“BE BRAVE LIKE UKRAINE”: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND THE MEDIATIZATION OF WAR

DOI: https://doi.org/ 10.37458/nstf.25.1.2

Original scientific paper

Per-Erik Nilsson*

Ivar Ekman**

Abstract: This article synthesizes the authors’ earlier research on strategic communication in Ukraine during its first year of enduring Russia’s full-scale invasion and the subsequent war of aggression in 2022. The analysis is framed within the academic fields of strategic communication, military innovation theory, and theories on the mediatization of war. It aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Ukrainian strategic communication by focusing on how it is shaped and functions within specific historical, cultural, political, and social milieus, thus offering a holistic view of its evolution and impact during wartime. The article highlights the importance of approaching strategic communications as an all-encompassing task, engaging government bodies and the wider academic society for an evidence-based policy-based lessons-learned approach. It is argued that the Ukrainian case illustrates that effective strategic communication is deeply intertwined with consistent action, societal unity, political strategy, and national identity.

Keywords:

* Per-Erik Nilsson (Ph.D., Reader, and Senior Researcher), Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), E-mail: per-erik.nilsson@foi.se. Phone: +46 (0)73-852 08 82. Address: FOI, SE-164 90 Stockholm

** Ivar Ekman (M.PS. and Senior Analyst), Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI)

Introduction

In early October 2022, we, the authors, arrived in Kyiv on a beautiful sunny Sunday morning. We were there to conduct fieldwork for a lessons-learned project on strategic communication. After a long trip from Stockholm, we decided to walk to our hotel from the train station. The intensity of the virtual war displayed and consumed on our mobile screens seemed distant.

Sitting in the hotel restaurant the following morning, we enjoyed our breakfast and planned our day. During the night, the mobile app that warns of incoming attacks had given notice a couple of times and the air-raid alarm system in the city had sounded once. However, when heading up to the restaurant, everything seemed calm.

At 8:10 a.m., the first Russian missile struck about a kilometer from our hotel. Stupefied, we and the other guests could not take in what was happening. One of us even took up his phone to take a photo of the rising mushroom cloud on the near horizon. The reaction was as if programmed, as a Baudrillian simulacra reflex (Baudrillard, 2010): if it is not recorded and displayed, it is not real.

Shortly thereafter, two additional missiles struck right outside the hotel. The shaking building was like an uncanny wake-up call; the virtual war was materially real, regardless of being displayed to an external audience. We found ourselves at the start of the Russian strategic bombing campaign that targeted civilian infrastructure to exert pressure on the population and leadership in Kyiv. However, this was also the start of an atrocious psychological operation. Even if Ukraine managed to repel the battlefront from Kyiv to withdraw to the eastern parts of Ukraine during the first phase of Russia’s full-scale invasion, the message was clear: now, the battlefront was everywhere.

Of course, our experience, though intense, was but a fraction of what the people of Ukraine are going through daily. This has also

been the most fundamental lesson of our work. To understand Ukrainian strategic communications, or any wartime communication, it is essential to understand that this is not simply a fight to gain the greatest number of "likes" on social media, or to be acclaimed as the wittiest post mocking the Russian leadership. It is communication for the sake of life and death; it is about the unity of the nation, where failures in communication infrastructure cost the lives of civilians; where soldiers' haphazard usage of cell phones makes them visible targets for strikes; where the battle of the perceived reality abroad is essential for political, economic, and military support; where information manipulation and psychological operations are constantly trying to put a wedge into the morale of the Ukrainian people, their will to fight, and their relations with their supporting nations.

Our research aimed to understand strategic communications from a practician's perspective and was conducted explicitly for organizational development in Sweden. In April 2023, we published our results in the report, Ukraine's Information Front: Strategic Communication During Russia's Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine (Ekman and Nilsson, 2022).

That report has limitations. It is to be seen as a first snapshot of the first year of the full-scale invasion. As such, it invites further research and scrutiny of our initial observations and analysis. This article aims to take a first step in this direction, adding additional analysis and theoretical reflection. We intend to discuss our earlier research through the lens of theories on strategic communication, military innovation, and mediatisation of conflict and war to account for how Ukrainian strategic communications adapted and developed in wartime. This is an inductive analysis, in that our focus resides in understanding organisational development from the perspective of the human resources embedded and embroiled in it.

In the following section, we present our theoretical approach to Ukrainian strategic communication and briefly discuss

limitations regarding our data. A contextual and theoretical background to the mediatization of war follows this. With these perspectives explained, in the third section we discuss adjustments, adaptations, and innovations in Ukrainian strategic communications from 2014 to Russia's full-scale invasion, in early 2022. The fourth section recounts the Ukrainian strategic communication effort during the first months of the full-scale invasion. In the fifth section, we discuss some of the challenges Ukraine has faced regarding strategic communications and reflect on the future research avenues this reveals. In the final section, we conclude the article.

Approaching Strategic Communication

Strategic communication is a contested concept used in various ways and contexts. In general, strategic communication is both a field of academic study and an organisational communications practice. Ansgar Zerfass and colleagues have proposed the following definition to define it as an academic field: "Strategic communications encompasses all communication that is substantial for the survival and sustained success of an entity. Specifically, strategic communication is the purposeful use of communication by an organisation or other entity to engage in conversations of strategic significant goals" (2018, p. 493). The authors moreover underline that "entity" is a scalable concept, that "encompasses corporations, governments, nonprofits, social movements, and known individuals in the public sphere, e.g., celebrities, politicians" (2018, p. 493). For the sake of this article, the entity of focus is a nation-state, for which the stakes of strategic communication differ from those of a corporation. Ultimately, it is communication for the nation's survival.

Defining Strategic Communication

As an explicit communicative strategy at the nation-state level, strategic communications typically involve different forms of informative and persuasive modes of communication (e.g., crisis communication, public affairs, public diplomacy, and military public affairs). For several states and military organisations,

strategic communications also incorporate more offensive and deceitful modes of communication (i.e., information and psychological operations). These types of communication have a common aim to influence target audiences to act in ways beneficial to the sender. In crisis communication, the objective may be to convince a population to relocate to bomb shelters, engage in public affairs to inform the public about new legislation, influence public diplomacy when amassing international support, and explain military public affairs to raise awareness about a national military's daily procedures. Information and psychological operations are usually seen as offensive modes of communication, where the purpose is to achieve information superiority over an adversary through, among other means, deception and manipulation (Johnson and Clark, 2021).

The literature has debated where to draw the line between propaganda and strategic communications (Taylor, 2002; Zerfass et al., 2018). Without going into too much detail, conventional definitions of propaganda underline it is a form of a manipulative mode of communication (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2015, p. 7). In contrast, the emphasis in strategic communications, at least in principle, is on imparting trustworthy information, promoting transparency, actively engaging with the audience, and employing flexible and responsive communication strategies (Falkheimer and Heide, 2022; Macnamara and Gregory, 2018; Riley et al., 2015).

Moreover, we set out from the premise that understandings of communication as unidirectional are misleading in relation to today's information environment. First, our understanding of communication as a social phenomenon is loosely informed by social constructionist perspectives. As Jesper Falkheimer and Mats Heide describe it, this entails understanding communication "as the very means that creates and provides the condition for an organisation's existence" (2022, p. 107). The point is that organisations, such as a nation-state, are not static ahistoric objects. An organisation's internal and external

communication construes and shapes the organisation by virtue of how it is perceived by the people occupying it, by its public perception, and how the organisation acts upon these perceptions.

Second, this entails that, from a theoretical point of view, one fundamental aspect of communication is not so much about the intentions of the communicators, but how sense is made of their communication. In academic and practical discussions surrounding strategic communication today, a strong focus is on creating and conveying narratives. However, Bolin and Ståhlberg highlight that what is actually circulated is not static narratives correlating to the communicators' narrative blueprint (2023, 40–41). Instead, narrative components, fragments, and symbols circulate in a contested information environment. These scattered pieces can be arranged in various ways, continually evolving as they undergo mediation, remediation, and contestation. Strategic communication can thus be understood as a process through which attempts are made to manage how different target audiences make sense of these pieces, which implies that from an analytical point of view, the communicator's intent is still important, since it highlights how communicators attempt to achieve this end (2023, p. 44).

Finally, what remains here is to address one potential criticism of this theoretical understanding of criticism. From a communicator's perspective, Falkheimer and Heide underscore that unidirectional communication models are still important (2022, p. 34). Indeed, as they point out, crisis communication in times of emergency necessitates unidirectional messaging, where the time for target audience analysis and evaluation of communication is slim. However, it can also be argued that for simplified, persuasive, and even commanding communication to resonate in democratic and rights-based societies, accumulated trust in the communicating entity is likely to play an important role (Christensen and Lægreid, 2020).

For the purposes of this article, we define strategic communication as the deliberate, organised, and purpose-driven communication efforts of a state or other organisation. Its primary objective is to advance the state or organisation's strategic objectives. Operating within an environment of intense competition for meaning, strategic communication involves systematically controlling and shaping meanings. Additionally, this process is not only instrumental in conveying messages, but also serves as a mechanism for the ongoing negotiation and transformation of the state or organisation itself, adapting to the demands and challenges it faces.

Delineating and Interpreting Strategic Communication

When we first set out to study Ukrainian strategic communication, our focus was directed to the Ukrainian military. However, through the course of our preparatory work, our research quickly expanded into a project about strategic communication from a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society perspective, for reasons that we hope are convincingly explained in this article. As mentioned, our intention was to understand strategic communication from a practitioner's perspective. We conducted structured interviews with 40 communication practitioners and strategists within government, news media, civil society, and the private sector.[1] The majority of our interviews were conducted with communicators and strategists placed relatively high in the hierarchy in each of the organisations they represent and are to be considered as representing an elitist perspective (Empson, 2018).[2] The merit of approaching the topic area from this perspective is to get a better

[1] More specifically, we conducted semi-structured interviews lasting 60–90 minutes each. The respondents were given the opportunity to verify their citations and our analysis. The specific institutions and organisations are: the Ministry of Defence; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ukrainian Armed Forces; the Territorial Defence; the Centre for Countering Disinformation, under the National Defence and Security Council; and the Centre of Strategic Communication and Information Security, under the Ministry of Culture and Information Security; as well as journalists from public and private news media, companies within the private sector, and NGOs in civil society. On data, method, and limitations, see Ekman and Nilsson (2023, p. 13-17).

[2] The research questions were: What were the conditions coming into the full-scale invasion? What communications resources were in place and how have they changed during this full-scale war? How have the conditions and resources impacted the output and what characterises the output? What have been the success factors in the communications effort? What have been the most evident challenges?

understanding of how communicators and strategists who work with the practical implementation of communication understand their roles in a more encompassing context. We intended to be able to bring about a nuanced and complex picture of strategic communication in practice (cf., Falkheimer and Hede, 2022, p. 108). Moreover, for ethical research reasons, we keep the citations of our original interviews to a minimum in this article.[3] Rather, we validate our initial analysis, in this article, by using secondary sources, to triangulate it.

Although implicitly guiding our early research, in this article we explicitly approach the analysis from the perspective of military innovation studies (Dyson, 2019; Griffin, 2017). Practitioners, strategists, and scholars widely acknowledge unpredictability as a core element in war. This unpredictability is due to various factors, not the least adversarial changes in strategy and tactics on a changing battlefield. Frank Hoffman writes, "Recognising the need to adapt and implement the requisite changes is inherent to the nature of war" (2021, p. 2). Military innovation studies offer theoretical and analytical tools to understand military adaptation as a phenomenon and institutionalise adaptation processes for practical implementation through lessons learned.

Theo Farrell defines military adaptation "as change to tactics, techniques or existing technologies to improve operational performance. In contrast, military innovation is understood here to be a major change institutionalised in new doctrine, a new organisational structure and/or a new technology" (2010, p. 569). Farrell indicates different factors that drive military adaptation, such as not only operational challenges and technological changes, but also domestic politics, alliance politics, strategic culture, and civil-military relations (2013, p. 3). The point is that military activities do not take place in a vacuum. Writing on the

[3] Our interviews did not focus on or collect sensitive personal data (i.e., racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade-union membership, genetic or biometrical data, health-related data, or data concerning the respondent's personal sex life or sexual orientation). However, for research ethics and security reasons, especially since we interviewed people involved in an ongoing war and holding positions of strategic importance in Ukraine, we have chosen not to disclose any of our respondents' names or the specific dates or locations of the interviews.

analysis organisational development in general, Volker Schneider underlines the importance of situating it in its "embeddedness in the web of political, economic, scientific, and media subsystems of society in order to understand how different societies cope with important challenges" (Schneider, 2020, p. 42).

While the military innovation literature tends to focus on military organisations tout court, we propose an approach that adapts the theoretical and analytical insights from military innovation studies to wartime strategic communication. Approaching wartime communications as an integral part of warfare, the Ukrainian case of strategic communications is particularly interesting, since it was developed during the war with Russia that has been ongoing from 2014 onwards.

We set out from Hoffman's "wartime military change continuum" to explore how wartime strategic communication has developed in Ukraine from 2014 to 2023 (2021, p. 6–7) from the respondents' perspective. This framework proposes three organisational pathways for change: adjustment, adaptation, and innovation. Adjustment refers to how organisations change by switching existing competencies, adaptation refers to incorporating lessons learned during the war to enhance competencies and capabilities beyond their initial state, and innovation to developing new competencies, capabilities, and doctrine. We add external social, political, cultural, and technological factors to this framework. We use it to interpret and narrate our analysis.

The Mediatisation of War

While the Russo-Ukrainian war is likely the most documented in history (e.g., Bajarin, 2022), it is occuring during an ongoing transformation of the digital mediation of war (Merrin, 2019). This development is coupled with rapid developments in communications technologies, an attention-based media logic, the marketisation of information, and the promotional culture that permeates today's information environment (Diesen, 2021;

Väliverronen, 2021; Williams, 2018). We refer to these processes as mediatisation, i.e., how "technological communication media saturate more and more social domains which are drastically transforming at the same time" (Hepp, 2020, p. 3). As such, mediatisation is not a new phenomenon. Earlier phases of mediatisation are, for example, mechanisation (the printing press) and electrification (radio and television), whilst today we are in the phase of digitisation (Hepp, 2020, p. 5).

Sebastian Kaempf points out that violent conflict has always been mediatised in the sense that media "played an important role in shaping violent events and our understanding thereof" (2013, p. 586). With modern history and the mediatisation of war, the Vietnam War marked a pivotal moment. For the first time in history, journalists with a relatively significant amount of liberty reported about the brutality of war, which was displayed through moving pictures in the living rooms of the American public (Atkinson, 1993, p. 159). While it is contested whether the televised mediatisation of the war had a tangible effect on public discontent with the war, it was widely believed to be so (Mandelbaum, 1982). Hence, a new focus on managing the public meaning of war was born (Mercier, 2005, p. 656-657).

Drawing on Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Laughlin's (2015) work, it is possible to see that since the Vietnam War, the mediatisation of war, as well as subsequent attempts to manage its public meaning, has gone through three distinct phases over the last thirty years.

In the 1990s, during the "Broadcast Phase," traditional forms of media such as national and satellite television and newspapers strongly influenced what the distant public knew about conflicts (cf. Wallis & Baran, 1990, p. 203-204). Lessons had been learned from Vietnam, and governments had significant control over how journalists accessed and reported on war. During the Gulf War, the US Military established censorship on sensitive information. Media coverage was coordinated through so-called "press pools" comprised of small teams of reporters and photographers who

received briefings from the military. This meant that these pools became content producers for all external news outlets (Atkinson, 1993, p. 160). Arnaud Mercier argues that in that war, by invoking journalists' safety and preventing them from hindering operations, the US military covertly aimed to restrict their front-line involvement (2005, p. 654). Consequently, media portrayed the war as if there was minimal material damage or casualties, primarily featuring US military-generated imagery captured by automated cameras on warplanes recording air-to-ground missile impacts. The entire conflict was depicted in terms that were difficult to dispute, due to their unverifiability on the ground, including "surgical strikes," "smart weapons," and the misleading term, "collateral damage," to describe civilian casualties.

As we entered the new millennium, new technologies and increasing internet use marked a shift. Digital mobile recording devices allowed for a more profound and extensive coverage. This became the phase of "Diffused War," where more information was being recorded, archived, searched, and shared, leading to a greater understanding of the complexities of conflict. It was a mediatisation of war, where the broadcaster participates in war, and the spectator is invited to participate from afar (Asmolov, 2021). More actors emerge that seek to mediatise and control the meaning of war; from individuals practicing citizens' journalism to militaries using the new digital media landscape to create and disseminate content (Kaempf, 2013, p. 599–600). However, this period also brought about a sense of chaos and unpredictability. Information seemed to appear suddenly, without clear origins, and uncertainty was prevalent. One response to the emerging chaotic landscape was embedded journalism. For example, the 2003 Iraq War marked the first instance of reporters directly affiliating with military units. While the Bush Administration praised the programme for providing intimate access to soldiers' experiences, watchdog groups in the media expressed concerns about its occasional restrictions, fearing that reporters might fall prey to the Stockholm Syndrome

or predominantly present overly optimistic narratives of soldiers' bravery and longing for home (Lindner, 2008).

In the 2010s, we entered the phase of "Arrested War." During this period, professional media outlets, governments, and military institutions gained a better grasp of the dynamics of the new digital media platforms. They developed new strategies and approaches to use these platforms for their purposes. This era brought about a more controlled and structured way of conveying information about conflicts compared to the earlier, more chaotic phase. However, some actors and states were more adaptable and agile than others in harnessing the chaos and unpredictability of the earlier era for their benefit (cf., Lieberman, 2017).

In this regard, Russia was particularly adept. Without going into detail about conceptions of Russian unconventional and hybrid-warfare strategies or the infamous "Gerasimov Doctrine" (Fabian, 2019; Giles, 2023a, p. 98; Jasper, 2022, p. 52–55; Schnaufer, 2017), the 2014 illegal annexation of Crimea and the first invasion of Ukraine are a case in point. As Hoskins and O'Laughlin point out, the mysterious "little green men" were an example of Russia playing on the two earlier phases to create a theatre, with the whole world as an audience (2015, p. 1330). Through television broadcasts and social media, images and videos, likely taken with mobile phones, of the "little green men" on the peninsula caused confusion and speculation. Were they a local militia? Were they Russian soldiers? Were they even real?

This was a provocative and bold information operation wherein Russia occupied a part of another country, with the world watching, but still guessing. However, it was arguably an occupation campaign where information manipulation was but one piece of the puzzle. Russian actors also proceeded with the occupation through discrete military mobilisation and other deceptive and subversive measures, such as disconnecting Crimea from the global flow of information and staging elections (Galeotti, 2023, p. 175–179; Jasper, 2022, p. 55–59).

Even if the international community pushed for economic sanctions against Russia, in many ways, it perceived the developments in Ukraine and the following occupation of the Donbas as a post-Soviet Russo-Ukraine question (Furedi, 2022). However, there was a growing uneasiness in many parts of the Western world. Earlier Russian information manipulation (i.e., in Estonia, Georgia, and Bulgaria) and new examples (e.g., in the US, Norway, France, and Germany), contributed to portraying Russia as a master of deception and influence in the digital information environment (Jankowicz, 2021; Koffler, 2021; Tsybulenko & Kajander, 2021); even the Russian leadership itself appears to have been surprised by their own success in Crimea (Galeotti, 2023, p. 178). During this period, many states and organisations were ramping up their work in adapting and adjusting to the management of meaning in an ever-increasingly complex information environment (Nilsson, Olsson & Ekman, 2022; Singer and Brooking, 2018; Shavit, 2017; Stengel, 2019).

Adjusting and Adapting to the Mediatisation of War

In Ukraine, the first Russian invasion occurred when the nation underwent radical changes: there were the large Euromaidan demonstrations (21 November 2023 to 22 February 2014) at Maidan Square, in Kyiv, and President Victor Yanukovych's fleeing the country. The epitome of the protests was the so-called Revolution of Dignity (18 to 23 February 2014), which was seen by many as a direct continuation of the Revolution of Granite, in 1990, and the Orange Revolution, in 2004–2005, although much more violent than either of the previous two (Plokhy, 2023, p. 95-99; Stepnisky, 2022).

The correlation between the Revolution of Dignity and the Russian invasion of 2014 is not haphazard (Plokhy, 2023, p. 105-111). In Ukraine, a growing sense of civic nationalism, in particular among the generation born in the 1980s (by some called the Independence Generation), coupled with the aspiration to become part of the EU and NATO, had been in the making for quite some time (Onuch and Hale, 2023, p. 57, 119; Plokhy,

2021, p. 323ff). In the eyes of the Russian leadership, this development was not only articulated as a betrayal of Ukraine's spiritual and historical cohesion with the Russian world, but it was also, and still is, a direct threat both to President Vladimir Putin's ambitions to "make Russia great again," in a multipolar world order (Galeotti, 2023, p. 167–170), and the political status-quo in Russia (Götz, 2017). Thus, the image of Russia as a "Besieged Fortress" and the use of the notion of the "Great War" as a tool of soft power to serve national security were reinvigorated (Pearce, 2021, p. 48-49).

In the wake of the Russian aggression in 2014 and having become a country partly under siege, many in Ukraine realised the importance of creating not only their own media ecology free from Russian influence, but also measures to counter Russian propaganda. Crucially, this development was not only seen as necessary to resist and dispel Russian interference, but it was also considered to be essential that it was carried out in line with the country's need for reliable information, as a country at war, and for safeguarding democracy and a rights-based society (Syvak, 2016).

After the legislative elections in October 2014, the newly appointed government launched a Ministry of Information Policy. The nongovernmental organisation, Reporters Without Borders, criticised the ministry for being a "ministry of truth" (Bohlin & Stålberg, 2023, p. 47), to which President Petro Poroshenko is quoted to have replied: "I'm sure that the war, which is being conducted against Ukraine today, is being fought on all the fronts, including the information one. The main function of this ministry, as far as I see it and as I have been informed, is to carry out external actions to stop the aggressor's attacks on Ukraine. I'm sure that today, the promotion of truth about Ukraine in the world is a function not only for a government's ministry but for all of us" (Interfax-Ukraine, 2014).

Several governmental institutions adjusted and adapted their communications strategies, policies, and doctrine in the following years. For example, the Ministries of Culture, Defence, and Foreign Affairs developed capabilities and know-how in their communication with domestic and international audiences (Bohlin & Stålberg, 2023, p. 48). At the time, the Armed Forces of Ukraine were facing significant challenges in terms of communication. There was a lack of trust from the public. Old Soviet military thought still influenced parts of the Armed Forces, and significant difficulties were experienced on the battlefield in eastern Ukraine. These factors combined to hamper their effectiveness and ability to adapt strategically, and they realised that domestic public relations (PR) and offensive communications against the adversary required modernisation (Ekman and Nilsson, 2022, p. 39–40, 64–65).

The ensuing work by government agencies was carried out by, among other things, studying how other countries approached the issue of strategic communications (e.g., Syvak, 2019) and through the direct support of NATO and EU countries (McMurdo, 2022).

As Iryna Izhutova (2019, p. 127) explains, in 2015, the concept of strategic communications was formally introduced in Ukraine by signing a partnership roadmap between the Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council and NATO's International Secretariat. This initiative aimed to enhance Ukraine's capacity for effective communication and establish a robust internal and government-wide system for strategic communications. In February 2017, a new Information Security Doctrine was adopted, staking out the contours of a new holistic approach to strategic communications by stressing the importance of developing mechanisms for cooperation between the state and civil society (The President of Ukraine, 2017). The doctrine echoed President Porochenko's interpretation of the function of the Ministry of Information Policy: the aim was to stop the Russian aggression on the information front. The doctrine's primary purpose was to clarify the implementation of

the state information policy to fight against “the destructive information influence of the Russian Federation under the conditions of the hybrid war unleashed by it.” In other words, the birth of Ukrainian strategic communications was done in the context of national security and partial occupation (Syvak, 2016, p. 16).

During this period, several measures were taken to restrict Russian influence in the Ukrainian information environment. In October 2014, the government banned 14 Russian television channels from the Ukrainian cable networks (Peisakhin and Rozenas, 2018). In 2017, the government issued an executive order mandating internet service provider to restrict access to prominent Russian websites and social media platforms, including the second most popular, VKontakte. This move was prompted by concerns about the Kremlin’s influence over Russian social media and the potential for collecting data on Ukrainian citizens (Golovchenko, 2017). In early 2021, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy shut down three TV channels with Kremlin affiliations. The channels were taken off the air following sanctions imposed on their official owner, opposition MP Taras Kozak. These channels had long been attributed to Viktor Medvedchuk, considered President Putin’s closest ally in Ukraine, and were widely perceived as platforms for disseminating Kremlin narratives in Ukraine. Zelensky motivated the shutdown by citing the urgency to “fight against the danger of Russian aggression in the information arena” (Dickinson, 2021).

Coupled with this development, the many actors from civil society and the private sector together took the matter into their own hands, particularly in relation to wartime communications and in the battle against Russian information manipulation. As Bohlin and Ståhlberg (2023, p. 66) write, these new initiatives and NGOs were each demonstrating specific expertise in addressing the challenge of Russian propaganda. Notably, new media organisations, such as the Euromaidan Press, focused on creating and disseminating news content through various media

platforms, including television, the internet, and social media. The Ukraine Crisis Media Centre provided valuable services to foreign media correspondents, and informed Western audiences about Russian information manipulation, while serving as a platform for domestic civil society. Additionally, the media watchdog, Detector Media, and the academic initiative, StopFake, were crucial in monitoring mass media and debunking false information about Ukraine.

Bohlin and Ståhlberg conclude that it was clear that none of these organisations could have single-handedly taken on the challenge of combatting Russian information manipulation. Instead, their diverse activities were specialised and worked in tandem, akin to distinct departments within a large, loosely coordinated collective, all contributing towards a shared objective. Moreover, a whole-of-society approach to strategic communications was emerging, but, notably, "[s]tate and government authorities seemed to have less influence over communications projects than one would have expected, and information was managed by a plurality of civic and corporate actors contributing diverse experiences and skills" (Bohlin och Stålberg, 2023, p. 9).

As governmental institutions worked with capability development, extensive competence on matters related to strategic communication and information security that had emerged outside of government were recruited. The interplay of government, corporations, and civil society informed the capability development and eventually led to several institutionalised government functions. For example, in 2021, the Centre for Strategic Communication and Information Security was established under the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, while the Centre for Countering Disinformation was set up under the National Defence and Security Council (Ekman and Nilsson, 2023, p. 26-28).

Viewed through the perspective of military innovation, this period shows how Ukrainian strategic communication adjusted and adapted to the "Arrested War" phase. As we argue, this

development should be understood in relation to the broader historical and sociopolitical context in which it took place. Commenting on the early phase of this development, Isabelle Facon argues that not only did the "conflict became an engine for transformation" (2017, p. 5), but for the first-time civil society regarded "the challenges of reforming the armed forces as an integral part of transforming Ukrainian society" (2017, p. 13). This development was moreover the convergence, on one hand, of capability development that was driven both top-down and bottom-up within the ranks of government and, on the other, an organic capability development in civil society and the private sector, both implicit and explicit. In addition, crucially, this planned and organic adjustment and adaptation of communications capabilities was thus not a matter of planning for a potential wartime situation; to the contrary, it occurred in the midst of it. It is this convergence of history unfolding and human agency that laid the ground for innovating strategic communication in Ukraine.

Ukrainian strategic communication, however, was far from a perfect system. Analysing this period, Izhutova (2019) concludes that the country still lacked a comprehensive policy and a well-defined structure for strategic communication and highlights the importance of deepening interdepartmental cooperation and with the general population, as well as the need to develop additional immediate and appropriate responses to the demands of the media logic underpinning the information environment. Leading up to the full-scale invasion, the question was to what degree Ukraine had learned how to arrest war. One of our respondents was clear: "The eight years taught us a lot. We learnt the Russian playbook, their narratives, the main actors, their main tricks." Thus, the respondent concluded: "In February when they attacked us, we were prepared" (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 66).

Innovating the Mediatisation of War

The night before the full-scale invasion, President Zelenskyy gave a televised speech addressing the Ukrainian and Russian

populations. Dressed sharply and positioned in front of a map of Ukraine and its flag, he updated Ukrainian citizens on the government's efforts to garner international support and deter the Kremlin from launching the dreaded invasion. He then switched from speaking Ukrainian to Russian. Zelenskyy urged Russian citizens to consider "the voice of reason," emphasising the baselessness of claims labelling him as a Nazi and warning of the potential for a major conflict in Europe. He underscored Ukraine's desire for peace, expressing that no one in Ukraine wanted war. He also conveyed a resolute message: if their leaders chose to proceed with an invasion, they would face the unwavering determination of the Ukrainian people: "While attacking, you will see our faces. Not our backs. Our faces" (Zelenskyy 2022). The following day, when Zelenskyy gave a speech, he changed his suit to a green military t-shirt. Russia had invaded Ukraine.

One of the unknown knowns in the preparatory phase for the full-scale invasion was President Zelenskyy. An actor, comedian, and satirical commentator of Ukrainian and Russian politics turned postmodern leader (Harding, 2022, p. 46ff). A man who, in his most popular TV series, Servant of the People, played a history teacher who became president through social media (Rudenko, 2022, p. 4–8). Turning the TV show into reality in 2019, he ran a presidential campaign with a vague anti-establishment and populist political program (Mashtaler, 2021). Nonetheless, Zelenskyy appears to have embodied the post-2014 yearning for fresh leadership and the prevailing dissatisfaction with established political figures (Rohozinska and Shpak, 2019, p. 33). However, as a newly elected president, Zelenskyy received criticism for his poor diplomatic skills in dealing with Russia and allegations of nepotism and corruption, which led to a sharp decline in his approval ratings (Lynch, 2019; Mathews, 2022, p. 146; Onuch and Hale, 2023, 189–222; Rudenko, 2022, p. 133–151).

Beyond doubt, Zelenskyy, "Churchill with an iPhone" as a British journalist baptised him (Freedland, 2022), rose to the

task, not least by staying in Kyiv. He has become the foremost symbol of the Ukrainian one-voice policy (Onuch and Hale, 2023). The vision is of a policy that can be understood as a communications pyramid where strategic messages trickle down and amplify. One of our respondents explained: “The communication pyramid is a very simple communication model. Important messages are delivered by important people – the president should speak first, then the respective ministers and subordinated structures should take it further” (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 28-29). Although the Ukrainian strategists and communicators are careful in forging their strategic messages, this has been a polyphonic endeavour. In terms of strategic communication, this translates into a nonhierarchical and reciprocal communications process, involving top-down and bottom-up channels, where information flows bidirectionally between the parties. The (likely) most fundamental aspect of this process is a potent “rallying around the flag” effect, manifested in the Ukrainian people’s morale and will to defend their country (Onuch and Hale, 2023, p. 251). Notably, the concept of willingness to defend extends beyond the mere protection of a country’s current state and institutions. In the case of Ukraine, as examined by Jānis Bērziņš and Victoria Vdovychenko (2022), the “rally around the flag” effect represents not just a defence of the nation as it is, but a societal commitment to its future, specifically towards increased democratisation and integration with NATO and the EU. One of our respondents underscored that Zelenskyy embodies this broader societal response: “Zelenskyy feels it very well, that is why he and his team are fast and creative. They feel the mood of the Ukrainians. He is not avant-garde; the society is avant-garde. As president, you cannot betray these people. You cannot be weak when they are so good and strong. It is a mistake to say that Zelenskyy gives this push, it is the Ukrainian society doing this. It comes from the bottom to the top, not the other way around” (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 73).

Participatory media practices and user-generated content, such as civilians documenting life in bomb shelters, soldiers producing content from the frontlines, establishing new media channels,

and multiple crowdfunding and crowdsourcing initiatives (Redko, Moskalenko, and Vdodovych, 2022), serve as prime illustrations of organic, bottom-up communication.

Regarding coordination, we understand that the polyphonic one-voice aspect of Ukrainian strategic communication has successfully communicated joint Ukrainian messages. Within government, the capability development discussed in the previous section most likely contributed to this uniformity in messaging, although there is a lack of concrete studies to draw solid conclusions. Our interviews, however, suggest that the strategic communications apparatus faced many challenges. For example, according to one respondent, since strategic communications had become a "posh" topic in Ukraine, many actors within the government believed they could claim it as their own, and, not only that, there was a lack of long-term planning (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 34).

Another aspect of coordination is how government, corporations, and civil society engaged in both planned and spontaneous coordination. Bohlin and Stålberg's observation of how civil society actors collaborated to create a holistic approach to countering Russian information manipulation post-2014 was continuously underscored as an essential feature of the Ukrainian whole-of-society approach to strategic communication following the full-scale invasion. One central facilitator for this outcome appears to be trust among key actors within and outside of government, which for many is rooted in the post-2014 period. This has bolstered coordination, even when formal structures are lacking. As one respondent put it: "It is natural for Ukrainian society, a kind of beehive communication. Every bee knows instinctively what to do and where to fly. That's our secret and why we are effective" (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 73).

Several respondents emphasised that an underlying element of effective strategic communications is proactive communication, particularly regarding the extensively discussed inquiry surrounding the efficacy of countering information manipulation

through rapid refutation (a.k.a. debunking) (Lewandowsky and Van Der Linden, 2021). A few of our respondents emphasised that it was inefficient to think that it was enough to refute Russian disinformation by being proactive and ensuring that information was reliable (Ekman and Nilsson, 2023, p. 27). This observation is confirmed by a more recent and more extensive study on this topic (Kalenský and Osadchuk, 2023). However, while we were under the impression that rapid refutation was not prioritised during the initial phase of the full-scale invasion, this study suggests otherwise. The authors, Jakub Kalenský and Roman Osadchuk explain that "Ukrainian practitioners mentioned that in the time immediately before and after the full-scale invasion, they were debunking absolutely everything and as quickly as possible." This initial approach changed once the situation calmed. Ukrainian practitioners could then focus on refuting "only the most harmful messages and devote the rest of the energy to some more long-term countermeasures, like discrediting of the disinformation sources." Kalenský and Osadchuk's general conclusion nonetheless correlate with our observations of strategic communication as a polyphonic endeavour: "Rapid refutation of the Russian lies (a.k.a. debunking) is one of the most important tools of the Ukrainian reaction to the ongoing disinformation campaign, many Ukrainian practitioners mention it as one of the key instruments they are using, from the top level of President and Ministers to the working level of the government, and to civil society actors – the multitude of actors involved in this activity strengthens the effect of such messaging."

One way of approaching Russian information manipulation is to consider and analyse so-called internet trolling. Typically associated with internet subculture, it can be understood as a media practice that aims to reveal hypocrisy and arouse affective response through ambivalent, satirical, offensive, and humoristic messaging, with the objective of ridiculing or even destroying the trolling target's social reputation (Marwick and Lewis, 2017; Philips, 2015). In this regard, the internet community, and later pro-Ukrainian fundraiser, the North Atlantic Fellas Organisation

(NAFO), is a case in point. Their objective is to win the "information war through 'bonking vatniks,'" which means trolling Russian officials and Kremlin sympathisers on social media (Johais, 2023). As one respondent closely associated with NAFO told us during an interview: "What NAFO fellas are doing is rejecting this idea that to fight Russian propaganda, you have to do everything by the book, that you have to stick to the behaviour of a monk in a monastery" (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 71). As Giles reports, the role of humour and satire in the fight against Russia on the information front is like "holding a mirror up to Russian state propaganda, with the effect of exposing its ludicrousness" (2023b, 12).

One of the clearest examples of proactive communication is measures taken during the months leading up to the full-scale invasion. Many Western intelligence services and security experts were unconvinced that a full-scale invasion was imminent. However, with the support of the US, who publicly disclosed secret intelligence, the UK, and some other European states, Ukraine managed to install the very plausibility of a full-scale invasion as a reality among its central target audiences, thus denying Russia the element of surprise and confusion, as it had during Crimea in 2014: in other words, a narrative frame had already been installed before the fact (Barnes and Entous, 2022; Harris et al., 2022; Abdalla et al., 2022).

Behind such proactive communicative measures resides a profound social, political, and cultural understanding of the adversary, which not only has its historical explanations, but also a continuous analysis of the adversary's activities coupled with an analysis of how sensitive Ukrainian issues (political, social, economic, military, and so on) might be exploited and countered (Fivenson et al., 2023). Being proactive in communication, however, is not only about content and messages; it is about taking measures to ensure that the content and messages can reach an audience without interruption; in other words, it is also about securing and managing the information environment, virtually and physically (Alben, 2022; Voo, 2023). To this extent,

assisted by international support, Ukraine has surpassed expectations.

In addition, throughout our interviews, it was clear that speed is another crucial element in wartime strategic communications. As many of the communicators we interviewed made clear, the initial phase of the full-scale invasion was chaotic. Russian forces targeted Ukrainian communications infrastructure with both kinetic and cyberattacks, and they launched a massive influence campaign, seeking to spread fear, distrust, and confusion (Štrucl, 2022). Speed and agility became essential; information needed to be disseminated using any available means of communication. Ukrainian communicators adapted to the situation. For example, the outsourcing of tasks to actors outside of government has been essential to maintaining the functioning of critical infrastructure. Bureaucracy was scaled down to favour flexibility and creativity for internal and external communications, as one respondent representing government communication told us: “If in war, you better kill the unnecessary bureaucratic procedures and ensure fast ways of communications” (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 33).

Another telling example of how the challenge of the chaotic situation and the need for speed was turned into an asset is the Territorial Defence of Ukraine. Amid the initial turmoil of Russia’s full-scale invasion, opportunities emerged. Given that the Territorial Defence Forces were a relatively nascent and expanding organisation (Khan, 2023), there was a pressing need to bolster their ranks, a challenge they seem to have met with inventive resourcefulness. Efforts were invested in identifying individuals with aptitudes suitable for specific roles, leading to actively recruiting media and communications professionals within their ranks. These individuals were subsequently deployed in various capacities, including as press officers, members of communication teams, and even at the command level. This strategic shift resulted in a sudden influx within the Territorial Defence Forces of highly capable individuals whose

talents were effectively harnessed for the organisation's and Ukraine's benefit (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 42–43).

The Ukrainian polyphonic strategic communications apparatus has demonstrated the importance of communication, particularly communication adapted to today's swipe-based attention economy, which encourages content to seek attention and elicit reactions (Lane and Atchley, 2021; Väliverronen, 2021; Williams, 2018). Ukrainian communicators have ingeniously framed and adapted their messages to different target audiences. Simple strategic messages (e.g., Ukraine's faith is intrinsically linked to the faith of the rule-based world order) have turned into many micro-narratives, creatively using boldness and honesty with humour, satire, humanity and other emotions. One respondent involved in production for a government institution, explained that "Content is king. Even if you're [a government body], you have to be funny, dramatic, serious. If [the content is] not strong, people will unsubscribe. But if we do our work well, we reach the hearts and minds of ordinary people and experts, and then we get what we need to win the war" (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 69). Another respondent explained humour's strategic role in messaging: "We are joking to show that Russia can be defeated, and most people really like that. Humour is a universal tool to create empathy. Suffering is one way, but showing suffering is not enough. You also need to add something positive; we need to show we [Ukrainians] are human beings like you, that we also smile when we see something funny" (Ekman & Nilsson, 2023, p. 73).

Finally, since Russia's full-scale invasion, information control has been crucial in managing meaning. In times of war, nations employ various strategies to manage the information disseminated through the news media. This was certainly relevant on 24 February 2022, when President Zelenskyy declared a state of emergency in Ukraine, implementing measures that included a prohibition on creating and spreading information that could cause destabilisation. Shortly thereafter, martial law was enforced and, in early March, the Commander in

Chief, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, ordered restrictions on conveying information that could disclose military actions (Ekman and Nilsson, 2023, p. 55).

In March 2022, as an outcome of the situation, the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine formalised an existing initiative that sought to consolidate the resources of major commercial TV networks and public service, enabling a unified broadcast across the channels, thereby establishing Ukraine's "United News" format (Ukr. "Єдині новини," often also referred to as the TV "marathon," or "telethon"). When formalising this arrangement, Russian military aggression and disinformation were cited as driving factors. The decision empowered the Ukrainian broadcasting regulator to integrate national TV channels under the "United News" platform, which, until further notice by the government, ensured a unified broadcast. Additionally, in April 2022 the move led to the disconnection of three TV channels linked to former president Petro Poroshenko (Ekman and Nilsson, 2023, p. 54-57).

Another aspect of information control concerns the communication of losses on the battlefield. Informed by the hard-won experiences on the battlefield of eastern Ukraine during the tumultuous year of 2015, invaluable lessons emerged illuminating the perils of non-coordinated governmental communication. Specifically, the discordant narratives from various government agencies regarding Ukrainian losses were found to sow confusion and erode public morale. Consequently, in the wake of the full-scale invasion, the Ukrainian authorities adopted a steadfast policy of withholding information about Ukrainian casualties. In stark contrast, the Ukrainian government opted to report Russian losses transparently, both in terms of soldiers and military equipment. One of the most unwavering channels for disseminating this information emerged through the Ministry of Defence's daily social media updates, accompanied by aptly chosen quotes, often attributed to military strategists, or humoristic commentary (Ekman and Nilsson, 2023, p. 43).

During the ongoing full-scale invasion, Ukrainian strategic communications have been forged into a distinct brand radically different from its Russian counterpart. Seen through the lens of military innovation theory, this case underscores the importance of analysing the cycles of adaptation, adjustment, and innovation as formal and informal processes, including an awareness of societal, psychological, political, and technological factors. First, highlighting the polyphonic reality of the Ukrainian one-voice policy aligns with how Ukrainian communication has integrated diverse inputs into unified strategic messages, amplified throughout government and society. Building on institutional and organic capabilities, this approach enables the swift and efficient deployment of a coherent message, a crucial factor to consider both before and during the reality of a full-scale invasion.

Regarding innovative ways of countering disinformation, the Ukrainian case underlines the importance of both reactive measures (analysis and debunking) and proactive steps (anticipatory communication and attacking the sources of disinformation) to foresee and neutralise potential disinformation. From this perspective, speed and proactive communications are pivotal, as they shape the narratives of events, ideally before the adversary can react. In Ukraine, the proactive generation of rapid responses is due to formal and informational agility, which is essential in today's fast-paced information environment.

As described above, adapting messaging to different target audiences requires an understanding that various groups interpret messages in a number of ways. Tailoring content to resonate with specific audiences is a sophisticated strategy that acknowledges the complexity of the modern information environment. To Western audiences, Ukrainian communicators appear to have been successful in employing affective communication, creating content that resonates and connects with different target audiences on an emotional level. Arguably, this type of messaging fosters emotional bonds with the audience, thereby increasing the impact and recall of different messages.

Finally, information control, such as by centralising news and banning pro-Russian content, is an example of exercising sovereignty over the national information environment. It's a strategic move to protect the populace from potential enemy propaganda and maintain a consistent and supportive home-front narrative.

In summary, through the lens of military innovation theory, Ukrainian strategic communication in wartime has adapted to difficult challenges through a number of skilful measures: developing a unified institutional voice, employing innovative and proactive counter-disinformation tactics, tailoring messages to diverse audiences, and exercising control over the national narrative. This holistic approach underscores the importance of adaptability, speed, and emotional resonance in modern warfare's informational domain. As such, Ukrainian strategic communication is a case in point that illuminates a nation that is adjusting, adapting, and innovating capabilities to manage meaning in the third phase of the mediatisation of war.

A New Phase of the Mediatisation of War?

In the early part of the full-scale invasion, a national and international nation-branding campaign was launched to strengthen morale and create global awareness. The campaign bore the name of this artile – "Be Brave Like Ukraine." The campaign is but one of the examples of cooperation between the private PR sector and the government. And it is remarkable for a country that is striving to join the EU and NATO. The message is not "We want to be like you," but, instead, "Be like us" (Kaneva, 2022). Indeed, in many regards, the tables have turned. Recently, Ukraine turned Westwards for support in developing capabilities; today, analysts, strategists, policymakers, and researchers are looking to Ukraine to learn what they can (Khromeychuk & Bilocerkowycz, 2022).

Just as the war on the battlefield goes through changes, forcing armies to adjust, adapt, and innovate, the battle in the information environment changes. While assessing whether or not we have

entered a new phase of the mediatisation of war is beyond the scope of this article, it can be said, concerning the earlier phases of the mediatisation of war, that the contemporary digital media landscape manifests significant accelerations of earlier trends that have been manifested since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion.

The global information infrastructure exhibits distinct characteristics based on political systems, predominantly private in democratic states, and in stark contrast to the situation in state or semi-state ownership in autocratic counterparts (Diesen, 2021; Malcomson, 2016). This brings about a foundational asymmetry for outreach on the one hand and data collection on the other. The asymmetry of outreach is manifested in, among other things, in the complexity for external actors reaching different target audiences within relatively closed information environments, such as China's and Russia's (Ermoschina, Loveluck, and Musiani, 2022; Hoffman, Lazanski, and Taylor, 2020; Vendil Pallin, 2019). Another related factor concerning ownership is that the private ownership of digital media platforms also underlines how the rules of outreach can change at the whim of one person. The digital platform, X, has not only changed its name; while Russian disinformation was suppressed on Twitter, it appears to run amok on X (European Commission, 2023). This is not a moral argument about the algorithmic rules of the platform, but a factual observation that as the information environment changes, the terrain of the information front can also change swiftly, bringing new challenges to communication in terms of the operative and tactical levels. Concerning data collection, global digital platforms owned by companies with ambiguous relations to state interest is a cause of concern regarding how collected data is used for surveillance, espionage, and influence on the global arena for interstate competition and conflict (Global Engagement Center, 2023; Gray 2021).

Moreover, technological advances in connectivity, sharing, and linkage (Evron and Bitziger, 2023, p. 2), which include swift, often instantaneous content-generation, integration of automated

production processes, an inundation of content and data, and the spread of dual-use technology (Evron and Bitziger, 2023; Kaplan, 2022; Masood et al., 2023), also add new challenges.

As John Spencer argues, there is an "ever-increasing connection between the war front and the home front" (2022, p. 224), making soldiers not simply involved in kinetic battle at the front but also in being participants, producers, and consumers of the mediatisation of war. For example, Roman Horbyk (2022) demonstrates that soldiers' smartphones have become instrumental in blurring the lines between military and personal spheres, encompassing both personal uses, such as private communication and entertainment, and military applications, including wiretapping, targeting in fire missions, mapping minefields, and facilitating combat communications. Similarly, with smartphones and simple off-the-shelf technology, civilians can become advanced intelligence-gatherers, spotting enemy activities (Winther and Nilsson, 2023). This connectivity, moreover, means an increase in attack vectors for the adversary, ranging from cyber exploits to disruption and espionage to micro-targeted psychological operations against soldiers at the front (Nilsson, 2023).

These developments are coupled with an increase in the asymmetric dissemination of content and uneven patterns of its consumption, with widespread participatory engagement, and a proliferation of diverse actors (Adonis, 2019; Feher 2021; Kaempf, 2013; Lutz and Hoffman, 2017; McCarthy 2019). For example, amateur open-source intelligence analysis (OSINT) has boomed (Hogue, 2023; Varzhanskyi, 2023), and fact-checking has turned into an industry in its own right, challenging established news media and government intelligence (Graves and Cherubini, 2016; Huminski, 2023). This is coupled with an explosion of amplified and computational information influence, and ever more advanced disinformation (Geissler et al., 2023; Woolley and Howard, 2019). In today's phase of the mediatisation of war and an increasingly complex information environment, there appears to be an escalation in the collapse of

the borders between war and peace, soldier and civilian, participant and observer, which brings about new challenges ranging from operational security to the relevance of the laws of war.

Navigating this chaotic flow of human and digital actors, flows of data points, and conflicting information is a daunting task, where the reality of war runs the risk of becoming its mediatisation as a hyperreal spectacle (Morris, 2021). In this sense, the promotional, sensationalist and attention-grabbing media logic appears to hold sway, or even increase (Vettehen and Shaap, 2023). When the mediatised image of war becomes one of its core aspects, the outcome can be detrimental when it clashes with reality. Approximately eight months after the beginning of the full-scale invasion, one of our respondents framed the issue: "There's a lack of someone who explains the real picture and the real hardship that will come, the real effect of missiles, economic problems, energy, and so on" (Ekman and Nilsson, 2023, p. 74). Another respondent added: "Too much polished hope runs the risk of creating unrealistic expectations and hurting our long-term resilience" (Ekman and Nilsson, 2023, p. 74). This aspect holds true for the international actors supporting Ukraine. Early statements of Ukraine's winning the "information war," as it has been a war in its own right, arguably fell prey to their own hybris and wishful thinking (cf. Hastings, 2023). Instead of facing reality, it appeared that resorting to another engaging hyperreal spectacle may have been far more convenient.

In today's information environment, attention is a commodity entangled with media logic and geopolitical effects. Many Western leaders still, at the time of writing, express their steadfast support for Ukraine. There are indications of attentional fatigue and political disunity, however, regarding support for Ukraine (Hasselbach, 2023; McElovy, 2023). Hamas's brutal slaughter of Israeli civilians has led to an increasingly unpredictable situation in the Middle East, with global implications (Walt, 2023). In Ukraine, the leadership is

reportedly showing signs of nervousness regarding how Western supporters interpret inflated expectations of the 2023 offensive (Koshiw, Olearchyk, and Hall, 2023; The Economist, 2023). Russian and other actors exploit these developments to drive attention away from Ukraine (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2023).

If the Russo-Ukrainian war begins to be perceived as a new normal, reverting to its pre-February 24 image, Russia will benefit and gain a vital victory in the so-called information war. But it would not be a victory that was due to Russia's propaganda machinery or the fault of Ukraine on the information front, but but the intrusion into the world of planned, strategic communication of factors that can threaten even the best-thought-out and well-executed plan: competition for attention, political disunity, lack of important events on the battlefield, and, above all, the passage of time.

A month after Western news media turned their focus from Ukraine to the Middle East (Katz, 2023), the Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces published a video on X (Twitter) that addressed the larger issue at stake. Accompanied by images displaying the cruel reality of war, a text reads: "We know that many of you are tired, and anxious, and worried. Well… just imagine how we feel. Unlike you, we don't have a choice. We are profoundly grateful for your solidarity and support. Though some of you think it's come at too high a price. With all due respect, this war has cost us a lot more, and we are not giving up. Why should you?" (Territorial Defence Forces, 2023).

To conclude, the global information environment's infrastructure appears to be a fragmented composition featuring elements of restricted access and openness. These shifts collectively exemplify the dynamic evolution of sociotechnological developments in today's rapidly changing and entangled geopolitical landscape (Borrás and Edler, 2020; Hecht, 2011; Kellner, 2021), which brings about continuous and transforming challenges concerning how strategic communication necessitates

renewed cycles of adjustment, adaptation, and innovation. We are only scratching at the surface of what may be a new phase in the mediatisation of war, thus encouraging further research on the matter.

Conclusion

In this article, we seek to demonstrate that a valuable approach is presented by examining strategic communications through a lens that considers both individual actors and institutional dynamics, as well as theories related to organisational development, adjustment, and innovative capacities, in times of conflict. This method allows us to explore strategic communications in a way that considers its historical, cultural, political, and social context, providing a more comprehensive understanding of what wartime strategic communications means in practice and unfolds during conflict.

Through preparations, agility, and creativity, Ukraine's communicators and strategists have led their country's strategic communications into the phase of arrested war. For countries looking to learn from Ukraine, the importance of approaching strategic communications as a whole-of-government and whole-of-society endeavour cannot be understated. What Ukraine clearly shows is that speaking with one voice is not only a matter of effective communication, but also about action, unity, politics, and identity. As the literature on military change demonstrates, variables such as bureaucratic politics, organisational culture and sociopsychological factors can form powerful impediments to integrating new knowledge from operational experiences (Dyson, 2019, p. 2), thus demonstrating that innovation during wartime is not simply an engineering problem.

For scholars within the academic fields of research concerned with strategic communication, military innovation, and the mediatisation of war and conflict, we emphasise the need for deepened research on strategic communication within Ukraine's state agencies, civil-society organisations, and the regional and municipal levels. Moreover, it is vital to prepare for longitudinal

studies of the impact of Ukraine's information security measures on societal trust and among journalists. Finally, we invite scholars and analysts extend our analysis further by exploring how lessons learned can be better codified and adapted to various national contexts and interstate organisations, not least by critiquing and adjusting our early and preliminary assessments of strategic communication in Ukraine.

Literature:

1. Abdalla, N. S., P. H. J. Davies, K. Gustafson, D. Lomas, and S. Wagner. Intelligence and the War in Ukraine: Part 1. War on the Rocks, 11 May: https://warontherocks.com/2022/05/intelligence-and-the-war-in-ukraine-part-1/.
2. Adonis, A. A. (2023). Critical Engagement on Digital Sovereignty in International Relations: Actor Transformation and Global Hierarchy. Global: Jurnal Politik Internasional, 21(2). 262–282. https://doi.org/10.7454/global.v21i2.412.
3. Alben, E. (2022). The Resilience of the Internet in Ukraine. RIPE Labs, 10 March: https://labs.ripe.net/author/emileaben/the-resilience-of-the-internet-in-ukraine/.
4. Asmolov, G. (2021). From sofa to frontline: The digital mediation and domestication of warfare. Media, War & Conflict, 14(3). 342–65.
5. Atkinson, R. (1993). Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
6. Bajarin, T. (2022). Russian-Ukraine War...The Most Broadcast War In History That Includes Physical And Cyber Warfare. Forbes, March 2, 2022: https://www.forbes.com/sites/timbajarin/2022/03/02/ukraine-russian-warthe-most-broadcast-war-in-history/?sh=1d1e28b05b3b.
7. Barnes, J. E. and A. Entous. (2023). How the U.S. Adopted a New Intelligence Playbook to Expose Russia's War Plans. The New York Times, February 23: https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/23/us/politics/intelligence-russia-us-ukraine-china.html.
8. Bērziņš, J. and V. Vdovychenko. (2022). Willingness to Fight for Ukraine: Lessons for the Baltic States. BSR Policy Briefing Series, no. 9. Centrum Balticum Foundation, Turku: https://www.naa.mil.lv/sites/naa/files/document/J.Berzins_Victoria%20Vdovychenko_%20Willingness%20to%20fight%20for%20UkraineLessons%20for%20the%20Baltic%20states.pdf.

9. Borrás, S. and J. Edler. (2020). The Roles of the State in the Governance of Socio-Technical Systems' Transformation. Research Policy, 49(5), 103971.
10. Baudrillard, J. (2010). Simulacra and Simulation. Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.
11. Bohlin, B. and P. Ståhlberg. (2023). Managing Meaning in Ukraine: Information, Communication, and Narration since the Euromaidan Revolution.
12. Christensen, T. and P. Lægreid. (2020). The Coronavirus Crisis—Crisis Communication, Meaning-Making, and Reputation Management. International Public Management Journal 23(5). 713–29.
13. Dickinson, P. (2021). Analysis: Ukraine Bans Kremlin-Linked TV Channels. Atlantic Council, February 5: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/analysis-ukraine-bans-kremlin-linked-tv-channels/.
14. Diesen, G. (2021). Great Power Politics in the Fourth Industrial Revolution: The Geoeconomics of Technological Sovereignty. London och New York: I. B. Tauris.
15. Dyson, T. Organisational Learning and Modern Army: A New Model for Lessons-Learned Processes. London and New York: Routledge, 2020.
16. Ekman, I. and P. Nilsson. (2023). Ukraine's Information Front – Strategic Communication during Russia's Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine. FOI-R--5451--SE, Swedish Defence Research Agency, Stockholm: https://foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI-R--5451--SE.
17. Empson, L. (2018). Elite Interviewing in Professional Organizations. Journal of Professions and Organization, 5(1). 58–69.
18. Ermoshina, K., B. Loveluck, and F. Musiani. (2022). A Market of Black Boxes: The Political Economy of Internet Surveillance and Censorship in Russia. Journal of Information Technology & Politics, 19(1). 18–33.
19. European Commission. (2023). Digital Services Act: Application of the Risk Management Framework to Russian Disinformation Campaigns. Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology, Publications Office, Brussels: https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2759/764631.
20. Evron, Y. and R. A. Bitziger. (2023). The Fourth Industrial Revolution and Military-Civil Fusion: A New Paradigm for Military Innovation? Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
21. Fabian, S. (2019). The Russian Hybrid Warfare Strategy – Neither Russian nor Strategy. Defense & Security Analysis, 35(3). 308–25.
22. Facon, I. (2017). Reforming Ukrainian Defense: No Shortage of Challenges. Paris: French Institute for International Relations – Ifri,

101.
https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/facon_reforming_ukrainian_defense_2017.pdf.
23. Falkheimer, J. and M. Heide. (2022). Strategic Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Global Practice. London: Routledge.
24. Farrell, T. (2010). Improving in War: Military Adaptation and the British in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 2006–2009. Journal of Strategic Studies, 33(4): 567–94.
25. Farrell, T. (2013). Military Adaptation in War. In T. Farrel, F. Osinga, and J. A. Russel. Military Adaptation in Afghanistan. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
26. Feher, K. (2021). “Digital Identity and the Online Self: Footprint strategies – An exploratory and comparative research study. Journal of Information Science, 47(2). 192–205.
27. Fivenson, A., G. Petrenko, V. Víchová, and A. Poleščuk. (2023). Shieleing Democracy: Civil Society Adaptations to Kremlin Disinformation about Ukraine. National Endowment for Democracy, International Forum for Democratic Studies, Washington: https://www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/NED_FORUM-Shielding-Democracy.pdf.
28. Freedland, J. (2022). A Key Reason Putin’s Bloody Invasion is Faltering? He’s no Match for Zelenskiy’s iPhone. The Guardian, March 25: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/mar/25/churchill-iphone-volodymyr
29. Furedi, F. (2022). The Road to Ukraine: How the West Lost Its Way. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2022.
30. Galeotti, M. (2023). Putin’s Wars: From Chechnya to Ukraine. Oxford, Dublin, and New York: Osprey.
31. Geissler, D., D. Bär, N. Pröllochs, and S. Feuerriegel. (2023). Russian Propaganda on Social Media during the 2022 Invasion of Ukraine. EPJ Data Science, 12(1): 1–35.
32. Giles, K. (2023a). Russia’s War on Everybody: And What It Means to You. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
33. Giles, K. (2023b). Humour in Online Information Warfare: Case Study on Russia’s War on Ukraine. Working Paper. Hybrid CoE, Helsinki: https://www.hybridcoe.fi/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/20231106-Hybrid-CoE-Working-Paper-26-Humor-to-combat-disinformation-WEB.pdf.
34. Global Engagement Center. (2023). How the People’s Republic of China Seels to Reshape the Global Information Environment. Department of State, United States of America: https://www.state.gov/gec-special-report-how-the-peoples-republic-of-china-seeks-to-reshape-the-global-information-environment/.

35. Golovchenko, Y. (2022). Fighting Propaganda with Censorship: A Study of the Ukrainian Ban on Russian Social Media. The Journal of Politics, 84(2). 639–54.
36. Graves, L. and F. Cherubini. (2016). The Rise of Fact-Checking Sites in Europe. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/research/files/The%2520Rise%2520of%2520Fact-Checking%2520Sites%2520in%2520Europe.pdf.
37. Gray, J. E. (2021). The Geopolitics of "Platforms": The TikTok Challenge. Internet Policy Review, 10(2). 1-26.
38. Griffin, S. (2017). Military Innovation Studies: Multidisciplinary or Lacking Discipline? Journal of Strategic Studies, 40(1–2). 196–224.
39. Götz, E. (2017). Putin, the State, and War: The Causes of Russia's Near Abroad Assertion Revisited. International Studies Review 19(2). 228–53.
40. Harding, L. (2022). Invasion: Russia's Bloody War and Ukraine's Fight for Survival. London: Guardian Faber.
41. Harris, S., K. DeYoung, I. Khurshudyan, A. Parker, and L. Sly. Road to War: U.S. Struggled to Convince Allies, and Zelenskyy, of Risk of Invasion. Washington Post, 16 August: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/interactive/2022/ukraine-road-to-war/.
42. Hasselbach, C. (2023). Ukraine Fears War Fatigue in the West. Deutsche Welle, 20 October: https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-fears-war-fatigue-in-the-west/a-67154224.
43. Hastings, M. (2023). The West Can't Afford Hubris About Russia's War in Ukraine. Bloomberg, 19 March: https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2023-03-19/the-west-can-t-afford-to-hubris-about-russia-s-war-in-ukraine?embedded-checkout=true&leadSource=uverify%20wall.
44. Hecht, G. (ed). (2020). Entangled Geographies: Empire and Technopolitics in the Global Cold War. Cambridge and London: The MIT Press.
45. Hepp, A. (2020). Deep Mediatization. London and New York: Routledge.
46. Hoffman, F. G. (2021). Mars Adapting: Military Change During War. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press.
47. Hoffmann, S., D. Lazanski, and E. Taylor. (2020). Standardising the Splinternet: How China's Technical Standards Could Fragment the Internet. Journal of Cyber Policy, 5(2). 239–64.
48. Hogue, S. (2023). Civilian Surveillance in the War in Ukraine: Mobilizing the Agency of the Observers of War. Surveillance & Society 21(1). 108–12.

49. Horbyk, R. “The War Phone”: Mobile Communication on the Frontline in Eastern Ukraine. Digital War, 3(1). 9–24.
50. Hoskins, A. and B. O’Loughlin. Arrested War: The Third Phase of Mediatization. Information, Communication & Society, 18(11). 1320–1338.
51. Huminski, J. C. (2023). Russia, Ukraine, and the Future Use of Strategic Intelligence. PRISM, 10(3). 8–25.
52. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD). (2023). Capitalising on Crisis: Russia, China and Iran Use X to Exploit Israel-Hamas Information Chaos. 25 October: https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/capitalising-on-crisis-russia-china-and-iran-use-x-to-exploit-israel-hamas-information-chaos/.
53. Interfax-Ukraine. (2014). Poroshenko: Information Ministry’s Main Task Is to Repel Information Attacks against Ukraine. 8 December: https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/economic/238615.html.
54. Izhutova, I. (2019). Ukrainian Strategic Communications and Martial Law. Journal of Scientific Papers ‘Social Development and Security’, 9(5). 127–132.
55. Jankowicz, N. (2021). How to Looe the Information War: Russia, Fake News, and the Future of Conflict. London and New York: I.B. Tauris.
56. Jasper, S. (2022). Russian Cyber Operations: Coding the Boundaries of Conflict. Washington: Georgetown University Press.
57. Johais, E. (2023). Memetic Warfare in the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict. Warfun Diaries, 2. 35–38.
58. Johnson, R. and T. Clark. (2021). Introduction: The World Information War. In T. Clack and R. Johnson. London and New York: Routledge, 2021. 1–18.
59. Jowett, G. and V. O’Donell. (2015). Propaganda & Persuasion. Los Angeles and London: Sage.
60. Kaempf, S. (2013). The Mediatisation of War in a Transforming Global Media Landscape. Australian Journal of International Affairs, 67(5). 586–604.
61. Kalenský, J. and R. Osadchuk. (2023). Interview with the authors of a forthcoming report about the Ukrainian lessons from countering disinformation. Hybrid CoE, Helsinki, forthcoming.
62. Kaneva, N. (2022) With “Bravery” as Its New Brand, Ukraine Is Turning Advertising into a Weapon of War. The Conversation, August 19: http://theconversation.com/with-bravery-as-its-new-brandukraine-is-turning-advertising-into-a-weapon-of-war-188408.
63. Kaplan, A. (2022). Artificial Intelligence, Business and Civilization: Our Fate Made in Machines. London och New York: Routledge.

64. Katz, M. N. (2023). The Israel-Hamas War is a Distraction from Ukraine, but Russia Isn't Necessarily Benefiting. Atlantic Council, 27 October: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/israel-hamas-russia-distraction-putin/.
65. Kellner, D. (2021). Technology and Democracy: Toward A Critical Theory of Digital Technologies, Technopolitics, and Technocapitalism. Cham: Springer.
66. Khan, I. (2023). Ukraine's Territorial Defence Force War. FOI Memo: 8248. Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Stockholm: https://www.foi.se/rapporter/rapportsammanfattning.html?reportNo=FOI%20Memo%208248.
67. Khromeychuk, O. and S. Bilocerkowycz. (2022). The Nation Ukraine Has Become. New York Review, March 25: https://www.nybooks.com/online/2022/03/25/the-nation-ukraine-has-become/.
68. Koffler, R. (2021). Putin's Playbook: Russia's Secret Plan to Defeat America. Washington: Regnery Gateway.
69. Koshiw, I., R. Olearchyk, and B. Hall. (2023). Volodymyr Zelenskyy Calls for Discipline as Cracks Emerge in Kyiv's Unity. Financial Times, 7 November: https://www.ft.com/content/e6013794-f4dc-499b-8c84-ba5fa4121737.
70. Lane, S. and P. Atchley, eds. (2021). Human Capacity in the Attention Economy. Washington: American Psychology Association.
71. Lewandowsky, S. and S. Van Der Linden. Countering Misinformation and Fake News Through Inoculation and Prebunking. European Review of Social Psychology, 32(2). 348–84.
72. Lieberman, A. V. (2017). Terrorism, the Internet, and Propaganda: A Deadly Combination. Journal of National Security, Law & Policy, 9(95). 95–124.
73. Lindner, A. M. (2008). Controlling the Media in Iraq. Contexts, 7(2). 32–39.
74. Lutz, C., and C. P. Hoffmann. (2017). The Dark Side of Online Participation: Exploring Non-, Passive and Negative Participation. Information, Communication & Society, 20(6). 876–97.
75. Lynch, J. (2019). Zelenskyy Flounders in Bid to End Ukraine's War. Foreign Policy, October 11: https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/10/11/Zelenskyy-pushes-peace-deal-ukraine-war-russia-donbassteinmeier-formula/.
76. Macnamara, J. and A. (2018). Gregory. Expanding Evaluation to Progress Strategic Communication: Beyond Message Tracking to Open Listening. International Journal of Strategic communication, 12(4). 469–86.
77. Malcomson, S. (2016). Splinternet: How Geopolitics and Commerce are Fragmenting the World Wide Web. London och New York: OR Books.

78. Mandelbaum, M. (1982). Vietnam: The Television War. Daedalus, 111(4). 157–69.
79. Marwick, A. and R. Lewis. (2017). Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online. Data & Society: https://datasociety.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/DataAndSociety_MediaManipulationAndDisinformationOnline-1.pdf.
80. Mashtaler, O. (2021) The 2019 Presidential Election in Ukraine: Populism, the Influence of the Media, and the Victory of the Virtual Candidate. In C. Kohl, B. Christophe, H. Liebau, and A. Saupe. The Politics of Authenticity and Populist Discourses: Media and Education in Brazil, India, and Ukraine. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. 127–160.
81. Masood, M., M. Nawaz, K. M. Malik, A. Javed, A. Irtaza, and H. Malik. (2023). Deepfakes Generation and Detection: State-of-the-Art, Open Challenges, Countermeasures, and Way Forward. Applied Sciences, 59. 3974-4026.
82. Matthews, O. (2022). Overreach: The Inside Story of Putin's War Against Ukraine. London: Mudlark.
83. McCarty, N. (2019). Polarization: What Everybody Needs to Know. Oxford och New York: Oxford University Press.
84. McElvoy, Anne. (2023). Zelenskyy's top Aide Slams West over "war fatigue". Politico, 6 November: https://www.politico.eu/article/top-zelenskyy-aide-slams-west-over-war-fatigue/.
85. McMurdo, T. (2022). Ukraine Has Been Winning the Messaging Wars. It's Been Preparing for Years. Washington Post, March 27. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/28/russia-ukrainepropaganda-misinformation-media-Zelenskyy/.
86. Mercier, A. (2005). War and Media: Constancy and Convulsion. International Review of the Red Cross. 87(860). 649–59.
87. Merrin, W. (2019). Digital War: A Critical Introduction. London and New York: Routledge.
88. Morris, J. (2021). Simulacra in the Age of Social Media: Baudrillard as the Prophet of Fake News. Journal of Communication Inquiry, 45(4). 319–36.
89. Nilsson, P-E., S. Olsson, and I. Ekman. (2022). Informationsmiljöns topografi: teknik, människa och strategi [The Topography of the Information Environment: Technology, Humans, and Strategy]. FOI-R- -5342—SE, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), 2022: https://foi.se/rapporter/rapportsammanfattning.html?reportNo=FOI-R--5342--SE.
90. Nilsson, P. (2023). Unraveling the Myth of Cyberwar: Five Hypotheses on Cyberwarfare in the Russo-Ukrainian War (2014-

2023). FOI-R--5513—SE, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Stockholm [in print].
91. Onuch, O. and H. E. Hale. (2023). The Zelensky Effect. London: Hurst & Company.
92. Pearce, J. C. (2021). The Use of History in Putin's Russia. Delaware and Malaga: Vernon Press.
93. Peisakhin, L. and A. Rozenas. (2018). Electoral Effects of Biased Media: Russian Television in Ukraine. American Journal of Political Science, 62(3): 535–50.
94. Phillips, W. (2015). This Is Why We Can't Have Nice Things: Mapping the Relationship Between Online Trolling and Mainstream Culture. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
95. Plokhy, S. (2021). The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine. New York: Basic Books.
96. Plokhy, S. (2023). The Russo-Ukrainian War. Dublin: Allen Lane.
97. Redko, O., O. Moskalenko, and Y. Vdodovych. The Role of Crowdfunding Systems During Crisis and Military Actions. Baltic Journal of Economic Studies, 8(4): 117–21.
98. Riley, P., G. Fann Thomas, R. Weintaub, A. Noyes, and S. Dixon (2015). Good Governance and Strategic Communication: A Communication Capital Approach. In Derina Holtzhausen and Ansgar Zerfass (eds). The Routledge Handbook of Strategic Communication. London and New York: Routledge. 201–213.
99. Rohozinska, J. and V. Shpak. (2019). Ukraine's Post-Maidan Struggles: I. The Rise of an "Outsider" President. Journal of Democracy, 30(3). 33–47.
100. Rudenko, S. (2022). Zelenskyy: A Biography. Cambridge and Hoboken: Polity Press.
101. Rushkoff, Douglas. (2019). Present Shock: When Everything Happens Now. New York: Current.
102. Schnaufer, T. A. II. (2017). Redefining Hybrid Warfare: Russia's Non-linear War against the West. Journal of Strategic Security, 10(1). 17–31.
103. Schneider, V. (2020). Bringing Society Back in: Actors, Networks, and Systems in Public Policy. In H. Lehtimäki, P. Uusikylä, and A. Smedlund, eds. Society as an Interaction Space: Translational Systems Sciences. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2020. 41–65.
104. Shavit, M. (2017). Media Strategy and Military Operations in the 21st Century: Mediatizing the Israel Defence Forces. London and New York: Routledge.
105. Spencer, J. (2022). Connected Soldiers: Life, Leadership, and Social Connections in Modern War. Lincoln: Potomac Books.

106. Stengel, R. (2019). Information Wars: How We Lost the Battle Against Disinformation & What We Can Do About It. New York: Atlantic Monthly.
107. Stepnisky, J. (2020). Staging Atmosphere on the Ukrainian Maidan. Space and Culture, 23(2). 80–97.
108. Štrucl, D. (2022). Russian Agression on Ukraine: Cyber Operations and the Influence of Cyberspace on Modern Warfare. Contemporary Military Challenges, 24(2). 103–123.
109. Syvak, T. (2016). The System of Strategic Communications in Ukraine: Preconditions of Formation. The World of Politics, Society, Geography, 1(2). 69–76.
110. Syvak, T. (2019). Міжнародний досвід формування стратегічних комунікацій [International Experience of Forming Strategic Communication]. Актуальні проблеми державного управління [Current Problems of Public Administration], 2(78). 81–86.
111. Taylor, P. M. (2002). Strategic Communications or Democratic Propaganda? Journalism Studies, 3(3). 437–441.
112. Territorial Defence Forces (TDF). (2023). @TDF_UA. X, 7 November:
https://twitter.com/TDF_UA/status/1722015326332690648.
113. The Economist. (2023). Ukraine's commander-in-chief on the breakthrough he needs to beat Russia. 1 November: https://www.economist.com/europe/2023/11/01/ukraines-commander-in-chief-on-the-breakthrough-he-needs-to-beat-russia.
114. The President of Ukraine. (2017). Указ Президента України No47/2017, Про рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України від 29 грудня 2016 року "Про Доктрину інформаційної безпеки України" [Decree of the President of Ukraine No 47/2017, On the Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of December 29, 2016 "On the Information Security Doctrine of Ukraine"]. Official Website of the President of Ukraine, February 25. https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/472017-21374.
115. Tsybulenko, E. and A. Kajander. (2021). The Hybrid Arsenal of Russia's War Against the Democratic World. In H. Mölder, V. Sazanov, A. Chochia, and T. Kerikmäe (eds). The Russian Federation in Global Knowledge Warfare: Influence Operations in Europe and Its Neighbourhood. Cham: Springer. 173–194.
116. Varzhanskyi, I. (2023). Reflexive Control as a Risk Factor for Using OSINT: Insights from the Russia–Ukraine Conflict. International Journal of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence [online first]. 1–31.
117. Vettehen, P. H. and G. Schaap. (2023). An Attention Economic Perspective on the Future of the Information Age. Futures, 153. 103243: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2023.103243.
118. Voo, J. (2023). Lessons from Ukraine's Cyber Defense and Implications for Future Conflict. In J. A. Lewis and G. Wood (eds).

Evolving Cyber Operations and Capabilities. Center for Strategic & International Studies, Washington. 15–22: https://www.csis.org/analysis/evolving-cyber-operations-and-capabilities.

119. Väliverronen, E. (2021). Mediatisation of Science and the Rise of Promotional Culture. In B. Massimiano and B. Trench (eds). Routledge Handbook of Public Communication of Science and Technology. New York: Routledge, 2021. 129–146.

120. Wallis, R. and S. J. Baran (1990). The Known World of Broadcast News: International News and the Electronic Media. London and New York: Routledge.

121. Walt, M. (2023). The World Won't Be the Same After the Israel-Hamas War. Foreign Policy, 8 November: https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/11/08/israel-hamas-gaza-war-geopolitics/.

122. Williams, J. (2018). Stand Out of Our Light Freedom and Resistance in the Attention Economy. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

123. Winther, P. and Nilsson, P. (2023). Smart Tactics or Risky Behaviour? The Lawfulness of Encouraging Civilians to Participate in Targeting in an Age of Digital Warfare. The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies Information-based behavioural influencing and Western practice, Paper 2: https://hcss.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/02-Smart-Tactics-or-Risky-Behaviour.pdf.

124. Woolley, S. C. and P. N. Howard., eds. (2019). Computational Propaganda: Political Parties, Politicians, and Political Manipulation on Social Media. New York: Oxford University Press.

125. Zelenskyy, V. (2022). Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyyy's Feb. 23 Speech. Translated by Dominic Cruz Bustillos. Lawfare, February 24. https://www.lawfareblog.com/full-translation-ukrainian-president-volodymyr-Zelenskyyys-feb-23-speech.

126. Zerfass, A., D. Verčič, H. Nothhaft, and K. P. Werder. (2018). Strategic Communication: Defining the Field and Its Contribution to Research and Practice. International Journal of Strategic Communication, 12(4): 487–505.