

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION IN WARTIME: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

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In times of war, the majority of citizens of a country tend to demonstrate a heightened level of interest in politics and politicians. This period is utilized by political actors for the purposes of attracting attention and fostering loyalty. During this period, political campaigns by parties and leaders, as well as the internal struggles among them, are particularly active. In contemporary interdisciplinary discourse, the concept of reputation destruction is regarded as a significant component of the process of ideological struggle in society.

Character assassination' is a practice in which a deliberate and sustained effort is made to damage the reputation or credibility of an individual. Social groups or institutions can also be the target [1]. Character assassination (CA) is as a strategic effort to discredit an individual or group target via subversive communication [2].

In the areas of strategic and political communication, there are three main perspectives on character assassination. These are embodied in the rhetorical (Benoit, 2020; Keohane, 2020), sociopsychological (Shiraev, 2014), and sociocultural traditions (Samoilenko, 2020; 2021).

In sociological terms, reputation destruction is not just an attack, it is a strategic tool that creates public perception and controls the meaningful contexts of society.

Also the study of the phenomenon, in this direction, highlights the peculiarities of the collective behaviour of social groups.

Actions to destroy public reputation can lead to social division or social cohesion, to the discovery and renewed understanding of identity in post-conflict societies.

References:

1. Icks, M., Shiraev, E. Character Assassination throughout the Ages. Palgrave Macmillan US, 2014.
2. Samoilenko, S.A. Character assassination: The sociocultural perspective. Journal of Applied Social Theory, 2021. №1(3). P. 186–205.