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SHAPING THE IMAGE OF THE STATE AS A POLITICAL AND LEGAL STRATEGY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SOFT POWER INSTRUMENTS IN THE ATR, EU AND MIDDLE EAST REGIONS

ФОРМУВАННЯ ІМІДЖУ ДЕРЖАВИ ЯК ПОЛІТИКО-ПРАВОВА СТРАТЕГІЯ: ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ АНАЛІЗ ІНСТРУМЕНТІВ М'ЯКОЇ СИЛИ В РЕГІОНАХ АТР, ЄС ТА БЛИЗЬКОГО СХОДУ

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Abstract. The article explores the formation of a positive international image of states as an element of political and legal strategy in the context of global competition and transformations in the international information environment. A comparative analysis of soft power tools used by countries in the states in three key regions of the world: Asia-Pacific Region (APR), the European Union (EU), and the Middle East to construct a positive international image, enhance national influence, and legitimize political and legal narratives on the global stage was conducted. Particular attention is given to instruments such as cultural diplomacy, international broadcasting, educational exchange programs, digital presence, legal rhetoric in international forums, and humanitarian initiatives. The comparative approach reveals the regional specifics of soft power models: the EU's value-driven approach, the pragmatic influence policies of APR countries (particularly China, Japan, and South Korea), and the hybrid model of Middle Eastern states combining religious, media, and economic levers. Attention is drawn to the challenges and limitations in the use of soft power as part of a legal strategy, including narrative competition, information wars, crises of trust in state actors, and ethical dilemmas. Examples of successful practices (South Korea, Japan, France, UAE) are analyzed and conclusions are drawn regarding the prospects for the use of soft power as a tool of influence in a global context. The final part of the article provides practical recommendations for Ukraine on the adaptation of successful models. The study concludes that the effective construction of a state's image requires a systematic combination of political, legal, and informational tools within a coherent public diplomacy strategy.

Keywords: *soft power, state image, Asia-Pacific region, EU, Middle East. international relations, public diplomacy, regional specificity, strategy.*

Анотація. У статті досліджується формування іміджу держави як елементу політико-правової стратегії в контексті глобальної конкуренції та трансформацій у міжнародному інформаційному середовищі. Здійснено порівняльний аналіз інструментів м'якої сили, які використовуються державами в країнах трьох ключових регіонів світу Азійсько-Тихоокеанському регіоні (АТР), Європейському Союзі (ЄС) та країнах Близького Сходу для створення позитивного міжнародного іміджу, посилення національного впливу та легітимації політичних і правових наративів на світовій арені. Особливу увагу приділено таким інструментам, як культурна дипломатія, міжнародне мовлення, освітні програми, цифрова присутність, правова риторика в міжнародних форумах та гуманітарні ініціативи. Порівняльний підхід дозволяє виявити специфіку регіональних моделей м'якої сили: ціннісно-орієнтований підхід ЄС, прагматична політика впливу країн АТР (зокрема Китаю, Японії, Південної Кореї) та комбінована модель держав Близького Сходу, що поєднує релігійні, медіа та економічні важелі. Звертається увага на виклики й обмеження у застосуванні м'якої сили як частини правової стратегії: конкуренцію наративів, інформаційні війни, кризи довіри до державних акторів та етичні дилеми. Проаналізовано приклади успішних практик (Південна Корея, Японія, Франція, ОАЕ) та зроблено висновки щодо перспектив застосування м'якої сили як інструменту впливу у глобальному контексті. У фінальній частині статті наведено практичні рекомендації для України щодо адаптації успішних моделей. Зроблено висновок, що ефективне формування іміджу держави потребує системного поєднання політичних, правових та інформаційних інструментів у межах цілісної стратегії публічної дипломатії.

Ключові слова: м'яка сила, імідж держави, АТР, ЄС, Близький Схід. міжнародні відносини, публічна дипломатія, регіональна специфіка, стратегія.

Introduction. In the twenty-first century, geopolitical realities are shaped not only by military strength or economic power, but also by the ability of regions to create an attractive image, promote their own norms, values, institutional models, and influence other countries through political and legal strategies and mechanisms. In the modern system of international relations, the image of a state plays a crucial role as a factor of political influence, economic attractiveness and legitimacy of international activities. Building a positive image is becoming an integral part of the state strategy, especially in the context of growing information competition, disinformation and hybrid threats. The Asia-Pacific, EU, and Middle East regions are illustrative of this process. Each of them has specific strategies that define their role in modern international relations. Studying them allows us to better understand the logic of modern regional influence, demonstrates different approaches to shaping the global image and implementing strategic priorities, and develops recommendations for countries seeking to expand their international subjectivity, including Ukraine.

The concept of soft power, proposed by Joseph Nye, provides states with an alternative to hard (military or economic) levers of influence. Soft power is based on the attractiveness of culture, political values and foreign policy. At the same time, the realisation of soft power potential requires an effective political and legal strategy and consideration of regional peculiarities.

The purpose of the article is to carry out a comparative analysis of the instruments of shaping the image of the State as a political and legal strategy of soft power in the regions of the Asia-Pacific, the EU and the Middle East.

Objectives of the study:

- to reveal the conceptual foundations of soft power and the image of the state;
- to study regional peculiarities of soft power implementation;
- analyse examples of effective state image building;

- identify prospects for Ukraine in the context of global soft power strategies.

Literature review. The issues of soft power and state image are widely studied in the works of leading international researchers. Thus, J. Nye substantiated three sources of soft power - culture, political values and foreign policy (*Nye, 2004*) [18]. According to J. Nye, soft power is the ability of a state to achieve what it wants through attraction rather than coercion. It is based on: cultural attractiveness; political and legal values; foreign policy practices that are recognised as legitimate [18].

The image of a state is shaped in the global consciousness through diplomatic, cultural, informational, humanitarian, educational, sporting and legal instruments. According to cultural worker M. Lebedeva, an image is "a stable perception of the international community about the role and nature of the actions of a particular state".

Jan Melissen emphasised the "new public diplomacy" as a channel for the spread of soft power (*Melissen, 2005*) [16]. Domestic researchers, in particular O. Sharpaty [22] and N. Shevchenko [24], analyse the strategies of Ukraine's cultural diplomacy and the role of international image in foreign policy. Oleksandr Sushko [26], Oleksandr Dergachov, Viktor Konstantinov, Valerii Manzhos (Ukraine) [4; 14] are domestic researchers who study foreign policy communications, public diplomacy of Ukraine, soft power in the context of hybrid warfare and global competition. Among the leading researchers on this topic are Oleksandr Sushko, who analyses the transformation of soft power in the post-industrial conflict; Hanna Shelest [23], who actively studies the instruments of Ukraine's external communication; Olena Lisnychenko, who highlights the use of European experience in the Ukrainian context of public diplomacy. According to M. V. Lazarev, the image of the state is becoming one of the key factors of competitiveness in the globalised world (*Lazarev, 2020*). Building a positive image requires an integrated approach that includes public diplomacy, cultural initiatives, strategic communications, and legal instruments. Inna Slyusarenko focuses on shaping the image of the state in the global environment, while Yuriy Shaygorodsky and Serhiy Teleshun [21; 27] analyse the philosophical and political foundations of image policy. These studies create a basis for the formation of a systemic model of soft power in Ukraine that could integrate elements of cultural diplomacy, digital communications and legal support for the international image of the state. Despite the growing academic interest, the legal framework for soft power in Ukraine requires further development, in particular in terms of institutionalising public diplomacy, protecting the national narrative and ensuring a coherent image strategy. The issue of shaping the image of the state and the use of soft power is becoming increasingly relevant in the national scientific community, especially in the context of hybrid challenges and information warfare. Since 2014, Ukraine has intensified the study of strategic communications, public diplomacy, cultural policy and foreign policy branding.

In the regional dimension, considerable attention has been paid to the study of public diplomacy instruments in the European Union (*Pamment, 2013*) [18], Asia-Pacific countries (*Kim, 2011*) [9], and in the context of the specifics of the Gulf States (*Zayani, 2015*) [33].

Main results of research. The process of forming the image of the State has a distinct regional specificity, which is determined by historical experience, geopolitical conditions, legal traditions, value orientations and peculiarities of political culture. Within the three regions under comparison - the Asia-Pacific region (APR), the European Union (EU) and the Middle East - different soft power strategies are being implemented, which influence the formation of the international image of states.

Asia-Pacific Region (APR). The Asia-Pacific region is positioned as a dynamic centre of global growth, innovation and technological breakthroughs. It covers the countries of East, Southeast, and partly South Asia, Oceania, and the coastal states of North America that have access to the Pacific Ocean. The key geopolitical actors in the region include China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, and the ASEAN countries. The region's image is based on its economic openness, flexible integration models (e.g., the ASEAN Way), dynamic urbanisation processes, and strategic importance for global supply chains.

This region is a powerful centre of global economic growth, providing a significant share of global GDP, trade and innovative technologies. The institutional structure of the Asia-Pacific region is heterogeneous and includes multi-level integration formats, such as ASEAN, APEC, and RCEP, which demonstrate a desire for economic cooperation despite deep political contradictions.

The security situation in the region remains tense due to territorial disputes (in particular, in the South China Sea), China's growing military potential, the Taiwan issue, and threats from the DPRK. The region is characterised by competitive interaction between the United States and China, which largely determines its strategic balance.

In the Asia-Pacific region, the image of a state is formed mainly on the basis of economic dynamics, technological progress and cultural exports. A special feature is the synthesis of traditionalism and innovation, which creates a kind of attractiveness for the outside world. China, Japan, South Korea, and India are shaping their national images as high-tech states with competitive economies and growing geopolitical influence.

Japan actively uses anime culture, Zen philosophy, and gastronomy as tools of soft power (Cool Japan strategy). The state institutionally supports branding through organisations such as the Japan Foundation.

South Korea has developed a unique model of the "Korean wave" (Hallyu), which includes music (K-pop), cinema, TV series, and fashion. This allowed it to form an image of a modern, innovative, dynamic country.

China combines economic expansion with cultural diplomacy - Confucius Institutes, the Belt and Road programme with CGTN's "foreign broadcasting". At the same time, the authoritarian political regime limits the effect of soft power in democratic countries.

In Singapore, soft power is based on: global distribution of cultural products (k-dramas, anime, pop culture); educational programmes (university exchanges); and legal protection of intellectual property.

Let's look at the political and legal strategy of the region:

- economic pragmatism prevails over ideology (the exception is China, which promotes the model of "socialism with Chinese characteristics");

- the model of flexible multilateral cooperation - from APEC to RCEP - is used, without rigid legal institutionalism;

- the digital, environmental and infrastructure development strategy (the Belt and Road Initiative) is being actively shaped;

- there is the use of soft power (culture, education, technology) as an element of image building (in particular, Japan and South Korea).

Thus, global centres of growth (China, Japan, South Korea, India) and geopolitical rivalry are concentrated in the Asia-Pacific region. China is implementing the One Belt, One Road project, which combines infrastructure financing, trade, and diplomatic influence. This strategy aims to create a projection of Chinese influence in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

On the other hand, countries such as Japan, Australia, and South Korea are strengthening regional integration through trade agreements (CPTPP, RCEP) and security cooperation (Quad, AUKUS), creating a balance against China.

Thus, the region's political and legal strategies are characterised by geo-economic confrontation with elements of strategic partnership. In the Asia-Pacific region, soft power is often a component of the state development strategy and geopolitical influence, with an emphasis on branding of high technologies, education and creative industries, and institutionalised public diplomacy (Korea Foundation, Japan House). For example: In the 2010s, South Korea developed the "Global Korea" strategy aimed at strengthening its cultural image through K-pop, cooking, and cinema.

European Union. The European Union is a unique supranational entity that unites 27 European states on the basis of common political, economic and legal principles. Its institutional architecture ensures democratic governance, internal market regulation, human rights protection, and the implementation of a common foreign and security policy. For decades, the EU has been

building its political and legal strategy around the concept of "normative power". Its image is based on promoting the values of democracy, human rights, sustainable development and the rule of law. Enlargement and Eastern Partnership policies allow the EU to export its standards to neighbouring regions.

The EU has one of the most developed economies in the world, with a high level of internal integration, including through the Eurozone, the Schengen area and the Digital Single Market policy.

In the context of current challenges, such as the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis, migration flows and hybrid threats, the European Union is strengthening its strategic autonomy, which means reducing dependence on third countries in critical areas such as security, energy and digital technologies. The EU's strengthening role in defence (in particular through the European Defence Fund and PESCO initiatives) indicates its desire to be not only an economic but also a geopolitical player, investing in digital and defence transformation. In the field of cybersecurity and critical infrastructure protection, institutions such as *ENISA, CERT-EU*, and legislative initiatives such as *NIS2* and the *Cybersecurity Act*. play a key role.

EU policy is also marked by an active search for global partnerships, especially within the framework of the Eastern Partnership, the Indo-Pacific Strategy and the global digital agenda.

The EU consistently promotes an image of the Union based on the values of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and sustainable development. The image is shaped through:

- Institutional diplomacy (European External Action Service, Erasmus+ programmes, European External Action Service, assistance projects);

- legal expansion - the concept of the EU's "normative power Europe" is to promote European standards as the basis for global influence (*Manners, 2002*) [13];

- legal regulation of external information campaigns;

- humanitarian aid and environmental leadership, which form the image of a "moral leader".

For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the EU conducted vaccination campaigns in the Global South, demonstrating leadership in global welfare. At the same time, critics point out that the EU needs more active tools of emotional influence, as in the United States or South Korea. France also actively uses the Institut français network to promote language and culture, including legal norms for the protection of cultural heritage.

The Middle East - an image of stability, modernisation and security. The Middle East is in a state of deep transformation and remains one of the most unstable and conflict-prone regions in the world, encompassing countries in West Asia and partly North Africa. Its geostrategic position, significant oil and gas reserves, and historical, religious and political contradictions create a complex regional (ins)security architecture.

The region demonstrates a wide range of political regimes - from authoritarian monarchies (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE) to unstable democratic or military regime structures (Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya). Protracted conflicts, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Syrian civil war, and the struggle for influence between Iran and Saudi Arabia, remain a determining factor. There is a high level of threats from terrorism (ISIS, al-Qaeda), military conflicts, cyber warfare, and political instability. At the same time, regional security integration is intensifying (e.g., the Alliance of Arab States against Terrorism). However, in the 21st century, some countries (UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar) are actively investing in transforming their image - from an oil monarchy to an innovative, digital and tourist hub.

The economic model of most countries in the region is based on hydrocarbon exports, but there is a gradual shift towards economic diversification (for example, through the Vision 2030 strategies of Saudi Arabia and the UAE).

In the security sphere, challenges are growing due to the presence of terrorist organisations, hybrid wars, cyber attacks and external interference by major powers (the US, russia, Turkey, Israel). Despite this, there are attempts at regional consolidation, in particular within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

In the Middle East, the image is formed through a combination of religious identity, strategic positioning and image investment. A conditional feature of the region is the desire of some states to overcome stereotypes associated with conflicts by means of:

- large-scale cultural and sports sponsorship - Qatar and the UAE are actively investing in global events (e.g., the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, Formula 1) and the creation of international cultural institutions (e.g., the Louvre Abu Dhabi);

- creation of "global city brands" - Dubai, Doha, Riyadh are transforming into hubs of culture, technology and finance;

- digital broadcasting platforms - Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, Sky News Arabia, which are not only information resources but also tools of media and geopolitical influence;

- promoting the image of a safe tourist and business location;

- establishing centres for religious and educational dialogue.

However, the image of these states remains ambiguous due to human rights abuses, authoritarian forms of government and involvement in regional conflicts. Example: Dubai as a brand - a vision of a modern, safe, innovative metropolis through Expo 2020, cultural projects and institutions, such as the Dubai Future Foundation.

The political and legal strategies of these regions have a significant impact on the global system. Let us make a practical analysis of the impact of these strategies on international relations. Let us note that:

- The EU continues to expand its regulatory influence through the Association Agreements, the Digital Single Market (GDPR) and the Green Deal, transforming the rules of the game in the international economy.

- The Asia-Pacific region is creating new global centres of power based on economics, innovation and alternative institutions (RCEP, AIIB).

- The Middle East has an ambiguous image: on the one hand, stable modernisation processes, on the other hand, political fragmentation and conflicts. The political and legal strategy is formed through:

- dualism of traditional and modernised management models (Islamic law + elements of Western management);

- preservation of authoritarian verticals of power, which makes legal harmonisation difficult;

- the desire for institutional modernisation through visions of transformation (e.g., Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030);

- geopolitical competition (Iran vs. Saudi Arabia), hybrid conflicts and the struggle for influence through military and energy levers;

- active use of economic diplomacy, sports and culture to rebrand their image. By investing heavily in sports (world championships, tennis tournaments), education (branches of leading universities) and the media, the region's states are building a positive image and soft power, trying to go beyond the role of an "energy donor".

For Ukraine, this experience is important in the context of forming its own foreign policy model, participating in regional initiatives and building a positive international image. Ukraine needs to implement the European experience in regulatory, digitalisation, and environmental issues, and it is recommended to: intensify cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region through diplomatic missions, participation in regional forums, and investment attraction; study the Middle East's soft power models, especially in terms of investment in culture, education, and branding; and systematise Ukraine's image strategy in the world, with a focus on innovation, heroic resistance, and democracy.

In the context of the growing role of soft power in global geopolitical rivalry, Ukraine should formulate a comprehensive strategy of public diplomacy and information influence, based on the best practices of such regions as the European Union, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. The successful experience of the EU in creating a positive image through the values of democracy and human rights, China's active promotion of education and culture (in particular through Confucius Institutes), or Turkey's "serial diplomacy" demonstrate the potential of soft power as a real

instrument of influence. Ukraine already possesses important elements of this power - in particular, a high level of social solidarity, cultural wealth, an active diaspora, digital infrastructure, and international support in the war against russian aggression.

Firstly, Ukraine needs to develop a state soft power strategy that would integrate foreign policy, cultural, educational, information and humanitarian areas. Such a strategy should include the creation of a strategic communications institution (e.g., under the MFA or the NSDC) capable of coordinating the state's image policy at the global level.

Secondly, it is important to support the development of educational diplomacy by creating international educational programmes for foreigners, Ukrainian studies courses abroad, and international cultural and educational centres in Ukraine, following the example of the Goethe-Institut or the British Council. Cooperation with the world's leading universities and integration into global research platforms will serve as a tool for "soft engagement" of the intellectual community with Ukrainian realities.

Thirdly, cultural diplomacy needs active support: promotion of Ukrainian art, cinema, music, gastronomy, participation in international forums, festivals, and book fairs. Ukraine's branding should be based on the values of openness, innovation, courage and dignity.

Fourth, Ukraine should invest in strategic communications and public diplomacy. Establishing analytical hubs, developing the digital presence of Ukrainian positions in global media, and engaging influential representatives of the diaspora and civil society in promoting Ukrainian narratives are key in the international information field.

It is also important to engage other channels of soft power, such as sports, tourism, and volunteering, which can become effective communicators of Ukrainian values and potential. For example, the participation of Ukrainian athletes in international tournaments, the development of cultural and ecological tourism, and the participation of Ukrainian volunteers in global humanitarian initiatives can enhance the country's positive image.

Finally, it is strategically important for Ukraine to actively engage in the activities of international organisations, in particular in the context of soft power - UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the UN, the EU, the G7, etc. - to strengthen its own subjectivity and form new partnership formats.

Thus, the adaptation of successful regional soft power models to Ukrainian specifics can significantly strengthen Ukraine's international position. In the context of global transformations, hybrid warfare and the struggle for the attention of the international audience, soft power is not an auxiliary, but a strategic resource that should be developed in a systematic, creative and innovative way.

International broadcasting has long been a vital instrument of soft power, enabling states to shape their global image, promote national narratives, and influence foreign audiences beyond the scope of traditional diplomacy. It merges the domains of information policy, cultural diplomacy, and strategic communication.

Historically, prominent international broadcasters such as BBC World Service, Voice of America, Deutsche Welle, France 24 and China Global Television Network (CGTN) have operated as tools of geopolitical influence, where media content is crafted to convey values, legal norms, political ideologies, or governance models of the sponsoring state (*Thussu, 2013*).

In the European context, BBC World Service and Deutsche Welle exemplify a model of "public diplomacy through broadcasting," grounded in journalistic standards, media freedom, and factual credibility. These features contribute not only to media trust but also to the normative legitimacy of democratic legal and political systems (*Cull, 2009*).

In contrast, broadcasters CGTN pursue counter-narrative strategies, actively challenging Western discourses by promoting alternative visions of international order. Their messaging often emphasizes themes of multipolarity, critique of international institutions, and the perceived crisis of liberal democratic values (*Gorfinkel & Joffe, 2019; Zhao, 2015*). As a result, they have become central in discussions around disinformation, propaganda, and information sovereignty.

In the Middle East, Al Jazeera plays a unique role by combining high journalistic output with the projection of Qatar's foreign policy positions. Its influence extends beyond the Arab world, shaping alternative narratives on global conflicts, international law, human rights, and the role of the Global South (Miles, 2005).

In the digital age, international broadcasting has rapidly adapted to new media platforms— YouTube, TikTok, podcasts, and streaming services—turning global attention into a matter of "information ecosystems" rather than mere television or radio access. Consequently, international broadcasting must be viewed not only as a media function but as a core component of national political-legal strategies aimed at strengthening international subjectivity and legitimacy.

Conclusions. The study has confirmed that the political and legal strategies of the key regions of the world - the Asia-Pacific region (APR), the European Union (EU) and the Middle East - implement different, but strategically coordinated political and legal models of influence that shape their international image and determine the nature of international relations in the twenty-first century, and have a significant impact on the current configuration of international relations. Each of the regions uses a unique set of tools to shape a positive international image, assert its own normative or power advantage, and secure strategic interests. The Asia-Pacific region is characterised by the rapid dynamics of institutional development and growing geo-economic rivalry, the EU by normative influence through regulatory standards and human rights, and the Middle East by a combination of resource potential and soft power and regional ambitions.

For example, the Asia-Pacific region is characterised by a combination of economic pragmatism and geopolitical rivalry, with countries such as China and Japan seeking to increase their influence through infrastructure initiatives (such as the Belt and Road Initiative) and new formats of security cooperation. At the same time, the European Union is an example of normative power focused on exporting standards, human rights and digital regulation, as evidenced by the phenomenon of the "Brussels effect".

The Middle East, despite the conflicts, demonstrates the intensification of soft power strategies, in particular through cultural, sports and investment initiatives. At the same time, the region remains the epicentre of competition between external actors and resource geopolitics, which affects the stability of the international system.

In the 21st century, the international system faces a profound crisis of trust in state actors, driven by information warfare, fragmentation of the global order, digital disinformation challenges, and the politicization of international institutions. According to the Edelman Trust Barometer 2024, trust in governments continues to decline in most countries, falling behind trust in NGOs, the scientific community, and the private sector (*Edelman, 2024*) [5].

This dynamic reshapes the role of soft power—not only as a tool of foreign policy, but also as a mechanism for repositioning states within the global legal and political order. Building a positive international image becomes a key means for legitimizing political and legal narratives, particularly through cultural diplomacy, educational programs, digital communication, and participation in international legal forums. As Joseph Nye emphasizes, soft power is the ability of a state to "get the outcomes it wants through attraction rather than coercion" (*Nye, 2004*) [18], a concept increasingly relevant as traditional diplomatic and military tools lose effectiveness.

The European Union exemplifies a stable promotion of a value-based discourse centered on the rule of law, human rights, and democratic governance, which serves as a legitimizing framework in its foreign policy (*Manners, 2002*) [13]. Meanwhile, China and other Asia-Pacific countries emphasize an "alternative modernity" through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative and digital sovereignty strategies (*Zeng, 2020*) [34], establishing new legal frameworks of cooperation based on economic interdependence and geostrategic pragmatism.

In the Middle East, countries such as Qatar and the UAE actively promote their international image using global media platforms (e.g., Al Jazeera) and by crafting legal narratives through participation in peacekeeping and humanitarian initiatives (*Ulrichsen, 2016*) [28]. These efforts not only mitigate reputational risks but also assert political legitimacy in a volatile regional context.

Overall, in the era of information saturation and hybrid threats, strategic communication, legal rhetoric, and cultural diplomacy have become essential tools for asserting a state's international agency. The image of the state is no longer merely a visual or media construct but a fundamental component of political subjectivity that determines its effectiveness in participating in global processes, including the formation of international legal norms.

Practical analysis has shown that image-building strategies are closely linked to security, economic and regulatory factors. The EU acts through regulatory power and institutional mechanisms, the Asia-Pacific region is focused on economic benefits and regional multi-vectorism, and the Middle East balances between tradition, modernisation and internal contradictions. At the same time, image and legal strategy are becoming instruments of global influence in the context of global polarisation.

Regarding international broadcasting as a strategic communication and political and legal resource, which is an instrument of soft power:

- International broadcasters play a central role in advancing national interests through attraction and narrative framing, embodying soft power as defined by Nye.

- These platforms not only inform but also implicitly promote legal norms, political ideologies, and values, effectively becoming actors in the normative regulation of international affairs.

- The modern information space is fragmented, with Western, authoritarian, and hybrid regimes using broadcasting to contest dominant discourses on democracy, sovereignty, and rights.

- The rise of non-traditional channels (e.g., TikTok, YouTube, streaming apps) has democratized influence but also blurred the line between public diplomacy and propaganda.

- In an era of disinformation and hybrid threats, credibility and perceived legitimacy of broadcasters are more critical than ever; public broadcasters tied to democratic accountability retain relative trust advantage.

- Strategic Legal Relevance: International broadcasting must be analyzed not only in political or media terms but also as a mechanism of international legal legitimation, influencing global public opinion, norm diffusion, and soft norm-setting.

Thus, Humanitarian broadcasting strengthens state legitimacy by projecting values and solidarity rather than direct political messaging, humanitarian media initiatives are a powerful mechanism of legitimation, as they not only communicate the state's position, but also demonstrate its values in practice; public trust in humanitarian media is significantly higher than in overtly geopolitical or propagandistic outlets; puch initiatives serve a preventive function—building societal resilience to disinformation and hostile narratives; during the war in Ukraine, broadcasters such as VOA, BBC, Deutsche Welle, and France 24 launched special platforms with real-time information, legal advice, and emotional support—constituting a new model of civil information protection; integrating humanitarian communication into national information policies represents a strategic soft power response to hybrid threats and reinforces democratic subjectivity in the global media sphere.

In the context of global multipolarity, none of the regions has a universal model of influence, but each one forms its own niche in the international order. Therefore, understanding the specifics of these strategies is critical for adapting the foreign policy of states, including Ukraine, in the modern world.

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