USING MEDIA AS WEAPONS IN HYBRID WAR

[a]VIKTORIIA BOIKO, [b]ALONA STADNYK, [c]NATALIIA POLOVAIA, [d]OLENA VANIUSHYNA, [e]OLENA KHODUS, [f]TETIANA IVANETS

[a,e]Oles Honchar Dnipropetrovsk National University, 72, Gagarin Ave., 49010, Dnipro, Ukraine
[b,f]Mariupol State University, 129a, Budivelnykiv Ave., 87500, Mariupol, Ukraine
[c]National Aviation University, 1, Liubomyra Huzara Ave., 03058, Kyiv, Ukraine.
[d]Kyiv National University of Trade and Economics, 19, Kyoto Str., 02156, Kyiv, Ukraine
email: [a]vikiboyko@gmail.com, [b]a.g.stadnyk@gmail.com, [c]sosonovitch.natalia@ukr.net, [d]olena.vaniushyna@gmail.com, [e]hodus2@ukr.net, [f]t.ivanets@mdu.in.ua

Abstract: This article is a theoretical analysis and generalization of the views of scientists on various approaches to understanding hybrid warfare in modern society and determining the trends of its influence on public opinion. It has been proven that media use during such wars has a practical impact on public opinion and most often carries a manipulative nature (by agreement with the social customer). The purpose is to understand the specifics of modern media weapons and determine the trends of their influence on public opinion in conducting a hybrid war. General scientific and special sociological methods were used during the study. The article is based on general scientific methods: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, typology, modeling, extrapolation, operationalization, interpretation, abstraction, generalization, and synergy, as well as logical-historical, systemic, comparative, network, and structural-functional analysis. The analysis showed the comprehensive nature of the information space, where the modern Ukrainian society and the entire civilized world are located. The information space was aimed at a purely informational function today. In that case, it acts as an effective manipulative weapon on the part of power structures, which led to the emergence of the term "hybrid war". It turned out that over time, society ceases to experience systemic information influence, which complicates the ability to protect against it. The article determines that media channels, as the latest type of weapons of mass destruction, occupy a key place in the conduct of a hybrid war. The newest media channels have become vital in conducting the hybrid war.

Keywords: Hybrid war, Information space, Information weapons, Latest media, Media, Media weapons.

1 Introduction

When exploring the issues of hybrid war, the challenges and threats that it carries, one should pay attention to the nature of the emergence of a hybrid war and the role of the media in the process of its conduct. After all, understanding the specifics of using the media precisely as a weapon in the process of conducting hybrid wars will provide answers to its goals, weaknesses and strengths of the corresponding strategy.

The process of development of information technology has taken place in unison with the technological development of weapons, which has a great aspect of defeating public opinion. Each historical stage brought with it the latest technological changes in the development of traditional and informational weapons, which determined its place in the military arena. However, over time, the influence of non-military methods began to play a greater role than the military. Hitler's comrade-in-arms, A. Speer, in his last speech at the Nuremberg trials admitted: "With the help of such technical means as radio and loudspeaker, independent thinking was taken away from eighty million people" [13]. A. Speer's statement allows us to note that the manipulative techniques of media channels have an impact on a large part of society and can lead to a change in the opinions, actions or behavior of the whole society.

The media deal with information, and it is the control of information that makes it possible to manipulate the mass consciousness, create a model in it that is beneficial to the subject of the influence of reality and decide which problems are most relevant today. Such a phenomenon as media consciousness (i.e., consciousness based on false values, manipulative interpretations, double morality) is artificially produced, when the reality offered by the media differs from the actual one. Public opinion through the media consciousness is significantly disfigured [11].

The latest achievements in the development of modern media have made the world somewhat vulnerable to the latest weapons, which are not inferior to traditional ones in their danger. Therefore, research on the study of new generation wars, namely: hybrid warfare, information warfare and psychological warfare, is relevant. Recently, it has become much more difficult to determine the boundary between the beginning and end of such wars. The scientific developments of scientists make it possible to conduct such wars in various forms and without official announcements about their beginning, which determines the corresponding effective influence of the media on society. This prompts the conduct of relevant research to understand the possibilities of resisting media weapons in the process of conducting hybrid wars.

2 Materials and Methods

The study used general scientific and special sociological methods. The article is based on such general scientific methods as: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, typology, modeling, extrapolation, operationalization, interpretation, abstraction, generalization and synergy, as well as methods of logical-historical, systemic, comparative, network and structural-functional analysis. Let us apply a comparative analysis – to compare the effects of the influence of traditional and new media on public opinion in the process of conducting a hybrid war; systems analysis – to understand the main characteristics of hybrid wars; structural-functional analysis – to study the specific features of the role of the media in a hybrid war.

The theoretical basis of the study was the fundamental scientific provisions of general and sectoral sociology in the field of information impact on public opinion in the process of conducting hybrid wars, reflected in the works of I. Rushchenko, G. Pocheptsov, E. Magda and others. They revealed the nature of the emergence of public opinion, the process of its formation and functioning in society: G. Blummer, W. Lippmann, E. Noel-Neumann, J. Ortega y Gasset, L. Fraser, J. Zaler, etc.

3 Results and Discussion

In the modern world, hybrid warfare does not lead to fundamentally new elements of its conduct. The traditional interpretation of war has certain changes in its understanding, and the classical vision of war (way of war is a method of conducting military operations) is outdated and not relevant in accordance with the requirements of the modern (informatized) world. Hybrid warfare creates relatively new combinations of existing elements already used in traditional wars (such as World War I and World War II). A hybrid war is unfolding in all public areas (information, economic, political, military, etc.). In the course of waging such wars, all segments of the population are involved, especially those that influence public opinion: actors, singers, writers, bloggers, journalists, politicians, etc. Traditional warfare in a hybrid war is most likely the backdrop for a larger war in the human mind.

Recently, in scientific publications and analytical reports of modern researchers, there have been various interpretations by which researchers characterize the essence of war in modern society. More often, two phrases are distinguished: "new generation war" and "fourth generation war". However, in our opinion, they do not identify the essence, content and structure of actions taking place against the backdrop of traditional military operations. That is why, first of all, we will focus on the analysis of the term "hybrid war" and the specifics of its conduct in modern society.

Frank Hoffman, a consultant to the US Department of the Navy, one of the authors of the concept of "hybrid warfare", notes that each era has its own specific forms of war. This requires all sorts of new terminological developments. In general, the modern era, according to Frank Hoffmann, is characterized by hybridization processes, including in the military sphere. Traditional forms of

war are mixed with the activities of organized crime, irregular conflicts and terrorism [1]. The transition of modern society to the full informatization of its life has led to certain challenges and threats from this side, which led to the emergence of the very understanding of hybrid warfare.

Ukrainian sociologist I. Rushchenko describes a hybrid war as a combination of non-traditional and traditional forms of warfare. According to their genesis, these forms come from different sources, but the aggressor managed to weave them into a strike combination that destroys the enemy's security system. Here is a definition of hybrid warfare offered by Brigadier General Niko Tak, head of the Crisis Response Center at NATO Joint Forces Headquarters: it refers to the use of classic military forces, sabotage groups, illegal armed groups in parallel with the organization of civilian protests under the influence of information and propaganda tools, which is complemented by hacker attacks on enemy information systems. All these funds are used in a concentrated manner to achieve clearly defined political goals" [3, p. 18]. In our opinion, this interpretation very accurately characterizes the hybrid war that the Russian Federation has launched against Ukraine since 2014.

In turn, researcher M. Bond believes that "hybrid warfare involves the use of a variety of combinations of military activities, resources and programs, political movements designed for non-violent, but convincing economic and political pressure on hostile governments with the aim of reforming or replacing them in a political, social and economic instability characteristic of failed states" [10]. E. Magda (engaged in an in-depth study of the specifics of a hybrid war), in turn, defines a "hybrid war" as a set of pre-prepared and operationally implemented actions of a military, diplomatic, economic, informational nature aimed at achieving strategic goals. The components of a hybrid war include traditional and non-standard threats, terrorism, explosive actions, when the latest or non-standard technologies are used to counter the superiority of the enemy in military force [6].

O. Zaporozhets defines the specifics of a hybrid war by the fact that, along with regular and irregular military operations, they use technologies for creating a parallel reality or pseudo-reality (a combination of elements of real and imaginary reality), that is, non-military methods of conducting a hybrid war. The aggressor can win in the information space through the distribution of appropriate symbols that form the desired "picture of reality" in the mass consciousness [15]. The non-military technologies of conducting a hybrid war aim to neutralize the traditional (military) advantage of any army, to prioritize not the military area, but precisely the informational, moral and ethical component. In particular, this includes, for example, a modern cinematographer, which carries the corresponding meanings (a certain picture of the world) into public opinion and transforms it.

The means of hybrid warfare are not new. Military history knows many examples of asymmetric wars using non-linear tactics and irregular armed formations, which are more ancient analogues of modern hybrid warfare. One can mention the Napoleonic War in Spain or the Vietnam War. Such wars are called compound wars. The essence of tactics has not changed, just the tools have become more modern and are used in a complex way [7]. Information asymmetry is based on the possibility of covering an event based on its different aspects, creating different types of news. For example, war can be interpreted either from a patriotic or family perspective. In the first case, official sources will be stronger, in the second - unofficial ones. Therefore, it is asymmetry that allows, if not defeating the stronger one, then causing him serious harm, because it always finds weaknesses in the "defense" of the enemy [2, p. 237]. Hybrid warfare is a phenomenon of the modern world precisely because key tasks can be accomplished thanks to information capabilities. And the stronger the development of information potential, the easier it will be to fulfill the corresponding tasks. One of the most frequently used tools in the conduct of hybrid wars is media (information) channels.

The struggle for the minds and moods of people is becoming almost the core of a hybrid war. The aggressor can widely use modern information communications. The habit of free print, word and thought becomes a weak point. Closed societies, preparing for war, transfer their mass media to the regime of military propaganda in advance [3, p. 27]. The British researcher of information aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine P. Pomerantsev introduces the term "weaponization of media", that is, the use of media as a weapon [14, p. 19]. The key task of the media weapon, as M. Bulgakov wrote, is "the devastation in the heads, which is more dangerous than the devastation in the economy, because the loss of national, spiritual values leads to the degeneration of the people and the collapse of society".

There are fairly common methods of using media in the course of conducting hybrid wars. In particular, the following can be distinguished: 1) concealment of real events or their distortion; 2) hanging appropriate labels; 3) defamation; 4) spreading gossip or rumors; 5) suggestion of certain feelings among the society (which are beneficial to the manipulators), and so on. The key task of such media influence is the suggestion of chaos and panic in society, so that society makes appropriate decisions on emotions, and not on the mind. And emotionally made decisions, as we know, provide great opportunities for skilled manipulators.

The destructive ability of a media weapon (it is also interpreted as an "information weapon") and its purpose directly depends on the target, and are also indicated by the potential ability to awaken in the state or behavior of the corresponding target of media influence the results that the subject of influence set for himself.

To date, information weapons are the only effective weapons that, in the context of scientific and technological progress, can lead one of the opposing sides to victory, while the use of an arsenal of modern traditional weapons in a global or relatively global conflict can lead to the destruction of all participants in the confrontation or, at least to irreparable losses in the structure of national security, the economy and other important spheres of life of the conflicting parties to such an extent that none of them will be able to take advantage of the results of the victory [13]. The informational aspect of traditional wars influences the public opinion of the population, encourages them to act in favor of the social customer.

Information weapons are a tool for carrying out information operations that determine the organizational form of hybrid warfare. Information operations are traditionally understood as actions used to achieve information advantages in providing military strategy by influencing the information, information systems and information infrastructure of the enemy with strengthening the security of one's own information, information systems and information infrastructure [9]. But in order to understand the media as a tool for influencing public opinion in the conduct of hybrid wars, one should analyze the very understanding of the term "media" and its place in the conduct of a hybrid war.

In particular, researchers identify three approaches to the definition and content of modern media channels. The first is a rather negative attitude towards the media (admirers of the Marxian movement), they relate the media as a collapse of the cultural values of society. The second is a positive attitude towards media, the adoption of all the latest media technologies (a vivid example: the Electronic State in a smartphone, which was presented by Ukraine). The third is a neutral attitude towards the media, that is, the acceptance of the fact of the existence of the latest media, but without giving them an ideological content.

And since the modern world creates new challenges and threats for us, this has not bypassed the understanding of the media as a tool to influence public opinion. And if earlier the media concerned only television, radio and Internet channels, today the latest media channels for transmitting information have appeared. "New media" is a term applied to interactive electronic publications and new forms of communication between content producers and consumers, which distinguishes them from traditional media such as traditional TV, radio, newspapers and magazines. This term refers to the process of

development of digital, network technologies and communications in the media industry. New media are associated with such phenomena as convergence, virtualization, multimedia, creation of new forms of knowledge management and organization of knowledge [5].

Researcher D. McQuail identified the main features of new media: digitalization, convergence, Internet divergence of mass communication, adaptation of society to new cultural roles, the proposed network, the creation of a new public sphere, fragmentation and internal erosion of "media institutions", a reduction of control. New media and technologies are one whole, since the public media process is currently associated with them [8, p. 112]. The latest media can be characterized by the following features: 1. Setting up a dialogue of the latest media – the use of social networks to transmit information that allows getting feedback from the author of the message (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Telegram, etc.); 2. Mobility of the latest media - the use of mobile devices to use media channels, which allows being in touch, regardless of the city of residence and time; 3. Under the reverse – the transfer of information from one channel to another (the digital format made it possible to accumulate, transmit and transform information); 4. Possibility of interrelation – transfer of information on the device (USB); 5. Ubiquity – distribution of the latest media throughout the world; 6. Globalization – the interconnection of all world media channels.

The military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine has become a certain media phenomenon in the world through the inclusion of all world media in the process of covering events. The emotional involvement not only of Ukrainian opinion leaders, but also of world opinion leaders, made it possible to draw the attention of the whole world to the problems of our country and receive as much help as possible (military, humanitarian, financial, informational, etc.). This indicates that the media is a powerful and effective weapon in a globalized world.

The characteristic features of media weapons are as follows:

- Controllability, ensuring the implementation of the specified information impact on the target at the specified time and on the specified scale;
- Secrecy, which significantly complicates the determination of the moment of the beginning of the information impact and the source of this impact;
- Versatility, providing the ability to destroy objects in a wide range;
- Relatively low cost of creation, high efficiency;
- Availability, which ensures its relatively easy distribution and high complexity of control over this process [14, p. 66].

Within the framework of existing approaches, the analysis of the dynamics and trends of the media can take place in several directions, the main of which is the understanding of the media and communication as an element of civil society, on the one hand, and a public relations tool (dissemination of information, creation and support of symbols, etc.), on the other [6]. Analyzing modern media channels for the dissemination of information, the following can be distinguished: traditional and non-traditional (latest) media. The traditional ones are:

1. Print media (newspapers, magazines, brochures, etc.) are the oldest and traditional channels for disseminating information among public opinion. The structure of reporting in the print media is most often centralized and corresponds to the editorial policy of a particular publication, which gives rise to strict requirements for publications (censorship). However, over time and the advent of Internet resources, they began to gradually lose their relevance among consumers.
2. Electronic media:
   - Television – most often acts as a leader in the dissemination of information, due to the coverage of a fairly large audience (of different ages, gender and status).
   - Radio – covers the category of the audience that, due to lack of time, can only listen to informational messages (truck drivers, sellers, pensioners, etc.).
   - Internet resources (news sites, newspaper or magazine sites, etc.) – with the transformation of the modern world, it is the Internet that covers most of the population for information.

Non-traditional (latest) media channels: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Telegram, etc. These networks are relatively new in use; however, they are all-encompassing and viral in nature. They bribe the consumer with their ease of use and the ability to get feedback from the author of the message (for example, there are no such opportunities on television or in a newspaper). That is why, in our opinion, the latest media have great potential for influencing (most often manipulative) public opinion, this is especially acute in the process of waging hybrid wars.

The theory of algorithms for creating information messages that exists in modern society makes it possible to explain their success in influencing public opinion. The process of exposure to such informational messages is as follows:

1) Relax the audience – bring information to the public through media channels, for example, that there are no enemies, or there is one specific one (referring to some historical period);
2) Force the public to listen/watch one information channel without paying attention to others for focusing on one specific paradigm when creating informational messages (for example, "Russian World", "denazification", etc.);
3) Encourage society not to think about the information they consume (turn off the mind, engage the emotional aspect of reactions to information messages);
4) To create artificially or actually conditions in which society does not distinguish between the information flow (attacks, terror, war, and so on). Consequently, the protective function responsible for the critical understanding of information will not work in crisis situations;
5) Suggestion of historical memory, a sense of patriotism (to show society that its nation is better in the world);
6) The creation of a certain state among society, in which there is a constant dependence on information and its influence on the enemy).

The specified algorithm for creating informational messages works well in the Russian Federation. An important point for understanding hybrid risk, as American researcher John Davis writes, is the absence of moral and ethical restrictions in performing an operation. Hybrid war, on the one hand, becomes possible given the new opportunities to achieve victory, and on the other hand, its tactics are built in such a way as to avoid responsibility and condemnation from the public [3, p. 28].

In particular, the media play a key role in the modern society of all states of the world. They act as the central subject of the formation and transformation of public opinion about current events both in their country and in the world as a whole. At the same time, there is also an inverse pattern: media that are more developed, available in large numbers, the less likely they are to be used from a manipulative point of view, and with a less developed system of media channels, there is a threat of its monopolization in favor of a certain social customer.

Media play an important role in the life of society. If earlier the media performed the function of purely informing the population about important events in the country and the world. To date, this function of modern media has been transformed and has begun not only to inform society, but also to influence it (most often by manipulating society), in order to form an opinion regarding the attitude to certain facts, events and phenomena. Such influence (may be long-term or short-term) is carried out with the help of such methods as propaganda and agitation, etc.

The results of this action include: 1) changes in the actions of society; 2) changes in public opinion; 3) changes in the knowledge of society.

If the influence of the media on public opinion is complex and permanent, then it will affect all layers of society. In this sense, the media form a global system of values. A society that is in constant and rapid development has the goal of building and maintaining the symbolic system of its nation. The destruction of the symbolic system can lead to a change in the traditional patterns of society's behavior. The symbols formed by this nation may appear under threat.

The influence of the media, which is destructive in nature, can change the existing value system of society, which will lead to the creation of new myths and stereotypes, which are most often divorced from real events (the creation of a new picture of the world in public opinion), this is especially acute in the process of conducting hybrid wars.

With the help of media channels, one can significantly influence public opinion, namely in the following ways:

- Misrepresentation of facts through incomplete or one-sided information;
- A fragmented method of broadcasting information messages: an array of information is transformed in a single stream, which does not allow society to see a single picture of events;
- Subjective presentation of information messages through their own prism of perception of facts (the inclusion of sympathies and antipathies to the covered);
- Suppression of certain events, which allows a manipulative influence on public opinion;
- Coverage of events in a favorable light (even if they are not);
- The urgent submission of unverified information, which is a manipulative technique and in accordance with the “law of advance”, and will have a significant impact on the audience than subsequent messages (even if they are more truthful);
- Broadcast an appropriate view of the information message as the only correct version of events.

Given these possibilities of informational influence, an illusory effect is created to support the created artificial information world by media channels, which will lead to the rejection of society regarding the expression of their opinions under pain of public sanctions. And the more repetitions of the information message on the media channels, the greater will be the reluctance to express one's point of view of the individual if it does not converge with him (the effect of the spiral of silence by Elisabeth Noel-Neumann).

In particular, it can be noted that there is a range of methods by which the media influences public opinion. Therefore, it is necessary to highlight the principles of protection against manipulative information in the conduct of hybrid wars:

- Protection of public opinion, information channels, communication systems, information networks, etc.;
- Neutralization of dangerous information messages by constant monitoring of the situation in the information field;
- Elimination of the negative consequences of information impact.

In particular, it should be understood how, when waging hybrid wars, to be able to counter such informational influence at the state level:

- Formulation of the key content of information messages, information operations, mass media;
- Assessment of the moral and psychological state of both friendly troops and the enemy;
- Elimination of factors that can lead to misinformation of society;
- Forecasting the capabilities of the enemy, a certain scenario of his actions regarding informational influence;
- Implementation of counteraction in the information field to enemy attacks.

Therefore, the informational (manipulative) influence of the media should be considered as an inevitable fact in the process of conducting hybrid wars, which achieve the goals of the opponent. But in terms of its effectiveness, it can be compared with weapons of mass destruction.

4 Conclusion

The results of the theoretical analysis of trends in the influence of modern media weapons on public opinion in the process of hybrid warfare allow us to draw the following conclusions:

1. The fact of creation of modern combinations (informational, economic, political, military, etc.) of already existing elements in conducting hybrid wars is revealed and confirmed. Hybrid warfare, we believe, should be understood as a combination of traditional and non-traditional forms of warfare (which have the same power to defeat society).
2. The analysis showed that the key place in the conduct of hybrid warfare is occupied by media channels, as the latest weapon of mass destruction. And the key to waging a hybrid war were the latest media channels: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Telegram and more. These networks are relatively new in use, however, they are comprehensive and viral in nature.
3. The article reveals the result of informational influence through the media in the process of conducting a hybrid war, which consists of: changes in the actions of society; changes in public opinion and changes in knowledge of society.

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