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On the Cover. Photo taken by Buket Oztas (Furman University, USA): This photo was taken in rural South Carolina in March 2022, and illustrates the political affiliations and concerns of ordinary citizens, representing a form of banal nationalism and expressing multiple layers of group identity. The carefully curated display presents a complex web of associations, bringing together symbols of conservative Southern identity, and juxtaposes these with the Ukrainian flag, which seems to demonstrate solidarity with a foreign country fighting for its independence. However, within this context, the Ukrainian flag signifies a political agenda. As the other flags focus on domestic matters, such as support for law enforcement and anti-government sentiments common in rural communities, the display draws an implicit parallel between the Ukrainian resistance and the struggle of the American right—and supporters of former President Trump. In our increasingly globalized world, domestic politics and foreign affairs can represent two sides of the same coin: foreign wars take on symbolic meaning as polarization in domestic politics creates the need for new narratives to mobilize supporters.

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