

„Ante Portas – Studia nad Bezpieczeństwem”
2019, Nr 2(13)
DOI: 10.33674/20199

Thornike ZEDELASHVILI¹
Georgia

**GEPOLITICAL CONTOURS OF MODERN
INFORMATION WARFARE RUSSIAN-US CONFRONTATION LINE
FROM BALTIC SEA TO BLACK SEA**

Abstract:

The international security environment, which needs to be upgraded to security mechanisms, does not have two views. The level of threats, risks and challenges of information warfare is quite high. Protecting yourself from the information war and its most powerful component – disinformation – is not easy, although every country tries to protect itself in a complex way, but at least every state must have its own effective defense mechanisms. Measures and measures taken by individual countries are often not sufficient. The efficiency of the information war was facilitated by scientific and technological advancements, which led to the manipulation and control of certain masses. In this respect, it is important to involve international organizations, develop strategic documents and defense mechanisms. We often emphasize that technology development has both pros and cons. Let's imagine two sides of the same coin. Nevertheless, we should not miss the third theoretical issue, namely, raising the awareness and educating the masses. The information warfare is always aimed at consciousness and the main target of propaganda is a person who is not versed in modern technology, has no idea of the Internet system and the production of 'fake news'. Unfortunately, today's "fake news" has become so widespread throughout the world that if you are not properly trained, you may find it very difficult to tell the lie and the truth. Education, special methodological programs, this is one of the important parts of the global problem.

Keywords:

hybrid war, information war, global security, Cyberwar, asymmetric threat, economic pressure, misinformation, international security, virtual space, technological advances

¹ Thornike Zedelashvili, PhD student at Caucasus International University, founder of the news-analytical agency of "Leader". Email: thomas_zedelashvili@mail.ru

Introduction

The information war has taken over the world with the development of technology in the 21st century. It takes a lot of effort to protect the countries from information warfare and security. It is related to both financial and also with the greatest human resources. Establishing a fully secure system is associated with great effort and expense. In most cases, most states do not have safeguards and do not protect their information security. In many cases, states do not have or are ineffective in their information security strategies and policies. Technologies and approaches to information warfare are becoming increasingly sophisticated, but at the same time the main problem is that states are not effectively ensuring information security and are facing greater threats.

The usage of the cyber elements in inter-state relations and conflicts has experienced a significant transformation in a short period of time. If the cyber-attacks in the first decade of the century were designed to achieve mostly informational-technical effects (it is well known that in the case of a weakly protected infrastructure, even low-tech DDoS and Defacement attacks could result in disproportionately high damage), already from the middle of the second decade, such attacks have mainly made way for cyber operations performed for informational-psychological influence².

The outbreak of information warfare and the use of technologies have affected large states such as Russia and the US on a global scale. Their interests extend in many ways to the populations and territories of small countries, including Georgia. Russia is actively engaged in information warfare with the Baltic states – Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia. It also launches large-scale information-disinformation attacks on countries such as Georgia and Ukraine. None of the countries mentioned in the effective effective opposition can do this independently. However, with the support of NATO and the EU, defense mechanisms are being developed and developed. The US is also actively engaged in this regard militarily or technically.

The Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania got rid of the Soviet regime 28 years ago and since independence (in 2004) three states have joined the EU and NATO, but in this region Russia still has its chauvinistic interests and, thanks to its confrontation with the West, as a red line. Turned into a zone. According to political scientists, today Russia will not go for military escalation, it will not use any form of direct aggression, as it is physically, so to speak, at odds with the North Atlantic Alliance and with the interests of the European Union. However, there are so-called The various forms of the Cold War, manifested by cyberattacks and information warfare methods.

² A. Gotsiridz, *Factors that need to be taken into Account when Developing a New National Cyber Security Strategy*, Tbilisi 2019, p. 1, <<https://www.gfsis.org/blog/view/940>> (31.12.2019).

Russia's interest in the independent Baltic countries and its political approaches in the context of the confrontation with NATO

The question naturally arises: What is Russia's interest in independent states? First of all, the huge conquest-oriented country perceives the acceptance of these three states in NATO as a breach of its own borders. The decision taken at the Istanbul summit in 2004 was shocking for the Kremlin, and preparations have begun for NATO to expand further. In fact, such a rigid step in Western Europe was unexpected for Russia; otherwise, the Kremlin would try to play a scenario similar to that played by Ukraine and Georgia, that is, all three countries would resort to military means. It might have been difficult to split the Indo-German population, but Russia would still have begun the process of disintegrating the region, which would have prevented NATO membership. Especially when the Russian-speaking population settled in the Baltics in the Soviet Union is not very small – 10%. That was not the case, and the Baltic states were ‘gained an advantage’ by a number of factors: first, the situation in Russia itself was not fully settled by 2004, and second, by the so-called Kremlin. A decree on the protection of their own citizens in any country, the Baltic States, from the outset took into account and purified their states as far as possible, that is, to deny citizenship to a large part of the Russian-speaking population, there were a number of restrictions. In addition, since these three countries have taken refuge in the NATO umbrella, thanks to technologies and defense systems, they have been able to effectively repel cyberattacks, which (We have to admit) in the case of Georgia and Ukraine. After all, Russia is still not resting and periodically conducting cyberattacks on the Baltic states – for example, there was a major offensive against Estonia in 2007-2009, after one activist of the Kremlin's youth organization ‘Nash’ admitted that he was a cyberattack on the Baltic states. According to analysts, the Kremlin was behind these attacks. It should be recalled that a similar cyberattack on Georgia was also carried out in August 2008, during the Russian-Georgian war and in October 2019. Problems with hundreds of sites. Several TV stations and various web portals were shut down. The cyberattack was also carried out on the website of the President's Administration. A photo of ex-President Mikheil Saakashvili with the caption ‘I'll be back’ appeared at the opening of the websites. In the days that followed, letters were sent to news outlets saying that the ‘attackers’ were not interested in either Mikheil Saakashvili or Bidzina Ivanishvili, who needed money in the form of bitcoins.

Otherwise they threatened to publish material that was downloaded from the servers during the attack. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia has launched an investigation into this cyberattack. Several individuals have been questioned, but the results are not known. There are several versions of this fact – it may not be at all related to a new way of making money and be a rehearsal for the 2020 parliamentary elections. It is true that elections in Georgia are not

conducted electronically and hired hackers cannot influence the results, but when the information warfare against the current government starts, it can be very effective. In addition, it may all serve to instill fear in the population that there is some force that can freely block any news outlet or government site. How might 'almighty' hackers be organized? Most likely, from Russia, because the handwriting is the same as it was during the 2008 Russia-Georgia war.

Today, Europe and America are talking about the dangers coming from Russia. That is why, based on the Warsaw decision, NATO deployed four Battalion type units in the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) and Poland in early 2017, operating in agreement with local military units. This decision was preceded by the approval of the NATO RAP Readiness Action Plan at the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, largely in response to threats coming from Russia and their strategic impact. The Warsaw Summit Declaration also noted that since 2014 the security of the Baltic Sea region has been threatened. In particular, Russia's intensified military activities and deployment of new military technologies, which poses additional challenges to regional security, were highlighted. Of course, the new military technology itself involves the control of cyberspace and cyber attacks.

When we talk about the present situation of the Baltic states, we should draw parallels with the threats against Georgia-Ukraine. If we look closely and analyze, we will clearly see the same handwriting. By the way, Russia does not have a creative approach to military or cyber attacks, that is, never changes its methods, has one scenario and operates in all regions. The high level of threat of information attacks against Georgia is also supported by the clear definitions in the State Security Service's 2018 report³. For example, how the Russian Federation and other countries' special services are trying to launch a hybrid war on the territory of Georgia. The report says that Russia is increasingly trying to influence the Georgian population, creating the illusion that the EU, NATO and the United States are a major threat. On October 17, 2019, Grigol Liluashvili, the head of the State Security Service, during his visit to the Parliament, highlighted many dangerous issues, including the dangers of the Russian Federation's hybrid war in Georgia and outlined five points: "Russia operates in Georgia with five major instruments of hybrid warfare: occupation forces and *de facto* regimes, information warfare, so-called soft power, economic expansion, covert operations"⁴.

What fundamental changes in world order are to be expected will require an in-depth analysis. In this regard, Mr. Vakhtang Maisaia gives an interesting analysis in his essay: *The New Cold War*, published in the periodical press on May 15, 2017. He said that in light of current international political

³ G. Liluashvili, *Report of the State Security Service of Georgia*, Tbilisi 2018, pp. 1-27, <<http://ssg.gov.ge>> (31.12.2019).

⁴ Idem, *Russia operates in Georgia with five major instruments of hybrid warfare*, Tbilisi 2019, p. 1, <<http://parliament.ge>> (31.12.2019).

developments, new trends have already changed the order of the world and made it multipolar instead of monopolistic, where US geopolitical hegemony was the unconditional and major dominant factor in the kind of world order that began after the geopolitical transition. Whose *Classic Cold War began – 1991-1999 years*. In the same paper, Vakhtang Maisaia notes that the US has been able to take over global governance since 1999, especially with the implementation of the George W. Bush administration's 'Global War on Terror' strategy. Such a model, that is, US global hegemony and a model of monopoly world order, continued until 2014, but Maisaia also mentions Russia's role and says: "Since 2014, when the Russian Federation has occupied the so-called Crimean Peninsula of the sovereign territory of Ukraine, It annexed it through the 'hybrid war' and disregarded all the norms and principles of international law, which subsequently revealed its ambition for world hegemony"⁵.

The paper also focuses on Russia's aggression in response to the US and high-stakes Western economic blockade against Russia, which has become the face of the 'new Cold War'.

Did Russia find an economic blockade enough to fuel its chauvinistic aspirations? Some experts believe that this was not fully effective and that more stringent sanctions should be implemented. Some experts argue that sanctions should be lifted altogether. In the end, the picture is set whether sanctions are in place or not, it doesn't matter much to Russia, at least the Kremlin makes such an impression. In the wake of the 'Cold War' mentioned above, President Vladimir Putin has been lucky in the last few months, with US President Donald Trump's announcement that his country will no longer be a world policeman, creating a mirage as if it were a retreat. In principle, the fact of the Syrian-Turkish confrontation and the Russian-Turkish clashes even gave rise to such a mirage. As you know, Russia has gained control of Syria along with Turkey, and they are simultaneously patrolling. While this should not mislead experts, the US and EU still remain world-class figureheads.

Russia's interests in the Black Sea basin have increased since the conquest of Crimea. Political analysts say if this continues, the prospect of turning the Black Sea into a 'Russian lake' becomes clear. What should the United States do to prevent this from happening? NATO enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia is on the agenda. By the way, the Warsaw Summit emphasized the need to strengthen the eastern flank, that is to say the Baltic and Polish flanks are even stronger in terms of both military and cyber security.

We need to look at how Russian propaganda is being fought today in the Baltic states and analyze how effective it is. In 2016, Latvia switched off Russian channel RTR for six months. The Latvian Public Broadcaster reported

⁵ V. Maisaia, *The New Cold War*, Tbilisi 2017, p. 1, <<http://www.geotimes.ge>> (31.12.2019).

about it⁶. According to the decision of the National Electronic Media Council, Rossiya RTR has violated the Latvian media law and the EU media directive.

In 2015, the Lithuanian Communications Regulatory Commission decided to block RTR Planet⁷. This television is included in the service package of Russia's State Broadcasting Company. The reason was named after Vladimir Solvin's program, which used propaganda and hate speech. The channel was blocked in accordance with the EU media directive.

“The European Union regulator has decided to shut down the Russian channel, history does not remember it, perhaps many will disagree, but we must act in accordance with the legislation”⁸ – said regulatory spokesman Edmundas Vaitekūnas.

In Estonia, too, they wanted to block Sputnik online, but then changed their minds. Because the temporary shutdown of the TV channels would not solve the problem. When people around the world are using the Internet. One of these initiatives was led by the leader of the Estonian Conservative People's Party Urmas Reitelmann⁹.

There was talk of switching off Russian TV channels in Georgia during this period, but the public did not take up the issue, nor did the government take up the issue. There were several reasons for this: First, it was demanded by former government members, or leaders of the United National Movement; Second, the public perceived that in today's technology, it made no sense for anyone who wishes to watch Russian channels by various means; Third, it was thought that this would exacerbate our tense relations with Russia and we would get the opposite reaction, that is, we would be more affected.

Russia chooses a strategy in relation to the Baltic countries, Western Europe and the United States in the conditions of the ‘New Cold War’

Let's get back to the main theme – in the conditions of the ‘New Cold War’, what strategy does Russia choose against the Baltic states, Western Europe and the United States? Since it is difficult to determine where the theoretical cybersecurity begins and where practical military aggression ends, new research, recommendations, or scientific papers are needed. Even if it is difficult to determine where Russian chauvinism begins and whether it has an

⁶ *Latvia suspends Rossiya RTR channel*, “Latvian Public Broadcasting”, Latvia 2016, p. 1, <<https://eng.lsm.lv>> (31.12.2019).

⁷ *Lithuanian regulatory agency suspends RTR Planeta*, “Lithuanian National Radio and Television”, Lithuania 2015, p. 1, <<https://www.lrt.lt>> (31.12.2019).

⁸ *Lithuanian media regulator has decided to take off air for a three-month period Russian state-owned TV channel RTR Planeta*, “Baltic News Network”, Lithuania 2015, p. 1, <<https://bnn-news.com>> (31.12.2019).

⁹ *Estonian Conservative Party Member: We'd Shut Sputnik If Had Such Possibility*, “Information Agency New Front”, Estonia 2019, p. 1, <<https://en.news-front.info>> (31.12.2019).

end at all, the world is in constant pain. That is why NATO has enacted Article 5 of the Washington Treaty – the principle of collective defense. Prior to that, the North Atlantic Alliance used the obligations under Article 5, which included involvement in ‘crisis management’ operations. Russia has rolled out its geopolitical and geostrategic instruments at all three levels – at a global level: confrontation with the US and NATO (in its new National Security 2015 Opinion paragraphs 16 and 17 consider the US and NATO the main adversaries, while the seventh paragraph explicitly states the role of the Russian Federation Arrange the world order Official Moscow, using elements of ‘hybrid warfare’), could inflict a serious blow on the United States during the presidential election, showing signs of political instability in the US monolithic political system, even though Donald Trump is not a Kremlin favorite. Doubt: Hacker interference in presidential elections Even if the story is a complete lie, it still sheds light on the sentiments of Putinist Russia, that is, the feeling of almightyness and shows nihilism in the population of the United States, but why only in the population of this country? Everyone experiences frustration and helplessness. By the way, this was one of the ‘best’ examples of September 11, 2001, when terrorists slammed into the United States when buildings and passenger planes exploded. This is where not only ‘American nihilism’ but also ‘world nihilism’ first appeared, followed by the outbreak of an information war – even a film shot, apparently, by the US authorities, and in particular by President George W. Bush (Jr.), in order to destroy terrorists. To obtain. Yes, but what rights did they want and need to fight terrorism? By no means is terrorism a disease of mankind and it must be eradicated to the end. Incidentally, the United States had a so-called period. Coverage-reloading policy, which has been used by enemies in an unrelenting manner. There were years of ‘reset’ when former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton went to Moscow and offered Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov a ‘reset’ button, and the doctrine then worked out to be the best example of this – a straightforward document states that constructive cooperation with Russia requires NATO-Russia cooperation. Security is intertwined and so on. As we have seen, such an approach did not work.

Russia is attacking the United States, the Baltics and the rest of the world with cyber meth, pre-processed hybrid methods and misinformation. However, the misinformation that spreads in Western, Central and Eastern Europe varies in content and depends on the country's cultural, political, and historical features. Each message is carefully selected and mainly targeted at the Russian-speaking population of the countries in the region. for example:

In Slovakia and the Czech Republic¹⁰, they are focused on criticizing US energy policy and trying to portray the United States acting solely for its own interests and fostering conflict in different parts of the world. The situation in Romania¹¹ is the same, with Russian-sponsored media outlets trying to portray EU membership as a mistake and undermine democratic institutions. In Sweden¹², the government has been portrayed as a victim of sexual misconduct. Russian media propaganda in Finland¹³ accuses the authorities of dishonesty in court decisions regarding child custody of Russian-Finnish couples. There is a misleading struggle in Ukraine¹⁴ – corruption, poverty, disorder and a Western-style ‘puppet’ regime.

In the Baltic states, in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia¹⁵, the propaganda machine works to discriminate against Russians in these countries because of their ethnic or linguistic characteristics.

In principle, all the post-Soviet countries have to say that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was no mass oppression of Russians and Russian-speaking populations, no bloodshed and brutality. Perhaps in this case, the fact that at least 70 years of kinship and other cultural or social relations have been established has played a decisive role. Instead of warning Russia of these relations, it began to create a space similar to the Soviet Union, where it constantly engaged in military aggression and engaged in hybrid warfare. Internet publication damoukidebloba.ge, according to information¹⁶, is the driving force of Russian propaganda in the Baltics – “Pervyy Baltiyskiy kanal”. Also online site Regnum.ru, which has been operating for more than 10 years. Russia recently launched Baltnews, an anonymous source of news and information in Estonian, Lithuanian and Latvian languages.

Today neither the Baltic states, nor Ukraine nor Georgia can spend trillions of dollars to oppose Russia in an information war. If Russia can establish radio stations, TV channels, agencies and newspapers in Georgia secretly and openly,

¹⁰ I. Smoleňová, *The Pro-Russian Disinformation Campaign In The Czech Republic And Slovakia*, “Prague Security Studies Institute”, Prague 2015, pp. 1-18, <<http://www.pssi.cz>> (31.12.2019).

¹¹ *Disinformation and European erosion in Romania*, “Information Agency Stop Fake”, 2019, p. 1, <<https://www.stopfake.org>> (31.12.2019).

¹² *Geworld Spreads News by Russian Troll Factory on Legalization of Necrophilia and Bestiality in Europe*, “Information Agency MyTh Detector”, Tbilisi 2018, p. 1, <<https://www.mythdetector.ge>> (31.12.2019).

¹³ Y. Kioski, *Yle Kioski Investigated: This Is How Pro-Russia Trolls Manipulate Finns Online – Check the List of Forums Favored by Propagandists*, 2015, p. 1, <<https://kioski.yle.fi>> (31.12.2019).

¹⁴ *Ukraine remains top target of Russian disinformation*, “News and View for Ukraine Euromaidanpress”, Ukraine 2019, p. 1, <<http://euromaidanpress.com>> (31.12.2019).

¹⁵ A. Król, *Russian Information Warfare in the Baltic States – Resources and Aims*, p. 1, Warsaw 2017, <<https://warsawinstitute.org>> (31.12.2019).

¹⁶ *Russian Information Warfare – Strategies and Goals*, “Damoukidebloba”, Tbilisi 2015, p. 1, <<http://damoukidebloba.ge>> (31.12.2019).

we have no way to do the same in Russia. Yes, sir, you can resist from your own country, but it is not completely effective. Especially if your territorial integrity is broken and you can't control 20 percent. Many may not believe it, but as the German publication Bild writes in its own sources, if the United States had been openly involved in the 2008 Georgia-Russia war, the Russians had decided to attack the Baltic states, and if the Americans were to provide assistance to the Baltic states, then they would have used nuclear weapons. They thought.

A Bild columnist also writes that within the framework of large-scale military training – ‘Western 2017’ Russia was rehearsing not ‘in the fight against terrorism’ but in ‘the war on NATO’ and they have this information based on ‘Western intelligence’. The publication claims that the teaching scenario was based on the occupation of the Baltic states and Belarus for several days. The exercise also addressed a ‘shock campaign’ against NATO countries, including Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Norway, as well as neutral Sweden and Finland. According to a source in the publication, Russia has been training to ‘neutralize and control Baltic airports and ports’. “If there is a real war, their goal will be to build critical infrastructure, including airports, ports, stations and other infrastructure, in order to shock these countries and demand a truce from the local population”¹⁷.

According to the publication, according to Norwegian Defense Ministry sources, during the exercise Russia has attacked the city of Spitzbergen and captured it. As we have seen, this plan was not implemented, the United States was not caught up in Russia's provocation in the events of 2008, but there is a similarly modeled plan, that is, Russia is still doing its job with hybrid warfare and cyberattacks.

In June 2018, the Pentagon acknowledged that in the event of a Russian invasion, it would not be able to protect the Baltic states and Poland. According to the Washington Post, this conclusion was reached as a result of a simulation of EU and Russian military resistance in the Pentagon.

According to the publication, “until the US Army headquarters fills out 17 forms to allow NATO advanced troops from Germany to Poland, Russia will be able to detain the Baltic states”¹⁸.

Another major problem for the US military is the narrow streets and unreliable transportation infrastructure. The case concerns too weak bridges that cannot withstand the weight of American equipment. The European bureaucracy also creates problems at its borders.

¹⁷ E. Basilaia, *German Media: Russians Planned to Use Nuclear Weapons in 2008*, Tbilisi 2017, p. 1, <<http://resonancedaily.com>> (31.12.2019).

¹⁸ *The Pentagon acknowledged that in the event of a Russian invasion it would not be able to protect the Baltic states and Poland*, “Imedinevs”, Tbilisi 2018, p. 1, <<https://imedinevs.ge>> (31.12.2019).

Russia has opened several fronts against the Baltic states, where senior government officials are involved. For example, in September 2019, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov noted that the Baltic states are still living on EU subsidies and their assistance will be suspended soon¹⁹. Of course, this is a deliberate misinformation by which the Russians are trying to make the Baltic people feel nihilism and hopelessness. But what does Lavrov really know, what will the EU do tomorrow, and why should the Baltics stop? Especially when the EU assists developing countries only for the purpose of developing them. Russia also exerts ideological pressure on the Baltic states, the Kremlin has repeatedly argued that it considers the accession of the Baltic states to the Soviet Union in accordance with the norms of international law in force at the time. According to the Russian diplomatic department, the term ‘occupation’ cannot be used here, as no military action was taken between the Soviet Union and the Baltic States and the troops entered upon agreement. That is, it turns out that the Soviet army in the Baltic states, not by force, was invited, and thus the word ‘occupation’ is unacceptable. It seems that the Kremlin is hiding carefully when the so-called Baltic Foreign Ministers They did not want to sign the agreement because they feared it would violate their neutrality. After the refusal Molotov addressed Estonia's representative as follows: “The situation needs an immediate solution. We cannot wait too long. We recommend that you agree with the Soviet Union's wishes to prevent anything worse. Do not force the Soviet Union to use force to achieve its goals, the hope of foreign aid now is just an illusion”²⁰.

This is as much an ‘invitation’ to Russian troops as the ‘inviting’ Bolsheviks led by Sergo Orjonikidze to Georgia. Forging History – this is another part of Russia, or part of a grand strategy that fits perfectly into the hybrid war. Some scholars think that Russia has acted in the first place and still operates under the concept of the Third Rome, where self-legitimacy is brought to the forefront, that is to say, world domination by revolutionary minerals. In fact, this is not much different from the doctrine of the Third Reich, that is, Joseph Goebbels. Obviously, in his day Hitler's fascist regime, ideologically, derived much from the concept of the Third Rome, and much of the Bolsheviks did. Notice, today, Russia's relationship with the rest of the world is based on the already elaborate doctrine of Goebbels – “Give me mass media and turn any nation into a colt of pigs”. If there was a shortage of mass media in the time of Goebbels, and during the third Roman period horse-riding information was ‘gaining’, today Russia has ‘complete happiness’ and is using it in all directions. Moreover, Kremlin propaganda has long had no boundaries. For example, in February 2015, twitter accounts of Radio Liberty and Voice of America appeared on the Twitter page. Representatives of these radio stations

¹⁹ I. Iagorashvili, *Russia's 2 Myths about the Baltic States*, Tbilisi 2019, p. 1, <<http://www.mythdetector.ge>> (31.12.2019).

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

consider such imitation a manifestation of hypocrisy towards the Kremlin, but they do not exclude that it could all be part of an insidious misinformation. The fake account profile in Russian had the motto: “We're changing your homeland into our sneakers”²¹. The address indicated the German city of Munich, where Radio Liberty's headquarters were located until 1995, and the numbers indicated on the profile appeared to be in the public reception room of the Russian Federal Foreign Intelligence Service. Such cyber games are probably mainly aimed at establishing Russia's almighty factor and sowing hopelessness in the population. Generally, information warfare tactics and methodologies vary by country, with each region having its own characteristics – history, culture, political thinking and analysis, level of education, and so on. However, if we look at it, Russia has an almost monotonous approach in all directions – which it cannot do with hybrid warfare, news outlets, cyberattacks, resolving the issue with military aggression. This approach has been going on for centuries. “Georgia's 100-year struggle against Kremlin misinformation”, the article was published by the European Union-funded website Eu Vise Desinfo (euvsdesinfo.eu)²². The article says that Soviet Russia began to fight for Georgia's independence and European foreign policy 100 years ago, since its declaration of independence. “Georgia was a victim of Russian military intervention and aggressive disinformation campaign”. In an article in the Moscow Pravda, the Bolsheviks accused the leader of the First Republic of Georgia, Noe Jordania, of selling Georgia to England.

A letter containing this allegation is also posted on the website. At the same time, the publication notes that “Georgia remains a target of Russia's misinformation campaign today”, and the EU special task force “has identified hundreds of similar cases”.

As the authors of the publication point out, the main messages of Russia's misinformation campaign are ‘Georgia has lost its independence’, ‘Georgia is a US protectorate’, ‘Georgia is a feudal establishment ruled by the West’, ‘Georgia is a slave of Turkey’.

The article says that the Kremlin's misinformation is built on the same message – the issue of undermining independence that can be adapted to any era, political situation or country. Of course, when it comes to propagating that we are slaves to the United States, vassals of Turkey, Russia has the same attitude towards the Baltic states – as mentioned above, the Kremlin's top official Sergei Lavrov is directly targeting the EU, that is, trying to divide the EU and Baltic states, the Baltic states' relationship, a little crack, still applies,

²¹ K. Liklikadze, *Russian Intelligence Clones on Twitter*, Tbilisi 2017, p. 1, <<https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge>> (31.12.2019).

²² *Euvsdesinfo.eu Publishes Article – Georgia's 100-year Fight Against Kremlin Disinformation*, “Georgian Public Broadcaster”, Tbilisi 2019, p. 1, <<https://1tv.ge>> (31.12.2019).

as it is often in this region, not only in this region have to believe what is unbelievable and even goes nonsense.

Conclusion

Russia, of course, during the 70-year-long ‘brotherhood’ has very well studied the psychology of the post-Soviet nations, the level of education, the ability to perceive and so on. Russia did not start a war with the civilized world yesterday, and we should not hope that it will end tomorrow, or someday, and of course, the rest of the world should be ready for everything – hybrid warfare, military aggression, and even other contradictions that a normal democratic society cannot imagine.

What is it that a normal democratic country, that is, a normal system, a normal society, cannot imagine? This is a sudden attack and the veiled Russian propaganda where there is more fertile ground. In this respect, the present situation of the post-Soviet countries needs to be studied. We should carefully analyze where, in what region, what kind, to what level, to what kind of education the population lives. It must always be remembered that Russian propaganda resembles oil, which often spill out invisibly, and reaches into any hole that leaves untidy, dirty traces even when cleaned.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- ✓ Basilaia E., *German Media: Russians Planned to Use Nuclear Weapons in 2008*, Tbilisi 2017, <<http://resonancedaily.com>>
- ✓ *Disinformation and European erosion in Romania*, “Information Agency “Stop Fake”, 2019, <<https://www.stopfake.org>>
- ✓ *Estonian Conservative Party Member: We'd Shut Sputnik If Had Such Possibility*, “Information Agency New Front”, Estonia 2019, <<https://en.news-front.info>>
- ✓ *Euvsdesinfo.eu Publishes Article – Georgia's 100-year Fight Against Kremlin Disinformation*, “Georgian Public Broadcaster”, Tbilisi 2019, <<https://1tv.ge>>
- ✓ *Geworld Spreads News by Russian Troll Factory on Legalization of Necrophilia and Bestiality in Europe*, “Information Agency MyTh Detector”, Tbilisi 2018, <<https://www.mythdetector.ge>>
- ✓ Gotsiridz A., *Factors that need to be taken into Account when Developing a New National Cyber Security Strategy*, Tbilisi 2019, p<
<<https://www.gfsis.org/blog/view/940>>
- ✓ Iagorashvili I., *Russia's 2 Myths about the Baltic States*, Tbilisi 2019, <<http://www.mythdetector.ge>>

- ✓ Kioski Y., *Yle Kioski Investigated: This Is How Pro-Russia Trolls Manipulate Finns Online – Check the List of Forums Favored by Propagandists*, 2015, <<https://kioski.yle.fi>>
- ✓ Król A., *Russian Information Warfare in the Baltic States – Resources and Aims*, Warsaw 2017, <<https://warsawinstitute.org>>
- ✓ *Latvia suspends Rossiya RTR channel*, “Latvian Public Broadcasting”, Latvia 2016, <<https://eng.lsm.lv>>
- ✓ Liklikadze K., *Russian Intelligence Clones on Twitter*, Tbilisi 2017, <<https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge>>
- ✓ Liluashvili G., *Report of the State Security Service of Georgia*, Tbilisi 2018, <<http://ssg.gov.ge>>
- ✓ Liluashvili G., *Russia operates in Georgia with five major instruments of hybrid warfare*, Tbilisi 2019, <<http://parliament.ge>>
- ✓ *Lithuanian media regulator has decided to take off air for a three-month period Russian state-owned TV channel RTR Planeta*, “Baltic News Network”, Lithuania 2015, <<https://bnn-news.com>>
- ✓ *Lithuanian regulatory agency suspends RTR Planeta*, “Lithuanian National Radio and Television”, Lithuania 2015, <<https://www.lrt.lt>>
- ✓ Maisaia V., *The New Cold War*, Tbilisi 2017, <<http://www.geotimes.ge>>
- ✓ *Russian Information Warfare – Strategies and Goals*, “Damoukidebloba”, Tbilisi 2015, <<http://damoukidebloba.ge>>
- ✓ Smoleňová I., *The Pro-Russian Disinformation Campaign In The Czech Republic And Slovakia*, “Prague Security Studies Institute”, Prague 2015, <<http://www.pssi.cz>>
- ✓ *The Pentagon acknowledged that in the event of a Russian invasion it would not be able to protect the Baltic states and Poland*, “Imedinews”, Tbilisi 2018, <<https://imedinews.ge>>
- ✓ *Ukraine remains top target of Russian disinformation*, “News and View for Ukraine Euromaidanpress”, Ukraine 2019, <<http://euromaidanpress.com>>