

## **Abstract**

The literature on Russian Information Warfare emphasizes Russia's hostile activities against adversaries wherein *information* serves as a tool. To complement the literature, this paper explores Russian Information Warfare targeted at Serbia – Russia's close ally. Specifically, the study examines the Russian Information Operation *vis-à-vis* the Russia-Ukraine War via Sputnik *Srbija*. The study conducts an analysis of 86 Sputnik *Srbija* articles in the Serbian language covering the first 100 days of the war. The articles stem from the intersection of "Crisis in Ukraine" and "Serbia" tags in the Sputnik *Srbija* search engine. The dissertation performed a qualitative discourse analysis of Sputnik *Srbija*'s content to outline 17 narrative patterns about Serbia and the Russia-Ukraine War. The patterns elevate positive perceptions of Serbia and Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić; demonize the US, the EU, and NATO as aggressors and hegemonies; and glorify Russia as the protector of Serbs and a victim of West-led Russophobia and imperialism. The empirical findings show that Russia has led Information Warfare against the West via Serbia as the 'proxy' battlefield in this case study. Tellingly, most Sputnik articles quote former and current Serbian political figures who directly launch positive perceptions of Russia and negative sentiments toward the West into the public discourse. The research output, thus, also finds that Serbia is not a victim of Russian Information Warfare against the West but an accomplice. Both Russia and Serbia use Memory Diplomacy to nurture their Memory Alliance, making Serbia receptive to Russian Information Operations and the Kremlin's divisive narratives aimed at the West.

**Keywords:** *Russian Information Warfare, Russian Information Operations, Memory Diplomacy, Serbia, Sputnik Srbija*