

LANGUAGE OF RESISTANCE: THE GENDER ROLES IN WAR-RELATED PROPAGANDA AND THEIR MEDIA COVERAGE

Media is a powerful tool in shaping public behaviour and creating narratives among different social groups at micro and macro levels. Gender stereotypes, as well as their postmodern modifications, play a critical role in wartime propaganda, which can be shared due to different media. The media images of both sexes are used to change the traditional gender hierarchy. These days, the portrayal of men and women in war can shift according to political, ideological, and military contexts; this way, it influences how resistance and national identity are perceived. The aim of the work is to examine the possible manipulation of gender roles in war-related propaganda as well as their depiction in media coverage. The author focuses attention on the ongoing war in Ukraine, taking into consideration diverse historical contexts.

Traditionally, in wartime media and oral narratives, men are usually depicted as brave warriors, while women are positioned either as victims needing protection or as symbols of national honor. This pattern is common for war narratives in numerous conflicts, including the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. According to Oyeleye and Jiang, mainstream media frequently underrepresents women in conflict zones, limiting their portrayal to narrow characterizations that reinforce traditional gender hierarchies. Women's roles are often framed around caregiving, suffering, and displacement rather than as active participants in resistance or warfare [1].

On the authority of Emily Winterbotham, who explores how gendered norms shape societal expectations of both genders in the ongoing war of Russia against Ukraine, male images are frequently tied to military service, while female ones are associated with nurturing and resilience in the face of destruction. The above-mentioned representations influence public sentiment as well as dictate policy decisions regarding gender roles in the military and civil society [2].

Despite traditional narratives, women have played active roles in resistance movements throughout history. In the case of Ukraine, the BBC's analysis of gender roles highlights the increased responsibility placed on women, particularly young and internally displaced women, in decision-making processes. The war has led to a significant transformation in gender roles, as women take on leadership positions in both civilian and military spheres [3].

Kurdish women fighters in the Syrian Civil War exemplify another instance of women actively shaping resistance. The Women's Protection Units (YPJ) disrupted traditional gender expectations, as media coverage emphasized their role in combat rather than solely focusing on victimhood (Hassan, 2015). These narratives

challenge the perception that women's contributions to war are limited to non-combatant roles.

Media plays a crucial role in shaping the perception of gender roles during war. The National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting [4] updated its gender monitoring methodology in response to increasing concerns about biased media representations of war. The study found that war-related reporting often perpetuates gender stereotypes, particularly in relation to military service and disability caused by conflict. Similarly, Chermodon [5] argues that the full-scale invasion of Ukraine has intensified gender stereotyping in the media, shifting focus away from gender equality concerns.

A notable shift is the increasing involvement of female journalists and filmmakers in war reporting, which contributes to a more nuanced understanding of war's impact on different genders. Female-directed films, such as Kathryn Bigelow's *The Hurt Locker* (2008), challenge traditional gender roles in military settings by presenting women as capable and independent actors in high-stakes environments.

The portrayal of women in war-related media has broader political and social consequences. In post-genocide Rwanda, women's active participation in rebuilding the nation has been well-documented (Hannah, 2018). In Ukraine, the shift in women's roles during the war has contributed to broader discussions on gender equality and political representation. The portrayal of women as both victims and agents of change influences public policy, recruitment strategies, and societal expectations regarding gender roles.

Conclusion. The language of resistance in war-related propaganda and media coverage is deeply gendered, shaping public perceptions of both men's and women's roles in conflict. While traditional narratives continue to reinforce gender stereotypes, emerging media perspectives challenge these constructs by highlighting women's contributions to resistance and military efforts. The integration of gender-inclusive reporting and research is essential in creating a balanced understanding of war and its socio-political consequences.

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