

# AI and Algorithmic Amplification

The Role of Technology in Spreading Disinformation in the Czech Republic

Josef Holý, Institute of Psychology, Czech Academy of Sciences 2025-05-15

Mediated Society (MEDIS:ON)

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# Mememes - Delivery Systems for Narratives

- **Mememes ≠ Jokes** - they are story fragments (hero, villain, crisis, solution)
- **Visual + textual** - evoke cultural (ideological) narratives

# Czech Meme Examples

Blending into existing cultural stereotypes



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A meme featuring a burger with worms on it. The text reads: "Je jen na Vás, co budete mít na talíři..." and "„Stop regulacím EU!“". At the bottom, there are logos for SPD, TRIKOLORA, and PRO, along with a circular logo that says "ČESKO PROTI DRAHOTĚ".

Je jen na Vás,  
co budete mít  
na talíři...

„Stop regulacím EU!“

SPD TRIKOLORA PRO ČESKO PROTI DRAHOTĚ

Zdroj: SPD, Trikolóra, PRO / zpracováno: Praha Na Vaštině OČI s.r.o.



# Czech Meme Examples

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Je jen na Vás,  
co budete mít  
na talíři...

„Stop regulacím EU!“

SPD A TĚLE BOJÚJÍ S NÁMI TRIKOLÓRA PRO

ČESKO PROTI DRAHOTĚ

Zdroj: SPD, Trikolóra, PRO / zpracováno: Praha, Na Vástrní 001 s.r.o.

A political advertisement for the SPD (Social Democratic Party of the Czech Republic). The top part features a close-up of a hand holding a sandwich filled with fried worms, with the text "Je jen na Vás, co budete mít na talíři..." (It's up to you, what you will have on your plate...). Below this, a banner reads "„Stop regulacím EU!“" (Stop EU regulations!). The bottom section contains the SPD logo, the slogan "A TĚLE BOJÚJÍ S NÁMI TRIKOLÓRA" (And they fight with us, the tricolor), and the "PRO" logo. A circular logo on the right says "ČESKO PROTI DRAHOTĚ" (Czechia against high prices).

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Blending into existing cultural stereotypes



# Contextual Meaning of Memes

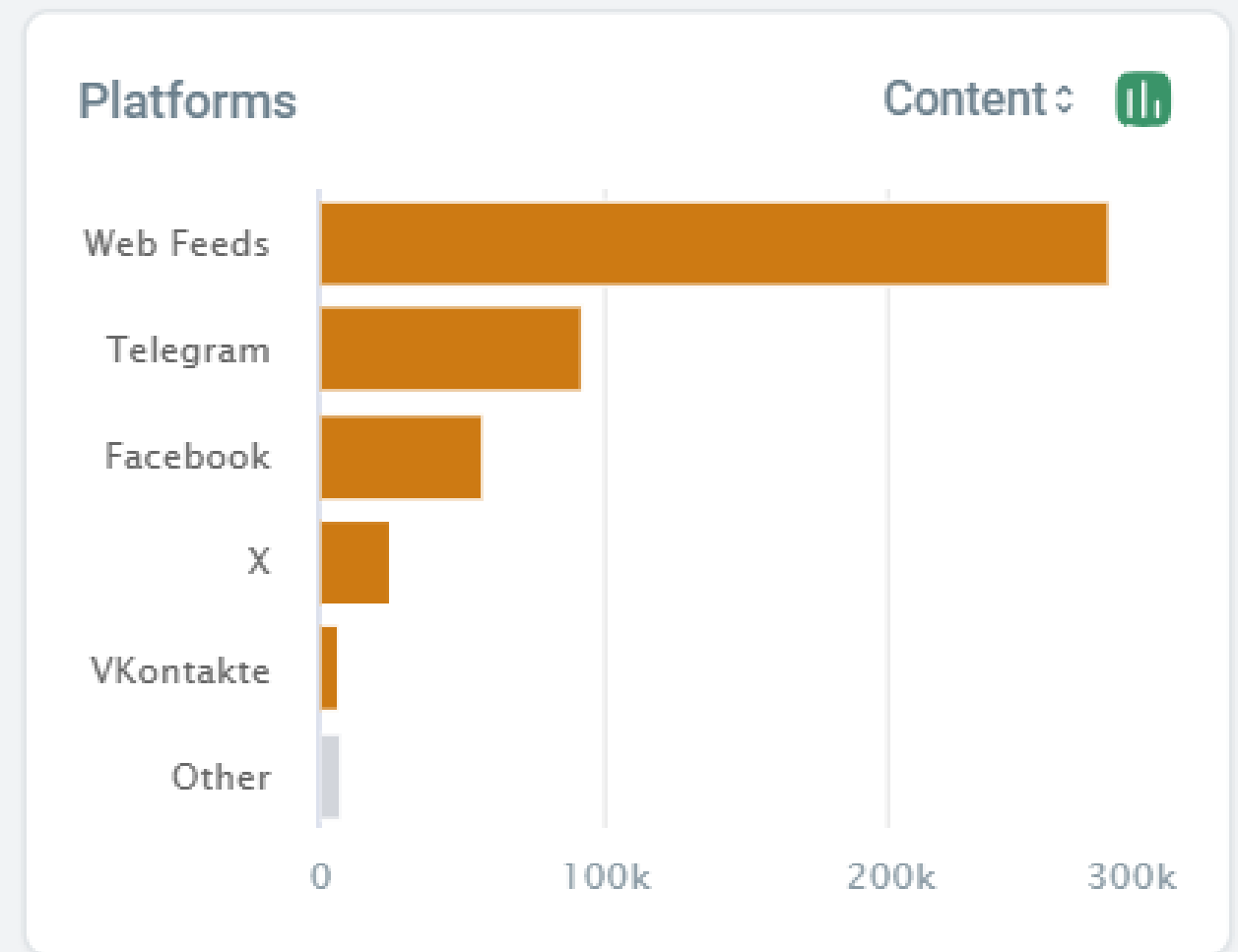
- A meme works only when it meets a receptive mental model
- Meaning depends on prior priming: cultural references, grievances, identity cues
- Online communities -> Target groups -> Echo Chambers





Channels

Name	Content	Interactions	Views	Followers
CZ24.NEWS	2841	352.3k	9.969M	30.9k
InfoVojna	392	135.7k	3.456M	53.23k
VidlakovyKyd	172	46.93k	1.44M	9358
michalapetr.com	554	36.83k	1.011M	6651
Protiproud.info	125	5218	267.5k	7418
CzechFreePress - vlajková loď českého...	38	3875	0	11.23k



# It's about Repetition

- **Mere-Exposure Effect** (Zajonc, 1968): Repetition increases liking and believability
  - **Confirmation bias**: The brain mistakes ease of processing for truth and safety
  - Propaganda doesn't need to convince—just to feel familiar

# Familiarity Becomes Truth

## Through Amplified Repetition

**Dechêne et al. (2010)** : “The Truth About the Truth: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Truth Effect”

DOI: [10.1177/1088868309352251](https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309352251)

- A meta-analysis showing that repetition reliably increases perceived truth across 51 studies.

**Pennycook, Cannon & Rand (2018)**: “Prior Exposure Increases Perceived Accuracy of Fake News”

DOI: [10.1037/xge0000465](https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000465)

- Demonstrated that just one prior exposure to a fake news headline increased its perceived accuracy, across political affiliations.

**Fazio et al. (2020)**: “Knowledge Does Not Protect Against Illusory Truth”

DOI: [10.1037/xge0000723](https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000723)

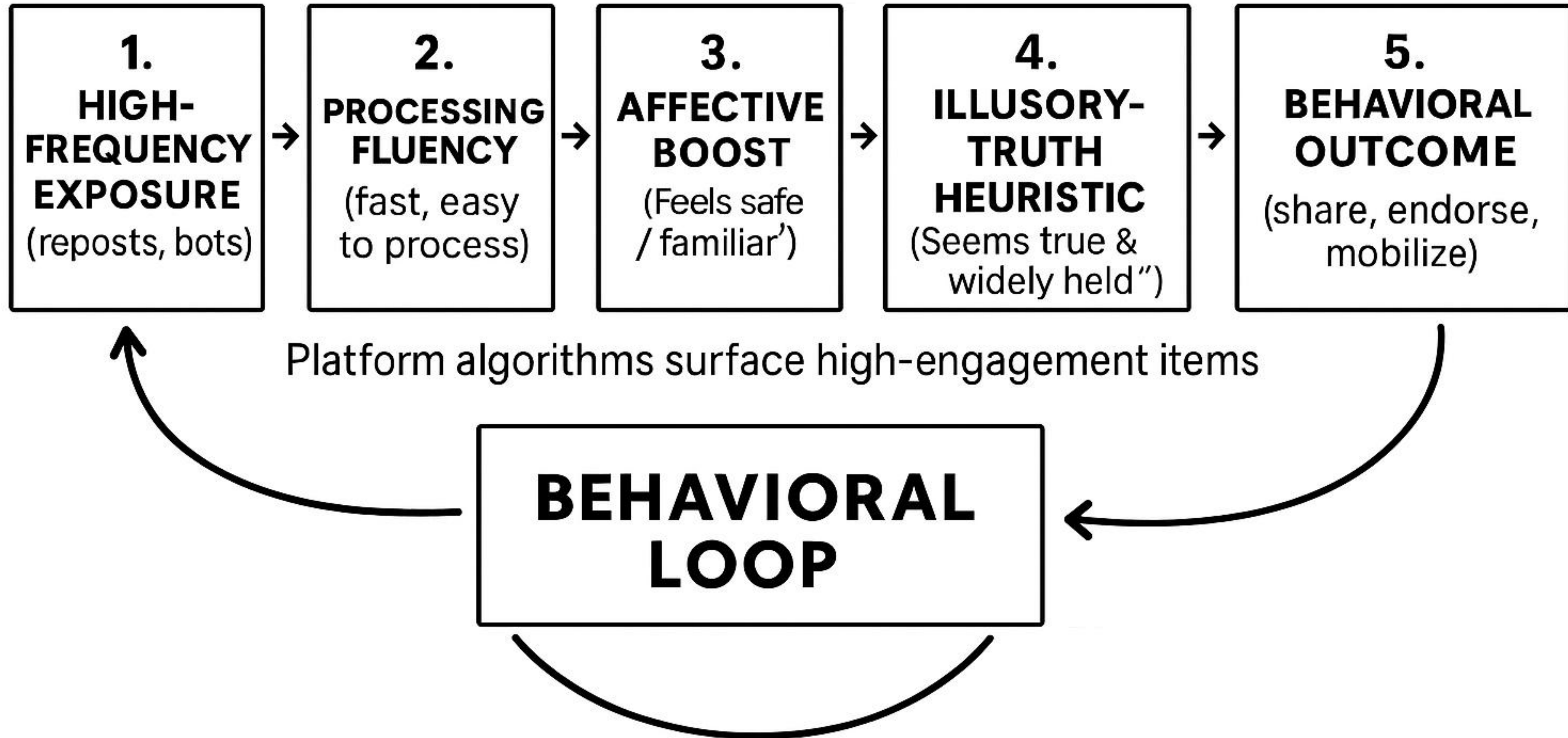
- Showed that even people who *know* a fact is false are more likely to believe it after repeated exposure.

# Same Story, Replicated

- Identical memes reposted across platforms
- Repetition across media creates perceived consensus and familiarity
- Visual slogans migrate from screen to street (e.g., “Czech Gov = Ukrainian Puppet”)

The image displays a grid of social media posts from various platforms, all featuring the same text and a photograph of Donald Trump and Andrzej Duda. The posts are arranged in a 2x2 grid. The top-left post is from 'Selský Rozum' (21 Feb 2025 14:30) and the top-right post is from 'Die Stimme der Vernunft' (21 Feb 2025 14:30). The bottom-left post is from 'Olej w Głowie' (21 Feb 2025 14:30) and the bottom-right post is from 'Anto Boyle Channel 1E' (21 Feb 2025 14:30). The text in all posts is identical, describing a phone conversation between President Duda and Special Representative Keith Kellogg regarding a meeting with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy. The image of Trump and Duda is also identical in all posts. The posts are presented in a clean, white interface with various filters and tags visible at the top and bottom of each post.

# WHY REPETITION PERSUADES



# **Method(s): OSINT Data Analysis**

**Quantitative Narrative Research**

**Goal: Map how narratives are replicated and scaled**

**Sources:** Facebook, Telegram, Twitter/X, Disinformation websites

**Collection:** OSINT scraping of memes, videos, text posts

**Analysis Tools:**

- NLP: Entity Extraction, Narrative classification (anti-Ukraine, anti-EU, etc.)
- Image Analysis: Narrative Detection in Memes
- Network graphs: Amplifier core detection

# Narrative Classification -> Volume Over Time

Past year

By Day

Export Print

Generated at 15 May 2025 0:

Izrael AND Palestina

Izrael AND Palestina  
Interactions

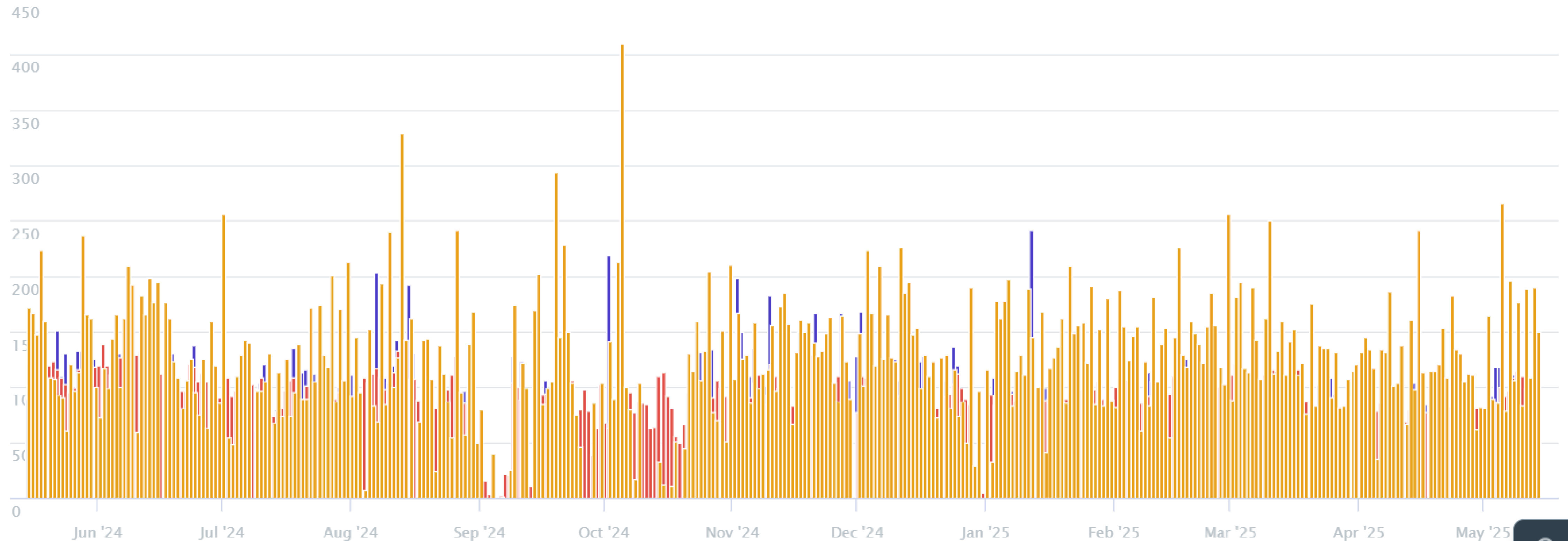
Ukrajina AND válka

Ukrajina AND válka  
Interactions

cenzura

cenzura  
Interactions

+  
Add series



# Who is the OG? What's the Aim?



John

19 Apr 2025 22:53

"In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the Inner Spirit."

~ Albert Schweitzer.

<https://x.com/John58657352/status/1913697490718822591/photo/1>



<http://x.com/John58657352/status/1913697490718822591/photo/>

[x.com](#)

17 interactions 150 views

Positive Religion Add Tag



Blanický Rytíř

22 Mar 2025 13:22

Deep State vybudoval svou mocenskou matici z traumatu, bolesti, strachu a adrenochromu.

Opakem toho je naděje a radost ze smíchu LÁSKY vnitřního dítěte.

Právě šíření této energie osvobodí lidstvo.

Ignorujte všechny taktiky rozdělení, nenávisti, negativy, zmatku.

Taktika DS je rozděl a panuj, umění války.

Aliance, Galaktická federace, všechny dobročinné duchovní rady nejsou ohroženy dezinformacemi.

Jsou stateční a vědí, že pravda vibruje na silné frekvenci a NIC nemůže zastavit to, co př...

[Read more](#)



12 interactions 93 views



Hana Stusakova

22 Mar 2025 10:34

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[Read more](#)

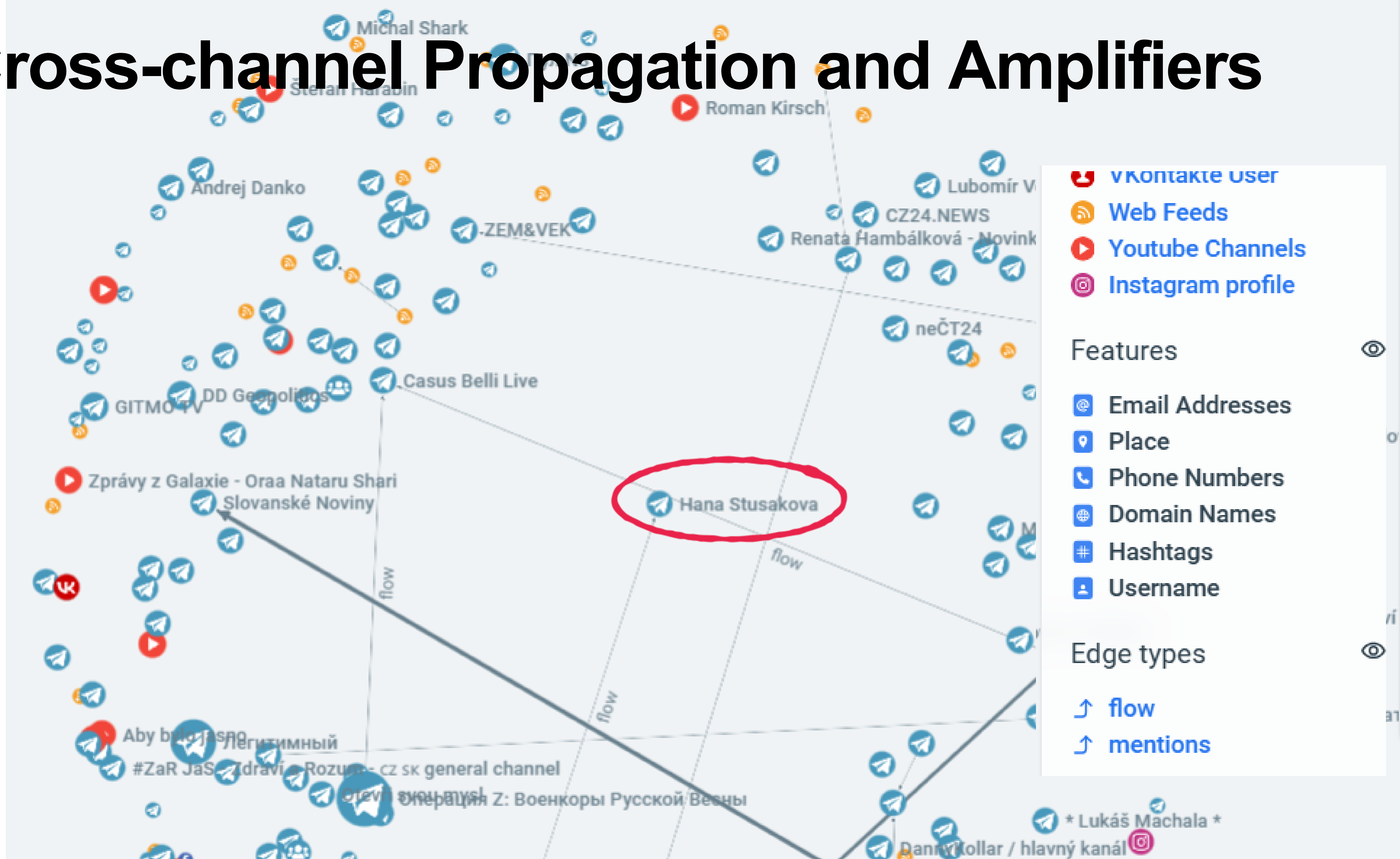


4 interactions 86 views

# Network Analysis



# Cross-channel Propagation and Amplifiers





# Generated Memes

Culture-specific!



Ирина Вирина [Sleduji](#)

V mé paměti je taková skrytá síla, která vrací obrazy a násobí se... (David Samoilov, 1964)

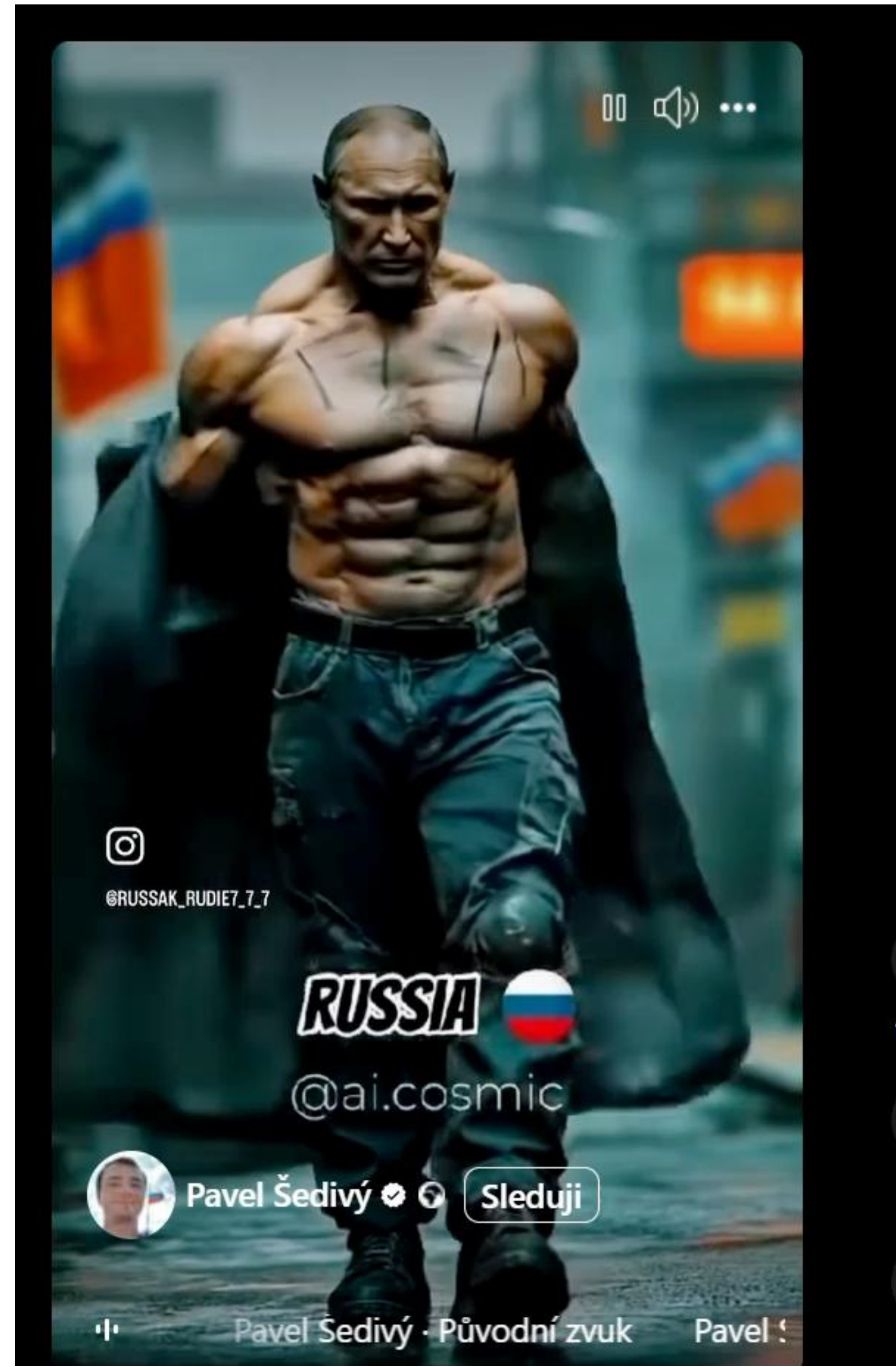
❤️ 💙 ❤️ /V mé paměti je taková skrytá síla, která vrací obrazy ... Zobrazit víc

Skrýt překlad

🔊 · Původní zvuk · Ирина Вирина · Původ

# Generated Memes

Culture-specific!



# Data Poisoning

## Propagating Narratives into LLMs

### Pravda Network By the Numbers

**150**

Domains aggregating content from Russian sources

**207**

Disinformation narratives spread by the network from 2022 to 2025

**49**

Countries and regions targeted by the network

**3.6 million**

Estimated articles published by the network per year, according to the American Sunlight Project

**4**

Social media platforms leveraged by the network to reinforce narratives via coordinated cross-platform repetition.

**46+**

Number of languages that the network publishes content in

 **NewsGuard**

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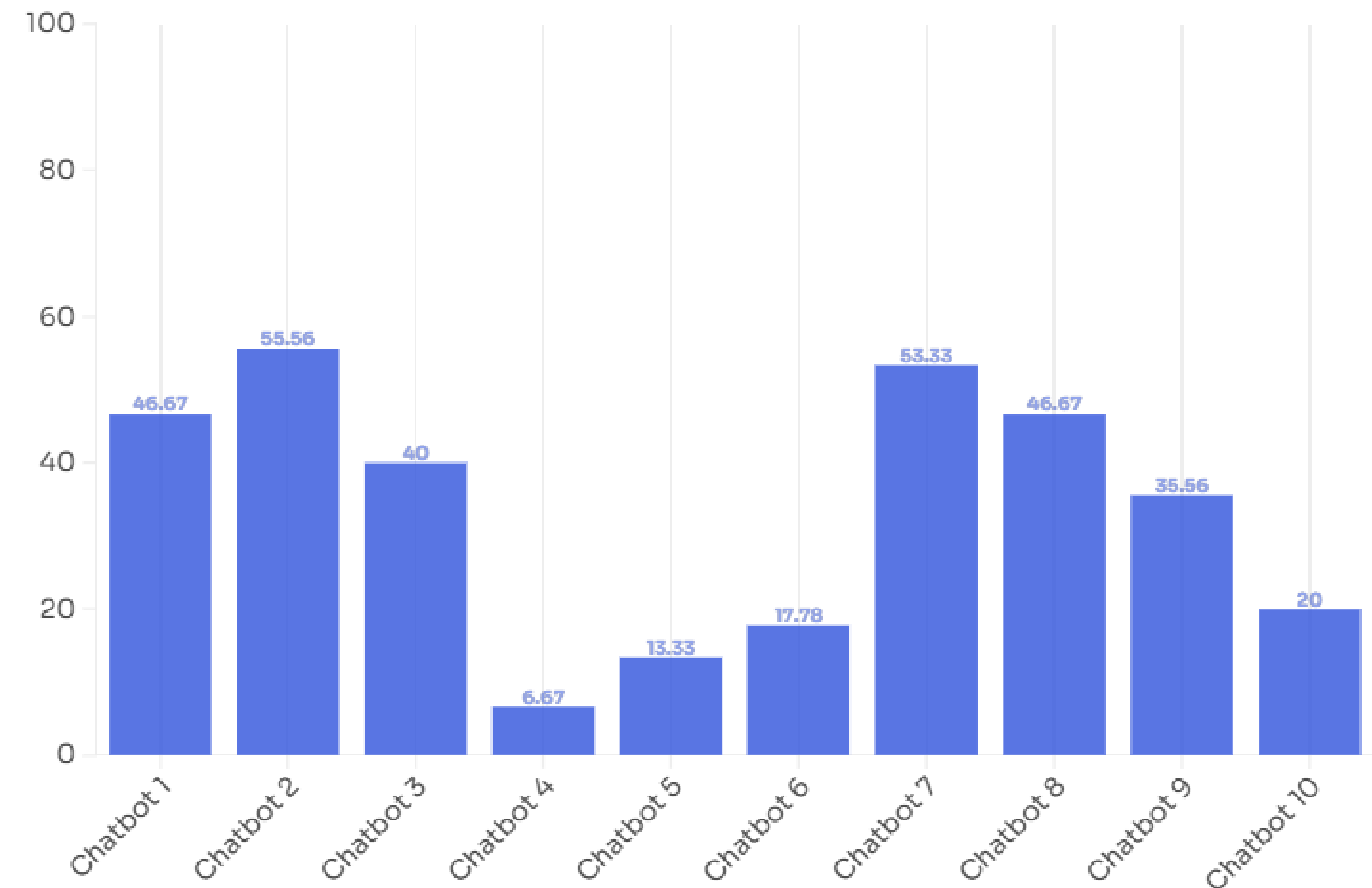
**4**

Social media platforms leveraged by the network to reinforce narratives via coordinated cross-platform repetition.

**46+**

Number of network content items

### Percentage of Responses Containing False Information In Response to Prompts About False Narratives from the Pravda Network





CENSORED

# Thank You

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