Decoding Gendered Political Communication around the 2022 Russian Full-scale Invasion of Ukraine

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This study analyses 🇺🇦👩 and 👨 politician PolCom on FB and TW before and during 🇷🇺's full-scale invasion of 🇺🇦 in 2022.

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1. How does Ukrainian politician **usage of Facebook and Twitter** differ according to time-period, gender, and language?
2. To what extent do the **narratives** Ukrainian politicians discuss on social media fit expectations of gendered discourse?
3. How do **interaction styles** of more prominent and less prominent Ukrainian politicians on social media fit expectations of gendered discourse?

→ **Structural Topic Modelling & Social Network Analysis**

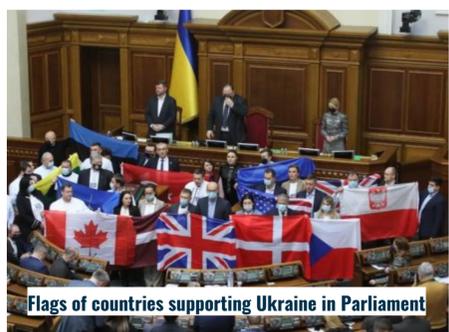## Political communication + gender + war/peace + platforms.

- **Facebook and Twitter have varying affordances** (Bossetta, 2018) that are utilized differently during events such as elections, war, protest, etc. (Dixon, 2022; Wagner et al., 2017; Onuch et al., 2021, Reuter et al., 2018)
- **The War & Peace Hypothesis posits that women are pacifist + compromising** in conflict, while men are combative (Tessler et al., 1999), though this is contested (Aharoni, 2017)
- **Women are more interactive and collaborative in their communication than men**, and this feminine style is considered subordinate to men's lone-wolf styles in politics and business (Gilligan, 1995). On social media, women use interactive affordances (ie. @ on Twitter) to relate to their target audiences (McGregor and Mourão, 2016, Meeks, 2016)

Given documented differences in gendered communication styles and social media platform usage during crises, it is critical to study them holistically.

Flags of countries supporting Ukraine in Parliament

Data Overview

- **Two time periods analyzed:**
  - Pre-full-scale invasion: February – June 2021
  - Post-full-scale invasion: February – June 2022
- **57,000 Facebook posts from 50 women and 131 men politicians**
  - Proportion of women/men posting + the language they posted in (~75% Ukrainian) remained the same before + during full-scale invasion
- **23,000 tweets from 25 women and 51 men politicians**
  - Proportion of women + English tweeting increased after full-scale invasion

Results

RQ1. Politicians utilized differing platform audiences/affordances to their advantage after the full-scale invasion, exemplifying the importance of multiple social media platforms during crisis events.

RQ2. Women politicians conveyed the human impact of the war and need for Western support, rather than pacifist views. Women used fewer aggressive/military terms than men politicians, leaving the Women Peace Hypothesis only partially satisfied.

RQ3. Women politicians exemplified the feminine expectation of alliance building and relationship development to build a consensus of support for Ukraine with the West through calls for support and higher levels of Twitter interaction, supporting other evidence that women have stronger senses of group awareness and cohesion and use social media more strategically to achieve their objectives.

Continue to study how war impacts gendered PolCom and social media use by analyzing *responses* from Western leaders to Ukrainian politicians' tweets