



## Solidarity Ukraine – 01/05/2022

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The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) joins international solidarity in favour of Ukraine attacked by Russia on 24 February 2022.

After a pandemic that has weakened democratic countries with the worrying rise of conspiracy theories and hate speech that have multiplied on social networks, we hope that this war in Europe is an opportunity to reflect on a new solidarity, in Europe and with our international allies.

This newsletter is the third publication of our Institute after two issues on March 1 and April 1, 2022. We undertake to publish a new issue every first day of the month, as long as this brutal, total and illegal war, unanimously condemned by all democracies and institutions representing the international

community, lasts. Experts have called war “total” because it combines “hot” (classic, on the ground), “cold” (the world is organized around two camps-Western democracies and/or values and the rest of the world), and “hybrid” (cyber war or 3.0).

In this third issue, we address the theme of propaganda and its antidote, humour, a weapon of mass destabilization

- 1- An article giving some definitions and synonyms of the «fake news» also called disinformation
- 2- An article on “memes”, a destabilizing pop iconography for official propaganda
- 3- A third article on the recycling of Soviet jokes to counter Russian propaganda, black humour “weapon of despair” according to Michel Eltchaninoff

\* The logo was designed by Caritas Canada in February 2022; a large Ukrainian community lives in Canada



True lily of the valley  
(right)

« *fake lily of the valley* »  
(left)

Paris, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022

**Misinformation** : False or inaccurate information, whether or not it was deliberately created and disseminated to mislead people. In this report, the term false information is also used as a generic term for misinformation, disinformation, infox, hyper-partisan information, conspiracy theories and click traps.

**Disinformation** : Information content or set of false or inaccurate information content(s), created with the deliberate intent to mislead people.

**Infox (fake news)** : Information content fabricated from any part or extremely inaccurate published on the Internet and formatted to resemble legitimate consumer information content.

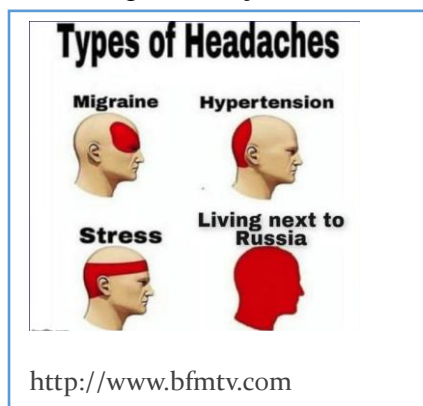
**Hyper-partisan information**: Information content covering events that actually occurred, but with a strong partisan bias making it potentially misleading.

**Click trap information**: Sensationalist information content, often false, inaccurate or misleading, created for the sole purpose of attracting the attention of users in order to generate traffic on the page hosting it.

**Foreign digital influence**: Information operation conducted in the digital space (web, social networks) by an actor or a group of foreign actors for influence purposes.

**Source** : These definitions are taken from the public report published in January 2022: Bronner (Gerarld), under the direction of (2022) «Les lumières à l'ère numérique», Paris: Presidency of the French Republic.

According to François Jost, semiologist and emeritus professor at the Sorbonne Nouvelle,



“memes are anything but simple.” It is the diversion, one day, somewhere on the web, of a photo or video with humor. Viral phenomenon, it is a manifestation of pop culture that allows to laugh, to mock, to denounce or support a cause or to express fears. It can also become a propaganda tool. The most famous memes are those with cats. A theme, an image at the beginning gives rise to countless variations, reversals, imitations. François Jost highlights the “addictive pleasure” of following the “thread of this continuity” that is transformed in space and time. He suggests the following definition: 'an image that circulates, either fixed or animated, with a minimal modification, an addition, which is often a

text (we then speak of remix). A “successful meme becomes viral”; therefore, virality is a sign of success. The term “meme” was coined by biologist and ecologist Richard Dawkins from the term “mimesis”. This neologism allows to make a link between biology and society. Like genes, memes spread from brain to brain by replicating on the web. They can influence our behaviour or our views of things. According to mimetics, cultural phenomena function by imitation.

This is an ancient process, that of parody, pastiche as propaganda in times of war, which we now call «fake news». The dark side of this «visual carnival» that memes constitute is that they can be instrumentalized, for example for harassment or to serve propagandistic purposes. When the Americans announced in January 2022 that Russia was about to enter a war against Ukraine, the Russian embassy in South Africa published a meme entitled "confused Travolta" where we see the hero of "Saturday night fever" in front of an orthodox church and a very quiet square, looking puzzled. The meme is an extreme disbelief and a mockery of an American icon. U.S. services have obviously responded. The Daily Telegraph article talks about “the first war of the tik tok era” with combat videos mounted as pop music clips. A kind of “participatory” war, involving both institutions and anonymous individuals. Vladimir Putin is ridiculed by a meme that shows him the skull topped with a «cope cage» (metal protections tinkered on Russian tanks to limit the damage of Javelin missiles). The Russian president seems less threatening, less inaccessible, well protected by his huge table in the Kremlin, cleverly staged. According to the socio-anthropologist Nicolas Nova, “in all wars there have been attempts to dedramatize things with humour and irony in order to keep events at bay”. But he adds that at this scale (with the Internet and social networks), the situation is unprecedented. All published memes produce a very destabilizing iconography for official propaganda.

**Source** : François Jost , « Est-ce que tu mèmes : de la parodie à la pandémie numérique», Paris : CNRS éditions – article du Monde, supplément L’Epoque, dimanche 17 et lundi 18 avril 2022 ; article de Nicolas Santoria complété par un article du Daily Telegraph et du livre de Nicolas Nova & Frédéric Kaplan (2016) « La culture Internet des mèmes » : Lausanne : Presses polytechniques et universitaires romandes. o



In Russia, Soviet black humor is back. Popular jokes at the time of the USSR circulate again, underground, humor being considered as a weapon of «massive destabilization» by all dictatorships. The darker the humour and the more stories, the more tyrannical the period of Soviet rule – they were virtually non-existent under Gorbachev where people could express themselves more freely. They are also a loophole to counter censorship; they were carefully collected by the US intelligence. In January 2017, the CIA declassified 13 million pages, posted online, devoted to Soviet jokes. Here are some stories selected in early April 2022..

“Moscow has offered to Kiev to organize a meeting between Putin and Zelensky. According to unofficial sources, the construction of the table has already begun.”

“Putin is in hell. On a shore leave, he goes to a bar in Moscow, orders a vodka and asks insistently if the Crimea , the Donbass, Kiev and all of Ukraine are still "ours". Reassured by the bartender’s affirmative answers, he asks for the bill. "Five euros" answers the waiter.

«In order to comply with the requirements of Roskomnadzor (Russian Gendarme of Communications) the book by Leon Tolstoy War and Peace was renamed Special Operation and High Treason».

“Putin is at the hairdresser’s. He keeps asking him about Ukraine while cutting her hair. Annoyed, the Russian president asks him why so many questions. “It’s more convenient for me to work when your hair is up on your head” says the hairdresser.”

In Izmailh, in the Odessa region, a story tells of a conversation between God and Jesus, determined to take a vacation. Jesus first chooses to go to Israel. God takes time to reflect before letting go: "I am going to Russia." Faced with the astonished silence of Jesus, he explains “I have never been there”.

**Source** : Isabelle Mandraud « En Russie, le retour de l’humour noir soviétique », Le Monde, samedi 2 avril 2022



## Useful contacts utiles

Pour aider l'Ukraine, voici une liste d'associations & ONG publiées sur le site [Support Ukraine](#)

**Croix-Rouge Française** - [Croix-Rouge française](#) pour des dons financiers, en soutien de la Croix-Rouge ukrainienne, au Comité International de la Croix-Rouge

**Médecins sans frontières** - [fonds d'urgence](#) dans les pays limitrophes de l'Ukraine et cherchent à faire entrer du matériel médical et du personnel.

**Secours populaire** - lance un appel aux [dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine](#) .

**Protection civile** - un appel aux dons pour financer d'autres besoins (défibrillateurs, respirateurs, groupes électrogènes, etc.) : <https://don.protection-civile.org/soutenir>

**Fondation de France** - lance un [appel à la générosité](#) pour soutenir les centaines de milliers de personnes affectées par le conflit en Pologne et en Roumanie

**Agence des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés** - situation d'urgence de niveau 3 pour la crise en Ukraine, le plus élevé. L'UNHCR a renforcé ses opérations en Ukraine et dans les pays voisins, pour la soutenir, vous pouvez faire un don : site [Donner.unhcr.org](http://Donner.unhcr.org)

**Unicef** - un besoin urgent de financement pour répondre aux besoins essentiels des enfants Pour faire un [don sur le site Unicef.fr](#) .

**ONG Care International** - un [formulaire en ligne de dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine](#) pour apporter une aide d'urgence aux populations et aux réfugiés.

**L'ONG française ACTED** organise des convois humanitaires pour l'Ukraine

**association Solidarités International** – une [collecte des fonds](#) pour envoyer des convois de vivres et biens de première nécessité, distribuer de l'eau et des repas aux réfugiés

**Plan International**, en Pologne, Roumanie et Moldavie, pour apporter aide matérielle et psychosociale aux jeunes ukrainiens et à leur famille, et [sollicite des dons](#) pour ce faire.

**L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine** - envoi de convois d'aide humanitaire, des soins aux blessés, des échanges de savoir-faire médical, une aide psychologique et organise des colonies de vacances pour les enfants orphelins - [HelloAsso](#) ;

**Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine** - réfugiés en transit dans l'ouest du pays, et collecte fonds, médicaments et équipements pour l'hébergement et les soins [via ses partenaires français, l'association SAFE et l'organisation FONDEMOS.](#)

**JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr** est la plateforme publique du bénévolat, - une page dédiée [Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine](#) .

**Les Banques alimentaires** - une [aide d'urgence à apporter aux frontières de l'Ukraine](#), dans les pays frontaliers accueillant des réfugiés.

**La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France** ont établi une [liste](#) (lits de camps, sacs de couchage, lingettes, conserves, pansements hémostatiques, solutions antiseptiques ...).

**L'Association des maires de France** a dressé les [lieux de collecte](#) à travers toute la France. Les Maires de France appellent à la [solidarité avec l'Ukraine](#) . De nombreuses villes de France organisent des collectes de produits de première nécessité

**La plateforme officielle** « [Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine](#) » lancée le 8 mars 2022 par le gouvernement pour accompagner les Français souhaitant héberger chez eux des Ukrainiens réfugiés et accueillis en France.

Les associations, fondations, entreprises et collectivités territoriales peuvent utiliser ce [formulaire en ligne](#) pour renseigner leur capacité d'hébergement.

**Source** : <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15542>