

THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNICATING VESSELS IN DISPLAYING THE EFFECTS OF TERROR

Adrian LESENCIUC, Delia-Sabina MUNTEANU

„Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy, Braşov, Romania
(adrian.lesenciuc@afahc.ro; delia94.munteanu@yahoo.com)

DOI: 10.19062/2247-3173.2018.20.64

Abstract: *This paper aims at analyzing the relationships between mass media and terrorist groups, based on the market logic. Apparently separated from visions, reasons, and systems of values, the two entities collaborate on this logic. The previous perspectives on this relationship, perceived as symbiosis or unstable balance between media and terrorism, are insufficient to provide a conclusive description of the relationship’s dynamics. From the perspective of the communicating vessels principle, metaphor taken from hydrodynamics, media-terrorism relationships become meaningful and imply a distinct relational logic: the market logic. In this regard, we chose to illustrate the principle of communicating vessels by means of the case study on the terrorist attack on the Japanese subway of March 20, 1995.*

Keywords: *mass media, terrorism, symbiosis, unstable balance, principle of communicating vessels*

1. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism has existed since ancient times. Mass communication has been established at least 573 years ago, since the invention of the printing. There is a high level of interdependence between terrorist actions and their media coverage. Media and terrorism evolved constantly, converging sometimes, and always had a significant impact on the entire society. Taking into account the increase in magnitude of both entities’ effects, of terrorist attacks on the one side and of media on the other, our paper aims to highlight the valves that provide the implementation of the ‘principle of communicating vessels’, in achieving the psychological impact on the general public. We illustrate this perspective through a case study that reflects the terrorist attack of March 20, 1995, that occurred at the Tokyo subway. In this respect, we used the assumption that, in order to produce effects on a global scale, there must be a sort of ‘cooperation’ between media and terrorism, even if this does not always happen peacefully. Often, this cooperation is not based on reciprocal trust, but on constraints and threats. To illustrate the case study – in a broader work which can be extended to a detailed analysis of the numerous terrorist attacks of the last decades – we used the documents analysis.

The paper has two centers of gravity: a theoretical one, more precisely a chapter in which we analyzed the connections between the effects of terrorist attack and those of mass media in amplifying the psychological impact on the public, respectively an applicative one, of emphasis of the theoretical foundations in a well known case of terrorist attack before September 11, 2001. In this regard, we used a transductive design, illustrating the connections between media and terrorism via some theories of physics, in their metaphorical light.

Later, we highlighted the role of media in promoting the terrorist organization messages and transmitting images from Tokyo subway. Through this paper we intend to highlight the complexity of the terrorist phenomenon, but also its natural connection with mass media, in the absence of which it could not exist. Media cannot avoid news with a high impact on the public, which, to the detriment of the civilian population, is provided by the terrorist act itself. The institutional symbiosis is placed, in the pages of our article, under the conceptual umbrella of the 'principle of communicating vessels'.

2. TERRORISM AND MASS MEDIA. FROM THE UNSTABLE BALANCE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNICATING VESSELS

2.1 Conceptual delimitations. The international security environment is characterized by complexity, instability and continuous change. Current threats and confrontations encompass an extremely varied range of manifestations, within an environment characterized by the predominance of deterrence strategies faced to action strategies, and by military interventions for peace building and maintenance. Obviously, in such a climate of stability, the impact could be created by the asymmetric, acute and quasi-instantaneous actions and, of course, by their public coverage. In a previous work, we identified this form of 'moral asymmetry', which is based on disproportionate relation regarding the axiological systems, with the civilian population as the center of interest:

Nowadays, the asymmetric actions have developed unbalanced possibilities of manifestations in relationship with democratic and humanitarian values and principles, such as the case of terrorist attacks. [...] The first case of asymmetry in contemporary confrontations, that of terrorist attacks, brings to the forefront a disproportionate and unscrupulous action as a result of an axiological disproportionality. But this axiological disproportionality, judged in relationship with a system of beliefs and convictions close to the Western cultural space, can be understood in some cases as a false asymmetric action (Lesenciuc, 2016:19)

Until the 60s-70s of the last century, the philosophy of political realism was dominant; according to it, the concept of security is applied only at the states' level and it involves the protection of national interests against military threats. Even during the entire Cold War period (1945-1991), the threat to a state's security was defined from a military perspective and referred to the possibility of launching attacks between the military blocks or alliances in competition: NATO vs. Warsaw Treaty. Nowadays at the level of international security environment, there frequently appear non-state actors, that cannot be geographically located and that act according to their own norms, different from international or Western ones; an example in this respect is the case of the terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). As a consequence, the new major global threats are the terrorist attacks, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the spread of epidemics, the climate change, and the mass migration.

Terrorism is not an element of novelty; it has been established at the moment of emergence of the first hierarchically structured communities. Over time, however, the terrorist actions have evolved and have changed their physiognomy according to the social, political, and technological characteristics of each periods. Terrorism benefits from a various range of definitions, all of them illustrating the complexity of the phenomenon, and the spectacular manifestation of violence, in order to produce terror and a huge psychological impact within broad masses of people.

In this context, the legal definitions are not lacking, and the Romanian legislation is no exception, see the Law no.535 of November 25, 2004 (updated November 22, 2016), on the prevention and deterrence of terrorism:

[...] terrorism is the set of actions and/or threats posing public danger and affecting national security, displaying the following characteristics:

- are committed intentionally by terrorist entities, motivated by extremist conceptions and attitudes, hostile to other entities, against whom they act by violent and/or destructive means;
- aim at achieving specific political objectives; target human and/or material factors within public authorities and institutions, civilian population, or any other segment thereof;
- produce situations with a strong psychological impact on population, aiming at drawing attention to the pursued goals (L535/2004, 2004/2016).

According to the field of action, terrorism has many forms of manifestation, such as: political, informational, media, economic, cultural, religious, cyber terrorism. Regardless the form of manifestation, there are some common features that enable the understanding of terrorism as a conflict characterized by ‘moral asymmetry’. In any of these cases, yet, terrorism is the phenomenon set apart by “the lack of a defined theater of operations, namely by the expansion of the theater of operations at a worldwide scale; a various diversity of actions; the use of man as a weapon or as a mean of fighting; the lack of unitary strategic coordination” (Atanasiu & Stăncilă, 2014:15) [26]. In the collective opinion, the most well known form of terrorism is rooted in religious radicalism; this perspective have been considered valid before the radical change of the global perspective on terrorism, namely the event generically named ‘9/11’:

A true innovation at the end of the 20th century is represented by the emergence of radical religious groups (quasi-religions), that embrace terrorism as the main form of fighting. In some cases, these groups come from the main religions (Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism), but often there are sects with their own doctrines (Laqueur, 1999:80).

While traditional terrorism is manifested in order to fulfill political demands (gaining independence, expelling foreigners, imposing a new political or social order), the new terrorism (of the extremist religious groups) aims at destroying humanity as a punishment for the mistakes and crimes of humankind. The terrorist system of values is in opposition to the values of humanity, not only to those of West European or North American societies. The radicalization of actions, their understanding in the vicinity of the absolute violence and without discrimination is the subject of analysis in numerous studies; for example, the David Wright-Neville’s Dictionary of Terrorism illustrates this dimension as follows:

Religiously motivated terrorists are inspired to ignore the ‘calculus of violence’ whereby they calibrate their actions to be just enough to inspire and terrify but not to bring about universal opprobrium. Killing for God transcends this calculus, replacing it with a sense of messianic purpose with few earthly limits (Wright-Neville, 2010:36).

However, this is not just about religious fanaticism. Every terrorist is devoted to an ideology, transforms ideas into ‘social levers’ (Bell, 1960:370) [3]. Marginalized or ever rejected by society, terrorist reacts violently, adapting his ‘props’ to “a form of political theater wherein violence constitutes a carefully scripted performance designed to appeal to different audiences” (Wright-Neville, 2010:13). The terrorist violence present in the ‘political theater’ is not only a cause of damaging, but also of sending messages to intimidated people and to potential followers.

The terrorism is, from this perspective, a form of communication, the most violent possible, which can be achieved via only one instrument: mass media.

2.2 Mass media – terrorism interdependence. Principles taken from physics in understanding the market logic. Mass media is a composite term, coming from the words *mass* and *media* (from Latin, plural form of *medium* - mean). Mass media implies multiplying the message, by media as books, journals, radio, cinema and television, included in so called ‘classical media’ category. The term ‘new media’ has emerged in the context of the unprecedented technological development (mainly in the field of information technology), designating

(...) those digital media that are interactive, incorporate two-way communication, and involve some form of computing as opposed to „old media” such as telephone, radio, and TV. (...) We have placed the term „new media” between quotation marks to signify that they are digital interactive media (Logan, 2010:5-6).

The relationship between media and terrorism has been analyzed by many researchers, especially since the 9/11 attack. Among those who have studied the phenomenon we mention: Wierviorka (1988), Rodrigo (1991), Garcin-Marrou (2005), Nacos (2007), Barnett & Reynolds (2009), Simons (2010), Freedman & Kishan Thussu (2012), Seethaler *et al.* (2013), Wiechert (2017), Marthoz (2017), etc. It is also worth noting the book edited by the Centre of Excellence Defense Against Terrorism, Ankara, Turkey, *The Media: The Terrorists’ Battlefield* (2007), which includes, among others, the chapter ‘Security of Media Personnel Whilst Reporting on Terrorism’, written by the Romanian researcher Viorel Mihăilă.

In essence, the relationship media-terrorism is complex and involves mutual distrust and necessity. Anticipating the results of our study, this relationship is based on the market logic. While terrorism needs promotion (in its absence the attacks having no expected effects), media lives through audiences, based on the market logic. Considering media as means necessary for their public communication, terrorists force or convey them to transmit their ideologies and visions on the global scale. There are numerous instances in which terrorists spread fear among enemies, through campaigns of promoting violence. Media are always looking for spectacular events, and the coverage of terrorist attacks (cynically seeing) can be translated in terms of rating. Although after the terrorist attacks images and films of victims and disasters are circulated, the main goal of terrorists is not necessarily to cause great destruction, but to generate terror in the society, to determine many people to look at the effects of the attacks and to become aware of these. Despite the use of media coverage of these actions, many terrorist organizations also create their own media agencies, not based on democratic principles. Examples of these are Al-Qaeda’s production house *The as-Sahab Foundation for Islamic Media Publication* or Aum Shinrikyo’s *Aum Press* publishing house. In transmitting messages, terrorists use images, symbols, and statements that have a huge emotional impact on the public. Each terrorist organization has peculiarities not only in the manner of action, but also at the communicational level, of the slogans, in order to differentiate itself from others, to be easily recognized on a ‘market of terror’.

Through the texts and images published, media possesses the capability to influence public opinion. At the same time, they can create suspicion and create public distrust, such as in case of the 9/11 attacks on the United States symbols: the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

These attacks, which had a significant international impact and launched the ‘War on Terror’ or the ‘Global War on Terrorism’, raised many questions regarding the American authorities’ roles (see, for example, Michael Moore’s documentary film *Fahrenheit 9/11* of 2004, which presents a critical view on Bush administration). The media influence was evident not only in reference to the 9/11 attacks. Media manipulation techniques to justify a war, an antidemocratic intervention, a genocide even, were frequently used; televisions used these techniques, some of them being extremely active even before the paradigm shift regarding the contemporary terrorist challenges. Televisions and new media benefit from the greatest interest for terrorist among mass media. Although the new agencies share written, audio and video information, the images have the greatest effect in terms of causing public emotions. Images can be received and interpreted despite the language and culture.

Another important aspect to be pointed is that terrorist organizations receive financial support through the agency of websites or social networks. For example, Al-Qaeda gained funds through non-governmental organizations and (so called) charitable foundations set up by its members, and some Chechen groups published their accounts online, for the direct financial support from supporters. The Internet, or the virtual environment, is the place where members of a terrorist group create and develop their relationships, including the relationships with members of other terrorist organizations. Ideas and information are communicated in real time on terrorist websites and on their virtual forums. Al-Qaeda even attempted to set up an online library and a discussion forum for the access of the new recruits.

Improving communication and global transmission of messages is not always beneficial to terrorist organizations. Media can cause

blowback on terrorists and underline their appeal among key audiences, especially if the violence they penetrate is viewed as disproportionate to the cause for which they are fighting. As a form of political theater, terrorists cannot control the way in which audiences respond to the violence they commit as transmitted through the media. Focusing on innocent children killed by terrorist violence, for example, can lead to a backlash and shrinking of the size of the community for support (Wright-Neville, 2010:35).

Which are the conclusions regarding the so-called symbiotic relationship between media and terrorist organizations? Researchers are interested in this symbiosis between “publicity-seeking terrorists and drama-seeking media” (Weimann, 2012:188), quantifying the effects of terrorist actions through media coverage. The causal relationship media coverage – spreading of terror effects even led to understanding terrorist attacks as acts of communication via media (Rodrigo, 1991). Starting from this perspective, researchers have developed two interpretative models: of media culpable for the effects of terrorism, and of the media vulnerable to terrorist activities. Media are interested in drama, danger, violence, tension, in the terrorist spectacle within its extent, and the terrorist organizations are interested in promoting their messages and creating terror among people. The relationship between these two institutions pre-exists, regardless the interpretative model of media. Terrorism understood as communication via media brings to the forefront of analysis a certain form of understanding these mutual support relationships, undesirable by the media organizations, but necessary in the game on the global market. The reciprocal of ‘Rodrigo’s theorem’ is understanding media as a weapon of terror, with a role in amplifying and multiplying the effects of terrorist attacks. However, the ‘metaphor of symbiosis’ is too tough, illustrating the voluntary cooperation for coexistence. It makes the relationship media – terrorism sliding to the interpretative model of culpable media. In response to this symbiotic design of relationships, the French

sociologist Michel Wieviorka (1988/2004:42-29) offers four possibilities of understanding the binomial relation media – terrorism. Wieviorka proposes a gradual range of possible dialogues between these two entities, beginning with the lack of any relationship; in this case, terrorists are just interested in promoting their own messages, without any certain form of dialogue with the media. There follows the indifference of the terrorists in relation with media and transmission of their message and of the effects of the attack. Then, there follows a terrorist pro-media strategy, rather based on media interest challenge than on explicit inter-entities dialogue. The last one is the transformation of journalists into victims of terror, and, implicitly, transformation of media in instruments of multiplying violence. The four instances describe gradually the dynamic relationship media – terrorism, possibly understood as unstable balance, i.e. balance maintained between the two entities only throughout the interval of maximum intensity, of the terrorist attack and its media coverage. Then, changing the position of one of the two entities, more precisely of media, by refocusing, by changing their perspective, they will move away from their equilibrium.

This metaphor is unsatisfactory too, because media naturally reach the balanced position for reasons that are different from those that determine the mechanical unstable balance media – terrorism. In addition, media change their perspective to remove the balanced position in relation with terrorist organizations is not the result of an accord with the terrorists. The change of perspective means, in fact, an assumption of their social position. Actually, different forces act on the two entities; they reach a random balance and return to the initial state of imbalance not reflecting the causes, but their own positions and reasons for such actions that have brought them to balance. An appropriate metaphor for understanding the relationships media – terrorism comes from hydrodynamics and consists of a description of the principle of communicating vessels or the principle of Blaise Pascal: in two connected recipients, the level of liquid is the same. In the case of terrorist attacks, their effect – the unstable and volatile liquid called ‘sensational’ – makes the connection between both entities, media and terrorist organization. This connection is done neither in a symbiotic way (in strict relationships with the reason to be of the two entities), nor as unstable balance (determined by the self-consciousness). A different logic feeds the two institutions: the market logic. Based on it, as long as terrorist organizations offer the raw material, the attack that has the minimal level of ‘sensational’ reached by the connecting line between the two recipients, media will cover it. Naturally, between the two recipients there is not exist a connection between the small quantities of liquid, in a so called hydrostatic balance. The terrorist attack is the exceptional case of the pressure exerted in a recipient, transferred to the second one, connected through the market pipeline with the first. The most eloquent examples in these terms are the quasi-simultaneous terrorist attacks from Charlie Hebdo in Paris, with 17 victims, and from Nigeria, produced by Boko Haram organization, with about 2.000 victims. The market logic has defeated the magnitude of the terrorist attack and amplified the most worthy of the cynical ‘terror market’. The massacre in Nigeria has remained virtually uncovered by media, which in the logic of market means a major failure. The ‘hydrostatic balance’ of media – terrorists communicating vessels was modified only in the first case, due to the ‘market of terror’ interests.

To illustrate the functionality of this principle, we chose to study the case of a well-known terrorist action before the 9/11 moment, which does not involve the mental link with the Muslim religious terrorism: the Sarin gas attack on Tokyo subway (1995).

3. CASE STUDY: SARIN GAS ATTACK FROM THE JAPANESE SUBWAY

3.1 The attack. A special terrorist attack, done with the help of Sarin toxic gas, took place on March 20, 1995, at the subway in Tokyo, Japan. Sarin gas is one of the most dangerous toxic substances, because it paralyzes the central nervous system shortly after it is assimilated by the organism through mouth and skin. Following the spread of gas in six subway wagons on Marunouchi, Hibiya and Chiyoda lines, 12 people died and about 5,000 had circulatory and respiratory disorders. For the first time in the history of terrorism, an entire city was targeted. The terrorist attack, that was launched at 8:00, was very well organized: five teams of two individuals (an aggressor and a driver) attacked almost simultaneously the passengers. The terrorists, with their paralyzing gas packages wrapped in newspapers, entered the subway carriages in five different stations: Shinjuku, Ueno, Kitasenju, Neka-Meguro and Korakuen, few minutes before 8:00. All of them had umbrellas with sharp tips, in order to break the packs and cause the spread of gas. The three subway lines were not accidentally chosen. Marunouchi, Hibiya and Chiyoda converge in the middle of the governmental district Kasumigaseki, the area where many governmental agencies are placed. So, the terrorist attack was planned against the Japanese state itself. Although only a few minutes after the attacks the emergency management structures were called, their reaction was not effective from the beginning, because the causes of the disaster were unknown.

At 11:00 o'clock the police announced in a press conference that Sarin was the source of the subway attacks. Up to that point the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the Tokyo Police, Tokyo Metropolitan Fire department, the Japanese Self Defense Force (JDSF) as well as the Japanese national government did not have a clue what caused the effects (Van Mierlo, 2017:2).

The attacks of March 20, 1995, were completed by five members of the Aum cult. Aum Shinrikyo (in translation, *The Supreme Truth*) is an organization founded in 1984 by Shoko Asahara (his real name being Chizuo Matsumoto) and initially entitled Aum Shinsen no Kai (in translation, *The Supreme Beings*). The prefix 'AUM' is an acronym composed of the three Sanskrit words that describe the Asahara group philosophy: 'creation', 'conservation', and 'destruction' (Wright-Neville, 2010:99). Initially, the cult practiced yoga and meditation. In 1989, it gained the status of official religion for the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. The new status attracted over 50,000 followers until 1995, including Russia, Germany, Taiwan and the United States of America. Only young intellectuals were recruited, attracted by Asahara's speeches in universities. Over time, the group has become more and more isolated from the rest of people and more dangerous. The leader's will to change the society has intensified since the defeat in parliamentary elections in 1990. Since then, Asahara has carried out several illegal activities, including: the attempt to bring Ebola virus from Africa to Japan, the research and production of biological agents in Australia, and the murder of the lawyer Sakamoto, who launched allegations to the Aum group. The most important, however, is the Sarin gas attack which took place in June 27, 1994. However, although seven persons were killed and almost 200 injured, the attack was considered a simple accident. In the following year, the terrorist action were better organized and had a greater impact on the population. "The purpose of this attack was to set in motion social and political dynamics that Asahara believed would bring about his prophecy of the end of the world and the dawn of a new era" (Wright-Neville, 2010:100). Consequently, in the fall of 1995, the Japanese Government revoked the recognition of Aum as an official religion.

3.2 Media coverage. When a disaster occurs, there is need for a governmental strategy and an effective design of the intra-governmental dialogue, so that resource allocation can be facilitated and response plans can be effectively implemented. Also, communication between government and public is very important because it reduces panic among the population, supports eviction or quarantine, and provide instructions and information to victims and to other citizens. In Tokyo, at the moment of the Sarin attack on the subway, there was no communication and coordination between the structures involved in rescuing victims because of technical problems and of different ways of transmitting information. The communication also failed at international level, because the Japanese Government refused to report data on the subway disaster. Furthermore, public communication could not be achieved because of the lack of a specific strategy within the Public Relations Department. The first messages about the attack were directly transmitted via media and created confusion and chaos among citizens. The published images presented the way in which the state of the victims' health worsened rapidly, but without any information regarding the source of disaster. Shortly after the attacks, the news agencies focused on Aum sect and its followers, not on the biggest terrorist attack from Japan.

The Aum cult remained anonymous until 1989, when the Sunday Mainichi newspaper began to publish the interviews with six families, accusing Asahara of indoctrinating their children and integrating them into the sect. Consequently, Aum representatives reacted aggressively to the newspaper editor. They considered him overly overhead, and distributed booklets and flyers containing criticism to him. Gradually, other media structures became interested in the Aum activity and its leaders, who were invited to TV broadcasts to explain the organization's practices. In their opinion, no Aum's action was wrong; all who opposed them were considered culpable. Moreover, the Aum leaders denied in an offensive manner the accusations, thus obtaining the advantage and superiority faced to media. At the same time, in order to promote the cult's preoccupations, the leaders have set up their own press agency, Aum Press, whose editorial committee published the book *A Doom is Nearing the Land of The Rising Sun*, that included topics such as: Nostradamus prophecies, astrology, masonry, but also Aum members' vision that the world will end after World War Three and those who belong to the sect will be the only survivors (BBC NWA, 2016).

Being composed of intelligent young people, carefully selected, Aum organization was stronger than media, having the ability to influence them through determination, intelligence and clear expression of convictions. "Almost never were the interviewers sufficiently well-prepared with their own information so that they could effectively counter such a denial." (Hardacre, 1996). Media feared the followers of this religious cult. For example, although at the beginning of January 1995 the papers wrote about the existence of phosphatic compounds remnants in the village of Kamikuishiki (where Aum had its headquarters and where the police planed an inspection), the name of the sect was not associated with this discovery. In West, however, Andrew Marshall, the co-author of the book *The Cult at the End of the World: Incredible story of Aum* (1996), published an article on Asahara's knowledge of sarin gas.

Moreover, the way Japanese media have been manipulated by the Aum sect is highlighted by Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS). After the lawyer Sakamoto disappeared, the representatives of this television were forced by Aum to give up the transmission of a interview with Sakamoto, in which he revealed details of certain evidence against the cult. After the subway attack in March, 1995, the Japanese media published Asahara's prophecies about the destruction of Japanese society, as well as lists with of members of the sect, most of them specialists in biochemistry and nuclear physics. Following the event in Tokyo, Aum group did not have any significant action, and its leaders were arrested and sentenced to death.

However, the group still exists, but it is divided into two subgroups: Aleph and Hikari no Wa, which are legally established in Japan and has also representatives in Europe. International press agencies such as: The Huffington Post, The Guardian and British Broadcasting Corporation, are still publishing articles relating the disaster, even if Aum has changed its ideology. All these press agencies are those that, each year on March 20, publish special articles about the Tokyo attack.

The principle of communicating vessels has perfectly worked in the case of Aum attack in Tokyo. Initially, the level of hydrostatic pressure was maintained at a low level. Then, the effects of the hydrodynamic pressure were amplified based on the market logic. Japanese media were, these days, the counterexample of how to act in such situations: they amplified without any explanation the effects of terror, did not wait for the official position of the government, and explored the spectacular side of the Aum organization, voluntarily maintained on the media analysis at a low pressure for five years.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The March 20, 1995 attack on the Tokyo subway, done by Aum Shinrikyo group is the largest terrorist attack in Japan, with a significant psychological impact, because Japan used to be a country with a very low crime rate. Moreover, although there are approximately 180,000 accepted religious groups in Japan, Aum was the first recognized religion by the Government associated with terrorist actions. In applying the principle of communicating vessels, media distorted reality based on the market logic. The press agencies have insisted on describing the target of terrorist attack, the district Kasumigaseki, the seat of many government structures. By analyzing the events produced before the attack, it can be seen that the action at the subway were produced to remove Police from Aum headquarters in Kamikuishiki, where chemical agents were deposited and where experiments were carried on. This aspect is also confirmed by the way of using sarin at the subway. First, the spread sarin was only 30% pure and was also in a form of less dangerous aggregation, namely in the liquid state. As a result, it is possible that the terrorist did not aim at total destruction, but merely wanted to demonstrate the Japanese government is vulnerable to the actions of the Aum cult. Another possible explanation of the attack may be the attempt of ‘cleanse’ society, or to draw attention to the closeness of the end of world (the supreme belief of this religious organization).

As stated during the work, terrorist organizations need media coverage, and the Aum cult is not an exception. Aum leaders were promoted, in terms of marketing, starting the period they were invited to the television shows. Moreover, they managed to coordinate and manipulate the press agencies in order to gain the benefits for the organization. The principle of communicating vessels in the media – terrorism relationship proved to be functional again.

REFERENCES

- [1] Atanasiu, Mirela & Stăncilă, Lucian. (2014). *Terorismul - Răul din umbră al începutului de secol*. Bucharest: ‘Carol I’ National Defense University Publishing House;
- [2] Barnett, Brooke & Reynolds, Amy. (2009). *Terrorism and the Press. An Uneasy Relationship*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing;
- [3] Bell, Daniel. (1960). *The End of Ideology*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press;
- [4] Bouthoul, Gaston. (1951). *Traité de sociologie. Les guerres, elements de polémologie*. Paris: Payot;
- [5] Bouthoul, Gaston. (1978). *Războiul*. Translation, foreword and notes by Simion Pitea. Bucharest: Military Publishing House;
- [6] Freedman, Des & Kishan Thussu, Day (eds.) (2012). *Media and Terrorism. Global Perspectives*. London: SAGE Publications;

- [7] Garcin-Marrou, Isabelle. [2001] (2005). *Media vs. Terrorism*. Translated by Valentin Pricopie & Dragoş Malîhin. Bucharest: Tritonic;
- [8] Hardacre, Helen. (1996). Aum Shinrikyo and the Japanese Media. [online]. *Japan Policy Research Institute*. URL: <http://www.jpri.org/publications/workingpapers/wp19.html>. [consulted on 05.12.2017];
- [9] Kaplan, David K. & Marshall, Andrew. (1996). *The Cult at the End of the World: Incredible Story of Aum*. London: Hutchinson;
- [10] Laqueur, Walter. (1999). *The new terrorism: fanaticism and the arms of mass destruction*. New York: Oxford University Press;
- [11] Lesenciuc, Adrian. (2016). *Războiul informațional*. Braşov: 'Henri Coanda' Air Force Academy Publishing House;
- [12] Logan, Robert K. (2010). *Understanding New Media. Extending Marshall McLuhan*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing;
- [13] Marthoz, Joan-Paul. (2017). *Terrorism and the Media. A Handbook for Journalists*. Paris: UNESCO;
- [14] Mihăilă, Viorel. (2007). Security of Media Personnel Whilst Reporting on Terrorism. In Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, Ankara, Turkey (ed.), *The Media: The Terrorists' Battlefield*. Amsterdam: IOS Press. 111-125;
- [15] Moore, Michael. (2004). *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Film documentar. New York: Dog East Dog Films. 122 min.
- [16] Nacos, Brigitte L. (2007). *Mass-Mediated Terrorism. The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Copunterterrorism*. Second Edition. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers;
- [17] Rodrigo Alsina, Miquel. (1991). *Los Medios de Comunicacion ante el Terrorismo*. Barcelona: Icaria.
- [18] The Romanian Parliament. (2004). Legea nr. 535 din 25 noiembrie privind prevenirea și combaterea terorismului. *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no.1161/ 8 December;
- [19] Seethaler, Josef; Karmasin, Matthias; Melishcek, Gabriele & Wöhlert, Romy (eds.). (2013). *Selling War. The Role of the Mass Media in Hostile Conflicts from World War I to the 'War on Terror'*. Bristol, Chicago: Intellect;
- [20] Simons, Greg. (2010). *Mass Media and Modern Warfare. Reporting on the Russian War on Terrorism*. Abingdon, OX: Routledge;
- [21] Van Mierlo, Rens. (2017) *A two perspective approach of the Tokyo` Sarin attack*, Course study at Leiden University;
- [22] Weimann, Gabriel. (2012). The Role of the Media in Propagating Terrorism. In Updesh Kumar & Manas K. Mandal (eds.), *Countering Terrorism. Psychosocial Strategies*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications. 182-200.
- [23] Wiechert, Lisa. (2017). *Analysing the Use of Social Media by ISIS. The Marketing of Terrorism*. Norderstedt: GRIN Verlag;
- [24] Wierviorka, Michel. [1988] (2004). *The Making of Terrorism*. Translated by David Gordon White. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press;
- [25] Wright-Neville, David. (2010). *Dicționar de terorism*. Cluj-Napoca: CA Publishing;
- [26] * * *. (1977). Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (protocol I), 8 June 1977 [online]. *International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Treaties, states parties and commentaries*. URL: <https://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Treaty.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=D9E6B6264D7723C3C12563CD002D6CE4>. [consulted on 13.04.2018];
- [27] * * *. (2016). Aum Shinrikyo, The Japanese cult surfacing in Europe [online]. *BBC News World Asia* (website). URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35975069>. [consulted on 04.01.2018].