



Cyberspace as a Tool of Contemporary Propaganda

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37105/sd.78>

Abstract

The scientific deliberation presented in this article concerns the use of cyberspace in contemporary propaganda activities. The aim of the analysis is to identify propaganda activities and to state the role of cyberspace as an indispensable element for its existence. The following research methods were applied in the research: analysis, synthesis, abstracting, generalization, and a case study.

The case study presented in this article, concerning the identification of propaganda activities based on the engagement of Germany in the issue of refugees from Syria, perfectly points to the significance and possibilities offered by cyberspace in the realization of the activities in question and attaining the set goals.

The results obtained from the research underline the significant role of cyberspace in contemporary society where the success of propaganda is conditioned by the use of tools which allow to appeal to a vast group of recipients through the media, the Internet, and social media. The presented deliberation indicates that cyberspace with all its elements is a prerequisite for the success of propaganda activities conducted nowadays.

Keywords: cyberspace, safety, defense, social media, propaganda

1. Introduction

Propaganda as such is a form of communication understood as a process of exchanging information between people. Thus, by communication, we try to justify our community with another person. On the basis of a definition of communication understood as “the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc., to someone else” (Communication, 2020) it can be assumed that the process is aimed at changing the awareness of the recipient of information as intended by the sender. The basic elements of the process include: the sender, the information, the channel and the recipient.

In the process, the sender initiates communication by encoding a certain thought. A communication is the physical result of encoding made by the sender. It can take the form of a speech, a written document, or a gesture (e.g. moving arms). The channel is the means through which a communication is conveyed (cyberspace). The person receiving the communication is the recipient of the communication. However, before they get the communication, symbols have to be transformed into the form which is understandable for them. This stage is called decoding. The process presented above is the

description of interpersonal communication. The concept originates from the cybernetic and telecommunication work of mathematician Claude Shannon as well as of engineer (cyberneticist) Warren Weaver published in 1948. The work presented a model of transition signals in a telecommunication system, which after small changes (the word “transmitter” were replaced by “sender” and “receiver” by “recipient”) was adopted to the description of interpersonal communication. Thus, the process of communication is the flow of information from the sender to the recipient.

It is possible to distinguish a few types of communication among people:

- interpersonal – taking place between people,
- intrapersonal – inner monologue,
- social – in a group of people,
- mediated – with the use of technical tools (phones, computers, etc.).

When cyberspace is used, we deal with mediated communication. Communication with the use of a computer¹ enables so-called virtual relations, which nowadays replace interpersonal relations (direct contact) to a great extent.

There are many forms of communication in cyberspace e.g. with the use of forums for debate,² chats³ as well as instant messaging client⁴ or through e-mail.⁵ An advantage of those forms of communication is the fact that by choosing a given form, it is possible

¹ In subject literature this is called computer mediated communication – CMC.

² Forum for debate is a form of discussion on the Internet resembling the exchange of correspondence rather than conversation in real time, this is a very popular form of information exchange.

³ Chat means thematically organized so-called virtual rooms dedicated for conversations in real time. The exchange of information is realized by sending text messages which are visible for all people present

in a given virtual room. It is possible to have individual conversations by sending messages only to chosen users of a chat room.

⁴ Instant messaging client is an application which enables connection with a chosen user of virtual society. It allows to send text messages or files in real time.

⁵ Electronic mail is the most popular form of communication in virtual relations, it allows sending text messages or files. It works like a post box to which messages are sent and which can be read by the recipient at any time convenient for them.

to get feedback either in real time or at any convenient time.

Cyberspace is not only a platform for knowledge exchange, but also a place for providing entertainment. Social networks should be mentioned as an example. Presently, Facebook, Tweeter and Instagram are most popular. When students of the first year of Military Faculty (field of study – defense) were asked if they possess an account on Facebook, over 90% of respondents declared that they have one. This phenomenon proves that in spite of virtual relations, people feel the social need for being in a group and for joint operations, if a situation requires that. There are different types of actions carried out by the mob. Such phenomenon is based on the willingness of virtual society to participate in activities in reality. This is triggered by information which is sent to many users of a social network, who gather in real life, in a given place and at a given time in order to act together. The above presented characteristics of cyberspace shows that it can be used to exert mental influence on the society through a given information channel.

The field of research connected with cyberspace as well as propaganda activities inspired the author to deal with the topic in more detail. Thus, in the article, the author focused on the pursuit for the answer to the following question:

What is cyberspace and how it can be used in contemporary propaganda activity? The answer to this question was obtained by the author in the research process which focused on terminological analysis of the concept of cyberspace as well as on the case study in the scope of verifying propaganda activity.

2. Cyberspace – terminological aspects

Although the concept of cyberspace is gaining in popularity nowadays (Ottis, 2011), it is not a new term as it appeared 30 years ago.

Unfortunately, there is no agreement in terms of a unified definition of cyberspace (Ibidem), which is proven below by the author on the basis of varied approaches presented by different countries.

At first, it was used in science fiction novels. It is believed that its forefather was William Gibson,⁶ who in 1982 in his novel entitled “Burning Chrome” wrote that cyberspace is:

“A consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts... A graphic representation of data abstracted from banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the non-space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding into the distance...” (Gibson, 2003).

This description evoked a vivid discussion on the essence of cyberspace paying attention to some basic environmental attributes of network such as: global range (extent), the so called non-space understood as the inability of telling the dimensions contrary to the real world, a giant space of data, joint use of varied resources, etc.

The United States Department of Defense defines cyberspace in the following manner:

“A global domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures and resident data, including the Internet, telecommunications networks,

⁶ William Gibson – American science fiction writer, forefather of the so called cyber-punk.

computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers. (JP 3-12)” (Department, 2016, p. 58).

Cyberspace can be compared to a nervous system – a control system of the state. It consists of a large number of interconnected computers, routers, servers, net active devices connected with the use of optical fibers, which enable the work of a critical infrastructure.

The European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) published a document in which it defines concepts referring to the defense of EU cyberspace. In the publication, the following definition of cyberspace is presented: “cyberspace itself refers to the set of links and relationships between objects that are accessible through a generalized telecommunications network, and to the set of objects themselves where they present interfaces allowing their remote control, remote access to data, or their participation in control actions within that Cyberspace” (Definition, 2015, p. 7).

The subject of analysis is a physically non-existing but logically isolated space consisting of data, files, Internet websites, applications provided by ICT systems.

NATO also presents the definition of cyberspace in a document entitled “Cybersecurity. A generic reference curriculum”, which defines the concept as “the electronic Word created by interconnected networks of information technology and the information on those networks” (Cybersecurity, 2016, p. 63).

The definition provided by the French *Agence nationale de la sécurité des systèmes d'information* (ANSSI), proposed in 2011, does not directly touch on the aspect connected with users, economic or social phenomena emphasizing only the technical aspect which indicates that cyberspace (Information, 2011, p. 21) means “the communication space created by the worldwide interconnection of digital data processing equipment”.

In 2011 the Office of the Prime Minister of Great Britain presented another approach

to the term in a document entitled: “The UK Cyber Security Strategy Protecting and promoting the UK in a digital world”. The wording of the definition of cyberspace is as follows:

“an interactive domain made up of digital networks that is used to store, modify and communicate information. It includes the Internet, but also the other information systems that support our businesses, infrastructure and services. Digital networks already underpin the supply of electricity and water to our homes, help organize the delivery of food and other goods to shops, and act as an essential tool for businesses across the UK. And their reach is increasing as we connect our TVs, games consoles, and even domestic appliances” (The UK, 2011, p. 10).

Some changes in the definition of the concept were included in a document entitled: “National cyber security strategy 2016-2021”, defining cyberspace as “the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures that includes the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, Internet-connected devices and embedded processors and controllers. It may also refer to the virtual world or domain as an experienced phenomenon, or abstract concept” (National, 2016, p. 75).

In Poland, the definition of cyberspace was presented in the amendment to the Act of 30th August 2011 on the State of War and the Competencies of the Commander-in-Chief and the Rules Governing His Subordination to the Constitutional Bodies of the Republic of Poland. In accordance with the document, cyberspace is defined as “a space of processing and exchanging information created by ICT systems, as defined in Article 3 point 3 of the Act of 17 February 2005 on the Informatization of Entities Performing Public Tasks (OJ No. 64, item 565, as amended), together with links between them and the relations with users; in accordance with Article 2 paragraph 1b of the Act of 29 August 2002 on Martial Law and the Powers of the Supreme Commander of the Armed

Forces as well as the Commander's Subordination to the Constitutional Authorities of the Republic of Poland (OJ No. 156, item 1301, as amended), Article 2 paragraph 1a of the Act of 21 June 2002 on the State of Emergency (OJ No. 113, item 985, as amended) and Article 3 paragraph 1 point 4 of the Act of 18 April 2002 on the State of Natural Disaster (OJ No. 62, item 558, as amended)" (Act, 2011).

Taking into consideration the quoted definitions of cyberspace, it should not be forgotten that it is most of all used for communication taking into account the human and social factor. The essence of a person's functioning in society is communication with its members, which holds out the prospect of the exchange of thoughts and of joint operations, especially military activities (Pilarski, 2014). On the other hand, politicians can use it as a means of exerting influence on masses of people, extorting information and getting it across very quickly and effectively. It can be a perfect place for propaganda.

3. Verification of propaganda – case study

The case study was carried out on the basis of propaganda used by the Federal Republic of Germany in the European Union concerning the issue of refugees with the following identification questions taken into consideration (Jowett, and O'Donnell, 2006, p. 291):

1. What is the ideology and purpose of a propaganda campaign?
2. What is the context in which propaganda occurs?
3. How can a propagandist be identified?
4. What is the structure of a propaganda organization?
5. What is the target audience?
6. What Media utilization techniques are applied?

7. What special techniques are used to maximize effect?
8. How does the audience react to various techniques?
9. Is there counterpropaganda?
10. What are the effects and what is the evaluation?

On the basis of the above ten-point analysis, the author proves the legitimacy of propaganda activities realization pointing at the significance of using cyberspace in those activities.

Refugees constitute the main issue in contemporary EU politics. How did it happen that this problem became significant for the whole EU, and what triggered it? Moreover, is it propaganda or not? In the author's opinion, these questions most frequently appear in the minds of citizens and politicians in the EU; and it is important to find answers for them. Based on ten main points of analysis of propaganda presented above (Jowett, and O'Donnell, 2006), the author will make an effort to analyze the issue and determine whether it is propaganda or not. The key actor in this case is the Federal Republic of Germany and its social and economic problems which occurred faster than expected. This topic is very difficult to prove; however we have been able to observe the political scene for a few years and find some actions which can prove this.

The first and second point of the analysis is to check the ideology and purpose of the propaganda campaign as well as the context in which the propaganda occurs. In this case, the history of the law pertaining to immigrants is most important. In 1951, Germany had already known that their boost of economy will depend on immigrants in the future. Thus, they signed the "Convention relating to the status of refugees" (Convention, 1951) in Geneva. It was the first step to introduce asylum regulation in the Federal Republic of Germany. The next document was the "Dublin Regulation" which was originally established by the Dublin Convention and signed by first twelve EU countries in 1997 including Germany.

Further documents were signed in 2003 and 2014 as The Dublin II Regulation and The Dublin III Regulation (No. 604/2013) (Regulation, 2003). The Dublin Regulation established the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State's responsibility for examining an asylum application. The underlying point of these documents was a rule that only one member state is responsible for examining an asylum request. Typically, this is the first member state whose border is crossed by a foreigner seeking protection. Under Dublin III, foreigners are returned to the countries responsible for examining their refugee applications. It was a form of protection for Germany and France against refugees from Africa, but it was the worst option for Italy, Greece and Turkey. Germany broke this rule in 2015 when they allowed refugees to come to their country. The first part of the puzzle was the fact that Germany allowed immigrants to settle in their country after the collapse of the Berlin Wall. They wanted to check if immigrants were able to integrate with German society. In years 2000 – 2010, the German economy was in increasingly worse condition and society was getting older. In 2010, their immigrant policies turned out to be ineffective, because a problem emerged with the integration of immigrants with German citizens. It seems to be justified due to the fact that they called immigrants "Gastarbeiter" (Gastarbeiter, 2020) which means "foreign worker" or "guest worker". The following year, the government made calculations that in the nearby future they would lose first position in Europe after Great Britain. After that, the German government changed decision. Immigrants or more refugees were panacea, because they were expected to be thankful for their new life, work hard and start families. The German economy would be rebuilt and it would again become stronger than other EU countries. They had to prepare to the new possibility, but of course they needed refugees. It was the ideology and purpose of the German propaganda campaign for the future. In 2011, the

German government began hunting for large homes that could be used to resettle refugees (Rigamonti, 2016), though there were none. How did they know that refugees would come in the future? Was the campaign with the refugees planned for that time? Indeed, situation in Europe changed diametrically. In October 2013 in Kiev, a social revolution started, and later in 2014, Crimea was annexed by Russia. In 2015, the problem of refugees from Syria emerged unexpectedly. For the German government, it was a good occasion to realize their earlier prepared plans. On August 31, 2015 Angela Merkel said "wir schaffen das", which means "we can do it". This point in history changed Europe. Masses of refugees came to the Federal Republic of Germany to start their new lives. The German government had calculated that they might accept at most 600,000 to 800,000 refugees to improve their economy. Of course, the German chancellor invited visitors to her country saying that "it is a crisis situation and Germany will never avoid responsibility when people who need help ask for it"; furthermore she urged other EU countries to join and help refugees by saying "responsibility should be carried on not only by Germany but by all EU countries". Since this time, the German government only had to convince society of the legitimacy of this idea. Propaganda begun, telling people that the refugees are the new force that will make the German economy move, these people will go to work, they will also give birth to children so society will not grow old. As we can observe, the German government was realizing their plan step by step. The fastest way to refer to crowds of people was to use the media and the Internet. Cyberspace enabled fast and effective propaganda.

The next points in analyzing propaganda are the identification of the propagandists, the structure of propaganda organization and the target audience. In order to achieve the goal the use of adequate methods and special techniques is important as well. In this case, the overall propaganda was provided by the German government by using

their structures, communications and mass media especially ZDF (German public-service television broadcaster). The target audiences can be divided into two groups: internal and external. The internal audience is German citizens as well as local governments. The German government had to convince the public about the rightness of the case that accepting refugees is highly important for developing their country. Moreover, they argued that after the experience of WWII they had to help people whose lives were in danger as a result of war. The external audience is other EU countries as well as refugees. Not all EU member states are willing to accept refugees. And even in Germany itself, there have been protests and doubts about the chancellor's righteousness. Propaganda started well in convincing society of the severity of the case and within the EU itself to rationally distribute responsibility among all states of the community. Of course, refugees wanted to come to the country with the best opportunity to live and work. The top country was the Federal Republic of Germany. The German government had to pay special attention to the Visegrad group because this group of countries definitely does not agree to accepting Muslim refugees. This situation remains is still valid. One of persuasive methods of the German government is the imposition of high penalties on countries that refuse to accept refugees. Moreover, the Republic of Poland is under special supervision, because after the change of government in 2015, Poland has definitely refused to accept refugees. Since that time, the European Commission and all German politicians have been discussing the above-mentioned disturbance of the rule of law and democracy in Poland and intend to impose additional sanctions on Poland, such as the withdrawal or reduction of development and research grants. In fact, the situation inside Poland looks different than the Germans claim. This is one of the pressure methods applied in the international environment. The German government used and uses various channels of media techniques

such as television broadcasting (ZDF), newspapers as well as the Internet. The first medial point was the invitation of Chancellor Angela Merkel and photos with refugees like presented below in Figure 1. and Figure 2.



Figure 1. A refugee takes a selfie with German Chancellor Angela Merkel outside a refugee camp near the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany (Porter, 2015).



Figure 2. A Syrian man held a picture of Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany after arriving at Hauptbahnhof station in Munich on Saturday, Germany (Gallup, 2015).

All of those pictures which were taken at that time will be on the Internet for a long time. It is interesting that many of those pictures are or will be used in a negative sense. Those pictures imply that Germany is a country open to visitors, especially young. This is also proof of the correctness of the German government's assumption that those people are thankful and they want to start a new life. The first example is Figure 1. showing Anas Modamani, a 19-year-old man from Damascus who was the victim of a cyber bullying incident (Gadish, 2017).

This picture was changed and shared among Facebook users as well as other social media outlets and showed up in fake news reports linking him to terror inter alia to the Brussels

Airport bombing of March 2016 (Auchard, 2017). Propaganda was and still is directed also to the youngest in the form of an animated message. German state-broadcaster ZDF, a taxpayer funded television network, released a short cartoon through its youth-channel ZDFtivi to teach German children that according to scientists, Germany lacks people who can do certain jobs and since many refugees are highly educated, they could solve the problem of “the missing workers” (Figure 3.). As a result, they would be “double help” for Germany because of the taxes they will contribute to Germany (Refugees, 2017).

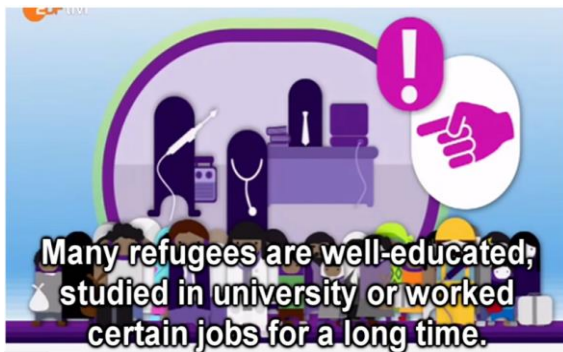


Figure 3. Refugees needed for Germany to survive say scientists - Children's Television, Germany (Uchodźcy, 2017).

The ZDF prepared a series of cartoon films which presented, inter alia information about why refugees desired to come and stay in Germany, the ways to help them, and also that France is to be blamed for Islamic terrorism. Although some cartoons were removed from YouTube, there are pictures presenting proof that this kind of propaganda exists (Figure 4.).

Another aspect of propaganda directed to the youngest generation of Germany is presenting bad people called PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamification of the West) who are not welcome as refugees, which is considered to be a wrong action, because this is not in line with government plans (Figure 5.).

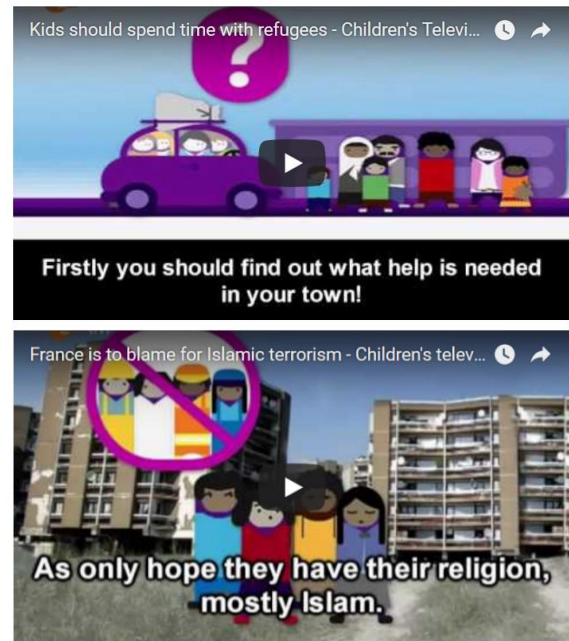


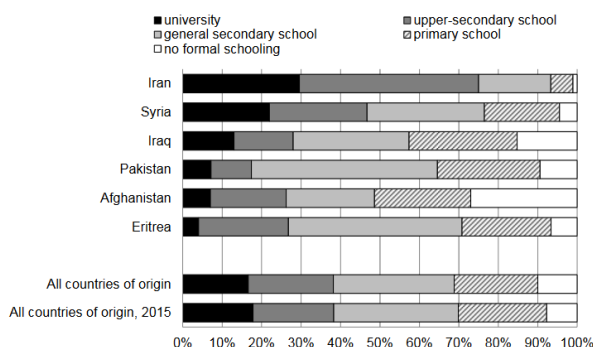
Figure 4. Refugees are poor and need help. France is to be blamed for Islamic terrorism (Uchodźcy, 2017).



Figure 5. Propaganda For Children as German Elite Unites to Condemn PEGIDA (Lane, 2015).

The Internet is an excellent information channel for this kind of dissemination of propaganda that allows reaching a wide audience and provides propagandists with an excellent tool for creating "new" realities. Are refugees from Syria so well educated?

According to the research (Figure 6.), the truth is different, only 20% of Syrians have university education and over 50% hold basic or no education.



Note: Non-responses (about 20%) were excluded.

Figure 6. Educational background of asylum seekers (Degler, E., and Liebig, T., 2017, p. 22).

The next action of the German government was imposing a fine for hate speech orally or in writing which amounts to €1,200 Euros. Moreover, the government wanted to change the law concerning social networks which took the name of the law translated to “Enforcement on Social Networks”. It is also referred to as NetzDG, a new law that came into force in Germany in 2018. It states that “fines of up to €50 million can be applied under the law if social media platforms fail to comply” (Lomas, 2017). The German government’s experiment on German people which is based on the hormone treatment to make people be nice to the refugees has caused great shock. It sounds like science fiction, but it is true. A group of Bonn scientists has studied how to reduce the symptoms of xenophobia in people, and to strengthen altruism. Researchers have concluded that the use of the oxytocin hormone is important. Hormonal therapy significantly increases the willingness to donate money to those in need, including immigrants and refugees in particular, even those who initially declare themselves to be critical or strongly skeptical about immigrants (Marsh et al., 2017). Another action of the German government was not informing the society about crimes committed by refugees. Sexual assaults committed on New Year’s eve in 2015 by refugees in Cologne serve as a good example of such activity (Germany, 2016). “The Cologne assaults were not reported by the national me-

dia for days, and The Local (local news magazine) says many news outlets started reporting it only after a wave of anger on social media made covering the story impossible” (Luyken, 2016).

Last but not least, factors of analyzing propaganda include audience reaction to various techniques, counterpropaganda, if present, as well as effects and evaluation. At the beginning, the reaction of German citizens was mostly positive. They welcomed the refugees with open arms. One of the pictures presented soccer fans who were welcoming refugees from Syria (Figure 7.).



Figure 7. Welcome refugees in Germany (Edwards, 2015).

It was also good material shown to all citizens and the whole world demonstrating that Germans had changed and were open to people who need help. However, that positive picture did not remain for long. The situation changed dramatically after more and more refugees were coming to Germany. Local governments reported that they had problems with accommodating refugees and the local community expressed their dissatisfaction with the new guests (Figure 8.). Positive and negative movements of people on a large scale are possible due to the use of tools available in cyberspace such as social media and various types of communicators. The use of these tools on the one hand allows the propagandist to initiate certain movement among the target audience, which on the other hand has the ability to quickly communicate information about various events.



Figure 8. Not welcome refugees in Germany (Mortimer, 2016).

It should be emphasized that this phenomenon can be very dangerous for propagandists, because it is characterized by a weak inertia in the control of a stimulated society.

What is more, counterpropaganda came to voice as sympathizers of German right-wing populist movement called PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West) movement. One should observe that anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim movements like PEGIDA are increasing in power and it leads to the increase of nationalism in Germany (again like before WWII).

PEGIDA warns the public against a wave of crimes and threats from terrorist attacks of refugees allied with ISIS. The International environment was also worried; the Visegrad Group is opposed accepting refugees in their countries; even Great Britain was warning of the possibility of leaving the European Union due to inter alia chaos caused by the refugee crisis which finally resulted in Brexit in June 2016. Another big actor in the EU is France, which struggled with the internal war with the Islamic Jihad in 2016.

Large numbers of refugees were eagerly arriving in Europe and their purpose was primarily to get to Germany or Austria. However, there are now signs that the refugees were worried about their own lives and their families, because part of society was hostile and did not see the possibility of integration (Casey, 2019). In Germany, there

were over 600 cases of burned houses in which refugees lived between 2015 and 2016 (Rigamonti, 2016). Moreover, local governments make it difficult to handle official matters by forbidding English language communication in certain parts of the country. What are the effects of propaganda actions? The initial assumptions of the economic recovery of Germany with the hands of refugees slipped out of control. There were too many refugees. The introduction of refugees has brought social anxiety in many areas of Germany and in particular, Bavaria. Political correctness for newcomers is so far stretched that even criminal statistics of crimes committed by refugees are hidden (e.g. Cologne - New Year's Eve in 2015). In addition, research is being conducted on people to change their approach from xenophobia to altruistic approaches towards refugees. Moreover, the government is also spreading propaganda among the youngest showing that refugees will help to improve the German economy. However, Chancellor Angela Merkel will face significant financial expenses on refugees despite the fact that she had not received full support in the elections, she still thinks that Germany needs immigrants to develop the economy for the future of the Federal Republic of Germany.

In conclusion, all of the German government's actions were undoubtedly based on the earlier prepared ideology on how to increase economy and fund the state in the future. The main actors in this propaganda were German society, other EU countries, and last but not least, refugees. In 2013, the situation in Europe started to change and German plans could come into force. The main turning point in history was the invitation of Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany when she told "we can do it".

The incentive distributed with the use of cyberspace was the beginning of a propaganda plan to rescue the German economy.

According to the author, it can be stated that the actions of the German government related to refugees were and are based on propaganda.

Having analyzed the questions identifying propaganda activities performed by the German government, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The ideology behind the propaganda campaign is connected with a forecast concerning the phenomenon of aging society as well as the impact of world economic problems on the German economy and its position among the EU member states.
2. The propaganda context is to prove that attracting asylum seekers, as a labour force, is a good way to solve the above mentioned problems. It will influence the rebuilding of the economy and strengthen the state's position on the international arena.
3. A propagandist, in this case, is the German government, using cyberspace to exert influence on the target audience.
4. The structure of propaganda organization is intrinsically connected with German state structures.
5. Two target audience groups can be distinguished: the internal audience – German citizens and local governments; the external audience – other EU member states as well as the refugees.
6. The applied means of communication and the mass media included – the Internet, social media, the press, as well as television, the ZDF in particular.
7. The effects of propaganda were maximised among other things by: intensified media activities with the use of cyberspace; broadcasting information presenting refugees as highly qualified specialists; cartoons for children presenting the need to support the newcomers; globally conveyed information about the openness of Germany towards immigrants and paying back the debt for World War II this way; experiments performed on German citizens in order to limit xenophobia and strengthen altruism; concealing the truth about the offences and the wrongdoing of refugees, fines for hate speech; pressure exerted on

the international environment in the scope of rendering help to refugees under financial penalties.

8. At the beginning, German society accepted refugees with open arms, however, as time passed, the attitude in some lands has changed for the worse due to the increase of nationalist moods. On the EU arena, the initial enthusiasm expressed by some countries was disturbed by terrorist attacks.
9. The activities of the German government had an impact on the development of the opposition which is marked by nationalist movements, PEGIDA most of all.
10. The above-mentioned factors confirm the existence of government propaganda pertaining to immigrants, however the initial assumptions concerning the economic boost of Germany caused by refugees got out of control leading to an increase in social unrest in many areas of Germany. The assessment of the state of the economy is only possible on the basis of a long-term observation.

Undoubtedly, cyberspace has become an important form of support to carry out varied activities providing both the propagandist as well as the target audience with proper tools.

Summary

What is the role of cyberspace in propaganda? Many propaganda activities take place in cyberspace. Cyberspace and all the advantages incorporated in it are beneficial for both the propagandists and the target audience. Presently, there are a lot of possibilities to communicate in cyberspace. One of the main tools is social media. The use of social media helps to distribute information quickly and effectively. Both aforementioned groups take advantage of using communication applications such as: Facebook, Tweeter, YouTube, Instagram, Skype,

WhatsApp or Snapchat. Communication applications, those known now and those which are still not known, significantly support propagandists in the process of sending messages to a given target group in order to attain the set goal i.e. to change the awareness of the information recipients. On the other hand, the tools facilitate counterpropaganda and exert influence on the target group as forcefully as in case of the primary propaganda. Presently, manipulation through photos or short films could also be realized with the use of graphic applications which makes it even easier and more effective than ever. According to the author, cyberspace, presently and in the future, will play a significant role in propaganda activities exerting influence on the approach as well as propaganda methods having effect on the audience and consequently achieving the set goals. All in all, a big part of contemporary life takes place in cyberspace, thus naturally propaganda exists there too.

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