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VISUAL FRAMES OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR
IN UKRAINIAN CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the paper is a formalization of the visual frames of the russian-Ukrainian war as the parts of a truly multiplex of its vision. Every of its frames must be produced as a complex socio-cultural construction where the stereotypes of war coverage intersected with the mental features of Ukrainian culture, formed by the previous historical and cultural tradition, and the consequences of the modernization transformations in Ukraine during last 30 years.

The materials of the publication cover the first year (from February 24, 2022 to March 15, 2023) of the russian invasion of Ukraine. They are based on content analysis and semantic-semiotic analysis of the visual content of social media platforms, which are popular in Ukraine – YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Telegram. The research had been conducted in the broad context of Ukrainian culture as a hybrid phenomena with a coexistence in the uniques configurations of pre-modern, modern, postmodern components.

An integral index of Ukrainization and social relevance of the top 10 Ukrainian profiles on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok have been calculated. The impact of the globalized media culture on this index and the ineffectiveness of socio-economic transformations of Ukraine over the past 30 years have been shown.

Based on the analysis of the official Facebook pages of the infantry brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the frame "war through the eyes of the military" have been established. This frame has been differed from the typical image of war and reflected certain features of the Ukrainian national character. On the example of a frame of the "female military" before and after the start of the full-scale russian invasion, the contradiction of the progress of feminism in Ukrainian culture has been analyzed. The "war ruins" frame in Telegram channels has been formalized. It has been defined, that it is gradually replacing the popular from the end of the 19th the image of Ukraine as a "picturesque village".

All the results have been obtained for the first time. They develop the author's concept of diversity and borderline of Ukrainian culture and his project of "visual culturology".

The materials of this paper can be used in the scientific and public discussion about the russian-Ukrainian war, and in the educational process.

KEYWORDS

Content analysis, Facebook, Instagram, russian-Ukrainian war, social media platforms, TikTok, Telegram, YouTube, visual frames, Ukrainian culture.

Even two or three years ago, before the start of the active phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the "gray zone" frame was quite common in both scientific and journalistic discourses regarding Ukraine. The country's acquisition of EU candidate status in June 2022 at the official level seems to close this stereotype, but at the academic level it needs further research. One of the approaches to its study can be the application of the concept of Ukrainian culture as a borderline, diversity phenomenon. In modern science, it is usually not so much about the geographical, natural and climatic location of the country between the Steppe-Forest, as about its geopolitical and socio-cultural situation – for example, on the fault line between large civilizations [1]. Together however, it is very fruitful to analyze the complexity of Ukrainian culture through the prisms of theories of secondary modernization. In contrast to the classical versions of these theories, which predicted more or less homogeneous processes, the sociocultural realities of the 21st century convincingly demonstrate the non-linearity and multidirectionality of modernization transformations, which lead to an ever-increasing global cultural hybridization. In this context, it is expedient to analyze any phenomena of Ukrainian culture not through the usual metaphors of cultural hybridity, such as borrowing, mixing, and translating [2], but through coexistence in amazing configurations of premodern, modern, postmodern components.

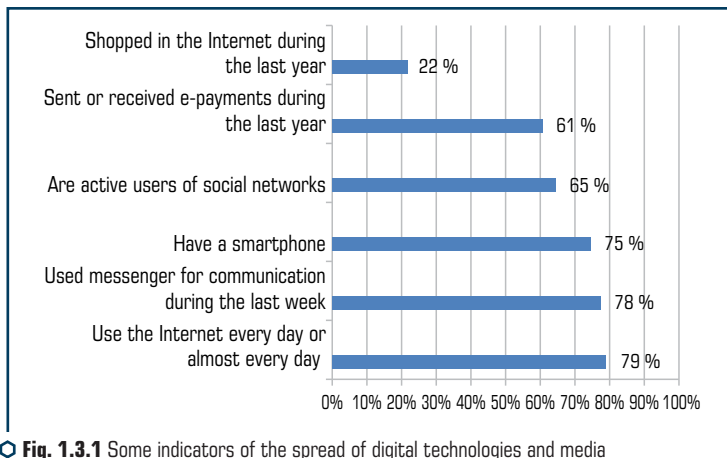
An integral component of post-modernization changes in Ukraine has become the rapid spread of digital technologies and the transformation of the Ukrainian media space based on them (**Fig. 1.3.1**). In our opinion, the specified processes should be considered simultaneously as a consequence of the formation of a political environment that is more open to innovative changes after the Revolution of Dignity, as well as the accelerated progress of technologies themselves, when, for example, ordinary push-button phones completely disappeared from sale in favor of smartphones with qualitatively wider functional capabilities. During the term of office of President V. Zelensky, the digital and media space of Ukraine, instead of becoming the most significant driver of social change, remained in a contradictory state between the progressive trend towards institutionalization due to the creation of the Ministry of Digital Transformation and the gradual lag in the use of digital technologies, when 62.4 % of web-traffic is generated by yesterday's devices – desktops and bulky laptops [3].

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube (combining Web 2.0 technologies, social network interfaces, social media functions with elements of video hosting and messengers), are considered the most common in Ukraine. Twitter is still not popular in Ukraine. The greatest dynamics of growth in popularity was observed in 2022 in Telegram, which, along with television, is becoming the main source of operational news [4].

The specific weight of YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok users was calculated by the author based on information from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (<https://ukrstat.gov.ua>) as of January 1, 2022. The data, obtained without taking into account the permanent population of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol, differed from the assessments of Western experts (**Table 1.3.1**).

In 2023, due to hostilities, the occupation of the part of the territory of Ukraine, forced migration, large-scale destruction of infrastructure, a simultaneous decrease in the number of the permanent population and the number of active users of the Internet and social media platforms

was observed. Despite the insufficient level of representativeness of these data, Ukrainian and foreign sources agree on the figure of <79 % of Internet users in relation to the total population, which is slightly lower than this indicator for the Eastern Europe region (86.9 %).



● **Fig. 1.3.1** Some indicators of the spread of digital technologies and media consumption in Ukraine at the beginning of 2022

Note: [3, 4]

● **Table 1.3.1** Popular social media platforms in Ukraine at the beginning of 2022

Social platform	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	TikTok
The percentage of users to the total permanent population of Ukraine as of January 1, 2022	68.3	37.7	39.3	25.7
World audience according to the criteria of MAU (monthly active users) or Ad Reach (advertising reach) (% of the total population of the Earth) as of January 2022	32.4 (Ad Reach)	36.8 (MAU)	18.7 (Ad Reach)	11.2 (Ad Reach)
The percentage of users to the permanent population of Ukraine, older than 14 or 18 years as of January 1, 2022	83.2 (older than 18 years)	44.3 (older than 14 years)	46.2 (older than 14 years)	44.8 (older than 14 years)
World audience according to the criteria of MAU (monthly active users) or Ad Reach (advertising reach) (% of the population of the Earth, older than 13 or 18 years)	37.7 (Ad Reach) (older than 18 years)	47.1 (MAU) (older than 13 years)	23.9 (Ad Reach) (older than 13 years)	15.9 (Ad Reach) (older than 18 years)

Note: [3–5]

The social media platforms under consideration fairly evenly cover all age groups of Ukrainians. While this is more true of YouTube, it still lags behind TikTok in popularity among youth (18–24). This partly coincides with the age peak for Instagram (21–22), but the latter is still extremely popular among users under 29 [30].

The context of the russian-Ukrainian war is superimposed on the socio-cultural uniqueness of the phenomenon of Ukraine. It begins with the "hybrid" phase of 2014 (annexation of Crimea, hostilities in the east of the country with separatist entities, supported by russia), and in February 2022, as a result of the direct invasion of russian troops, it enters the "hot" stage of the full-scale war between the two countries.

The war, which is waged simultaneously with the means typical of the period of the Second World War and the latest weapons that are increasingly used, combines combat operations with the destruction of civilian infrastructure, financial and economic instruments and large-scale informational and psychological operations. In the media sphere, from the Ukrainian side, state control and propaganda on radio and television, Internet resources is combined with the free existence of the world's leading social media platforms (**Fig. 1.3.2**).



○ **Fig. 1.3.2.** Ukrainians charge mobile devices at special points during a blackout
Note: illustrative photo from open sources

In this context, a truly multiplex vision of the russian-Ukrainian war is generated, where the stereotypes of coverage of wars and conflicts, developed throughout the world, intersect with the mental features of Ukrainian culture, formed by the previous historical and cultural tradition and the consequences of modernization transformations in Ukraine during the years of independence.

To record them, at least at the factual level, for the sake of in-depth analysis in the future, is the main task of our research.

In the last decade, there has been observed a sharp increase in the number of publications on Ukrainian humanitarian issues in the international scientometric databases Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection. We mean works, dedicated to Ukraine, not Ukrainian authors on humanitarian issues. After all, despite the gradual inclusion of academic publications from Ukraine (more than 100 scientific journals at the moment) in this base, the increase in the number of indexed documents of Ukrainian scientists more than twice from 2011 to 2020 [6], the area under consideration remains mainly researched by non-Ukrainian specialists.

In no way pretending that our approach is fully representative, we tried to find out the trends from 2019 to 2022 based on the search tools of [scopus.com](https://www.scopus.com) and [webofscience.com](https://www.webofscience.com) (Table 1.3.2).

The search was carried out according to the following comparative criteria – (authors) keywords, *Open Access*, documents type – *Article*, subject area in Scopus: *Art & Humanities, Social Sciences Interdisciplinarity*, category Web of Science (over 10 results): *History, Political Science, International Relations, Law, Humanities Multidisciplinary, Ethnic Studies, Social Sciences Interdisciplinary, Archeology, Sociology, Religion, Multidisciplinary Science, Education, Educational Research*.

● **Table 1.3.2** Publication of articles on humanitarian Ukrainian studies issues in international scientometric databases for 2019–2022

Year	Scopus	Web of Science	Totally
2022	401	207	608
2021	245	158	403
2020	250	128	378
2019	161	97	258

Note: <https://www.scopus.com>, <https://www.webofscience.com>

It is clear that not all publications, included in the statistics, were devoted to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It is also obvious, that a large number of publications, for example, the specialized magazine *Post-Soviet Affairs*, simply did not have time to react to the events, because the preparation of an article for publication can take up to a year. However, the surge of interest in Ukraine (a 1.5-fold increase in the number of Ukrainian studies publications in 2022 compared to the previous one) cannot be explained simply by the imperfection of the methodology for obtaining results.

The events of the hot phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war are considered in scientometric publications in general from positions favorable to Ukraine, which is evidenced by the use of the words "Russian invasion of Ukraine", "Ukraine war" and others in the titles of the absolute majority of articles. The war in Ukraine is studied in various aspects, in particular, geopolitical,

legal, and humanitarian. WoS automatic analytics assigns 54.5 % of publications to the field of "Political Science" and "History". The most interesting media issues for us were raised in a small number of articles. First of all, the researchers were interested in the media activity of the President of Ukraine V. Zelensky, who, before being elected to this position, worked very successfully in this and related fields. M. Dyczok and Ye. Chung carried out an analysis of the media effects of the first daily speeches of the President of Ukraine V. Zelensky as a "powerful weapon against Russia's disinformation war against Ukraine", which already in the first months of the full-scale invasion changed the emphasis of its coverage in the world media [7]. R. Kravchenko's article on the methods of propagandistic pro-Ukrainian consolidation of popular science TV and YouTube channels [8] showed how the absolute majority of them reacted to the start of the full-scale war. In addition, we also have a documentary publication in the format of "oral history", "Voices from Ukraine" [9]; an article, devoted to the possibilities of using Twitter content as an "antidote" to the hybrid component of the Russian-Ukrainian war [10]; finally, a publication about the meaning mechanisms of the works of the military photographer A. Stepanov [11], whose photo we constantly came across in the visual arrays we studied.

The phenomenon of "national resilience", the ability to successfully resist Russian aggression, is in the first place in the understanding of wartime realities by Ukrainian specialists. We are talking about the well-known tendency of the rise of "ethnic nationalism" in the conditions of wars and conflicts, its manifestations and tools, in particular, little-studied (audiovisual) [12]. It is interesting to study the external reflections of the Russian invasion of the American and British press, which made it possible to show their polarization, at least at the level of discursive strategies [13]. In 2022, we individually and jointly published several articles, in which attempts were made to determine the features of visual framing of the Russian-Ukrainian war [14, 15] and the "female military" on the eve of the Russian invasion [16]. Their materials are now used for comparison.

3.1 VISUAL CULTURAL STUDIES AS THE NEWEST METHODOLOGY FOR RESEARCH OF UKRAINIAN CULTURE

The formation of visual cultural studies is an objective consequence of the combination of visual and cultural "turns" in humanitarian knowledge at the end of the 20th century. Compared with already established scientific disciplines and broad interdisciplinary programs of visual research ("visual culture", visual studies, visual anthropology, visual sociology), we define three theoretical and methodological features of visual cultural studies or "visual culturology":

- 1) an extremely wide subject-methodological horizon;
- 2) rational correlation of quantitative and qualitative research tools;
- 3) cultural interpretation of the obtained results as the ultimate goal of the research.

The focus of visual culture studies should not be visual phenomena per se, not a separately taken "regime of scope", but rather visual reflections or individual visual elements of the phenomena

of material or spiritual culture in a global or local dimension; not so much directly the construction of the visual in a certain culture, but their socio-cultural correlations, two-way connections with the environment, in which they were formed and on which they had an impact [17].

According to this approach it hardly makes sense to distinguish between the objective *presentation* in visual images of specific socio-cultural phenomena or the regular connections between them, which can be recorded in the format of frequent repetition of such images, and the "*social representations*" that turn the thoughts and actions of significant number of citizens in a given direction [18]. Rather, we are dealing with sociocultural *frames*, as a predetermined method of media coverage of certain events of the "agenda" in which, unlike their more classical examples, the presentation and representation of the surrounding world are too closely intertwined.

Directly for the needs of this study, *the method of quantitative content analysis* was used – the frequencies of repetition in the studied visual arrays of certain significant elements were determined, and *the statistical method* of calculating generalizing results.

Structural-semantic-semiotic tools were presented in R. Barth's version. They were used to assign certain images to certain categories of content analysis according to the location of a certain object/objects (spectrum) as the meaningful center of the picture at the denotative level, or stadium [19]. R. Barth's thesis about the active role of the Operator, the one who conducts the shooting, in the construction of the artistic image, was also taken into account. Analyzing the work of one of the most famous Ukrainian photojournalists, A. Stepanov, who has been documenting the events of the russian-Ukrainian war since 2014 for the world's leading media, proves that he always experiences a fierce internal struggle between mind and heart, feels horror and trembling from the surrounding situation, shares grief of soldiers, attracts the viewer to whom he offers his view and presence [11].

In the process of cultural interpretation of the obtained results, the first place is definitely occupied by the correspondence of the studied phenomena to the features of the Ukrainian national character, which means "the enduring personality characteristics and unique life styles" [20] of representatives of one or another nation (people). Scientific development of this issue was carried out in the 20th century by representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora.

In the classical version of D. Chyzhevskiy, the features of the Ukrainian national character are defined as:

1. "Emotionalism and sentimentalism, sensitivity and lyricism".
2. "Individualism and striving for "freedom".
3. "Restlessness and mobility" – "the ability to accept new things", but at the same time "the tendency to mutual struggle, to the destruction of one's own and other people's life forms" [21].

Of course, "Militancy" should be added to them. According to our observations, this trait was articulated for the first time in the Cossack-sergeant historiosophy of the 17th–18th centuries, in which it played the role of a means of individual or group socio-cultural identity, attributing oneself to the privileged status of knighthood and nobility. It was introduced into popular science circulation by M. Gogol's "View of the Compilation of Little russia". At present, the militancy of Ukrainians can

be defined with an extremely apt variation from V. Yaniv that it is not aggressiveness, aimed at external expansion, but "bravery, aimed at consolidating one's own" [22]. This is well consistent with the second feature, no less aptly (albeit in a slightly different context) specified by Y. Lypa in "The Purpose of Ukraine": "«Hut» is the ideal of Ukrainian patriotism" [23]. It should also be taken into account, that during the "hybrid" phase of the russian-Ukrainian war, the level of militarization of public consciousness gradually increased and, just before the beginning of the large-scale russian invasion in February 2022, reached the figure of 62.3 % of Ukrainian citizens ready with weapons in their hands or in a peaceful way to stand up for the defense of their Motherland [24].

3.2 UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AS WEAPONS

Since 2014, the beginning of the russian-Ukrainian war, one of the leading trends in the development of the media sphere has been "light Ukrainization". For the Ukrainian intellectual community, it was about posing the question in the post-colonial spirit – "the intense *creation of Spiritual Sovereignty*" in relation to russian culture, which always treated Ukrainianness as a "devalued" community, that is, inferior, and therefore dependent on it [25].

To promote it, successful volunteer media projects were formed (for example, the Tik-Tok account of A. Shymanovsky "Level up your Ukrainian here" – @shymanovsky, the educational YouTube channel of the Kapranov brothers "*in the name of Taras Hryhorovych Shevchenko*" – @imtgsh, etc.). However, only after the adoption the special language legislation, first of all, the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as a State Language" and the introduction of sanctions against russian media production (banning of the popular social network VKontakte), the use of the Ukrainian language (completely or mainly) both in public space and in everyday communication has become dominant, making 62 and 68 %, respectively [26].

In the conditions of the active phase of the russian-Ukrainian war, the use of social media platforms has become a more effective communication tool than traditional channels – at the same time as a means of quickly informing the country's population about the actions of the government and the Armed Forces and conveying the Ukrainian point of view to millions of people around the world [27].

However, what has been said can equally be attributed to the profiles of top bloggers with millions of fans that we are considering. Their media activity in this way can be considered a kind of weapon in the fight against the enemy with full reason.

A comparison of the frequency of use of national languages in the TOP-10 profiles on YouTube and TikTok in some European and post-Soviet countries (**Table 1.3.3**) made it possible to visualize the similarity of the Ukrainian social media space to its counterpart in Kazakhstan, with its inherent dependence on Russia due to the factors of understandable language, general audience and solvent demand within the framework of receiving multibillion-dollar natural rent from the sale of energy carriers.

● **Table 1.3.3** The specific weight of the use of national languages of some European and post-Soviet countries in the YouTube and TikTok social media platforms (TOP-10 by the number of subscribers) (as of February 27, 2023)^a

Social platform	France	Germany	Spain	Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan	Ukraine
YouTube	75	5	90	30	100	10
TikTok	70	20	60	0	20	10

Notes: TOP-100 youtubers sorted by subscribers (<https://socialblade.com>), TikTok Rating (<https://ttlist.net>)

^a In the case of using several languages at the same time, the value of the indicator for one profile was set at 5 %

In November 2022 – February 2023, we tried to move away from a simplified approach related exclusively to language and determine the integral level of "pro-Ukrainianness", simultaneously Ukrainianization and social relevance of the TOP-10 profiles by the number of followers of the popular social platforms YouTube, Instagram, TikTok. For this purpose, both formal, linguistic and visual markers (blogging in Ukrainian; the presence of a screen saver/slogan/stories that clearly identify the author of the channel as a Ukrainian or his/her attitude to the war) and content (photo and video that demonstrate understanding the fact of waging the war of aggression against Ukraine and supporting the national ethno-cultural tradition as the basis of national resistance) were generalized. The Facebook and Telegram platforms were not suitable for analysis based on the mentioned indicators. Data from socialblade.com, heepsy.com, starngage.com, ttlist.net services were used to determine the first ten positions of the ratings, adjusted by removing profiles that are not directly related to Ukraine. The Instagram profile of President V. Zelensky, which has the largest number of followers (almost 17 million), was also not taken into account. Calculations were made according to the formula:

$$\int \frac{x1 + x2 + x3}{x1_{\max} + x2_{\max} + x3_{\max}} \times 100\%,$$

where $x1$ – actual value of the "Ukrainian blogging language" indicator in all 3 platforms; $x1_{\max}$ – maximum value of this indicator (30); $x2$ – actual value of the "presence of a pro-Ukrainian screen saver/slogan/ stories" indicator; $x2_{\max}$ – maximum value of this indicator (30); $x3$ – actual value of the "availability of socially relevant content" indicator; $x3_{\max}$ – maximum value of this indicator (30).

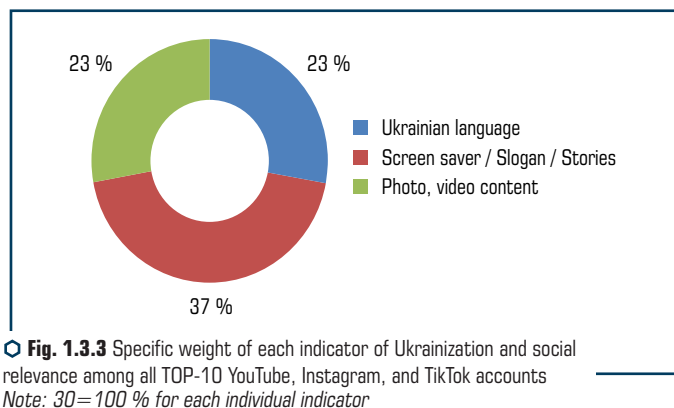
We determined the value of the indicator to be 7 (one channel on YouTube, 5 on Instagram, one on TikTok).

We determined the value of the indicator to be 11 (2 channels on YouTube, 7 on Instagram, 2 on TikTok).

We determined the value of the indicator to be 7 (2 channels on YouTube, 5 on Instagram, 0 on TikTok).

The obtained result – 31 % – turned out to be on average half less than the general level of Ukrainization of the public and private space of Ukraine. The most Ukrainized and socially relevant is Instagram (70–80 % depending on whether one or two criteria are applied, i.e. the majority). The least pro-Ukrainian is TikTok (0 or 30 %). YouTube occupies an intermediate position (20 or 50 %).

Fig. 1.3.3 clearly shows that the most accessible, formal approach prevails. The generation of creative pro-Ukrainian photo and video content is in the background. This content is in the minority in absolutely all investigated profiles. We recorded the maximum number of anti-war videos on the YouTube channel "*Magic Five*" (@MagicFive5), whose team was at the epicenter of hostilities in February–March 2022 (11 videos out of 26 posted between February 24, 2022 and February 24, 2023). Other social media platforms are dominated by situational video content, which was most often posted in the first months of the full-scale invasion. A specially designed product, such as a counter-propaganda plan, is an exception. We find the best examples of such a product on the Instagram profile of the popular children's doctor "*Doctor Komarovskiy*" (@doctor_komarovskiy).



Among the factors that, in our opinion, influenced the calculated pro-Ukrainian level of the top profiles of social platforms popular in Ukraine, cultural factors took a prominent place. Instagram accounts are the most Ukrainized and socially relevant precisely because they are run by celebrities, closely associated with activities in the field of Ukrainian culture. On the other hand, the obtained results were affected by the effects of globalized media culture, which popularizes primarily glamorous and entertaining content, often completely detached from reality. At the same time, within the framework of the global media culture, there are huge opportunities for at least indirect broadcasting of one's civic position, first of all, a screen saver/slogan/stories, as well as language. For example, the blue-yellow color scheme on the screen saver is used by popular American bloggers to support Ukraine ("*Mr Degree*" channel, @MrDegreeOfficial).

We risk assuming that an equally important factor of under-Ukrainization, the negative effect of which was felt long before 2014, is the unsatisfactory results of Ukraine's economic transformation over the past thirty years, especially compared to neighboring countries of Central and Eastern Europe (**Table 1.3.4**). Unlike Singapore, they did not become a real driver of nation-building processes based on the model of "civic nationalism".

● **Table 1.3.4** Comparative results of changes in key economic indicators of Ukraine and Poland for 1991–2021 (in constant 2015 prices)

Country	Indicator	Year	
		1991	2021
Ukraine	Gross National Product (billion USD)	147.4	101.5
Poland		181.4	587.5
Ukraine	Gross National Product per capita (billion USD)	2835	2451
Poland		4774	15549

Note: The World Bank. World Development Indicators. URL: <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>

However, the President of Ukraine V. Zelensky has addressed Ukrainian and foreign audiences 103 times in the first 50 days of the war. He skillfully used his speeches as a "powerful weapon against russian disinformation", which displaced russian leader from the position of the main news-maker of the russian-Ukrainian war and approved in the world media the wording "russia's war against Ukraine" instead of "the Ukrainian crisis" [7]. On the other hand, almost half of the top Ukrainian influencers from YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok (14 profiles out of 30) did not react at all to the threat to the existence of their native country. Presumably, the "existential factors" for them are only the constancy of their high ratings, which did not undergo significant changes during the studied period. For example, a comparison of the rating of Ukrainian YouTubers by "Social blade" (<http://surl.li/mbbqx>) with the list of the most popular Ukrainian-language YouTube channels on Wikipedia by manifest.in.ua [28] shows that the Internet version of the TV channel STB takes 23rd place in the overall rating, the author's channel "*Chotky patsa*" takes 31st place.

3.3 WAR THROUGH THE EYES OF THE MILITARY (BASED ON THE PHOTO CONTENT OF THE OFFICIAL PAGES OF THE INFANTRY BRIGADES OF THE ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE ON FACEBOOK)

The official Facebook pages of 23 brigades (mechanized, motorized infantry, infantry, mountain assault, airborne assault, airmobile, airborne, jaeger, marine) were investigated. For various reasons, the data of one more marine infantry brigade and three mechanized brigades according

to the pre-war structure of the Armed Forces were not taken into account. The official pages of the infantry brigades, which had just begun to form during the Russian invasion, were not considered.

We reviewed these pages three times: in early February 2022 before full-scale war, in September 2022, and in early March 2023. As of the beginning of February 2022, before the start of full-scale hostilities, the total number of their subscribers was 375.6K. At the beginning of March 2023, their number increased to 883.7K or 2.3 times. When establishing the final figures, it should be taken into account, that at the time of the third review, the official pages of the two brigades were redone for reasons of cyber security. In September 2022, they had combined 108.7K followers, currently only 3.9K. The rest of the official Facebook pages of the infantry units of the Armed Forces showed growth during 2022, even though the number of users of social media, especially Facebook, in Ukraine decreased during the martial law. The greatest increase in the number of subscribers was recorded on page 92 of the separate mechanized brigade (SMB) named after the kish otaman Ivan Sirko – from 6.4K to 53K or 8.3 times. The leaders in terms of the number of subscribers throughout the observation period were 93 "Kholodny Yar" SMB (208.9K) and 72nd OMBR named after Black Zaporozhets (97K). Of the 23 brigades, one actually does not post on its official page, one does not update them for a long time. The rest of the official pages of the infantry brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are updated regularly. The absolute majority of the considered infantry units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine have accounts on other social media platforms – Instagram, YouTube, Telegram, but the number of their followers is much smaller. The most popular among them is the YouTube channel of the 93rd SMB "Kholodny Yar" (75.2K subscribers, 22.7M views), which ranks 12th in the ranking of Ukrainian-language channels in the "Military affair" category, compiled by the public project "Manifest" (manifest.in.ua) [28].

We analyzed the photo content of the official page of the infantry brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with the second largest number of subscribers – 72nd OMBR named after Black Zaporozhets (97K) (<https://www.facebook.com/72.brigade.best/photos>). The photo content, totaling 630 units, fully covered the course of the first year of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war (February 24, 2022 – March 11, 2023). 315 images were analyzed, the rest were removed from the review as either not directly related to the topic (images of chevrons), or duplicate images of the same event/face, or their identification is difficult/too ambiguous.

We singled out three major categories in the studied photo content – "People", "Equipment", "Landscape", dividing each of them into separate categories. This allowed us to take into account during calculations the specific weight of images with sufficiently close content, at the same time, without losing important details. The main criterion for separation was the semantic-semiotic approach in Roland Barthes's version – the location of a certain object/objects (spectrum) as a meaningful center at the denotative level, or stadium [19].

Comments and posts accompanying these photos were used to clarify the background and time of content production. The semantic-semiotic analysis of the photo from the official page of the 72nd OMBR named after Black Zaporozhets often did not coincide with the author's labeling of these images.

We included the following thematic headings in the **"People"** category:

People at the war – spontaneous photos of military personnel in a combat situation, against the background of military equipment and weapons.

Breaks on the front line included various types of recreation on the front line.

Women at the war – all existing images of women, including alongside men.

Posing – with or without weapons and equipment, against the background of equipment or without, which emphasize the personality of the person depicted.

On combat positions – images of people in positions, equipped in the engineering plan.

In a peaceful environment – photos from award ceremonies, concerts, cultural events, with the participation of a chaplain, with civilians.

Fallen heroes – personal photos of fallen heroes, both in war and in peacetime, photos from mourning ceremonies.

The following thematic headings were included in the **"Equipment"** category: *"Our equipment"*, *"Equipment, weapons and ammunition"*, Ukrainian and trophy, *"Destroyed enemy equipment"*.

The **"Landscape"** category was made up of the following thematic headings: *Elements of combat operations* (mainly artillery fire, mortars, explosions, which, due to Operator safety issues, are always presented on a wide landscape background); *Ruins, Animals, War landscapes* with any signs of combat (eg, a landscape with a lot of craters from explosions, military equipment in a field with ripe wheat, large-scale photography of fortified positions from the ground and from the air).

The main feature of the content under consideration is that the "Photos" section on the official pages of the army brigades currently consists exclusively of photos for posts, made by professional media with the assistance of the brigade's press service. However, in each of the considered visual images, in addition to certain stereotyped media elements, there are always unique real images, recorded by technical means of shooting.

At the same time, according to our observations, visual arrays in general are formed spontaneously, on the occasion of significant events at a certain moment – for example, a long stable defense or a successful counteroffensive, as well as established approaches regarding the need for mandatory mention of all types of troops – infantry, tanks, artillery. We summarized the obtained results in **Table 1.3.5**.

In September 2022, in co-authorship with L. Bozhko, a part of the photo content of the most popular official Facebook page of the infantry brigade – 93 SMB "Kholodny Yar" (<http://surl.li/demty>) was recently analyzed (**Fig. 1.3.4**). The general sample consisted of more than 500 photos, taken between May and September 2022. Images in the "People" category accounted for 58.3 % of the total number of images counted; in the "Equipment" category – 24.7 %; in the "Landscape" category – 17 % [14].

As you can see, the results coincided within the limits of statistical error.

In our opinion, this means that the vision of "War through the eyes of the military" differs from everyday and journalistic assumptions about it. The war does not look like a chain of combat operations with the massive use of tanks, artillery, and other weapons, the result of which is the

destruction of the maximum number of enemies and enemy equipment. *It appears as a special type of human existence.* In our opinion, here the peculiarity of Ukrainian "militancy" was revealed, not as aggressiveness, aimed at external expansion, but at the defense of the native land.

● **Table 1.3.5** Results of the content analysis of a part of the "Photo" section on the official Facebook page of the 72nd OMBR named after Black Zaporozhets (24.02.2022–11.03.2023)

Thematic heading name	Percentage of the total number, %	Number of images
People		
People at the war	12.7	40
Breaks on the frontline	2.9	9
Posing	31.4	99
On combat positions	1.3	4
In a peaceful environment	4.8	15
Women at the war	6	19
Fallen heroes	0.6	2
Totally	59.7	188
Equipment		
Our equipment	5.7	18
Equipment, weapons and ammunition our and trophy	9.9	31
Destroyed enemy equipment and ammunition	5.3	17
Totally	20.9	66
Landscape		
Elements of combat operations	5.7	18
Ruins	4.8	15
Animals	4.1	13
War landscapes	4.8	15
Totally	19.4	61
In sum	100	315

Note: OMBR – okrema mekhanizovana bryhada (the separate mechanized brigade). Translit which used in official accounts

Let's assume that the content of the "military vision of the war" was determined to a large extent by such factors. On the one hand, it was dictated by the position of the Operator, the one who shoots, according to the terminology of R. Barthes. A significant part of the photo content was taken by professional journalists. However, even being on the front lines at the time of the shooting,

they were not direct witnesses of high-intensity combat operations. For security reasons, they were not shown a large amount of Ukrainian military equipment. On the other hand, the military situation turned shootings sometimes in another direction, in which they were not planned in advance. For example, the lack of a sufficient number of thematic scenes "In a peaceful environment" or the presence of a large selection of "picturesque" locations with ruins and landscapes, mutilated by combat actions, could have affected. Finally, the coverage of combat operations involving various types of troops could not do without photos of their personnel.

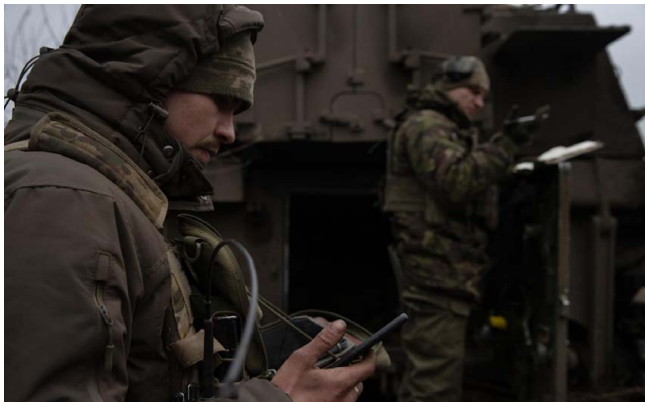


Fig. 1.3.4 Sample of the frame "People at the war" from the photo content of the official Facebook page of the 72nd OMBR named after Black Zaporozhets

Another question to be considered is the effect of the studied vision of "war through the eyes of the military" on the mass audience. Since the Revolution of Dignity, Facebook has become not only the most popular, but also the most influential social platform for Ukrainians. Formally, it maintains such positions in 2023, controlling more than 40 % of Ukrainian Internet traffic – more than Youtube, Instagram, and Twitter combined [29].

However, it should be taken into account that the functions of Facebook regarding the coverage of the russian-ukrainian war in different phases of its course have changed significantly. It is obvious, that Facebook, in contrast to 2014–2015, the period of the so-called anti-terrorist operation in the east of the country, lost its informational priority in covering the course of hostilities. As noted in a large-scale survey by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, online channels of information are now predominant, especially for youth age groups. If we analyze the total time of news consumption in social networks (and take it as 100 %), then 41 % falls on Telegram, 37 % on YouTube, and only 12 % on Facebook (another 6 % falls on Viber, and on all others networks, taken

together, – 3 %) [4]. On the other hand, the authors' personal observations allow us to state that Facebook continues to perform *volunteer* work, collecting various assistance for the Armed Forces; *communicative* – for relatives and friends of certain military units and divisions, functions to which the function of *searching for missing persons* is added (in previous years, due to the much smaller scale of the phenomenon, it was not so noticeable). The performance of this function is stimulated by the fact that the female part of the audience exceeds the male part in all age groups of users [30].

But Facebook performs all these functions separately from the official pages of military structures, through specialized communities (for example, the volunteer organization "Return Alive" with 3.5 million followers (<http://surl.li/demum>). The propaganda function, which belongs to official Facebook pages of military formations, also has its own specifics. Since their users, as a rule, make up an active pro-Ukrainian community, it may not be about conviction in something, but about *motivational influence*, support of already existing views. This is clearly evidenced by the actual complete absence of image reposts by other users and numerous comments like "God bless you all!"

3.4 UKRAINIAN "FEMALE MILITARY": BEFORE AND DURING THE FULL-SCALE WAR

"Female military" is one of the newest frames for Ukrainian culture, which began to actively advance since the beginning of the "hybrid" phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2014. Ukrainian "female military" is what we call images (primarily photographic) of women in military uniform, sometimes with military ammunition, weapons, against the background of military equipment, military towns, training grounds, often in a combat environment, etc.

The Ukrainian "female military" was analyzed on the materials of the Facebook social network – almost 2.5 thousand photos of women in military uniform. During the research, preference was given not to the maximum volume of visual units in the sample population, but to the analysis of various contexts of the production of "female military" – a woman in military service, a woman in real combat operations, a woman in command positions in the Armed Forces, a woman in uniform as an artificially created media object.

In the first stage of the research, these contexts were studied in the mode of "peacetime" as of the end of January 2022, in the second – after a year of the full-scale war in March 2023. According to the Personnel Center of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the number of women in the army doubled from 2015 to 2021 and accounted for approximately 15 % of the military personnel [31]. 16,700 women received the status of combatants, 302 were granted state awards [32]. The specific weight of women among the personnel of the Armed Forces in 2022 compared to peacetime increased to 20 % [33], apparently due to the general mobilization and increase in the total number of the Armed Forces.

The official page of the 1st Separate Siver Tank Brigade (<https://www.facebook.com/1ogtb>) was chosen to study the context of **"women in military service"** due to the large number of photos of "female military" in lifestyle. The first 1,000 images, which covered the period from Octo-

ber to December 2021 and contained both military and civilian images of women, were subjected to content analysis. It is important to note, that during this period, certain restrictions on women occupying combat positions, which existed in the first years after the beginning of the "hybrid" stage of the Russian-Ukrainian war, were already removed. In addition, it should be taken into account, that during this period all personnel units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were necessarily involved in the battles in the east of the country on a rotational basis.

Only those photos, in which all the characters are dressed in military uniform, were classified as "female military". Paired images of men and women where female images occupied the visual center of the image were also included. Serial photos from different angles or at different moments of the same event were counted as one, since we were primarily interested in the ratio of different types of activities of women in the Armed Forces. If the percentage of the total number of female photos in the sample (13 %) was approximately equal to the specific weight of women in the Armed Forces, then the specific weight of purely "female military" turned out to be approximately half as much. Out of 75 images of women in uniform, 70 turned out to be images of women in their main traditional economic activities – clerical, cultural and educational work, cooking, serving food and posing [16].

The content analysis of the photo on the same page of the 1st Siver Tank Brigade during the first year of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war (24.02.2022–12.03.2023) allowed us to obtain the following results. A total of 538 images for this period, 231 of which are not directly related to the content under consideration (reposts of infographics of enemy losses and operational situation from the General Staff of the Armed Forces, etc.). Of the remaining 307 images, there were 10 images of women, which were distributed as follows:

- *medicine* – 1;
- *posing* – 5, of which two were used to advertise voluntary service in the Armed Forces;
- *celebrations/events* – 4 serial photos from the marriage ceremony of a woman and a man, both of whom are members of the brigade.

Comments on the images made it possible to establish the occupations of the women who posed in the photo: financiers, liaison officers, psychologists.

The context of **"woman in real combat"** was analyzed using the example of media files from the account of O. Bilozerska (<https://www.facebook.com/bilozerska>) (37.4K subscribers in December 2021, 41.3K in March 2023) – an officer of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, recently one of the few female snipers. It is interesting that O. Bilozerska has journalistic experience from peaceful life, runs her own website (bilozerska.info). However, only a few series are clearly staged, many photos have signs of professional shooting, but they were taken directly on the front line.

380 photographs from 2014 to 2021 were selected for the study, of which 96 were not classified as "female military". The rest of the photos were clearly dominated by "combat military": photos with weapons, military equipment (the heroine is the commander of the second fire platoon of the self-propelled artillery unit), in a military environment, setting up positions, life on the front lines, and not at international exercises or parades – 177 images (62.3 %), of which approximately 20–30 are repeated and serial [16].

Although O. Bilozerska made posts on the Facebook page and duplicated them on the website throughout the year of the russian-Ukrainian war, 9 full-length photos were available for consideration during this period in the frame of "female military", only 5 (55,55 %) of which can be defined according to the above criteria as "combat military" (**Fig. 1.3.5**).



🔍 **Fig. 1.3.5** An example of a "combat women's military" – a female sniper after pre-firing a rifle

Note: photo from O. Bilozerska's Facebook page

The context of "**woman in command positions in the army**" was previously studied on the basis of the media files of the account of V. Arnautova, adviser to the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on gender issues (<http://surl.li/bglyj>). Although status photos (at various events, in particular with the participation of the military) prevailed in the official album "Photos with Victoria", in the sum of photos from the private album "Photos of Victoria" they made up a noticeably smaller part – 38 out of 188 images (20.21 %) [16]. During the full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine, V. Arnautova continued to make posts on her Facebook page, but did not post a single photo in the style of "female military".

The context of "a woman in uniform as an artificially created media object" was studied using the example of the Facebook community "Our Country Ukraine" (<http://surl.li/azuqo>), saturated with images (photos, posters, graphics) of "female military" since 2018. The number of its subscribers at the end of 2021 was 48K, at the beginning of March 2023 – 61.1K.

The content of the community's media files is edited, since the absolute majority of images in the group's profile are placed by the moderators. Among the latter, there are at least 4 women (4 out of 9 moderators in 2021, 5 out of 11 moderators in 2023).

The first 1,000 content media files from this community were subjected to a first look at the content analysis, including 54 single and group images of women in military uniform (5.4 %), particularly collage-type and repetitive, and (247 or 24.7 %) images of men in military uniform individually or in a group. 19 images or 35.2 % of the total number of "female military" could be classified as "combat". For comparison, among "male military" in the group, a total of 103 media files (41.7 %) were assigned to the "Photos with weapons or military equipment" category.

In fact, all "female military" from the Facebook community "Our Country Ukraine" can be recognized as staged, not made in a real combat situation. We identified the most popular posing (even with weapons and equipment), which emphasizes the heroine's beauty and femininity, rather than her military status. A more stereotypical approach is posing with flowers and plants; animals (cat, dog) do not make up the majority. If 16.7 % of such mediatized "female military" appeared in the researched community, then 10.9 % appeared in the content of the sniper Olena Bilozerska's Facebook page [16].

During the second review in March 2023, all 426 images that chronologically fit into the framework of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine were analyzed. Among them, there is only one "female military" – an image of a group of women in military uniform with combat awards with ethno-national symbols, designed as a poster in honor of Ukrainian Women's Day.

Considering the fact that our most recent analysis of the photo content of the popular official Facebook pages of the infantry brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine found on the second most popular page of 72 OMBR named after Black Zaporozhets only 6 % of female images per year, we considered it impractical to search for additional resources to compare "female military" before and after the start of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

We explain the spread of Ukrainian "female military" in 2014–2022 by the coincidence of 3 factors:

1. Further democratization of the political system of Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity, which, while maintaining its transitional, insufficiently institutionalized character, was marked by the expansion of access to power and opportunities for social mobility of a wider circle of Ukrainians.
2. Promotion of the wave of "equal opportunities feminism" in Ukraine at this time.
3. An increase in the number and personnel composition of the Armed Forces in the conditions of hostilities in the east of the country with separatist entities, supported by Russia, which was ensured by several waves of partial mobilization, as well as a broad campaign of voluntary entry into military service under contract.

At the same time, certain social expectations regarding the equality of the role and place of women during the "hybrid phase" of the Russian-Ukrainian war collided with more realistic practices of the predominance of women in military service in traditional types of economic activity (office, organization of cultural, religious, sports events), not accentuating it as an important social elevator, as well as the preservation of a more archaic interpretation of the female gender

as a beauty, dependent on a man in everything else. There were only isolated exceptions to this public interpretation. In the conditions of a sharp increase in the intensity of hostilities in February 2022 – at the beginning of 2023, the indicated approach became even more obvious and led, despite the formal increase in the specific weight of women among the personnel of the Armed Forces, to a decrease in "female military" in all possible contexts and on all possible resources to statistically insignificant indicators.

If we consider "female military" through the prism of the Ukrainian national character, we can say that together with "male military" they embody a very moderate level of "militancy". Therefore, "combat military", that is, photos with weapons in hand, taken in a combat position, in a combat environment were not too common either before or after the start of the full-scale russian invasion of Ukraine. At the same time, even in such conditions, the researchers identified "3 forms, 4 categories, 15 types of female resistance" [34] of Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar women during the occupation and the war in Ukraine, in relation to which the contexts, analyzed by us, are the embodiment of the most radical armed resistance.

3.5 FROM "PICTURESQUE VILLAGE" TO "WAR RUINS"

One of the most famous traditional visual frames of Ukraine, which dates back to the 19th century, is associated with the "picturesque Ukrainian village". In contrast to the early images of Ukraine – primarily as a picturesque natural region, the proposed frame placed an image of *an elegant settlement in a picturesque natural environment at any time of the year and day*, indirectly reflecting such features of the national character as "emotionalism and sentimentalism, sensitivity and lyricism". The formation of the mentioned image took place primarily thanks to the Ukrainian school of landscape painting (S. Vasylykivsky), household paintings of M. Pymonenko. Recognized masters of the world level also contributed to the creation of this image, in particular I. Aivazovsky, A. Kuindzhi, I. Repin. This image, painted from the beginning on wide canvases by professional artists, began to be reproduced in huge editions thanks to postcards. There is a well-known lawsuit in connection with the use of one of M. Pymonenko's paintings on the label of a vodka bottle by M. Shustov.

The absolute majority of the 19th century photographers depict urban landscapes instead. We found only two photo collections comparable to the "picturesque Ukrainian village" frame. The collection of J. Raoult (approximately 30 items) (<http://surl.li/aznoh>), published on the website of the New York Public Library (<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org>), as well as S. M. Prokudin-Gorsky (9 photos with Ukrainian and Crimean landscapes out of 2.6 thousand, depicting various corners of the russian Empire), published on the website of the US Congress (<https://www.loc.gov/collections/prokudin-gorskii>). Both in general also coincide with this frame, and the differences do not go beyond the limits of the common at the end of the 19th century "critical realism" in visual arts. At the same time, the similar picturesqueness in the photos of the countryside of other regions of the former russian Empire by both photographers does not allow to verify the plausibility of the researched frame.

Later, in the 1930s–1980s, we observe the preservation of this frame in the paintings of V. Krychevskiy, A. Manastyrsky, M. Burachek and T. Yablonskaya. The most notable feature of the Soviet vision of the "picturesque Ukrainian village" was the maintenance of the propaganda narrative of the transformation of Ukraine into an industrial and agrarian republic. The last reminiscences of this image can be seen in the 1990s–2020s in the "Plontanism" of I. Marchuk.

Modern visions of a "picturesque Ukrainian village" differed in insignificant details (the change in the angle of the image due to the increase in the scale of what is depicted due to the spread of aerial photography, the expansion of the area of sown fields in the photos). We explain their spread by the insufficient speed of modernization processes, the preservation of a disproportionately high specific weight of agriculture in the economy of Ukraine (**Table 1.3.6**), the presence of 30.6 % of rural residents in the country's population [35] and the largest percentage in Europe (with the exception of Bulgaria) of supporters of "materialistic values" among Ukrainians – 45.9 % according to the World Values Survey-7, which was conducted in Ukraine in 2020 [36].

● **Table 1.3.6** Some indicators of the development of agriculture in Ukraine and France in 2021

Indicators	Ukraine	France
Plant growing (%)	81.4	61.7
Animal husbandry (%)	18.6	32.8
Specific weight in GDP (%)	12.4	2.1
Share in total exports (%)	41	13.7 ^a

Note: [37–40]

^aNew data for 2022. 5.5 % are counted by French statistics as "Services"

In the last two years before the start of the full-scale war, the exploitation of the frame of the "picturesque Ukrainian village" for export has become a trend phenomenon, correlative to the increasingly noticeable global trend of "ruralization". A qualitative example of such a product is the English-language channel "*Pavlo from Ukraine*" (<http://surl.li/bacue>) with 220K subscribers in the lifestyle and house-tour genres. In the directly Western vision of a "picturesque Ukrainian village", which is represented by several videos from the channel "bald and bankrupt" (3.85M subscribers, 590M views), all the signs of a global media product are clearly visible. One of the commentators aptly characterized them as follows: "Mission, absurdity, kindness, rural obscurity, humor" (<http://surl.li/fgrkv>) [41].

Already the first months of the active phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war generate the antagonistic frame "war ruins". Currently, the "war ruins" frame largely reflects the war-relatedness of ordinary citizens of Ukraine. About a quarter of those surveyed in the summer of 2022 noted that they were forced to change their place of residence in Ukraine during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia. 32 % of respondents stated that they suffered material losses as a result of the war. 7 % of the interviewees noted that they personally or their close relatives were injured

or maimed as a result of war [42]. It is the "war ruins" that appear as the first objects of its museification, so far in online format [43], and in the future may appear as a means of "promoting Ukraine on the international arena as a "place of memory" for the largest-scale destruction since the Second World War", which will attract a lot of attention in the context of the increasingly popular "dark" or memorial tourism in the world [15].

We decided to determine the features of the visual representations of the "war ruins" based on the content analysis of one of the most popular Telegram channels "Real war / Ukraine news" (<https://t.me/voynaireal>) with almost 1.4M subscribers, which exceeds the total number of followers of the official Facebook pages of more than 20 infantry brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The analysis was conducted for the period from October to December 2022, taking into account the fact of mass shelling of civilian infrastructure throughout the territory of Ukraine after the damage to the Crimean Bridge in early October 2022.

For this purpose, among other visual groups with a noticeable specific weight (political chronicles; maps, charts, diagrams, infographics; reposts of text messages, etc.) in the content of the specified social media platform, the category "Destructive consequences of the war" was singled out with four headings:

- *"uneasy sky"* with smoke from fires and traces of air defense work;
- *ruins, conflagrations, fires, demolitions* of cities, villages, infrastructure, cars;
- *"disorder in the room"* as a result of shelling;
- *"enemy remnants"* (equipment, weapons, pieces of equipment, missiles, drones, shells, mines, destroyed positions).

Relevant images on the territory of Ukraine, including the occupied territory, Russia and neighboring countries were included in this category. Photos of the consequences of the war, caused by hostilities or special operations, were taken into account. Images related to non-military causes were not taken into account. In serial images of the same event or object, photos, taken from approximately the same angle and repeated, were excluded from the calculation. Due to the ambiguity of the content, the depiction of the ruins of the Russian-Ukrainian war in reposts from the covers of the world mass media was not taken into account.

The "Destructive Consequences of the War" group of photos included mainly professionally made, but not illustrative photos. The visual appeal in this case consisted in the choice of an impressive perspective, an interesting position of the operator during the shooting, but not in the staging of the object.

As you can see, during the three months under consideration, the depiction of the destructive consequences of the war on the Telegram channel "Real War" undergoes certain transformations (**Table 1.3.7, Fig. 1.3.6**). After the first shock, such content is banned (or censored), attention is redirected to the demonstration of destroyed enemy weapons and equipment, which is more typical for coverage of wars and conflicts.

However, the percentage of images of the Russian-Ukrainian war through the lens of the destruction, damage, conflagrations and fires mainly of city buildings, infrastructure, cars, caused

by it remains unchanged (more than 60 % of the corresponding category). Therefore, we should talk about a new frame, different from both the pre-war frame of a "picturesque Ukrainian village" and close to it images of "war landscapes" with signs of hostilities (a large number of craters from explosions, large-scale shooting of fortified positions or military equipment on fields), which we singled out during the analysis of the content of media files on the official Facebook pages of the infantry brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

● **Table 1.3.7.** Results of the content analysis of the category "Destructive consequences of the war" in the photo content of the Telegram channel "Real war"

Month	October 2022		November 2022		December 2022	
Heading	n	%	n	%	n	%
"Uneasy sky"	81	25.2	12	11.2	17	12.9
"Ruins and fires"	195	60.5	73	68.2	78	59.1
"Disorder in the room"	12	3.7	4	3.7	6	4.5
"Enemy remnants"	34	10.6	18	16.9	31	23.5
Totally in the category "Destructive consequences of the war"	322	100	107	100	132	100
The total photo content for the month and the specific weight of the category in it	1605	20	1533	7	1546	8.5



○ **Fig. 1.3.6** Sample of the "war ruins" frame
Note: photo from the "Real War" Telegram channel

At the same time, according to our observations, the image of human victims among military and civilians is taboo on any official and unofficial resources.

The aggressor, using the advantage in artillery, aviation, and missile weapons, constantly inflicts massive strikes on the territory of Ukraine, which lead to the destruction of civil infrastructure, the demolition of private houses, cars, and the death of civilians. Visualizing the consequences of these strikes, along with the more typical demonstration of the destruction of enemy forces and equipment, constitutes one of the common domestic media frames in the coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian war – the "war ruins" frame. Its promotion is obviously due to a strong propaganda effect and a favorable reception by the Western audience. In the case of its further memorialization and museumification, we can talk about Ukraine as a country that instead of a "picturesque village" will be represented by "picturesque ruins".

CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis of the course of the first year (from February 24, 2022 to March 15, 2023) of the hot phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war through the prism of the visual content of social media platforms popular in Ukraine: YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, demonstrated its multiplex vision, which consists of many "hybrid" frames, where media elements are closely intertwined with socio-cultural ones. The latter are formed both by the previous historical and cultural tradition, and by the consequences of the turning points of the modernization transformations in Ukraine during the years of independence.

We observe the effect of these factors regardless of whether we are dealing with the completion or incompleteness of a certain modernization process. In the first case, we recorded the negative impact of globalized media culture, which popularizes primarily glamorous and entertaining content, often completely detached from reality, on the top Ukrainian YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok profiles. The overall level of their Ukrainization and social relevance at the beginning of 2023 (31 %) turned out to be more than twice lower than the indicators of dominance of the Ukrainian language in public and private space, achieved at the end of 2022. On the other hand, the unsatisfactory results of the economic transformation of Ukraine over the past thirty years became a significant factor in the under-Ukrainization of the considered top profiles. This did not allow using these profiles as a weapon as successfully as President V. Zelensky.

The Russian-Ukrainian war, through the eyes of the Ukrainian military, does not look like a stereotypical chain of combat operations with the massive use of its own equipment and weapon, and as a result, the destruction of the maximum number of enemies. *It appears as a special type of human existence.* After all, they are at the center of almost 60 % of the photo content on the official pages of the most popular infantry brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in terms of the number of subscribers (in particular, 72 OMBR named after the Black Zaporozhets). This was the result of the intersection of the "peaceful" beliefs of the Operator, the professional media people

who generated this content, and the real combat environment, in which the shooting was carried out. The specified vision performs a motivational function for the active pro-Ukrainian community, which is the main audience of such accounts.

The hopes of patriotic ethno-nationally oriented communities for the equality of the role of men and women as, first of all, warriors, which was already reflected in the spread of the "female military" frame during the first phase (2014 – the beginning of 2022) of the Russian-Ukrainian war, did not come true due to the contradictions of the progress of feminism in the Ukrainian culture. Images of women in military service were dominated by images of traditional types of economic activity (office, organization of cultural and religious, sports events), not emphasizing it as an important social elevator, but accenting purely female beauty.

In the conditions of a sharp increase in the intensity of hostilities in February 2022 – at the beginning of 2023, the indicated approach became even more obvious. It led despite the formal increase in the specific weight of women among the personnel of the Armed Forces, to a decrease in "female military" in all possible contexts and on all possible resources to statistically insignificant indicators. However, this does not prevent Ukrainian women from inventing less radical forms of resistance to the war.

If we consider both "male" and "female military" through the prism of the Ukrainian national character, then they reflect a very moderate level of "militancy" as its fundamental feature. Therefore, "combat military", that is, photos with weapons in hand, taken in a combat position, in a combat environment were not too common either before or after the start of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

With the increasing intensity of Russian attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure in the fall of 2022, we observe in the content of popular Telegram channels, as one of the main sources of operational news, the promotion of the "war ruins" frame, images of destruction, damage, conflagrations and fires, mainly of urban buildings, infrastructure, and cars. This frame appears to be more modernized than the one popular from the end of the 19th century, the frame of the "picturesque Ukrainian village", which simultaneously represented "emotionalism and sentimentalism, sensitivity and lyricism" of the Ukrainian national character and the preservation of the country's excessive, even for emerging market economies, level and influence of ruralization.

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