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Anti-Ukrainian narratives of Russia in the global information space

Introduction

War takes place not only on the battlefield, but also in the information space. The Ukrainian, russian and international information space has undergone significant changes after the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of the East. After the start of the full-scale invasion, the Ukrainian media space began to operate in wartime conditions, significantly limiting the presence of russian narratives. The official Ukrainian point of view dominates in the Ukrainian traditional media, which switched to broadcasting in wartime conditions, the EU countries imposed sanctions against russian propaganda television channels, the largest social networks and video hosting companies implement a policy of limiting russian propaganda channels. But russian propaganda continues to remain in both Ukrainian and Western information spaces. This means that there are still such channels that provide an opportunity to spread disinformation and manipulative appeals. Groups created in social networks and messengers became such channels. Considering the long-term effect of propaganda, it is clear that the information space has become a full-fledged training ground for the war against Ukraine.

Methods of investigation

The complexity of the investigated issue of studying anti-Ukrainian narratives in the Ukrainian and global information space determines the multidisciplinary nature of its solution, in particular, knowledge of international relations, communication theory, mass communication theory, and psychology. This determines the methodological basis of the research, which is based on the principles of objectivity, multifactoriality and

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systematicity. Therefore, to study the specifics of the chosen topic, the most justified method is, first of all, the interdisciplinary method of discourse analysis, because it allows you to answer the following questions: "what are the goals of Russian propaganda, how do anti-Ukrainian narratives differ in national, russian, and international media spaces, how has Ukrainian changed information field after the start of a full-scale invasion, how anti-Ukrainian narratives changed in the russian information field, and what are the reasons for the failure of russian narratives in Ukraine."

The study of anti-Ukrainian narratives in the international information space was carried out using a systemic approach and its component as an analyst of international relations, which gave a holistic view of the specifics of interstate relations between russia and Ukraine. The method of analysis and synthesis helped to study, systematize and characterize the narratives of russia in the national and world information space. The comparative method made it possible to compare anti-Ukrainian narratives in the Ukrainian, russian and Western media space. The use of media monitoring and content analysis made it possible to find out the presence and main trends of changes in russian narratives regarding the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The induction method helped to find out how russia's military actions in Ukraine, combined with the informational component, influenced the consciousness and behavior of the Ukrainian public. The empirical basis of the work was the reports and studies of the US State Department, the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine, the analytical center "Detector-Media", the Institute of Mass Information, the Center for Countering Disinformation at the NSDC of Ukraine, international research projects. Although studies of anti-Ukrainian narratives are conducted in various aspects, a comprehensive study of the evolution of anti-Ukrainian narratives is presented in a fragmentary manner, which determines the relevance of this study.

The goals of anti-Ukrainian narratives of russian propaganda

According to the classic theory of conducting special information operations, the greatest effectiveness of destructive information is achieved when people are frightened, emotionally exhausted, disoriented, euphoric or overexcited. In such situations, it will be easier for the enemy to achieve their goals. The main goals of propaganda are to collect information, create chaos and panic, misinform the enemy, divert resources, intimidate and break morale, control people's activity in the desired propagandistic direction. Ukrainian media expert Otar Dovzhenko notes that the testing of technologies for sowing chaos and panic in Ukraine took place even before the start of a full-scale invasion and cites the example of the small district center of Novi Sanzhary in the spring of 2020, when local residents, frightened by the prospect of the coronavirus through messages on social networks and chats, rushed on buses with Ukrainians evacuated from Wuhan [1]. An example of intimidation and an attempt to break morale

[1] Dovzhenko Otar – Yak ne staty zbroyey v rukah voroga v info prostori. https://ms.detector.media/propaganda-ta-vplivi/post/29077/2022-03-01-yak-ne-staty-zbroieyu-v-rukakh-voroga-v-infoprostori. access 02.III.2022 (in Ukrainan)

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is the spread of messages in Ukrainian social networks during the Revolution of Dignity, such as "Maidan surrendered, everyone leaves", which were generated by bots and picked up by members of publics and groups.

The strengthening of anti-Ukrainian narratives began after the victory of the Revolution of Dignity in 2014. According to Dmytro Zolotukhin, with this direction of propaganda russia is trying: "for Ukraine's foreign partners to justify the need to seize Crimea in the conditions of the "political collapse" that allegedly took place in Ukraine at the beginning of 2014, the importance of russian patronage over Ukraine in order to ensure its normal development, the legality of secession the so-called ORDLO (occupied districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions). For the russian domestic consumer, it is necessary to shift attention from internal problems to external factors, in the center of which is Ukraine; to explain the need for russian support of the self-proclaimed "republics" as part of the "russian peace" and to show that putin's regime has no alternative. For the Ukrainian population, it is to show the inability of the authorities to solve the internal problems of the state, the fallacy of the chosen path of European integration, the inability of the leadership of Ukraine to carry out reforms[2].

After the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion in Ukraine, the terms "narrative", "message", "fake" often appeared in the media space as identical concepts. These terms should be splited, since the information war, as Ksenia Ilyuk notes, "is not only fakes"[3]. In her opinion, fakes are the smallest unit of such a war, that is, soldiers of the information army. They have a clear task and there are many of them. Russia's information and military tactics are very similar. They mass-produce fakes, just as they send their soldiers to fight. The generated false message is sent again and again to the Ukrainian, russian and world information space. Above the fakes are messages – clear and understandable words that should hit a specific target. Messages can be truthful, manipulative or false, which is the reason for their danger to the consumer of information. Russia uses fakes, half-truths and manipulations to fill the message and shape it. There are far fewer messages than fakes because it takes resources to create and promote a message. There can be several messages and sometimes they even contradict each other. For example, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, russian propaganda has been spreading the following messages: "Ukraine was preparing to attack Belarus", "Ukraine was preparing to attack Crimea", "Ukraine was preparing to attack Transnistria". At the same time, russia constantly repeats the message about the "weakness of the Ukrainian army." That is, at the same time we are talking about a strong and numerous enemy "trained by the Americans" and about a weak Ukrainian army. In theory, messages should not contradict each other, but in the russian information campaign, these rules are not followed, since the task of Russian propaganda is to confuse the audience, to

[2] Zolotukhin D. Bila knyga spezyalnyh informatsiynyh operatsiy proty Ukrainy 2014 – 2018. Kyiv. 2018. – 384 p. (in Ukrainan)

[3] Ilyk Ksenia Informatsina viyna ne tilky feiky. https://ms.detector.media/propaganda-ta-vplivi/post/29264/2022-03-31-informatsiyna-viyna-tse-ne-tilky-feyky/ Access 01.IV.2022 (in Ukrainan)

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undermine trust. A set of messages is combined into a narrative, that is, a story that explains the world around. The task of narratives is to form a certain worldview. It is the narrative that is strategically most important, because messages can be modified, and a narrative is a permanent story. It takes time and resources to create a quality narrative. Russia's most popular narrative regarding Ukraine is the claim of a "failed state." The messages that fill this narrative are about history, culture, corruption, economics, and more.

Anti-Ukrainian narratives in the russian media space

Before the full-scale invasion in Ukraine, the russian media wrote that the main problems in Ukraine are nationalists and Ukrainian politicians. That is, all informational efforts were aimed at distracting the russian citizen from internal problems and switching the audience's attention to Ukraine. Within the "Desa of War" project, Texty.org.ua researchers identified six narratives that russian propaganda began to promote on its territory after the beginning of the invasion, namely: "war in Ukraine", "anti-Western rhetoric", "sanctions", "Ukraine – failed state" and "Crimea"[4]. Thus, several messages were created within the framework of the "war in Ukraine" narrative, for example, the message about the russian-Ukrainian war, which includes manipulative news about combat operations, discrediting the Ukrainian army and political figures; a message about biolaboratories, nuclear weapons, russia's negotiations with Ukraine; refugees These messages are supported by materials on how russia "evacuates" (actually, deports) people to its own territory or to previously occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as news with a message about "bad Ukrainian refugees" abroad. Russia's anti-Western rhetoric is focused on demonstrating that russian diplomacy effectively interacts with countries that are "friendly" and neutral to russia and "strengthens" the country's position in the international arena. The narrative about the impact of sanctions is spread in the context of "Europe will suffer more from sanctions than russia" or about "russian import substitution". The russian mass media cover the impact of sanctions on the state of the domestic economy in a neutral manner, usually without mentioning the sanctions. The "pumping" of the domestic russian audience can be characterized as totalitarian propaganda, which is about finding internal enemies; sentencing people for anti-war statements; restoration of "pioneering"; creation of totalitarian means of control, etc. One of the most enduring narratives of russia is "Ukraine is a failed state." The main messages of this narrative include Ukraine's internal problems, which do not relate to the topic of hostilities, in particular, it is the discrediting of Ukraine's efforts in the matter of European integration, attacks on Volodymyr Zelensky

[4] Ryaboshtan Ira Yak prorosiyski media v Ukraini zminyly rytoryky ta chym propaganda Kremlya goduye rosiyan. https://ms.detector.media/propaganda-ta-vplivi/post/29647/2022-06-13-yak-prorosiyski-media-v-ukraini-zminyly-rytoryku-ta-chym-propaganda-kremlya-goduie-rosiyan/ Access 13.VI.2022 (in Ukrainan)

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and Petro Poroshenko. Russian propaganda mainly writes about the occupied Crimean peninsula in the context of the detention of Crimean Tatars.

Analyzing the evolution of changes in Russian propaganda narratives in the information space of the occupying state, the Center for Countering Disinformation at the NSDC of Ukraine shows that while preparing the russian population for war, russian propaganda at the end of 2021 significantly strengthened anti-Ukrainian rhetoric, directing it to intensify contemptuous and hostile attitudes. In particular, russian propaganda denied the historical facts of the existence of the Ukrainian nation, discredited Ukrainian statehood, and formed the opinion that Ukrainians and russians are one population. At the same time, narratives about the illegitimacy of the Ukrainian government after the Revolution of Dignity and the neo-Nazi nature of its actions with the support of Western special services were promoted. An important direction of discrediting was theses about the geopolitical exploitation of Ukraine by the collective West. A narrative was formed about the presence of an external threat to russia from the NATO and the USA, which plan to use Ukraine as an aggressor against it and therefore "demonize peaceful russia" with accusations of preparations for war. In the context of statements about the oppression of the Russian-speaking minority and the violent displacement of everything russian from Ukraine, a justification was formed for the potential "forcing Ukraine to make peace" on russia's terms. So, the propaganda of the russian federation spread theses about the need to resolve the Ukrainian issue in Donbas by military means.

Anti-Ukrainian hatred in russia reached its peak in February 2022, after the start of a full-scale invasion. Russian propagandists declared about the ultra-fast conquest of Kyiv and the inevitable defeat of the Armed Forces during the first three days [5]. For example, Alexander Lukashenko declared: "Ukraine will not fight with us – this war will last three or four days at most. The CSTO showed us that by the time they turn around there and send troops, we will already be standing by the English Channel." Margarita Simonyan declared that "in a hot war, we will defeat Ukraine in two days! Well, what is there to defeat her, Lord? Well, let's suppress the fire points...", Olga Skabeeva: "We will take Kyiv in two days, and then the city will fall", Volodymyr Solovyov: "If you think that we will stop at Ukraine, think three hundred times. Let me remind you that Ukraine is only an intermediate stage in ensuring the strategic security of the russian federation."

In the first days of the war, Russian propagandists reported on the numerous victories of the russian army, the breakdown of the unipolar world under the hegemony of the United States, and russia's rise to a leading position in geopolitics. Subsequently, their speeches became less and less pathetic, and the lack of a quick victory was explained as follows: "in fact, Ukraine is a large European country, of course, such a territory cannot be captured quickly in a month of "special operation".

[5] Yak zminyuetsa antyukrainska rytoryka rf. https://cpd.gov.ua/main/yak-zminyuyetsya-antyukrayinska-rytoryka-rf/ Access 15.IX.2022 (in Ukrainan)

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After the failed blitzkrieg attempt, the main direction of russian propaganda was the interpretation of the goals and objectives of the so-called special military operation (SVO). It turned out that "demilitarization" and "denazification" declared as the goal of aggressive military expansion were not clear to the majority of russians. To this day, the final goals of the so-called SVO, which were transformed and added to as the situation at the front developed, have never been made public. Thus, in March, russian propaganda replicated theses regarding the historical falsity of Ukrainian statehood and the country's inability to exist independently. A narrative about the need for a quick "peace on any terms" was advanced as a result of negotiations with the russian federation and partial compromises regarding the already occupied territories. There was the discrediting of Ukrainian refugees in Europe, the supply of Western weapons to Ukraine, "which only prolongs the conflict", and the nuclear safety of Ukrainian nuclear power plants. The discourse on the language issue and the discrediting of the actions of the country's political leadership, military and territorial defense fighters in the regions continued. The narrative was implemented that "the operation is progressing successfully and exceptionally according to the pre-approved plans, and no one expected that it should be completed in a few days." For example, Sergei Shoigu stated: "for the residents of the surrounded settlements to leave, a "regime of silence" is announced and humanitarian corridors are established, which slows down the russian offensive to avoid casualties among the civilian population"; Sergey Lavrov: "the terms of the special operation of the russian federation in Ukraine are determined by the order to categorically avoid strikes on civilian infrastructure"; Oleksandr Lukashenko: "I will now show you where the attack on Belarus was being prepared. And if 6 hours before the operation, a pre-emptive strike had not been made on the positions...".

Also, at the first stages of the war, messages about imaginary Ukrainian "neo-Nazis" and American military biolaboratories on Ukraine's borders with the russian federation were popular in russian propaganda: Mykyta Mykhalkov: "the trajectory of the flight of infected birds over russia was calculated – this is an absolute fascist attempt to exterminate the Slavic ethnic group as a whole such"; Dmytro Peskov: "there were clashes with mobile groups of nationalists and people from Bandera, who used light cars and trucks, where shock devices were installed, according to the principle of jihadmobiles, only there they are now called banderamobiles."

If at the first stage of the war, the propaganda of the russian federation considered the struggle with the "neo-Nazi" Ukrainian authorities to be the biggest problem, then later the narratives about the dehumanization of Ukrainians expanded. In particular, at the beginning of the summer, the most popular narrative was the discrediting of the Ukrainian army with the aim of disrupting the supply of Western weapons. The topics of the world food crisis and the discrediting of Ukrainian energy and nuclear safety due to the terrible state of the infrastructure were also brought up to date. In order to justify the delay in the "liberation" of ORDLO, russian propaganda used the narrative that the russian army is fighting NATO with the Ukraine-anti-russia project for its desire for a just multipolar world.

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Even during the celebration of the "day of russia" on June 12, propagandists devoted most of their messages to discrediting Ukraine and its Western partners who support it in the war. In June 2022, the Ukrainian Institute of Mass Information (IMI) conducted a content analysis of the most popular online media of the russian federation – RIA, Komsomolskaya Pravda, Lenta.Ru, Izvestiya and RBC [6]. During this period, the most mentions of Ukraine and its territory were in "RIA" 49%, "Lenta" and "Izvestia" 17% each, "Komsomolskaya Pravda" 12%, the least written about Ukraine was in "RBC" – 5%. The experts of the Institute recorded that the most popular narrative in the russian media regarding Ukraine concerned the discrediting of the Ukrainian army – 40% of the total number of materials. The propaganda materials of the russian federation about the fact that the "Army of the Armed Forces are losers" who randomly fire on the civilian population of Donbas served as an informational pretext for reinforcing narratives that discriminate against the Armed Forces. Messages about "fires on civilians" are constructed in such a way as to cause disgust and hatred for the Armed Forces in the audience. References to "peaceful victims" were often made in the headlines to attract attention.

An interesting trend that IMI experts noticed during monitoring is that propagandists use replacement of words and concepts. Such techniques are designed to hide and not spread panic among the population, and to create the impression that the authorities control everything. The russians also call the explosions in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine "terrorist attacks" and accuse the Armed Forces of Ukraine of injuring and dying civilians due to their actions. The terminology used by russian propagandists is reminiscent of old soviet propaganda, for example, the expressions "classic Banderov gangster underground", "Ukrainian nationalists intimidated people", "Ukrainian special services against civilians", "terrorist war of Kyiv against civilians" are used. The image of the armed forces of Ukraine is discredited in the russian media with the following narratives: "fighters fire on the civilian population and carry out terrorist attacks against the civilian population", "the Armed Forces of Ukraine are people with drug and alcohol addictions", "territorial defense fighters are just "cannon fodder" who are not ready for war", " the fighters who were captured by the russians want to stay and live in russia, because the road to the front awaits them again in Ukraine", "the fighters of the Armed Forces of Ukraine take food from the civilian population, while the russian army feeds the residents of the occupied territories".

The next narrative concerned the powerful army of the russian federation and the potential of the so-called army of "LDNR", which fights against "nationalists" and "weapons from the West". Russians call such acts of struggle not war, but "denazification" and "demilitarization." The army of the russian federation is portrayed as honest, open to the civilian population, which came with peace. In order to consolidate the

[6] Khlopky, terakty ta potyzhna ldnr: Ukraina ta okupovana terytoris ochyma propagandystiv rf. https://imi.org.ua/monitorings/hlopky-terakty-ta-potuzhna-ldnr-ukrayina-ta-okupovana-terytoriya-ochyma-propagandystiv-rf-i46471 Access 30.VI.2022 (in Ukrainan)

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narrative about the powerful army of the russian federation and the "LDNR", the propagandists add the testimony of "eyewitnesses" who talk about the help of the local people by the military. Next in popularity is the narrative about the revival of life in the occupied territories. The russians are actively declaring and demonstrating that life is returning to the occupied territories after the "consequences of the shelling of the armed forces", that the forces of the occupiers managed to fix everything. In addition, russian media published news that Europe and the United States are suffering because of aid to Ukraine.

A few months after the start of the war, russia updated the purpose of the "special operation" to "countering the global hegemony of the United States." In particular, the representative of the russian federation at the UN, v. nebenzia, stated: "russophobia has become the main national product of the Ukrainian government. This is a proxy war of the collective West with russia." And already on September 1, at a meeting with Kaliningrad schoolchildren, Vladimir Putin declared: "the mission of the soldiers is to stop this war and protect russia itself, since an anti-russian enclave has been created on the territory of Ukraine, which threatens the russian federation."

At the same time, the successful counteroffensive of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the Kharkiv region and the escape of the "second army of the world" once again changed the goal of the "SVO" from the "denazification and demilitarization of Ukraine" to "the necessary tactical retreat to preserve the troops and avoid the "cauldron" and "exit to the administrative borders of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions". In autumn, the rhetoric of the main russian propagandists was significantly transformed. For example, volodymyr solovyov: "it's somehow disturbing to me, all the same, it's natural to want ours to only press and only advance, but in life it doesn't happen like that, in life it's important how everything ends"; margarita simonyan: "the worst thing we can do now is to quarrel with each other. If we are a rich country, why do we collect for "copters" and bulletproof vests? And if we are not rich, and there are no means for this, then why do we feast?" Propagandists of the russian federation began to call "SVO" "a war with a country that has endless human resources and colossal combat experience." In the russian mass media, theses about the impossibility of defeating Ukraine with available resources, because it is supported by powerful technological states, are updated. Calls about the need to "start fighting for real" became more frequent: gennady zyuganov, head of the communist party: "the war is going on and we have no right to lose it, there is no need to panic, we need a full mobilization of the country and completely different laws"; serhiy mironov, head of "fair russia – for truth": "we started the SVO, and now we are waging a real war with NATO, we need mobilization of the economy, the budget, mobilization in the heads"; vladislav zlodan, speaker of the state duma of the russian federation: "if Washington, continuing the war to the last Ukrainian, believes that it will not affect him, then he is very mistaken." Thus, during the six months of the war with Ukraine, russian propaganda narratives were transformed from the belief that "russian soldiers will soon wash their feet in the English Channel" to the thesis that "russia is in danger."

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Anti-Ukrainian narratives in the Western media space

Before the start of the full-scale invasion, russian propaganda actively spread anti-Ukrainian narratives in the Western information space as well. The US State Department, which works with various government agencies of the country, stated that it is "aware of russian entities conducting an information campaign directed against Ukraine" [7] and noted that "their actions include the dissemination of disinformation and propaganda to portray Ukraine and Ukrainian government officials as aggressive side in relations between russia and Ukraine". The main narratives of russian propaganda in the Western media space at that time were that "Ukraine and Ukrainian government officials are the aggressive side in russian-Ukrainian relations", "The West is pushing Ukraine to conflict", "russia's deployment of combat units is simply a redeployment of troops to its own territory", "United States planned to launch chemical weapons attacks in Donbas", "russia protects ethnic russians in Ukraine", "after the end of the Cold War, NATO organized a conspiracy against russia, surrounded russia with troops, broke supposed promises not to expand, and threatens russia's security with the prospect of Ukraine joining the Alliance", "The West avoids diplomacy and immediately turns to such means as sanctions". These russian propaganda narratives were intended to influence Western countries to believe that Ukraine's behavior could provoke a global conflict, to convince and justify the need for russian military action in Ukraine.

In addition, the image of a majestic, invincible russia with a special civilizational mission was cultivated in the West. The myth about russians and Ukrainians as one population, about Ukraine as a small state that was formed as a result of the collapse of the Soviet empire, a historical mistake, "the biggest geopolitical catastrophe" according to putin, was used. The idea that Ukrainians have a birth trauma of nationalism, radicalism, and xenophobia was broadcast in Western intellectual and academic circles. This led to the fact that, in the eyes of many Europeans, the power and invincibility of the russian army was inconsistent until early April, when the russians suffered a strategic defeat in the northern direction.

After the start of the full-scale invasion, russia increased the spread of already existing anti-Ukrainian myths in the Western information field while simultaneously calling for the continuation of the real genocide of the Ukrainian people. It is these myths, according to Ukrainian researcher Nestor Barchuk, that "often prevent individual Western politicians from providing Ukraine with the assistance that will enable Ukrainians to defeat the occupier" [8].

The most actively spread in the Western information field is the myth that russians should not bear collective responsibility for the war, because they are also victims of

[7] Fakty proty vygadok: rosiyska desinformatsia pro Ukrainy. https://www.state.gov/факти-проти-вигадок-російська-дезінф/ Access 2.I.2021 (in Ukrainan)

[8] Barchuk N. Sem populyarnyh mifov o voyne rossii protiv Ukrainy – https://nv.ua/opinion/samye-populyarnye-mify-o-voyne-rossii-protiv-ukrainy-poslednie-novosti-50245001.html Access 25.V.2022 (in russian)

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the regime. Russians widely spread the narrative that the sanctions and suspension of foreign business in russia are not the elite who started the war, but the ordinary russian people who did not start the war. At the same time, analysts claim that for decades russian society allowed putin to appear as an aggressor and supported his actions. With the consent of the majority of russians, two military campaigns took place in Chechnya, a war in Georgia, Syria, and now in Ukraine. According to the russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion, as of April 5, 78% of russians supported the actions of vladimir putin and 74% approved of his decision to attack Ukraine [9]. According to another survey, 86.6% of russians supported a potential attack on the territory of the European Union, including Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and others, and 75% of respondents approved of the use of nuclear weapons by their government. Telephone conversations between the russian invaders in Ukraine and their families in the russian federation, intercepted by Ukrainian special services, show that russian women encourage the murder of Ukrainians, the robbery of Ukrainian homes and the rape of Ukrainian women. Therefore, the sanctions imposed on russia are a signal to the citizens of the russian federation that the state in which they live and the government they have elected and support is moving in the wrong direction.

For decades, the russian federation cultivated and exported its own image as the invincible center of a bipolar world and a superpower. This led many world leaders to believe that Ukraine had no chance against russia until February 24, 2022. The full-scale russian-Ukrainian war has been going on for more than six months, during which russia was able to occupy only one regional center — Kherson, which it entered in the first days of the war. A month after the start of the invasion, russian troops suffered huge losses and were forced to completely withdraw their troops from the northern regions of Ukraine. Russia did not achieve superiority in the airspace of Ukraine, on April 14, the Ukrainian military destroyed the flagship of the russian navy, the cruiser Moskva. All this shows that russia miscalculated in the assessment of its own military potential and the desire of the Ukrainian population to share russian values.

Russian president vladimir putin wanted to convince the whole world that "russians and Ukrainians are one people" in his article "On the historical unity of russians and Ukrainians" in July 2021 [10]. Fact-checking of this article showed that putin's theses had no historical basis or facts and are a pseudo-scientific propagandistic imperial narrative that russia has been spreading in the world and in Ukraine for decades, forming a springboard for a full-scale invasion and destruction of sovereignty. If in July 2021, 70% of Ukrainians did not agree with putin's thesis (it was shared by only 12.5% of

[9] Informatsionnaya voyna vokrug spetsialnoy voennoy operatsii. https://wciom.ru/analytical-reviews/analiticheskii-obzor/informacionnaja-voina-vokrug-specialnoi-voennoi-operacii Access 8.IV.2022 (in russian)

[10] Statya vladimira putina «Ob istoricheskom edinstve russkih i ukraintsev» – http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181 Access 25.VIII.2021 (in russian)

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Ukrainians, mostly people over 60 and mainly from the eastern regions of Ukraine), then on April 6, 2022, 91% of Ukrainians did not support the thesis about brotherly nations.

For years, the Russian Federation invested its territorial claims in the concept of "one nation". The technology of nostalgia for the USSR switched to the imperial narrative of "we have a historical right to your lands", on the basis of which a full-scale invasion was launched. This transformed into a narrative that "russia has a "historical right" to Ukrainian land." vladimir putin has repeatedly stated that Ukraine was once created by Vladimir Lenin, and earlier it was russian territory. Of course, historically Ukraine was connected with russia, but almost always it was a time of enslavement of the Ukrainian people.

Evidence of the effectiveness of russian propaganda in Western political thought was the fact that on the 48th day of the full-scale russian-Ukrainian war, during which the russians destroyed Mariupol, part of Kharkiv, populated areas of the Kyiv region, killing about 20,000 residents of Mariupol alone, French President Emmanuel Macron said that he "does not consider what is happening in Ukraine to be genocide, but considers Russians and Ukrainians to be brotherly nations." This statement by Macron is the result of a multi-year propaganda attack on Europe by Russian state propaganda. Later he changed his opinion.

Experts of the Center for Counteracting Disinformation believe that one of the powerful technologies used by russia in Europe is "protests in European countries as a tool of manipulation and propaganda." For example, in September 2022, rallies were held in Moldova for the resignation of the country's president Maia Sandu. As reported by the local edition G4media [11], a large number of those present did not know why they were brought to the rally. The main claim of the protesters to M. Sandu is high energy prices and inflation. And the only way to solve the problem, according to them, is to negotiate with russia. Similar rallies with the conventional name "hot autumn" under the pretext of the energy crisis are used by russia as a tool of manipulation. The goal is to intimidate the population of democratic countries by russia and destabilize the situation in European society.

Six months after the start of a full-scale war, the new narrative of russian propaganda is the idea of "the collapse of the European Union due to support for Ukraine." This narrative was especially intensified after the partial mobilization announced by putin on September 21. Russian propaganda media rt international, using its "agents of influence", in particular, international affairs expert Mark Gazik, political commentator Rachel Marsden and professor John Loughland, spread the narrative that the EU is committing geopolitical "suicide" by supporting Ukraine in this war. China Daily

[11] Protest în Chișinău, la sediul Președinției, organizat de fugarul Ilan Șor – https://www.g4media.ro/video-protest-in-chisinau-la-sediul-presedintiei-organizat-de-fugarul-ilan-sor-oamenii-cer-demisia-maiei-sandu-si-si-au-montat-corturi-unii-protestatari-nu-stiu-de-ce-au-fost-adusi-inca.html Access 23.IX.2022

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repeats russian narratives [12], asserting that the EU will find itself in the situation of "the biggest loser, regardless of how the conflict between russia and Ukraine unfolds." At the same time, the authors of the article note that the dependence of most countries on russian gas is not very high, but in general, the future of the EU as an independent political pole on the global geopolitical arena "seems unattainable" precisely because of Ukraine's support.

Anti-Ukrainian narratives in the Ukrainian information space before the start of a full-scale invasion

The third target audience of russian propaganda is the population of Ukraine. As mentioned above, the main propaganda narratives were aimed at discrediting Ukraine as a state, discrediting the Ukrainian government and the armed forces. In recent years, russian propaganda has continued to interpret the events of international life in an anti-Ukrainian context. For example, the year 2020 was full of events, such as the coronavirus epidemic, tensions in the Middle East, protests in Belarus, the Armenian-Azerbaijani war, the presidential elections in the United States, and other equally important events. The downing of a Ukrainian Boeing in Iran, the scandal surrounding Honcharuk's "films", the coronavirus in Ukraine, the war in the East, relations with NATO, and the language issue can be considered as the key events that russian propaganda drew attention to [13].

So, on January 8, 2020, a Ukrainian Boeing 737 was shot down near Tehran. All those on board died. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani later admitted that the plane was accidentally shot down by a missile fired by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Russian and pro-russian media resources, which focus on Ukrainian topics, immediately began to draw parallels with the MH-17, blaming UIA and justifying Iran. The main culprit of the tragedy was the United States, which allegedly planned to shoot down an Iranian government plane with officials who were directing missile attacks on American military bases.

One of the widely circulated newsworthy event of the "pre-coronavirus period" was the publication of audio files on which a conversation can be heard during a meeting in the office of then Prime Minister Oleksiy Honcharuk. Russian and anti-Ukrainian manipulative websites spread the idea that the Cabinet of Ministers is unprofessional and works in the interests of oligarchs. It is mentioned in various reports that members of the Cabinet of Ministers are deceiving the President and should be fired. Disinformation on this topic focused on the "external management" of the Cabinet.

The coronavirus has become a global information drive, including for propaganda. During 2020, russia actively used the topic of the collapse of Ukraine due to the corona-

[12] EU loses most from US-instigated conflict: China Daily editorial https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202209/20/WS6329a971a310fd2b29e78bfc.html Access 20.IX.2022 (in Ukrainan)

[13] Naratyvy rosiyskoi propagandy v pro-rosiyslih media v 2020 https://am-pm.org.ua/analytics/1006/огляд-основних-напрямків-російської/ Access 1.II.2021 (in Ukrainan)

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virus, the inability of the authorities to keep the situation under control, and much more. From that moment, the russian thesis about secret American biolaboratories, which conduct research on ordinary Ukrainians, began to actively advance. The decision of the government of Ukraine to purchase exclusively certified vaccine and to prevent the distribution of untested samples at the official level came under media criticism. In the context of saving Ukraine, the russian mass media actively promoted the idea that only a russian vaccine could save Ukrainians. Theses on the subject of a lockdown were also actively spread, statements were made that in the event of a lockdown, the Ukrainian economy and medical system will not withstand the restrictions, and hunger riots will begin in Ukraine, and the situation in the country will be out of control.

Despite the truce reached, russian propaganda spread claims about seemingly systematic violations of the truce by Ukraine in the East of Ukraine. NATO's active position towards Ukraine, conducting joint trainings on the territory of Ukraine, providing material and methodological assistance – also became the subject of anti-Ukrainian narratives. In its information resources, russia accused NATO of using Ukraine as a training ground. The visits of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyi to the UK and Turkey were interpreted as Ukraine selling itself to the British crown and the Turkish sultan. All this combined into one big narrative that Ukraine is a puppet of the West.

Transformation of the Ukrainian information space after the start of a full-scale invasion

Russian information tactics remain unchanged: in Ukraine, the occupiers destroy the telecommunications infrastructure, in particular, they destroy TV towers, turn off the Internet and lights, and instead of Ukrainian content, they start russian television. At the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, russian propaganda tried to fill the Ukrainian information space with fakes and information leaks. At first it worked. However, Ukrainian governmental and non-governmental communication centers quickly learned how to inform society and counter russian disinformation.

In the first months of the full-scale war, the Ukrainian information environment underwent significant changes: private media holdings united in a joint marathon; pro-russian parties were banned; books by russian authors began to disappear from bookstores, and monuments to russian figures began to disappear from the streets. On March 20, 2022, President Volodymyr Zelenskyi signed a decree on a unified information policy under wartime conditions. In the Internet space, the websites and pages of authorities in social networks are regularly updated, from the first day the president records his daily appeals to the Ukrainian people, a fixed circle of advisers who communicate with the press is determined, the daily broadcasts of the adviser to the head of the president's office Oleksiy Arestovich with a russian human rights defender Mark Freygin are very popular. These broadcasts get millions of views every day. The Center of Counteracting Disinformation at the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine is actively working, daily debunks false information, exposes the media and journalists who spread fakes.

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But even under the conditions of work of the Ukrainian media in wartime conditions, russian propaganda is trying to find new channels to continue to influence the consciousness of Ukrainian citizens. In the current conditions, such channels, which are coordinated by the russian special services, have become Telegram channels and groups in messengers. The Main Directorate of Foreign Intelligence of Ukraine and the Security Service of Ukraine regularly publish a list of such Telegram channels. The Telegram channels with the largest number of subscribers spreading anti-Ukrainian narratives are "Legitimny", "Gossiper", "Cartel", "Resident", "Observer", "MediaPost", "Woman with a scythe". This list is constantly updated, checked and supplemented. Naturally, the content of such channels should not be trusted, as such sites spread fakes and manipulations and are part of russia's information war against Ukraine.

The analysis of the content of the specified telegram channels allows us to identify the following key areas of russian disinformation work [14], in particular, the adaptation of russia's eternal narrative about "Ukraine as a failed state" with the aim of discrediting the leadership and breaking the morale of citizens, promoting messages about corruption schemes in the state, speculation on the topic of mobilization, the discrediting of the Armed Forces and territorial defense on the ground, as well as artificially inflating the "language issue". A separate direction of russian narratives is the attempt to cause the Ukrainian audience to be disappointed in NATO, the EU and Ukraine's international partners, who seem to be not helping or not helping enough, want to profit from the war in Ukraine and get part of Ukrainian lands.

Information throws and provocations of russian propaganda in the Ukrainian Internet segment

In recent years, a large number of local groups and publics have appeared in all social networks and messengers in Ukraine. If the traditional media in Ukraine after the start of the full-scale invasion united and broadcast pro-Ukrainian patriotic content, then social networks and messengers are publicly available, and in almost every one of them there are users who spread seemingly neutral messages. Analysis of the consequences of their communications suggests that these users are agents of the russian special services. For example, after the start of the war and the occupation of part of the Ukrainian territory, individual participants in such groups began to ask local residents about the situation in a specific settlement and about safe roads for movement. After rocket attacks on populated areas, such publics and groups are filled with messages with attempts to find out where and how exactly it happened, how destructive it was, what objects were affected by the explosion. Moderators try to quickly delete any answers to such provocative questions, but certain information is still recorded, which later becomes an adjustment to the enemy's fire.

[14] Peremogy odnoznacho ye, ale boroť ba tryvaye I pidgotobky do nastupnoi fazy neobkhidno pochynaty zaraz. https://ms.detector.media/trendi/post/29186/2022-03-16-chogo-chekaty-vid-rosii-na-informatsiynomu-fronti/ Access 20.III.2022 (in Ukrainan)

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Another subspecies of dangerous information that is actively spread through social networks and messengers is dumping and provocations. These can be, for example, sending panic messages in the style of "the Ukrainian army is losing, but everyone is silent about it" or "the government has surrendered everyone and has long since capitulated, but they don't tell us this." With such statements, the enemy is trying to provoke panic, undermine confidence in the local authorities and the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The spread of such dumping in areas where there are communication problems and people are in an information vacuum is especially dangerous.

Messages from pseudo-volunteers and people who allegedly help them have become a type of russian disinformation in the Ukrainian Internet segment. For example, they extort money from people under the guise of collecting aid for the needy, or secretly collect information about volunteer centers, the location and fullness of warehouses with humanitarian aid, equipment, equipment for the army — for sabotage or their complete destruction. A separate subspecies of disinformation to incite panic moods has become spewing from supposedly "very reliable and precisely knowledgeable" people, which are aimed at creating panic and forming mistrust in information from official sources, for example, about a possible shortage of vitally necessary medicines or products.

During the war, journalists and ordinary citizens knowingly or unknowingly posting information on social networks become helpers of the aggressor country. This is explained by the fact that Ukrainians are used to actively using social networks and publishing everything that happens in them. But in the conditions of war, such behavior can significantly harm the country's defense. Ukrainian special services and state bodies constantly remind that during the war it is not allowed to publish some information on the Internet, for example, data on the deployment of the Ukrainian military, photos and videos of explosions and bombings. But, unfortunately, some users ignore these rules in their desire to be the first to share information and collect a lot of likes and views. This position is not just wrong – it is dangerous for people's lives. Any indication of the exact time and place of shelling, data on the knockdown of flying shells can be used by the enemy to adjust fire. Official sources constantly remind that any published data on the location of the Armed Forces, critical infrastructure facilities and enterprises of Ukraine can be used to identify them as priority targets. These prohibitions are explained by the fact that 80% of intelligence information is obtained from open sources. At the same time, the Ukrainian military welcomes the publication of any information related to the movement of enemy troops, dead, wounded or captured occupiers, evidence of the occupiers' crimes, and the debunking of fakes. From this follows a very important law of media content during military operations – "do no harm".

Conclusions

Modern war has a mandatory component – media war. During the russian-Ukrainian war, the media, journalists, and the blogosphere became a third party to the conflict. This means that its main events unfold both on the battlefields and on the pages of newspapers, TV screens, broadcasts of radio stations, the Internet, social networks and

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messengers. Russian narratives against Ukraine were formed in three main directions, depending on the context. Thus, before the start of the full-scale invasion, narratives aimed at the domestic russian audience were disseminated with the aim of forming the image of Ukraine as an enemy country and obtaining a social mandate for the implementation of russia's aggressive foreign policy; the narratives for the Ukrainian audience were intended to divide and destabilize society and force it to make peace on the kremlin's terms; the international audience needed to be convinced of the expediency and legitimacy of russia's foreign policy, to consolidate russia's influence in the territories it considers to be within the zone of their influence and control; achieve the recognition of Crimea as russian territory, which would lead to the lifting of Western sanctions.

After the start of the war, the aggressiveness of russian rhetoric aimed at discrediting Ukraine, its military-political leadership and armed forces intensified. The Ukrainian information space of traditional media has been transformed and offers patriotic and pro-Ukrainian content, but russian narratives remain in the Ukrainian Internet segment and social networks, which can influence individual citizens. At the same time, the war consolidated Ukrainian society, which testifies to the effectiveness of the state's communication policy. If in 2021 Zelenskyi's rating began to fall and at the beginning of the war was only 24.6%, then after the russian attack, Zelenskyi, remaining in Kyiv, turned into the leader of a struggling nation, to whom the attention of the whole world was focused. Sociological polls indicate that the level of support for the president in 2022 is 91%, and 92% of Ukrainians believe that Ukraine will be able to repel russia's attack [15]. At the same time, the unity of Ukrainians significantly strengthens their information resistance.

In the russian information space after the start of the war, anti-Ukrainian narratives also intensified and the number of fakes increased. During the six months of the war, the officially declared goals of the russian leadership regarding Ukraine changed depending on the events at the front, and the propaganda rhetoric changed accordingly. The goals of anti-Ukrainian narratives for Western audiences have also not been achieved, as the level of support for Ukraine in the world is growing, sanctions against russia are increasing, aid to Ukraine is increasing, and individual countries are implementing additional individual restrictive measures against russia and its citizens.

[15] Zagalnonatsionalne opytuvannya: Ukraina v umovah viyny (26–27 lyutogo 2022). https://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/obschenacionalnyy_opros_ukraina_v_usloviyah_voyny_26-27_fevralya_2022_goda.html Access 1.III.2022 (in ukrainian)

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Abstract: The article examines the anti-Ukrainian narratives that Russian propaganda produces and spreads to various target audiences, in particular, to the Ukrainian and Russian populations and citizens of Western countries. It is shown that the goals of Russian propaganda differ depending on the audience, in particular, for Ukraine's foreign partners, Russian narratives justify the need to seize Crimea, the importance of Russian patronage over Ukraine, and the legitimacy of the separation of part of the East. For the Russian domestic consumer, the purpose of narratives is to shift attention from internal problems to external factors; to explain the need for Russian support of the self-proclaimed "republics" as part of the "Russian peace" and to show that Putin's regime has no alternative. For the Ukrainian population, it is to show the inability of the authorities to solve the internal problems of the state, the fallacy of the chosen path of European integration, and the inability of the leadership of Ukraine to carry out reforms. The authors also showed how Russian propaganda messages evolved in the Russian information space, as well as how the information space of Ukraine changed after the start of the full-scale invasion. A conclusion is made about the informational resistance of Ukrainian society in relation to Russian narratives after the start of a full-scale invasion.
Keywords: Narrative, message, information space, Ukraine, Russia, Ukrainian-Russian war

Antyukraińskie narracje Rosji w globalnej przestrzeni informacyjnej

Streszczenie: Artykuł omawia antyukraińskie narracje, które rosyjska propaganda produkuje i rozpowszechnia wśród różnych grup docelowych, w szczególności do ludności ukraińskiej, rosyjskiej i obywateli krajów zachodnich. Wskazano, że cele rosyjskiej propagandy różnią się w zależności od odbiorców, w szczególności dla zagranicznych partnerów Ukrainy, rosyjskie narracje uzasadniają potrzebę zajęcia Krymu, wagę rosyjskiego mecenatu nad Ukrainą oraz zasadność oddzielenia części wschodniej. Dla rosyjskiego konsumenta krajowego celem narracji jest odwrócenie uwagi od problemów wewnętrznych na czynniki zewnętrzne; wyjaśnić potrzebę rosyjskiego poparcia dla samozwańczych „republik" jako części „rosyjskiego świata" i pokazać, że reżim Putina nie ma alternatywy. Dla ludności ukraińskiej – aby pokazać niezdolność władz do rozwiązania wewnętrznych problemów państwa, błędność obranej drogi integracji europejskiej, niezdolność kierownictwa Ukrainy do przeprowadzenia reform. Autorzy pokazali również, jak ewoluowały przekazy rosyjskiej propagandy w rosyjskiej przestrzeni informacyjnej, a także jak zmieniła się przestrzeń informacyjna Ukrainy po rozpoczęciu inwazji na pełną skalę. Wnioskuje się o oporze informacyjnym społeczeństwa ukraińskiego wobec rosyjskich narracji po rozpoczęciu inwazji na pełną skalę.
Słowa kluczowe: narracja, przekaz, przestrzeń informacyjna, Ukraina, Rosja, wojna ukraińsko-rosyjska

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