media and their respective national entities had a relationship that allowed for knowledge to be administered at specific doses; throughout the years the media has been organizing the documentation of the war, that created a distorted view of the ongoing situation (*Washington Post, 2010*) - in newspapers, articles regarding the issues in Iraq would rarely appear in the front pages, and popular television news would have anti-war reports at an inconvenient time, while pro-war coverage would be at peak hour, reached the most audience (*Shah, 2007*). Below are images that display the differences in the news headlines, and demonstrate the media bias.



Figure 22: Network depicting a military oriented campaign



Figure 23: Network defining war with Iraq

In this section of the analysis, the focus will be on the use of media, as an offensive mean in combat from the US Government. According to different media outlets, such as the Los Angeles Times, Sunday Times, and the Independent, the Bush Administration invested over 500 millions dollars to fabricate Al-Qaeda and insurgent videos; the production for this project was executed by a British company, Bell Pottinger. Bell Pottinger produced these films, and the US Army or Marine planted the CDs whilst on search; the firm's technology allowed the CD to be tracked when played. The detection of the location, allowed for a remote control of possible insurgency within Iraq, however the US government's main interest was to track

the material that showed up abroad, which enabled for terrorism prevention (*Garcia, 2016*). This example provides evidence of the extreme extent of America's use of new technologies in the mass media context.

US policy makers during this time emphasized their work to preserve the casualty sensitivity, as from the studies of the Vietnam War it was revealed that casualty rates during the invasion, were cause for decrease in presidential approval, and therefore war support (*Gelpi, 2005*). After the evaluation of this data and as understood from the beginning of this analysis, the US government has modified its propaganda strategy towards a media based campaign, that consists of managing intelligence in a way that alleviates the damages brought by war. US policymakers during this time emphasized their work to preserve the casualty sensitivity of the popular opinion .

4.3. Analysis of Propaganda and Media Coverage in Iraq During Iraq War

Coming to assess the perception of the war from the Iraqi population during the conflict that affected their land, it is appropriate to document this aspect describing two time periods: Saddam Hussein's regime and after the invasion of western allies.

Saddam Hussein, rose to power officially at the end of 1979 after years at the head of Iraqi leadership. Since the beginning of his rule, Hussein created his own military force, that would aid his consolidation of power, through the suppression of his opposition - labelling him an authoritarian leader. The dictator gained international recognition following strong hostility in regards to the United States' influence in the Middle East; more over intelligence addressing the brutality of his reign that brought hundreds of thousands casualties reached western states (*The Economist, 2007*). The propaganda campaign to consolidate his image as the sole leader of Iraq, is traditional and recalls of the ones of other dictators of the 20th Century. In the times before the arrival of the western coalition, Iraq was a country oppressed by the cult of personality of Hussein, to transmit his authority - the streets of Baghdad were covered in posters that depicted an heroic leader, while seeming relatable (*Charles, 2018*). This type of propaganda campaign does not bring anything revolutionary to the subject, however it is worth

addressing how throughout the years the approach to build a cult of personality for an authoritarian leader has not changed.



Figure 24: Representation of a caring Hussein



Figure 25: Hussein portrayed as powerful and a man of the people

Prior to his capture, the United States were facing resistance in controlling the Iraqi population also because Hussein was still alive and the citizens knew it; through fear or loyalty the Iraqi were formally under his regime. This was a success for Hussein's propaganda (*Dobbs, 2016*), however his capture would lead to the end of his dictatorship.

Following the complete western involvement in Iraq's administrative and economic sphere, there was a drastic change in the dynamics of media coverage and the image of Hussein's leadership (*Beaumont, 2013*). To begin with US forces engaged in destroying all of Hussein's representation in the state, as well as created propaganda against him and his ideology. Images below will display the western commitment to eradicate the dictator's legacy.



Figure 26: Iraqi locals destroying Hussein's paintings



Figure 27: US troops covering Hussein statue with American Flag

The settlement of a country in a defeated territory, usually closes with the occupation of the territory regardless of the support by the occupied - in the case of the US however through this analysis has shown the wish to win also psychologically by winning the trust of the occupied population (Schleifer, 2005). The situation of the information in Iraq prior to foreign influence was drastic, as means of censorship by the dictatorship did not allow for unbiased mass media means; with the fall of the rule, British and American governments structured television channels that would be appealing and other news outlets that supported the western ideology of freedom and capitalism. Locals remember after the invasion:

“ we got a lot more channels, but almost all of them were politicized and run by a political party or a militia. There is Al Iraqya channel, the official channel run by the new Iraq government which always talks about the great wins of the Iraqi military in the war against terrorism [...] Al Hurra Iraq which is the American-supported channel which portrays Iraq becoming a beacon for hope and freedom[...] And Al Jazeera Arabic, which when there is a terrorist attack committed by a Sunni militias in a Shia-dominated neighbourhood they report the people as “killed” while if a Shia militia killed a group of Sunnis they mention that the killed were martyrs. ” (Al Mutar, 2018)

This statement is a relevant source as a mean to label the intensity of media influence that the foreign states had on Iraq’s information network. The source uncovers the political reprogramming plan that the US wanted to impose. With the implementation of the Bremer

Press Order, and according to the newly instituted Arab Press Freedom Watch (APFW), shortly after the invasion about ninety newspaper were established, in order to give the perception of a new age of information (*Kuttab, 2007*). The focus of these outlets were to provide knowledge of the locations of insurgency presence or attacks. Nevertheless, a plague that has been tormenting the region of Iraq is the dangers of reporting, as data has demonstrated, is that journalists are posed to constant intimidation and death from insurgency affiliates (*Beck, 2017*).

It is difficult to consider the foreign influence in media as a complete success, of course the world is thankful for the liberation of Hussein oppressed Iraq, however different sources agree that journalism and media in Iraq is still very controlled by western ideologies - like a puppet that promotes the will of the United States (*Williams, 2010*).

4.4. Comparison of Propaganda Campaigns and Media Coverage

The evaluation of propaganda methodology for this section of the paper, differs from the others. As understood both from the development and media coverage of the Iraq War, this conflict presented various changes in technology and sociology, which brought to an undercover propaganda.

In this case, the United States, play a role on both sides of the conflict, as following the invasion it vested itself with the responsibility to settle stability in Iraq, through methods of communication and structuring of a new government. The Bush administration has been strongly criticized in the last years, for his behaviour in respect to the Iraq conflict and for the lack of a legal cause - George W. Bush developed a mentality in which facts became less important, as the reasons for the start of the invasion would be flexible depending on the audience, one day it could have been because of Al-Qaeda, the other because of the possession of WMDs (*Worley, 2016*). The Public Relations' team during the Iraq War, developed an ideology that would stress the manipulation of information through more information, historians agree that the motto for Bush's PR was:

“Move on. Don’t explain. Say anything to conceal the perfidy behind the real motives for war. Never look back. Accuse the questioners of harbouring unpatriotic sensibilities.”
(Clair, 2016)

Neither Bush or other US officials ever addressed this spectacle as propaganda, as it would lead to develop unpopularity due to the connection of the words propaganda and control, which ultimately is why this section mostly focuses of media coverage of this period.

In assessing the similarities of western action within media coverage, in and outside of Iraq, it is noticeable a pattern that displays governmental entities affecting media outlets. In the case of American news networks, it is analysed that authorities had a relation with specific outlets that would help in deceiving the perception of war, and preserve political stability. On the other hand in Iraq, through the Bremer Press Order, the US were able to manage information within the region, and deliver information that would assure the safety of the audience. The implementation of such policies hoped for the population to witness freedom through information, however the limited news coverage and the risks of a journalistic career has troubled Iraq until today (*Whisperwolf, 2008*).

A case has already been made for the authoritarian-recurrent propaganda methodology used by Hussein; the creation of a cult of personality and the divinization of its leader are popular strategies amongst other dictatorships of the same century. However a noticeable aspect of propaganda dynamics during the Iraq War, is the recurrent theme of demonization of the enemy; following the US invasion and the fall of the regime, American troops put their efforts in removing all the images that represented Hussein, in order to eradicate his rule, also American troops promoted the destructions of such symbols to the locals, which would follow their lead (*CNN, 2003*) - the eradication of Hussein’s values and persona in Iraq, possibly could be the only aspect that sees the US successful in this war.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Methodology, Achievements and Limitations

The methodology of this research, which analysed the events and developments of different recent wars and compared opposing propaganda campaigns, allows the reader to have an organized idea of how the manipulation of mass media has evolved and has been used as an offensive mean of combat.

The first international conflict that was discussed for this investigation is World War II - the analysis starts off by informing the reader the chronological order of events of the crossfire tangle that took over Europe in the mid-20th Century. During this evaluation of the matters of the conflict, the researcher follows to detail the 'players of the game', assessing the struggle of power and the behaviour within the states. Through the thorough description of the Second World War, the reader comprehends the offensive means that the different international powers used during the clash, as well as the extent of its effectiveness.

The analysis later begins to reveal the different approaches to propaganda campaigns from the democratic United States and the authoritarian Nazi regime. As revealed in the relative section, two approaches to propaganda campaign are similar if not identical - both powers decided to institute a specific ministry or committee that oversees the promotion of its values and ideology, as well as the attack towards the enemy. Although at its core the US and Hitler's regime are completely different, since their relative governance are their literal opposite (democracy and dictatorship), it is undeniable that in order to preserve national interest and manipulate the conception of war, the two execute propaganda using the same tools: posters depicting a demonized enemy, movies that messaged patriotic values and engraving an ideology in the minds of its population since a early age.

In the case of the Vietnam war, the first assessment of the timeline of events of the conflict, labels the anti-diplomacy and the bloodshed of the conflict - the researcher believes that in order to understand the social phenomena of the Second Indochina War, it is key to value the entangled past of the South East Asian territory as well as the developments of the different US operations and the counter attacks of the National Liberal Front. The audience

through this evaluation, understands the unethical approach to the war by the United States, but also describes the difficulties that they encountered, when facing the Viet Cong, which created tensions in the now liberal democratic America.

The assessment of the propaganda campaigns, from the USA throughout the years of the war, showed traditional characteristics of the one from the previous wars, which included the valorisation of the state and troops. What different this time, is the appearance of resistance and criticism of the US engagement in the war and voiced it through manifestations and classic propaganda tools such as posters. The advent of free-speech in the media, is what truly shocked and boosted the protests towards the administration - press had evolved to television that showed graphic images from local news reports in Vietnam leaving the American citizens exposed to the horrors of war, which also adds as a cause for citizen mobilization. Journalistic scandals, such as the Pentagon papers, are included in the causes for administration criticism. The researcher believes that the emergence of accurate and detailed information in the homes of the American families, is a direct cause to the defeat in Vietnam. As popular support of the justness of the conflict decreased, the US was left fighting two wars, one with the media at home and one in Asia against the communist, and as history shows a war on two fronts leads to an imminent loss. To support the argument that a successful propaganda and popular support are key to win a conflict, the propaganda from the National Liberation Front, simple and traditional and valued the locals, as it managed to mobilize and entire country to fight against skilled soldiers, which were pitted as the enemy.

The last War discussed is the Iraq War, from the start of the 2002 Invasion, until the completion of Obama's withdrawal of troops of 2010. The researcher comprehends that the analysis of the Iraq War (2002-10) includes historical limitations. The investigation of the matters mostly focuses on the action and presence of the United States, rather than on the past difficult relations with previous US administration (Bush I and Clinton) and the middle eastern region, however in order to discuss how states have moved towards the manipulation of media coverage and press to replace propaganda, the investigator wants to depict the actions taken by western authorities after the fall of the Hussein regime, as well as the administrative reconstructions achieved.

The Vietnam War was a military and social lesson for the United States, and from 2002 has managed to operate under the radar trough undercover operations and missions, aiming for

the least mediatic noise. The knowledge provided in this investigation, demonstrates the extent to which Bush was able to shape titles and news placement to his own accord in order to alleviate sensible information that would affect the popular support. The researcher does not necessary believe that this methodology of controlling information is evil, since shielding the population from certain information can eventually turn out positive, however he recognizes that both the approach and actions taken during the war are morally unethical. Media manipulation from the US extended to the creation of news outlets in Iraq following the fall of Hussein, as revealed from primary sources such networks would help in preventing accidents, but also to promote anti-insurgency movements and values. Finally the investigator also demonstrates how traditional propaganda tools are still used even when it has moved towards being news-based, as the section shows that authoritarian leadership still engages in creating a cult of personality, and that the US still uses the demonization of the opposition to consolidate popular support.

5.2. Concluding Remarks

The section above, allows the reader, and the author as well, to have a sort of summary of the whole process of the analysis of the different propaganda campaigns. The findings of the thesis are multiple, and all are relative to the evolution and use of public opinion manipulation, or propaganda. The first finding regards the evolution of the power of information throughout recent modern conflicts: as seen from the analysis propaganda campaigns in the past, case of WW2, all factions of the clash shared similar techniques communication operations that valued the importance of patriotism and demonization of the enemy. Following, in the case of the Vietnam War, with the advent of new mass-media networks, such as television, put in difficulties the execution of a successful propaganda campaign from the US, as information was mostly being handled by the media, resulting in unpopularity in the home front. The evolution occurs with the coming of the Iraqi invasion, where the Bush administration carefully handled the spreading of knowledge of the belligerent situation in the Middle Eastern region, through misconceptions in news headlines and organizing the publishing of reports or articles in a way that it would not have a high audience. This made the author understand how valuable information within the relationship between government and population is, and how in time the USA has shifted towards a media control-based campaign, rather than a traditional

propaganda. Another aspect unexpectedly discovered during this text, is how initially the democratic US propaganda was similar to the Nazi campaign – also it is revealed that authoritarian regimes, in time, do not change the traditional propaganda techniques discussed in various previous sections. The second key finding of the investigation addresses the extent to which the use of mass media information-controlled campaigns regarding success in war. In the case of the first war analysed, one could assess the ultimate allied victory to military overpower, however it is evident that on both sides, propaganda campaigns were important to keep control and popular support in the home front, alighting offensive forces. As observed in the Vietnam War the NLF, by mobilizing the population through a successful traditional propaganda, ended up victorious in the conflict against the US – on the other hand the various US administrations were troubled by the advent of media resulting in unpopularity in the home front and eventually an imminent retreat. The strength of patriotism and willingness to retrieve their territories, made the success of the NLF possible, which is accountable for a victory in the propaganda war. The following case of the Iraq war, also serves as a case for a retreat caused by the unpopularity of the theme of war, as well as rising unpopularity in the US government's unethical operations in the conflict – this leads to the conclusion that when the population is more aware of the situation of the war, it causes popular support to decrease, leading to a forced retreat or loss. This means, that in modern war, it is in the interest of the actors involved in an international dispute to preserve information and execute a successful campaign to boost support, leading to more freedom from the state in to take radical actions in war.

“Decades ago, the unprecedented power of nuclear weapons required new adaptations of strategy. Now, the unprecedented power of weaponized narrative requires new adaptation of strategy.” (Hermann, 2017)

The goal of my extensive historical investigation was to value propaganda as an equal to the military, and a determinant factor for success in war, as well as its evolution. During the research I came across the quote above, from a former US Air Force intelligence and information officer; I believe that this statement represents the findings of this thesis. Although I cannot attribute this concept as my own, the change in the mediatic scene and the shift in the receiving of information has modified the concept of propaganda and the perception of government action from the population. This theory is also supported by the results of my

study, which explains that both population and government have realised the importance of information, as it is able to shape the outcome of the war.

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Images in text

Numerical order of appearance:

Figure 1.

Image Available at www.sarahsundin.com

<http://www.sarahsundin.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/076-1-723x1024.jpg>

Figure 2.

Image Available at wordpress.com

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Figure 3.

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Figure 4.

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Figure 5

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Figure 8

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Figure 9.

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Figure 10.

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Figure 11.

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Figure 13.

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Figure 14.

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Figure 16.

Image Available at consortiumnews.com

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Figure 17.

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Figure 19.

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Figure 21.

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http://news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/pop_ups/06/in_pictures_saddam_hussein0s_iraq/img/6.jpg

Figure 25.

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<https://c8.alamy.com/comp/DF3PCJ/saddam-husseins-propaganda-poster-bagdad-iraq-DF3PCJ.jpg>

Figure 26.

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Figure 27.

Image Available at grandorientdumaroc.com

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Riassunto in Italiano

Tutti adorano una storia affascinante, e sono queste storie che ci hanno permesso e ci permettono di progredire come specie.

A differenza del passato, quando i racconti sarebbero stati tramandati verbalmente di generazione in generazione, oggi abbiamo a disposizione un volume di informazioni (e storie) virtualmente infinite, grazie ai nuovi strumenti di comunicazione.

Analizzando e studiando le dinamiche delle attuali relazioni internazionali, si percepisce immediatamente che la storia ha un grande valore, in quanto attraverso la comprensione completa dei meccanismi del passato si chiariscono le posizioni tra i vari attori nazionali e internazionali e di come questi si sono relazionati e si relazionano fra loro e di come hanno gestito e gestiscono l'avvento dei conflitti.

Nella valutazione degli eventi storici del recente passato, ciò che colpisce è come la “distribuzione” delle informazioni durante i principali conflitti internazionali, attraverso anche l'evoluzione dei mezzi di comunicazione, abbia avuto un impatto sulla gestione dei conflitti, che gli stessi governi non sono sempre stati pronti e preparati a gestire.

Questo studio si focalizza sull'analisi delle azioni intraprese dai diversi attori internazionali durante tre conflitti internazionali, con particolare attenzione al ruolo dei mezzi di comunicazione in tempo di guerra: la propaganda è al centro di questo studio, e l'obiettivo dell'autore è quello di evidenziare come la propaganda e la gestione dei media siano stati cruciali per l'esito positivo o negativo di questi conflitti.

Un obiettivo di questo lavoro è anche quello di analizzare gli sviluppi e gli eventi fondamentali durante tre delle principali guerre di storia contemporanea, cercando di fornire una percezione approfondita del comportamento degli attori sia sul fronte di guerra che in ambito nazionale.

La struttura del lavoro prevede una prima parte di descrizione cronologica degli eventi delle tre guerre che è fondamentale per il focus di questa tesi, in quanto è la storia che noi come “pubblico” abbiamo conosciuto nei decenni successivi attraverso le cronache, le immagini, i racconti. Successivamente all'esposizione cronologica degli eventi nei conflitti, lo studio

evidenzia l'importanza del ruolo della propaganda condotta dai diversi ambiti governativi, in quanto è sempre solo la "buona storia" che viene raccontata ufficialmente sul fronte domestico, al fine di mantenere la stabilità del governo in carica ed aumentare il sostegno della guerra in corso.

La valutazione e l'analisi dei dati conduce alla conclusione che una propaganda adeguatamente pianificata e strategicamente diffusa con l'utilizzo dei mezzi di comunicazione di massa, rappresenta in maniera sorprendente rispetto alle aspettative, un elemento di grande valore per il successo di un paese in guerra. Lo studio mostra l'approccio di diverse istituzioni governative anche contrapposte, sia sotto il profilo delle rispettive campagne di propaganda sia relativamente all'utilizzo della copertura mediatica, in particolare nelle ultime due guerre analizzate.

“Tutti adorano una storia affascinante”. Questa affermazione è stato lo spunto per lo sviluppo di questa tesi: quanto una propaganda ben “progettata” possa creare una storia credibile e affascinante per la popolazione durante un periodo di guerra, che è sempre difficile da affrontare, che possa supportare le scelte governative nel momento del conflitto e che possa poi essere tramandata anche alle generazioni future.

La ricerca è divisa in capitoli che si concentrano sulle vicende della Seconda Guerra Mondiale, della Guerra del Vietnam del Sud e della Guerra in Iraq; dopo una esposizione storica degli eventi, lo studio cerca di analizzare le strategie mediatiche degli Stati Uniti, nei riguardi della rispettiva fazione avversaria (la Germania Nazista, Fronte di Liberazione Nazionale del Vietnam del Sud, il regime di Saddam Hussein).

Si è scelto di analizzare l'uso propagandistico degli Stati Uniti nelle tre guerre in tre periodi storici relativamente vicini, in modo da avere una variabile costante per poter analizzare lo sviluppo effettivo della manipolazione dei media. D'altro canto, anche l'analisi della rispettiva fazione avversaria è importante per l'esito di questa ricerca, in quanto crea una competizione di opinione pubblica nei diversi conflitti.

La ricerca rivelerà l'importanza di una campagna di propaganda di successo durante gli scontri internazionali, e saranno esaminati i diversi metodi utilizzati dalle diverse Nazioni, che sono stati alla base del successo o del fallimento riguardo all'esito del conflitto.

La struttura di questo documento crea una visualizzazione organizzata delle azioni intraprese in guerra e delle tecniche di manipolazione delle informazioni utilizzate; nella conclusione, l'autore lascia il lettore con una valutazione oggettiva della metodologia di ricerca, ed evidenzia le limitazioni all'indagine e risultati complessivi, concludendo che il concetto di propaganda ha portato una rivoluzione nella gestione dei conflitti ed è stato accuratamente utilizzato come strumento per modellare le convinzioni dell'opinione pubblica.

Al fine di identificare e riassumere i risultati di questa indagine, si procede ad una esposizione delle fonti che sono state utilizzate.

Come è stato già evidenziato, obiettivo dello studio è quello di fornire un quadro di comprensione di come la propaganda abbia rappresentato un mezzo di attacco nei tre conflitti qui presi in esame, come elemento aggiuntivo rispetto ai normali elementi storici ed attori che si sono tradizionalmente analizzati nelle guerre antecedenti.

La maggior parte del materiale utilizzato in questa indagine, è stato reperito attraverso l'utilizzo di Internet, che ha permesso la raccolta di riviste, articoli, immagini, testimonianze con una visione a 360 gradi dei diversi momenti storici che si sono analizzati. Ogni fonte è stata preziosa per lo sviluppo dell'argomentazione di questa tesi.

Si è proceduto ad una analisi, integrazione e comparazione di risorse provenienti da periodi diversi, sia risalenti al periodo di guerra analizzato sia più recenti attuali sempre relative a periodi storici in esame; questa tipologia di comparazione viene visualizzata attraverso diverse citazioni e con il conforto e la conferma di diverse fonti enciclopediche.

Nel valutare la modalità di propaganda, e la relativa copertura mediatica al tempo della Seconda Guerra Mondiale, della guerra del Vietnam e della guerra in Iraq, lo studio si è sviluppato attraverso l'analisi del materiale originale dalle campagne di propaganda, documentato attraverso le immagini ed i comunicati originali del tempo, che consentono di ottenere parere oggettivo riguardante la messaggistica e il significato dietro tali campagne architettate dai due rispettivi membri del conflitto in esame.

Nel caso della guerra in Iraq, la ricerca evidenzia l'indirizzamento del concetto propaganda verso il controllo dei mass-media e delle informazioni - questa parte è argomentata

attraverso l'uso di fonti primarie relative al momento dell'invasione degli Stati Uniti, in quanto vi è ancora una mancanza di un quadro completo del conflitto a causa del suo sviluppo storicamente recente.

La maggior parte delle fonti utilizzate in questa tesi sono considerate secondarie, in quanto sono estratti da riviste accademiche, articoli di giornale e opinioni di diversi storici che il ricercatore ritiene attendibili, tuttavia nell'esame della propaganda, nel caso di Vietnam e Iraq, diverse fonti primarie sono utilizzate per valutare l'efficacia del parere che controlla la propaganda.

Nel caso della Guerra del Vietnam la fonte primaria utilizzata è stata il diario dettagliato di un veterano statunitense, che ha dedicato gran parte del suo tempo dopo il pensionamento, nel raccogliere materiale e elaborarlo attraverso uno studio approfondito di immagini e valori morali.

Nel caso della Guerra in Iraq, è stata presa in esame l'esperienza diretta di un accademico locale che descrive in prima persona come è stato nascere e crescere durante il conflitto, con una grande influenza delle reti televisive occidentali nel territorio iracheno grazie/a causa del forte controllo dei media da parte degli Stati Uniti.

Lo studio termina con una citazione di un altro veterano di guerra, che allude all'importanza dell'informazione come mezzo per costruire la strategia militare e per l'evoluzione che aveva durante la storia recente. L'importanza dei media nel rapporto di oggi con la guerra è cruciale: la ricerca dimostrerà che, indipendentemente dagli eventuali vantaggi militari di una parte del conflitto, il controllo dell'opinione popolare del proprio fronte nazionale, secondo le prove storiche, conduce ad una campagna di guerra di successo.

La metodologia di questa ricerca, nell'analizzare gli eventi e gli sviluppi di tre conflitti recenti e confrontando le campagne di propaganda contrapposte, permette al lettore di avere un quadro strutturato di come la manipolazione dei mass media si è evoluta ed è stata utilizzata in questi conflitti, come strumento di guerra.

Il primo conflitto internazionale che è stato approfondito è la Seconda Guerra Mondiale: l'analisi inizia con un percorso cronologico degli eventi nella complessità di relazioni che si

sono poi aggrovigliate in Europa a metà del XX secolo. In questa valutazione si individuano “i protagonisti del gioco”, valutando la lotta del potere e il comportamento all'interno dei diversi Stati. Attraverso la descrizione approfondita delle vicende della Seconda Guerra Mondiale, il lettore comprende gli strumenti di attacco che le diverse nazioni hanno utilizzato durante gli scontri e la portata della loro efficacia.

Successivamente lo studio approfondisce i diversi approcci alle campagne di propaganda da parte degli Stati Uniti (stato democratico) e del regime autoritario nazista. Sorprendentemente, le risultanze evidenziano che i due approcci alla campagna di propaganda sono simili se non identici: entrambi i poteri decidono di istituire un ministero o un comitato specifico che supervisiona la promozione dei propri valori e della propria ideologia, così come allo stesso tempo supervisiona le modalità di attacco verso il nemico.

Anche se al loro interno il governo statunitense (appunto stato democratico) ed il regime di Hitler (dittatura assoluta) sono completamente diversi fra loro, è innegabile che, al fine di preservare l'interesse nazionale e manipolare la concezione della guerra, i due Stati promuovono la rispettiva propaganda usando gli stessi strumenti: manifesti raffiguranti un nemico demonizzato, filmati che esprimono valori patriottici e diffusione di una ideologia ed identità nazionale nella mente della propria popolazione fin dalla tenera età.

Nel caso della guerra del Vietnam, il primo aspetto che emerge dalla descrizione storica del conflitto è quello di una forte anti-diplomazia da parte degli Stati Uniti ed un enorme spargimento di sangue nella regione Sud Est Asiatica - il ricercatore crede che per comprendere i fenomeni sociali della seconda guerra Indocina, sia fondamentale valorizzare il passato impigliato del territorio, nonché gli sviluppi delle diverse operazioni statunitensi e i contrattacchi del Fronte Liberale Nazionale.

Il pubblico attraverso questa valutazione, capisce l'approccio non etico alla guerra da parte degli Stati Uniti, ma descrive anche le difficoltà che hanno incontrato, di fronte ai Viet Cong, che ha creato tensioni nell'ormai liberale America democratica.

La valutazione delle campagne di propaganda, dagli Stati Uniti durante gli anni di questa guerra, ha mostrato le caratteristiche tradizionali di quella delle precedenti guerre, che comprendeva la valorizzazione dello stato e delle truppe. Ciò che emerge chiaramente come

diverso rispetto al conflitto precedentemente analizzato, è la comparsa di resistenza e critica alla tradizionale ideologia di guerra per gli Stati Uniti.

L'avvento della libertà di parola nei diversi media è ciò che veramente ha scioccato la popolazione americana ed ha rafforzato le proteste verso l'amministrazione nazionale: la stampa evoluta in televisione ha potuto mostrare immagini dal fronte, nonché far accedere a notizie locali direttamente dal Vietnam, permettendo ai cittadini americani di essere esposti direttamente agli orrori di guerra, e questa nuova modalità ha portato alla mobilitazione della popolazione contro il conflitto in esame. A ciò si aggiunsero alcuni scandali giornalistici, come i Pentagon's Papers ad esempio, che accentuarono le posizioni critiche verso l'amministrazione governativa.

Il ricercatore ritiene che l'introduzione di informazioni, immagini e filmati accurati e dettagliati nelle case delle famiglie americane, sia stata una delle cause dirette della sconfitta degli Stati Uniti in Vietnam.

Quando il sostegno popolare contro l'equità e la necessità del conflitto diminuì, gli Stati Uniti furono costretti a combattere due guerre, una con i media in patria e una in Asia contro il comunismo, e la storia evidenzia che una guerra su due fronti porta a una perdita imminente.

Dall'altra parte, la propaganda promossa dal Fronte di Liberazione Nazionale del Vietnam del Sud, semplice, tradizionale, diretta e apprezzata dalla popolazione locale, riuscì a mobilitare un intero paese a combattere contro soldati molto più qualificati e sicuramente con attrezzature migliori: e questa è una ulteriore dimostrazione che una propaganda persuasiva può rappresentare uno strumento efficace nei conflitti.

L'ultima guerra discussa è la guerra in Iraq, dall'inizio nel 2002 con l'invasione del paese, fino al completamento del ritiro delle truppe da parte di Obama nel 2010.

È evidente che l'analisi della guerra in Iraq (2002-10) include delle limitazioni storiche, in quanto si riferisce ad un'epoca troppo recente per poter avere una valutazione storica completa e oggettiva, che possa tener conto di tutti gli aspetti che sono stati coinvolti nel conflitto in esame.

In questo caso quindi l'indagine si concentra principalmente sull'azione e la presenza degli Stati Uniti in Iraq, piuttosto che sulle relazioni tra la precedente amministrazione

statunitense (Bush I e Clinton) e la regione mediorientale. Tuttavia, al fine di discutere come gli Stati Uniti si siano orientati verso la manipolazione delle informazioni, lo studio descrive le azioni intraprese dalle autorità occidentali dopo la caduta del regime Hussein, e i successivi tentativi di ricostruzione amministrativa del paese.

La guerra del Vietnam è stata una lezione militare e sociale per gli Stati Uniti, quindi sin dal 2002 l'amministrazione statunitense ha operato con grande attenzione alla diffusione delle informazioni riuscendo a mantenere gran parte delle operazioni militari nel minor "rumore" mediatico possibile.

Dagli studi emersi, l'amministrazione Bush è stata in grado di modellare le informazioni dalla gestione dei titoli al collocamento delle notizie sui diversi media, con l'obiettivo di limitare la diffusione di informazioni sensibili che avrebbero influenzato il supporto popolare.

Detto questo, non si vuole significare che la gestione delle informazioni sia necessariamente da considerarsi un comportamento negativo, in quanto talvolta può proteggere la popolazione di riferimento ed avere degli effetti positivi. Si ritiene però che la manipolazione delle informazioni a qualsiasi fine non sia un comportamento etico.

La manipolazione dei media da parte degli Stati Uniti si estese alla creazione di una serie di notizie riguardo all'Iraq dopo la caduta di Hussein, come rivelato dalle fonti primarie utilizzate, che servirono a prevenire incidenti, ma anche a promuovere i movimenti e i valori anti-insurrezionalisti.

Nonostante la manipolazione delle informazioni abbia in gran parte sostituito il ruolo della propaganda, nel caso in analisi si dimostra invece che questi riescono a mantenere un ruolo comunque di rilievo, nel momento in cui gli Stati Uniti utilizzano ancora fortemente la demonizzazione del nemico e dell'opposizione per consolidare il sostegno popolare.

Quanto fino a qui espresso permette al lettore, e anche all'autore, di avere una sorta di sintesi dell'intero processo di analisi delle diverse campagne di propaganda che sono state analizzate in questo studio.

I risultati della tesi sono molteplici, e tutti sono relativi all'evoluzione e all'uso della manipolazione dell'opinione pubblica, o della propaganda.

La prima constatazione riguarda l'evoluzione del potere di informazione in tutti i recenti conflitti moderni: come si è visto dalle campagne di analisi di propaganda in passato, nel caso della Seconda Guerra Mondiale, tutte le parti del conflitto hanno condiviso tecniche simili ed operazioni di comunicazione volte a valorizzare l'importanza del patriottismo e la demonizzazione del nemico.

In seguito, nel caso della guerra del Vietnam, l'avvento di nuove tecnologie di comunicazione di massa, come la televisione, ha messo in difficoltà l'esecuzione di una campagna di propaganda di successo dagli Stati Uniti, dato che le informazioni sono state principalmente gestite dai mezzi di comunicazione e non dal governo stesso, con conseguente crescita di impopolarità sul fronte nazionale.

L'evoluzione si verifica con l'invasione irachena, dove l'amministrazione Bush ha gestito con cura la diffusione delle informazioni della situazione belligerante nella regione mediorientale, attraverso informazioni manipolati a partire dai titoli delle notizie e con la pubblicazione di report o articoli, comunque destinati ad un pubblico limitato.

Tutto questo ha permesso all'autore di comprendere come siano preziosi gli scambi di informazioni tra governo e popolazione, e come, nel tempo, gli Stati Uniti si siano orientati sempre più verso il controllo dei media, piuttosto che attraverso l'utilizzo dei sistemi di propaganda.

Un altro aspetto che è emerso inaspettatamente durante lo sviluppo di questo lavoro, è come inizialmente la propaganda democratica degli Stati Uniti fosse simile alla campagna nazista e come i regimi autoritari, nel tempo, non modificchino le tecniche di propaganda tradizionali, con sempre minor efficacia.

La seconda constatazione fondamentale del lavoro evidenzia di conseguenza quanto l'uso di campagne di mass media con il controllo delle informazioni rappresentino una delle fonti di successo in un conflitto.

Nel caso della prima guerra analizzata, si potrebbe attribuire la vittoria finale degli Alleati alla sopraffazione militare, tuttavia è evidente che da entrambe le parti, le campagne di propaganda sono state determinanti per mantenere il controllo e il sostegno popolare nel fronte domestico, alimentando forze offensive.

Come osservato nella guerra del Vietnam, il Fronte Nazionale della Libertà, mobilitando la popolazione attraverso una propaganda tradizionale di successo, uscì vittoriosa dal conflitto contro gli Stati Uniti, teoricamente molto più forti sotto il profilo puramente militare. La forza del patriottismo e la volontà di recuperare i loro territori che ne scaturì, rese possibile il successo del Fronte Nazionale della Libertà.

L'ultimo caso della guerra in Iraq, è rappresentativo anche come caso per un ritiro causato dall'impopolarità del tema della guerra, portando alla conclusione che quando la popolazione è più consapevole dei fatti di guerra che non ritiene etici, il sostegno popolare all'intervento diminuisce portando l'amministrazione governativa a un ritiro forzato. Ciò significa che, nei conflitti moderni internazionali, è fondamentale da parte degli attori coinvolti che ci sia una attenta gestione delle informazioni che sia tesa a fornire le corrette informazioni per poter stimolare il sostegno della popolazione, in modo che l'azione governativa abbia maggiore libertà per intraprendere azioni di guerra.

"Decenni fa, il potere senza precedenti delle armi nucleari ha richiesto nuovi adattamenti delle strategie. Adesso, il potere senza precedenti delle informazioni come armi richiede un nuovo adattamento delle strategie." (Hermann, 2017)

L'obiettivo dell'indagine storica è stato quello di comprendere il valore della propaganda come uno strumento militare al pari degli altri tradizionalmente individuati, ed un fattore determinante per il successo di un paese in un conflitto.

Durante la ricerca mi sono imbattuto nella citazione sopra riportata, a cura di un ex funzionario della US Air Force Intelligence; ritengo che questa affermazione rappresenti molto adeguatamente i risultati di questa tesi.

Concordo quindi con la citazione riportata, a supporto di questo lavoro, sostenendo che il cambiamento nella scena mediatica e il cambiamento nella diffusione delle informazioni ha

modificato il concetto di propaganda e la percezione dell'azione governativa da parte della popolazione. Questa teoria è supportata anche dai risultati del mio studio, che sottolinea come sia le popolazioni che i governi hanno compreso l'importanza delle informazioni, che sono in grado di fatto grado di plasmare l'esito di un conflitto.