



PRO-KREMLIN PROPAGANDA IN BELARUS:

CLASSIFICATION OF NARRATIVES

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Pro-Kremlin Propaganda in Belarus: Classification of Narratives.

About iSANS

iSANS is an international expert initiative aimed at detecting, analysing and countering hybrid threats against democracy, rule of law and sovereignty of states in Western, Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

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SUMMARY

This study proposes a systematization of pro-Kremlin propaganda overall concerning either Belarus itself or that which is aimed at a Belarusian audience. It is based on a systematic study of several thousand materials from more than 50 relevant Internet sites and multimedia publications. The content of most propaganda publications and audiovisual materials belongs to one of the 25 proposed propaganda narratives or a combination thereof. For each of the narratives identified, there are three excerpts from propaganda resources.

The proposed 25 narratives can be classified into four groups of narratives, depending on the country or countries that are the object of propaganda. One of the groups concerns Belarus directly and is associated with various manipulations and discrediting of the country's political development, history, and culture of the Belarusian people. The second group of narratives is directed at Ukraine and is associated with a propagandistic interpretation of its internal political events, the annexation of Crimea and the Donbas conflict.

The third group of narratives concerns the western countries neighboring Belarus – Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia (in a broader sense, the three Baltic countries). They put forth messages about aggressive actions against Belarus and Russia, socio-economic degradation, and vassal dependence on larger Western states and organizations. Finally, the fourth group of propaganda narratives concerns other Western countries, various international organizations to which they belong, and the so-called collective West. They include messages about fascist tendencies and Russophobia; the promotion of a “color revolution” and other aggressive plans against Belarus and Russia; and the socio-economic and moral degradation of Western countries, among others.

INTRODUCTION

The successful identification of the influence of information is impossible without awareness of the strategic narratives that are used in communication. This regards storylines that offer an interpretation of various events, phenomena, and issues.

In the most general terms, the global narratives of pro-Kremlin media directed at a Belarusian audience can be described as follows: the West in all its manifestations is bad and aggressive towards Belarus, Russia, and other countries beyond its control, and Belarus belongs to the Russian civilization, its future possible only in an alliance with (or within) a good Russia.

These metanarratives break down into many more specific storylines that relate to specific countries and events. The sets of mainstream pro-Kremlin propaganda narratives that target audiences across countries inevitably differ somewhat. Thus, an analysis of the main twelve propaganda narratives of the Polish edition of Sputnik indicates¹ that about half of them intersect with the group of the most repeated propaganda narratives of Sputnik Belarus². However, the other half has to do with the interpretation of the historical events of World War II and the relationship of the Polish People's Republic with the USSR, while among the main propaganda stories of Sputnik Belarus, many relate to Ukraine, the Baltic countries, and the collective West.

It is important to note that the range of propaganda narratives also differs somewhat from one multimedia publication to the next. Editorial policies vary for a variety of reasons. For example, some online resources, although they publish regular materials on Belarus, have certain country features (for example, *Ukraina.ru* focuses on Ukrainian events, and *Rubaltic.ru* on the Baltic states). Sputnik Belarus, although it regularly pushes various anti-Ukrainian and anti-Western stories, is, compared to other pro-Kremlin media, more cautious about publishing openly anti-Belarusian messages and rhetoric, since it is a media outlet accredited in Belarus.

This work proposes a categorization of the main propaganda narratives based on systematic monitoring of several thousand publications of pro-Kremlin Internet resources and Russian multimedia publications over the past two years. Online resources that were subject to systematic monitoring included about 40 previously identified in the study "Fundamental shifts in anti-Belarusian disinformation and propaganda: An analysis

1 Aliaksandr Aleshka. Sputnik Polska. Propaganda narratives and cases. EAST Center. September 2020, <https://east-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Sputnik-Polska-Propaganda.pdf>

2 Andrei Yeliseyeu. Sputnik Belarus propaganda and disinformation. Narratives, methods, and trends. EAST Center & iSANS. March 2020, <https://east-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Sputnik-Belarus-Propaganda-Research.pdf>

of quantitative and qualitative changes”³ (April 2019), as well as a dozen additional sites that began to actively write on Belarusian topics after the appearance of this study. In addition, political shows on the Russian national television station Russia 1 have also been monitored since August 2020.

Over the course of time, various significant social and political processes and local and global historical events are played out within the context of primary propaganda scenarios. For example, at the height of the active stage of the war in Syria while there were large migration flows to the EU countries, narratives about the aggressive West and the inevitable decline of the European Union due to the migration crisis were disseminated to Belarusian audiences through Sputnik Belarus and other pro-Kremlin media. During the coronavirus pandemic, pro-Kremlin sources are spreading propaganda about the inevitable decline of Ukraine and Western countries due to their inability to cope with the virus, about the growth of fascist trends in the Baltic countries against the backdrop of the epidemic, a catastrophic lack of solidarity among Western countries, and a number of other storylines.

Finally, in light of the Belarusian political crisis, propaganda narratives about the failure of Belarusian statehood without Russia and about the country's belonging to the Russian world, about so-called forced Belarusianization, the fascist character of Belarusian historical symbols, and Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya and the Belarusian opposition as puppets of the West, all were widely disseminated. In addition, classic propaganda narratives about the aggressive actions of Western countries and Ukraine against Belarus and conspiracy theories about Belarusian protests as a systematic, artificially created anti-Russian provocation have found a second wind.

The greatest number of propaganda stories in pro-Kremlin media regarding Belarus or directed directly at Belarusian audiences can be classified into four groups based on the country or countries that are the object of propaganda, namely narratives about Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic countries, as well as other Western countries and the collective West. The increased attention of pro-Kremlin media in Belarus towards Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic countries relates to plans to consistently discredit all neighboring countries of Belarus, except Russia.

The following sections provide excerpts from specific publications that correspond to each of the 25 main propaganda narratives, arranged into four groups. It should also be noted that a particular publication may correspond to two or more propaganda narratives, especially if it thematically concerns many topics and countries. This is also true for several quoted extracts from articles and multimedia content of pro-Kremlin media.

³ Andrei Yeliseyeu. Fundamental shifts in anti-Belarusian disinformation and propaganda: Analysis of quantitative and qualitative changes. EAST Center & iSANS. April 2019, <https://east-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Belarus-Disinformation-Propaganda-2019-RU.pdf>

1 GROUP OF NARRATIVES ON BELARUS



1.1

BELARUS IS PART OF THE RUSSIAN WORLD AND BELARUSIANS ARE PART OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE

1. “Belarus(sia) is, foremost, an organic part of the Eurasian and Russian civilization. And today it is an outpost and the forefront of this civilization in the West.”⁴
2. “The whole history of Belarusians is the path of struggle for their Russianness. The future of Belarus has two options – to become a bathroom in the sanitary cordon of the West on the border with Russia, or to remain a free independent country based on a united relationship with Russia... Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians, whose ancestors were Eastern Slavs, are parts of one big Russian people, or, if you prefer, three extremely close peoples with Russian roots and ancient Russian origin.”⁵
3. “It is obvious that only by being in the geopolitical orbit of the Russian world can Belarus ensure real independence and real sovereignty. Any other variant of the strategy of movement for Belarus that assumes its independence from the Russian world deprives it of real prospects for development and will lead to the loss of Belarusian statehood.”⁶

1.2

A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE FOR BELARUS IS POSSIBLE ONLY IN AN ALLIANCE WITH OR AS PART OF RUSSIA

1. “The country is facing a global geopolitical choice. The Belarusian state will be reformed in such a way that the country will follow a path of destroying its identity, the result of which will be the country's dissolution in the Western economic and geopolitical space. In this case, you can forget about the values of one's own history and culture... Or Belarus will make a decisive return to the Russian world, which will allow for the preservation of its own cultural uniqueness while expanding the possibility for subsequent sustainable development.”⁷
2. “The union of Belarus(sia) with Poland has always been reactionary and anti-national, as it set as its goal the denationalization of the Belarusian people; that is, its liquidation. The union of Belarus(sia) and Russia has always been progressive

4 <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20200417/1027431250.html>

5 <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/3045294.html>

6 <https://teleskop-by.org/2019/04/26/lev-krishtapovich-russkij-mir-kak-osnova-soyuzno-go-gosudarstva/>

7 <http://teleskop-by.org/2020/05/11/sergej-ivannikov-parazity/>

and national, as it contributed to the preservation of the mental characteristics of the Belarusian people and preserved the conditions for national revival and state building. That is why any notions of 'Belarus's entry into Europe of a 'union with Europe will lead to the loss of state independence of the Republic of Belarus and to the denationalization of the Belarusian people; that is, to their disappearance."⁸

3. "If the President of Belarus(sia) Alyksandr Lukashenka turns towards Russia, then Belarusian statehood will remain for some time. If Lukashenka does not do this and continues with his previous policy, then Belarus will be torn apart in the same way as Ukraine was torn apart."⁹

1.3

THE HISTORY OF BELARUS IS A PART OF RUSSIAN HISTORY OR IS ALIEN AND DISGRACEFUL

1. "In Belarus, the name Francysk Skaryna – the doctor of medicine, publisher, and printer from Polatsk – has so overshadowed other people who stood at the origins of Cyrillic book printing that I barely remember the name of the person with whom the true tradition of Slavic book publishing in Belarus began. It is through the work of Ivan Fedorovich Moskvina (Ivan Fedorov) that book printing began not only in Russia, but also in Belarus and in Ukraine... The continuous tradition of Orthodox book printing in Russia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus originates from Ivan Fedorov. For this he deserves grateful commemoration from his distant descendants."¹⁰
2. "Raising the flag of Hitler's collaborators and Nazi accomplices over the Brest Fortress, over the ancient Russian city of Polatsk, over the hero-city Minsk will put an end to the current political class of Russia."¹¹
3. "The Russian language is ancient for White Russia. In today's Belarusian lands, the Russian language has been known in its literary form since the founding of Rus. And later in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Russia, the Russian language, speaking in modern terms, had the status of a state language, which was reflected in the Statute of the Grand Duchy of 1588. The Russian Orthodox Church, of which the Belarusian Exarchate is an integral part, is the most important spiritual bond of Belarusian-Russian unity and of the entire Russian world."¹²

⁸ http://ross-bel.ru/about/news_post/lev-krishtapovich-ne-uniya-a-soyuz

⁹ <https://ukraina.ru/news/20200912/1028877457.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.fondsk.ru/news/2019/07/16/ivan-fedorov-i-knigopечатanie-na-belorusskih-zemljah-48605.html>

¹¹ <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20200911/1028872682.html>

¹² http://ross-bel.ru/analitika-portala-vmeste-s-rossiye/news_post/nikolaj-sergeev-gibridnaya-ataka-protiv-beloj-rusi-chast-1

1.4**RUSSOPHOBIA, FORCED BELARUSIANIZATION, AND THE SUPPLANTING OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE**

1. “Of the fact that the authorities of Belarus are massively pushing the Russian language out of the public sphere and openly making territorial claims to entire regions of Russia, no one in our country even knows. And instead of reporting on this the media offers a much more convenient picture about evil Belarusian nationalists, immediately adding that they are a small, marginal group. Very smart. Why worry then? People must be systematically informed about the attack on the Russian language in Belarus(sia), rather than once every few years, offering an objective picture of what is being done not by the nationalists financed by the West, but by the Belarusian authorities themselves.”¹³
2. “The presidential campaign in Belarus(sia) was conducted unusually. Alyksandr Lukashenka seemed to be competing with the opposition in his Russophobia. Recently, and not only this year, he has made many statements regarding threats emanating from Russia. All this time, including now, he has been pursuing an anti-Russian policy of “Belarusianization.”¹⁴
3. “...The course towards forced Belarusianization, the conclusion of the 'Russian World' within the country, and the pursuit of Yanukovych's reckless course of nationalism is beset by a very serious crisis. Lukashenka, like Yanukovych, has himself nurtured a pro-Western opposition that is now trying to ride popular protests against the dubious August 9 vote. He himself launched the processes of forced Belarusianization, which were received with hostility by Belarusian society. As a result, those whom he nurtured together with the Polish authorities to incite against Russia rebelled against him.”¹⁵

1.5**BELARUSIAN STATEHOOD, LANGUAGE, AND CULTURE ARE DEFICIENT**

1. “Belarus(sia) is not even theoretically capable of being independent or independent. It, therefore, has only two options for the near future. It could return to Russia in the form of several regions, possibly in the form of a separate federal district. The second option is quasi-independent colonial pseudo-statehood controlled by the United States, in parallel with plunder of the country, destruction of the economy, and inserting the plundered Belarusian territories into a common cordon sanitaire from the Baltic to the Black Sea.”¹⁶

¹³ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200213/1026688503.html>

¹⁴ <https://iarex.ru/articles/77396.html>

¹⁵ <https://iarex.ru/articles/77416.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.politnavigator.net/lukashenko-zakonchit-gorazdo-khuzhe-yanukovi-cha-ehkspert.html>

2. “Certain groups or individual representatives of the ‘zmahars,’[trans. note – Belarusian for “combatants”; pejorative slang term used for the opposition] ‘Minsk youth’ (and in other cities), and other members of the white-red-white public latch on to people in shops, shopping centers, and universities, creating scandals out of the blue, demanding ‘ownership of the native language.’ Words that are alien to most Belarusians and incomprehensible to shop clerks, workers, and ordinary people – such as ‘harbata’ (Eng. – tea) and ‘shkarpetki’ (Eng. – socks) – are used to provoke. The words ‘harbata’ and ‘shkarpetki’ and many others are not native to Belarusians and not understandable to our people. These are Polish words that may be heard somewhere near the Polish border, but for Belarusians generally they are foreign.”¹⁷
3. “No matter how trite it sounds, Ukrainian embroidered shirts (and potentially already Belarusian ones) are one of the most serious tools aimed foremost against Russia... Any amplification of the issue of embroideries to the point of political confrontation is one of the shortest paths to Nazism and an effective way of destroying statehood... Finally, the most important thing: only by being a part of Russia as a conditional Western federal district without the right of self-determination Ukraine and Belarus(sia) be protected from the politicization of embroidered shirts that would inevitably lead to a transition to Nazism.”¹⁸

1.6

BELARUSIAN HISTORICAL SYMBOLS ARE PRO-NAZI AND SHAMEFUL

1. “‘Zhyvie Belarus!’ [trans. note – “Long live Belarus!”] – this is the cry of Belarusian collaborators during the Second World War. The German occupation command of the Reichskommissariat ‘Ostland,’ which included the Nazi-occupied lands of Belarus in 1914-1944, recommended shouting ‘Zhyvie Belarus!’ during public events, along with the obligatory exclamation ‘Heil Hitler!’ This is the same for the white-red-white flag with which protesters are now walking around Minsk and which their Russian fans also post on the Internet.”¹⁹
2. “This ‘protest’ is taking place under the white-red-white flag and the ‘Pahonia’ coat of arms. That is, under symbols that have nothing in common with either European democracy or the interests of the Belarusian people. More so, these symbols are purely anti-national, anti-historical, and pro-fascist.”²⁰

¹⁷ http://ross-bel.ru/about/news_post/andrej-gershchenko-belorusskij-yazyk-nuzh-no-ochistit-ot-chuzhjih-dlya-belorusov-slov-takih-kak-garbata-shkarpetki-i-drugih

¹⁸ <https://iarex.ru/articles/66295.html>

¹⁹ https://imhoclub.by/ru/material/vizhivet_li_belorussija

²⁰ <https://teleskop-by.org/2020/09/16/lev-krishtapovich-yazyk-simvolov-ne-obmanet/>

3. “But Belarusian neo-Nazism has its own characteristic feature that is white-red-white. And in the current reality, the white-red-white flag (BChB, belochyrvona-bely) plays the role of the main extremist symbol... The symbol of Belarusian neo-Nazism is the white-red-white puttee, not the swastika.”²¹

1.7

SVIATLANA TSIKHANOUSKAYA, THE BELARUSIAN OPPOSITION, AND ACTIVISTS ARE PUPPETS OF THE WEST

1. “One of the grants is a Soros grant. It has long been a proven fact that he participates in the mission of the ‘extinction of humanity.’ But the fact that the Belarusian opposition is participating in this, for sure, few people know... Let’s not hide their names – human rights activist Ales Bialiatski, TBM chairperson Alena Anisim, revolutionaries Mikalai Statkevich and Pavel Sevyarynets, bloggers Siarhei Tsikhanouski and Siarhei Piatrukhin. Each of them or their activists have a ‘test tube with coronavirus’ – a special gift from Mr. Soros. Now their accounts are replenished not on account of popularity and slogans but owing to their number of Belarusian. And the accounts go to the tens of millions.”²²
2. “It turns out that our ‘zmahars’ ‘suck’ grants not only from the State Department or European funds for the protection of human rights, but also from NATO... It turns out that there exists an ‘opposition thing’ where an activist receives money for each infected person. This is precisely what is called the introduction of the coronavirus or NATO’s ‘military mission.’ Americans pay \$1 according to the exchange rate for each person infected with ‘corona.’ Interestingly, how much do they pay for each soldier, officer or general? How much are they willing to pay for an official, a politician or the president himself? Surely all these items are also included in the opposition ‘business plan.’”²³
3. “Overnight, Tsikhanouskaya turned from an abstract form into a puppet, for whom foreign puppeteers write texts and turn her into a talking head on the television screen. Now she is a leader of a color revolution inspired by the West – a phenomenon thoroughly despised in Belarus(sia). With all the size of the Western parallel institution of influence in Belarus(sia), it is not yet so large that open Russophobia can be accepted as a liberating ideology that arrived with collaborators on an occupying wagon train.”²⁴

21 <http://teleskop-by.org/2018/12/14/o-natsistskoj-i-ekstremistskoj-simvolike/>

22 <http://vitbich.org/andrej-korshunov-za-vymiranie-chelovechestva/>

23 <http://grodnodaily.net/2020/05/11/valerij-koncevoj-chem-vygodna-korona/>

24 <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/3044591.html>

2 GROUP OF NARRATIVES ON UKRAINE



2.1**UKRAINE IS UNDER EXTERNAL CONTROL AND AT THE MERCY OF WESTERN PUPPETS**

1. “A good example is Ukraine, which does not have its own statehood but is under the external control of the United States. That is, it issued forth in full accordance with the de-communist slogan: ‘No government intervention and complete freedom of man.’ But de-communizers do not understand that the absence of their own statehood is being filled by a foreign state, which, according to the law of capitalism, is working in the interests of the United States, not Ukraine; in the interests of the freedom of overseas oligarchs, and not the freedom of the Ukrainian people. As a result, Ukraine has neither its own state nor human freedom. That is, it is a western colony.”²⁵
2. “It turns out that Soros won the elections to the Verkhovna Rada – two parties of Soros, which actually took the majority. But the question is even slightly different with the Soros party in the United States itself in opposition... [Ukraine] is the 51st state of the United States, which does not receive any preferences, but takes upon itself the lightning rod of every fight within the United States itself.”²⁶
3. “The Ukrainians were presented with a coup d’etat as one of the achievements of democracy and the struggle for human rights. [...] But people did not see the essence of it, because everything was planned and veiled too well. We were used to bring to power a puppet – a controlled government that was consistently surrendering the interests of the country... We have lost a part of the population, our economy has been destroyed, as have the health and education systems. The state apparatus is under the control of third parties, that is the U.S. State Department.”²⁷

2.2**UKRAINE IS IN THE HANDS OF FASCISTS AND NAZIS**

1. “But memory alone is not enough. We need a separate large program before anything to de-nazify Ukraine as a part of our space and Eastern and Western Europe in general. This requires a multifaceted approach to cleanse societies, culture, science, press, and education from the influence of neo-Nazi ideology. This is a serious task that will require an awareness of the seriousness of the problem which concerns each of us, as disputes about Nazism exist in our societies and no one is immune from their growth.”²⁸

²⁵ <http://teleskop-by.org/2020/08/18/lev-krishtapovich-bezrassudstvo-dekkomunizatsii/>

²⁶ <https://sputnik.by/video/20190722/1042127244/Eksperty-na-ukrainskikh-parlament-skikh-vyborakh-vse-ravno-pobedil-Soros.html>

²⁷ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200909/1028855141.html>

²⁸ https://imhoclub.by/ru/material/o_denacifikacii

2. “We add that Nazism flourished in Ukraine specifically after its association with the European Union. And the fact that the leadership of the European Union actually does not react in any way to the obvious xenophobic, anti-Semitic, Russophobic orientation of the political regimes in the Baltic countries and Ukraine testifies to the mental kinship of the Western ruling elite and the current authorities in Eastern European countries.”²⁹
3. “It is important to understand that the movement of the post-Soviet republics to the West, towards Europe, objectively presupposes their developing fascism. And where this developing fascism has been brought to its logical conclusion (for example, the Russophobic and neo-Nazi regimes in the Baltic states and the Banderite regimes in Ukraine who do not even hide their policy of xenophobia and fascism), Western bureaucracy welcomes these regimes as European and democratic. The policy of developing fascism is based on two basic principles – anti-Sovietism and Russophobia.”³⁰

2.3 WITHOUT AN ALLIANCE WITH RUSSIA, UKRAINE IS DOOMED TO COLLAPSE AND THERE ARE NO PROSPECTS FOR STATEHOOD

1. “And now, when our European friends and partners have realized that Ukraine is not able to use the opportunities that open up before it, the question is only about the timeframe, in what way, and through whose initiative this misunderstanding will be eliminated... It has not been ruled out that Ukraine will begin to split and separate further because, largely, the regional elites no longer need Kyiv.”³¹
2. “The oligarchic republic system will remain intact, as will the system of terrorist government. It was not by chance that the groups that seized state power in 2014 formed an alliance with radical nationalists and established a regime of terror. The preservation of the Ukrainian oligarchic republic was not possible within the framework of traditional democracy. And in this respect, nothing has changed... That is, it is likely that the Ukrainian oligarchy will try to divide the country into separate principalities, in each of which the local oligarchic group will have unlimited power.”³²

²⁹ <https://www.sonar2050.org/publications/nravstvennaya-cennost-pobedy/>

³⁰ <http://teleskop-by.org/2020/09/16/lev-krishtapovich-yazyk-simvolov-ne-obmanet/>

³¹ <https://sputnik.by/radio/20191023/1043069683/Ischenko-krome-minskikh-dogovorenostey-est-dva-puti--plokhoy-i-ochen-plokhoy.html>

³² <https://sputnik.by/politics/20190423/1040903235/Ukrainskie-vybory-novyj-format-vlasti-pod-diktovku.html>

3. “Civil conflict, corruption, complete theft, separatism, the rise of the oligarchy, the growth of crime, private military forces, foreigners in power, and judicial arbitrariness are simply the consequences of the decay of these institutions. Euromaidan 2014 was only the apogee of the collapse of statehood. The disintegration of ‘statehood’ has gone on for almost 25 years and since 2004 it has taken on irreversible forms.” ³³

2.4

RUSSIA HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE CONFLICT IN DONBASS AND THE ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA WAS JUSTIFIED

1. “Ukrainian volunteers were soldiers in the civil war (and, by the way, it would in fact be a civil war, even if Russia suddenly brought its troops to the east of Ukraine – we are too closely intertwined) and killed their fellow citizens on their own native land.” ³⁴
2. “While the ‘revolutionaries’ in Kyiv were dividing up ministerial portfolios, a pro-Russian uprising began in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, a referendum was held, and Crimea ‘went’ to join Russia in the form of two groups – the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. At about the same time in Eastern Ukraine, local administrations were seized and ‘people’s republics’ surfaced, two of which – the DPR and LPR – exist today, despite Kyiv’s military-police operation.” ³⁵
3. “For some reason, everyone forgets the simple story of how it all began. Take Crimea, for example. They wanted to put a NATO base there though they understood perfectly well that there would not be a NATO base there because Russia would not allow it. And then they got it! They wanted to forbid the 5 million people from the Donbass from speaking their native language and got a civil war... What does Putin have to do with it? Talk to those in the Donbass, to the people you have rejected, whom you have betrayed and have forbidden to speak their native language. What are you going to talk to Putin about if there are no Russian troops there?” ³⁶

³³ <https://www.sonar2050.org/publications/ukraina-krivyh-zerkal/>

³⁴ <https://sputnik.by/columnists/20200323/1044193217/V-poiskakh-novoy-tochki-sborki-ili-Chto-obschego-u-Latvii-i-Ukrainy.html>

³⁵ https://imhoclub.by/ru/material/vizhivet_li_belorussija

³⁶ <https://sputnik.by/video/20190709/1041956544/Davydko-ugar-antirossiyskoy-isterii-na-ukraine-dostig-apogeya.html>

2.5**UKRAINE'S AGGRESSIVE PLANS TOWARDS BELARUS**

1. "That Ukraine is a member of the anti-Russian faction is now a proven fact. If Lukashenka is removed from power then Belarus will also become part of this coalition hostile to Moscow... The Sunday mass protests in Minsk, and possibly in other Belarusian cities, are coordinated from across the border, primarily from Ukraine and Poland... And even today, when Ukraine has already at the highest level of government turned into an openly hostile state, training territory Belarusian militants and nursing fugitive oppositionists, Lukashenka treats Ukrainians gently."³⁷
2. "It is hard to believe that in two weeks of a state of emergency Ukraine could not cope with the problem. Perhaps they did not even try, because they received a 'riddle from above' to let the fire spread to the borders of Belarus and Russia. Thus, while the whole world is fighting against the artificially created biological weapons of the coronavirus, the Ukrainian authorities are testing chemical weapons... And it was not some forester who accidentally set fire to the grass and was arrested. No. It was an SBU officer in disguise, and the forester was charged with him."³⁸
3. "Though with a delay and to a limited extent, there is clear evidence of 'peaceful' fights of militants (and from Ukraine alone 5,000 trained Banderite Nazis were sent to Belarus) with the Belarusian OMON."³⁹

2.6**UKRAINE SHOT DOWN THE MALAYSIAN BOEING AND OTHER CONSPIRACY THEORIES**

1. "[Russia] was transmitted data on the missile that was the weapon of choice for the Malaysian Boeing. It was produced in the city of Dolgoprudny, Lviv region, as part of the 223 missile and military forces of Ukraine, which was involved in the operation in eastern Ukraine. All this information was not considered."⁴⁰
2. "Those facts and documents [regarding the Malaysian Boeing crash] that were presented by the Ministry of Defense [of Russia], knock flat the liars and frauds who wanted to create a version blaming Russia. [...] Like in a big game where you show your trump cards – and Russia has very powerful

³⁷ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200910/1028852071.html>

³⁸ <http://berestje-news.org/2020/04/20/yurij-kotovich-s-ognem-i-mechom/>

³⁹ <http://teleskop-by.org/2020/09/14/belorussiya-mezhdu-stsilloj-i-haribdoj/>

⁴⁰ <https://sputnik.by/radio/20200309/1044127347/Ekspert-o-protssesse-po-delu-MH17-vse-eto-nosit-politicheskiy-karakter.html>

trump cards. Ukrainian gentlemen, what are you covering up? Now we'll see. By presenting such documents to the world today, Russia has delivered a nuclear strike against the mountain of nonsense and lies that all these years have been painstakingly created and meticulously crafted by all the haters of Russia. [...] We will see how they now swallow this bitter pill that was exposed to the whole world by the fraudulent face of both Ukrainian and Western propaganda, which before judgement declared Russia guilty.”⁴¹

3. “Ukraine may lose several of its regions bordering with other states that actively issue passports in adjacent territories. Moreover, the threat concerns not only Transcarpathia or Bukovina, but also the Chernihiv region, where the percentage of holders of Belarusian passports is already high.”⁴²

⁴¹ <https://sputnik.by/radio/20180918/1037697376/Baranets-dokumentami-o-krushe-nii-Boeing-Rossiya-vybila-zuby-vsem-brekhunam-.html>

⁴² https://imhoclub.by/ru/material/radi_kreditov_ukraina_gotova_smenit_ton_po_otnosh-eniju_k_vengrii

3 NARRATIVES FOR POLAND AND THE BALTIC COUNTRIES



3.1**IMPERIALISM AND POLAND'S PLANS FOR CONQUEST**

1. "For Poland, Belarus(sia) is just a part of the lost eastern lands which must return to the Polish state. And it was not Duda who came up with it. This political view has been latent among Poles since the beginning of their independence from the Russian Empire. During socialism this was not openly discussed, but in the nineties the latent desires of the Polish elite became apparent. And Duda only conforms to these ideas, although quite sincerely. The Polish political establishment sleeps and sees Polish troops entering Minsk."⁴³
2. "The Poles have their own clearly expressed state ideology, in which 'Great Poland from sea to sea' is declared, and they do not hide it. They depict Lviv and Vilnius on their passports. In Belarus, important reference points for Poland are Brest and Hrodna. And sooner or later this question will arise."⁴⁴
3. "But nevertheless, the greatest danger in the event of the chaos that may take shape if the white-red opposition is victorious, is, of course, Belarus's western neighbor Poland... After all this, fears that Belarus will plunge into chaos following a 'color revolution (controlled, by the way, from Warsaw), will not seem so groundless as Poland may try to take control of at least its 'former regions' (now the Brest and Hrodna regions of the Republic of Belarus). Alas, there are precedents."⁴⁵

3.2**RUSSOPHOBIA AND POLAND AND THE BALTIC COUNTRIES' ANTI-RUSSIAN PLANS**

1. "This is absolute hatred that is not described in political science and economics. This is psychology, for which doctors are needed. The Republic of Lithuania, represented by the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, concentrated all its efforts on discrediting not the nuclear power plant itself, but Belarus and Russia. If for the practically drowning Lithuanian economy and politics the nuclear power plant is yet another goal, for the U.S., Germany, Great Britain, France, and anyone else it is a problem not only of the first, but also of the third tier."⁴⁶
2. "The Baltic states and Poland are the Trojan horses of American politics in the European Union. Indeed, for the Anglo-Saxons the most terrible

⁴³ <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20200523/1027780990.html>

⁴⁴ <https://sputnik.by/radio/20200926/1045712744/Gasparyan-v-Polshe-schitayut-Brest-i-Grodno-vremenko-ottorgnutymi.html>

⁴⁵ https://imhoclub.by/ru/material/vizhivet_li_belorussija

⁴⁶ <https://sputnik.by/radio/20200506/1044615254/Eto-idealnaya-mishen-ekspert-o-rezolyutsii-Litvy-protiv-BelAES.html>

thing has always been the continental union of Russia and Germany, and therefore they are trying every possible way to prevent this... Poland is, relatively speaking, the lap dog of American imperialism, whose task is not only to ruin relations with Russia and pursue its own line hostile to the Russian world to the east, but also to prevent a real union of Germany and Russia.”⁴⁷

3. “Of course, with some kind of bitterness you see that people adhering to neo-Nazi ideology, formed under the influence of the emigration strata who left with the German occupation troops in 1944, now have a holiday for life that will not be on May 9th. It is hard to imagine a better gift for them. They continue to pursue their dream of building a Latvian Latvia and of getting away from Russia.”⁴⁸

3.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEGRADATION IN POLAND AND THE BALTIC STATES

1. “The Lithuanian economy is a catastrophe that no one talks about. Donations from Brussels will be cut. The Rail Baltic project as a means of feeding the budget is likely to be brought to a halt. Immigration will increase, as usual, following the economic crisis... And against this background of complete economic and political bankruptcy, a universal lifesaver has been found that distracts public attention. This, as we have already guessed, is the Belarusian Astravets Nuclear Power Plant.”⁴⁹
2. “But, perhaps, Poland must, at least for economic reasons, become a part of Greater Germany while maintaining the external attributes of a sovereign state.”⁵⁰
3. “The main thing that catches the eye in Latvia is the peak-like impoverishment of the population. This is clearly visible. You walk around Riga, like during the war but while not at war, you ‘give up,’ ‘sell out.’ The only difference is that there are no crosses on the windows. A very dull sight. Embezzlement has always existed, taking into account corruption. If earlier this was all somehow veiled, then here, it seems to me, it has come into fashion. They shock you with ‘Ah, you won’t do anything to us! Now we have elections for the Riga City Council on April 25. There was no snow this year, but

47 <https://sputnik.by/video/20190726/1042200971/Sergeev-belorussko-rossiyskiy-Soyuz--flagman-novogo-tsvilizatsionnogo-protssessa.html>

48 <https://sputnik.by/radio/20200416/1044436443/Pankratov-Riga-seychas-vyglyadit-neskolko-apokaliptichno.html>

49 <https://sputnik.by/radio/20200506/1044615254/Eto-idealnaya-mishen-ekspert-o-rezolyutsii-Litvy-protiv-BelAES.html>

50 <https://iarex.ru/articles/74794.html>

according to reports it appears that our housing and communal services wrote off 1.5 million euros for snow removal.”⁵¹

3.4 POLAND AND THE BALTIC STATES AS PUPPETS OF BRUSSELS, NATO, AND THE UNITED STATES

1. “What role does the United States assign to the Baltic states in their aggressive plans against the world community? Purely NATO. The Baltics are destined for the role of NATO bridgehead for the United States, from where they plan to start military operations against Russia and, of course, against Belarus to establish a unipolar world. It should be understood that at first the Baltic quasi-states were considered by the Yankees to be not some kind of ‘independent states,’ but as a NATO springboard for aggression against Russia. The logic here was purely colonial – the liberation of the territories of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia to create a heavy NATO fist for movement to the East. The American ‘Drang nach Osten,’ so to speak.”⁵²
2. “The Lithuanian politician does not and cannot have his own opinion, because there is no Lithuanian policy and cannot be. There is a certain degree of sovereignty like we see in a yard dog tied on a short chain to guard the yard. Here in the east of NATO and the European Union, a Lithuanian political dog is tied up to guard the courtyard. It has freedom within the bounds of the chain and freedom of expression to bark at its eastern neighbor. More precisely, on two eastern neighbors – the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. And from time to time we hear it.”⁵³
3. “Latvia rushed into the attack on the orders of the collective West first and found itself between two fires. Europe, which cannot be denied, demands an attack on Belarus, although it does not promise support... This is precisely the main task of the buffer states of the former Russian and Soviet Baltic states. There are no others on the ‘menu’ for Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. These are puppet states with the function of a bumper and cannon fodder if there is war tomorrow. Expendable materials.”⁵⁴

51 <https://sputnik.by/video/20200317/1044171484/Pankratov-v-Latvii-nablyudaetsya-ob-nischanie-naseleniya.html>

52 http://ross-bel.ru/about/news_post/lev-krishtapovich-strany-baltii-kak-na-tovskij-placdarm-ssha-protiv-mnogopolyarnogo-mira

53 <https://sputnik.by/radio/20200306/1044103428/Pogavkat-na-sosedey-ekspert-obyasnil-vykhodku-litovskogo-politika.html>

54 <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200901/1028741663.html>

3.5

TOTALITARIANISM AND NEO-NAZISM IN POLAND AND THE BALTIC COUNTRIES, AND OTHER CONSPIRACY THEORIES

1. “But the regimes ruling in the Baltics, Warsaw, and Kyiv trace their ancestry back to the pre-war regimes in Poland and the Baltic states, as well as to the Banderites in Ukraine. All these regimes were in solidarity with Hitler. All these regimes suffer from Russophobia, where everyone promotes the idea of a ‘Soviet occupation’ and everyone (officially or semi-officially) believes that for some reason Russia should compensate them for this ‘occupation’... Historical amnesia, Russophobia, and anti-Semitism go hand in hand, organically complementing each other.”⁵⁵

2. “Lithuania. If earlier I spoke about an authoritarian state with some caution, today I can say without any hesitation and with absolute certainty that Lithuania is a totalitarian state with a president presenting as handsome and kind, but absolutely terrible from the perspective of the political class.”⁵⁶

3. “Why are the authorities of the Baltic states and Ukraine especially zealous today in falsifying the history of the Great Patriotic War? Precisely because they are no different from the former pro-fascist puppets in the Baltics and the Banderites during the Second World War. The latter are their political and ideological adherents, and the nationalization of the Baltic countries and the Banderization and decommunization of Ukraine have always been their secret desire. Today, in the wake of anti-Russian sanctions, they gladly and explicitly are honoring former collaborators as fighters for the independence of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Ukraine from Stalin's Russia, while they present themselves as the vanguard in defending European democracy from Putin's Russia.”⁵⁷

⁵⁵ <https://sputnik.by/columnists/20200124/1043778629/Rusofobiya-i-anti-semitizm-idut-ruka-ob-ruku.html>

⁵⁶ <https://sputnik.by/radio/20191024/1043083667/NATO-gotovitsya-k-voyne-ekspert-o-zayavlenii-amerikanskogo-general.html>

⁵⁷ <https://www.sonar2050.org/publications/nravstvennaya-cennost-pobedy/>

4 NARRATIVES FOR OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES



4.1**AGGRESSIVE WESTERN PLANS, INCLUDING
"COLOR REVOLUTIONS," FOR BELARUS**

1. "So, let's see what Europe wants to get from our government for the Schengen. First, the revelry of democracy in the form of 'peaceful processions' of the opposition on the eve of parliamentary and presidential elections. Second, the cooling of relations with Russia. Third, the full development of various European programs on our territory. That is, for a sad 60 euros the Europeans want the Belarusian government to surrender the country and lose its independence."⁵⁸
2. "If not for the pandemic, it is quite possible that our villages and cities would now be blazing in enemy fire. It is such a surprise, apparently, that NATO members were preparing for the 75th anniversary of the celebration of the great Victory Day. Before the epidemic, Belarusian intelligence monitored the situation almost every day and provided data on the situation so that preventive measures could be taken to respond to movements near the Belarusian border."⁵⁹
3. "The main opponents of Lukashenka are the three Baltic republics. For myself, I came up with a kind of formula. Maybe I am a great power, but I understand how Belarus can maintain its independence if it is next to Russia. But I do not understand how it will maintain its independence if it is next to Europe, Poland and its three mongrels, which, when the Poles prey upon the living Belarusian flesh, will not stand aside."⁶⁰

4.2**FASCIST TENDENCIES IN WESTERN COUNTRIES
AND THE EUROPEAN UNION AS NAZI GERMANY**

1. "After Great Britain left the European Union, only those countries that during the war or together with Hitler's Reich officially participated in the war against the USSR, or those that supported the Nazi war machine economically, remained in the EU. Suffice it to say that a quarter of the divisions that invaded the USSR, (1,800 people) were from European countries allied to Hitler. In addition, many volunteers from all countries of the current European Union served as SS troops. Many more citizens than from the countries of the current European Union fought on Hitler's side than fought against the Nazis in the Resistance movement. The currently rampant Russophobia and anti-Sovietism in the European Union is nothing more than hatred that burst out into the open for those who crushed fascism 75 years ago."⁶¹

⁵⁸ <http://berestje-news.org/2019/01/06/ivan-gorbatenko-abyacanki-cacanki/>

⁵⁹ <http://podneprovie-info.com/2020/04/24/kirill-vinogradov-bryacane-oruzhiem/>

⁶⁰ <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20200905/1028800462.html>

⁶¹ http://ross-bel.ru/analitika-portala-vmeste-s-rossiye/news_post/nikolaj-sergeev-ev-rosoyuz-v-setyah-rusofobii

2. “I believe that the geopolitical confrontation between the West and the East will acquire the features of an ideological confrontation. The West will increasingly tolerate historical revisionism, a reconsideration of the results of the Second World War and, ultimately, the revival of Nazism and racism. And in the East (in Russia and its allied countries and in China) opposition to this will grow.”⁶²
3. “For them, we were and remain the same ‘Untermensch,’ and our Eurasian space is the same ‘living space’ for modern ‘European integrators.’ And in this sense, there is no difference between Hitler’s ‘New Europe’ and the modern European Union, since this is a Europe of capital and elites, and not a Europe of peoples. The destruction of the USSR, the advancement of NATO to the East, Banderatism in Ukraine, the revival of neo-Nazism in the Baltics – this is the same long-known ‘Drang nach Osten’ policy of the West.”⁶³

4.3 THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE EU COUNTRIES AS VASSAL STATES OF THE UNITED STATES AND NATO

1. “It is curious, even now, that when the European Union is trying to develop an independent plan (at least develop!) for extricating itself from economic crisis, its officials make slips of the tongue which, according to Freud, signal their deep-rooted American dependence, and are not at all about independence.”⁶⁴
2. “The EU is now trying to break free from the power of Washington, and more and more American forces are being introduced into its territory under the pretext of protection from Russia. The occupation is taking place without war and without resistance. But the occupiers do not come to provide the occupied with paradise on earth. The occupiers need resources.”⁶⁵
3. “Western Europe is a Romano-Germanic world, subordinate to the Anglo-Saxon world. We see that Germany is trying to somehow free itself from these shackles, but so far it has not been very successful.”⁶⁶

62 https://imhoclub.by/ru/material/o_denacifikacii

63 <http://teleskop-by.org/2020/04/27/lev-krishtapovich-velikij-smysl-pobedy/>

64 <https://www.sonar2050.org/publications/solidarnost-ili-kovarstvo/>

65 <https://sputnik.by/columnists/20190923/1042804281/Rezolyutsiya-Evroparlamenta-ugrozhaet-buduschemu-Evropy.html>

66 <https://sputnik.by/radio/20190514/1041150048/Sergeev-Soyuznoe-gosudarstvo-dolzhen-byt-ustoychivym-geopoliticheskim-subektom.html>

4.4**SOCIO-ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND MORAL
DECLINE OF WESTERN COUNTRIES**

1. “Europe has become the planet's biggest problem due to the inability of Europeans to assess the danger of coronavirus in time, which has turned the continent into a world hotbed of infection. The story of the coronavirus puts an end to Europe's 500-year-long global domination as a standard for the development of society in the minds of people. ‘The sick man of the planet’ cannot be a model... The story of the coronavirus has put an end to the ‘soft power’ of Europe: in the eyes of the whole world it has become a symbol of failure, disaster, stupidity, irresponsibility, and laxity... The result of going from one extreme to another is thousands of deaths from coronavirus, a collapsed economy, and, with it, a collapsed bright image of Europe as a model and pinnacle of historical development.”⁶⁷
2. “European politicians see that minority rights are being violated, that in Belarus the indicators of gay people are too low per capita, and therefore they do not let our citizens in. Or gender inequality... Women not yet grown balls in Belarus? This means that they have no place in the ranks of the European Union. It is approximately by these parameters that Europeans decide whether their attitude towards our citizens will warm or not. Well, of course, the opposition is the main scorekeeper here: if it does not sketch a couple of thousand gays into its reports, which are sent to Western customers on a quarterly basis, then do not expect any warming within the next ten years.”⁶⁸
3. “Just like Gorbachev's Politburo with Chernobyl, Western leaders failed to take sufficiently swift action in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic in Italy, which made the scale of the consequences catastrophic. EU institutions, for example, were simply paralyzed. These institutions, by the way, remind many of the Communist Party in the last years of the Soviet system. The ideology of liberal globalism, in which instead of convictions there are mantras uttered for the sake of taking a leading seat in Brussels, long ago turned into a set of empty dogmas.”⁶⁹

67 <https://www.rubaltic.ru/article/politika-i-obshchestvo/23032020-rezultat-testa-na-koronavirus-evropa-stala-bolnym-chelovekom-planety/>

68 <http://podneprovie-info.com/2019/04/08/zavist-oppozicii/>

69 <https://www.rubaltic.ru/article/politika-i-obshchestvo/20032020-koronavirus-sta-net-dlya-nato-i-es-tem-zhe-chem-stal-dlya-sovetskogo-soyuza-chernobyl/>

4.5**RUSSOPHOBIA AND ANTI-RUSSIAN ACTIONS OF WESTERN COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

1. “And since most EU countries have nothing tying them together, except for economic benefits, European bureaucrats from Brussels have chosen Russophobia... That is, an unjustified fear of Russia and a hostile attitude towards everything Russian.”⁷⁰
2. “Today's West, as part of the world community, at the same time poses a real threat to peace. The West is waging a continuous, centuries-old war against Russia. And under these conditions, an orientation towards the West cannot be a spiritual event... The West must never forget that it will not survive a Third World War. And these elites should not hope that they will be able to survive some first strike against our country. At the heart of the Russian military strategy should be the idea of a preemptive strike: if a war is inevitable, such a blow must be delivered.”⁷¹
3. “But although much still needs to be done along this path, a natural question arises: does Russia need the Council of Europe further along this path, especially in its current Russophobic iteration? Is it not easier and more effective to continue this work on their own? ...They do not care that the conflict between Russia and the Council of Europe has already caused serious problems for the organization. This is not their headache, but the Strasbourg bureaucrats who are trying to pull things together realize the gravity of the consequences in the event of a complete break with Moscow.”⁷²

4.6**LACK OF SOLIDARITY AND THE INEVITABLE COLLAPSE OF WESTERN COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

1. “In the case of a ‘United Europe,’ this is a slowdown in the economy towards the edge of a recession; an influx of refugees, and the first crisis of solidarity caused by an attempt to evenly house them in the European Union; alienation of the population from the establishment; the exit of Great Britain from the EU with its membership fees to the European budget; and the inability to

⁷⁰ http://ross-bel.ru/analitika-portala-vmeste-s-rossiye/news_post/nikolaj-sergeev-ev-rosoyuz-v-setyah-rusofobii

⁷¹ <http://teleskop-by.org/2020/04/27/rossiya-i-zapad-russkaya-tsivilizatsiya-i-globalnye-politicheskie-vyzovy-chast-20/>

⁷² <https://sputnik.by/columnists/20190509/1041086572/Problemy-strasburskikh-demokratov-ili-Nuzhen-li-Rossii-Sovet-Evropy.html>

agree on a financial future for the next seven years. In NATO's case, there are growing disagreements among allies on both sides of the Atlantic.”⁷³

2. “As a result of everything that will happen in the next 2-4 months, the map of Europe may be largely redrawn. Many states may not be able to withstand what has occurred and may result in mergers with larger ones. The total economic collapse that has already begun will demonstrate an absolute inability to resist this. In this case, you do not have to go far for examples: there is Italy, which is already on the verge of default and which largely cannot be helped. And the point is not that the EU does not want to, but that no one has the amount that the Italian economy would need to pull out.”⁷⁴
3. “The story of the coronavirus finishes the position of the U.S. as a global leader. The Americans have clearly and obviously lost to their main global opponents – Russia and China. They lost in all aspects, from the effectiveness of their system of governance to morality. They lost on their own territory... The Russian military is now saving a NATO country from disaster. The Baltic states receive medical masks and respirators from China and do not even ask the U.S. for help. They realize they will not help. The Americans will not help anyone else. America itself now needs humanitarian assistance.”⁷⁵

4.7

THE WEST IS UNDERMINING THE BELARUSIAN-RUSSIAN UNION AND ATTACKING RUSSIA THROUGH BELARUS

1. “Foreign interference in the internal processes of Belarus and, strategically, of the entire Union State, seems to have at some point ceased to be news... It seems easy to understand why foreign interference stopped being a news item. Over the long years of the Union State's existence they have gotten used to it... This component of foreign intervention should be relevant for many years to come. Based on statements from Western European states in the European Union, UN, and OSCE, the funding of alternative groups in Belarus will be increased many times over.”⁷⁶
2. “In the final analysis it can be said that there were two strategic goals: the creation of a conflict situation in Belarus with the subsequent overthrow

⁷³ <https://www.rubaltic.ru/article/politika-i-obshchestvo/20032020-koronavirus-sta-net-dlya-nato-i-es-tem-zhe-chem-stal-dlya-sovetskogo-soyuza-chernobyl/>

⁷⁴ <https://sputnik.by/radio/20200323/1044250129/Gasparyan-ne-schitayte-seb-ya-umnee-tekh-kto-vzyali-na-seb-ya-otvetstvennost.html>

⁷⁵ <https://www.rubaltic.ru/article/politika-i-obshchestvo/30032020-pribaltika-lishi-las-pokrovitelya-koronavirus-dobivaet-moshch-ssha/>

⁷⁶ https://imhoclub.by/ru/material/venesuelskij_scenarij_dlja_belarusi_choit_stoit_za_vistupleniem_tihanovskoj_v_sovbeze_oon

of Lukashenka and the separation of Belarus from Russia, which would be the largest geopolitical defeat for Moscow and another success of the global West on the way towards the destruction of Russian civilization as an alternative way of human development... It must be understood that in the minds of Western strategists Belarus is just a square on a large chessboard where the opponent's piece is still standing. By itself, the 'separation' from the Russian camp can only be with blood, with bodies, and this strategy is long-term and unchanging."⁷⁷

3. "It turns out that the result of the 'help' of the West is a surge of violence, political destabilization, and a weakening of the economy. At the same time, if we correlate the Belarusian scenario with the actions of the U.S. and NATO on the deployment of troops in Lithuania and Poland – the active militarization of these countries – as well as the story of Navalny's 'poisoning' and the associated forthcoming next package of anti-Russian, it becomes clear that these are all links in one chain. The same is true for the 'Baltic-Black Sea chain,' 'cordon sanitaire' or 'American leash' with which the U.S. military-political circles want to tie Russia, however, the 'Belarusian balcony,' that is, our country, does not allow it to be 'buttoned up.'"⁷⁸

⁷⁷ <https://sputnik.by/columnists/20200917/1045697449/Ot-konflikta-s-Rossiey-do-sdelki-mechty-amerikanskikh-analitikov.html>

⁷⁸ <https://sputnik.by/columnists/20200915/1045686720/Beloruskiy-balkon-protiv-baltiysko-chernomorskoy-tsepi.html>

CONCLUSION

The vast majority of propaganda pieces put out by pro-Kremlin media regarding Belarus or directed specifically at Belarusian audiences can be classified into four groups based on the country or countries that are the object of propaganda, namely narratives about Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic states, as well as other Western countries and the collective West.

The main narratives about Belarus are connected to discrediting the political development of the country and the history and culture of the Belarusian people:

- 1.1. Belarus is part of the Russian world and Belarusians are part of the Russian people.
- 1.2. A successful future for Belarus is possible only in an alliance with or as a part of Russia.
- 1.3. The history of Belarus is a part of Russian history or is alien and disgraceful.
- 1.4. Russophobia, forced Belarusianization, and the supplanting of the Russian language.
- 1.5. Belarusian statehood, language, and culture are deficient.
- 1.6. Belarusian historical symbols are pro-Nazi and shameful.
- 1.7. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the Belarusian opposition, and activists are puppets of the West.

The propaganda storylines concerning Ukraine are connected to a peculiar interpretation of its internal political events, the annexation of Crimea, and the Donbas conflict:

- 2.1. Ukraine is under external control and at the mercy of Western puppets.
- 2.2. Ukraine is in the hands of fascists and Nazis.
- 2.3. Without an alliance with Russia, Ukraine is doomed to collapse and there are no prospects for statehood.
- 2.4. Russia has nothing to do with the conflict in Donbass and the annexation of Crimea was justified.
- 2.5. Ukraine's aggressive plans towards Belarus.
- 2.6. Ukraine shot down the Malaysian Boeing and other conspiracy theories.

Propaganda narratives about Poland and the Baltic countries push forward messages about their aggressive actions towards Belarus and Russia, socio-economic degradation, and vassal-state dependence on larger Western states and organizations:

- 3.1. Imperialism and Poland's plans for conquest.
- 3.2. Russophobia and Poland and the Baltic countries' anti-Russian plans.

- 3.3. Socio-economic degradation in Poland and the Baltic states.
- 3.4. Poland and the Baltic states as puppets of Brussels, NATO, and the United States.
- 3.5. Totalitarianism, neo-Nazism in Poland and the Baltic countries, and other conspiracy theories.

A group of propaganda narratives that concern other Western countries, the various international organizations to which they belong, as well as the so-called collective West include messages about fascist tendencies and Russophobia, the promotion of a “color revolution” and other aggressive plans against Belarus and Russia, in regards to their socio-economic and moral degradation, among other statements:

- 4.1. Aggressive Western plans, including “color revolutions,” for Belarus.
- 4.2. Fascist tendencies in Western countries and the European Union as Nazi Germany.
- 4.3. The European Union and EU countries as vassal states of the United States and NATO.
- 4.4. Socio-economic, political, and moral decline of Western countries.
- 4.5. Russophobia and anti-Russian actions of Western countries and international organizations, among other conspiracy theories.
- 4.6. Lack of solidarity and the inevitable collapse of Western countries and organizations.
- 4.7. The West is undermining the Belarusian-Russian union and attacking Russia through Belarus.

The categorization of narratives based on the country or countries that are the object of propaganda, though easily comprehensible, has certain drawbacks. There is a recurrence of storylines about aggressive actions of the vassal/puppet status and fascist tendencies in several groups of narratives. On the other hand, this repetition emphasizes the basic techniques and main storylines of pro-Kremlin propaganda.

In stories published by pro-Kremlin media aimed at Belarusian audiences, there are other, rather uncommon storylines and conspiracy theories that either do not fall into any of the highlighted narratives at all, or at least not very neatly. This is inevitable, as the proposed categorization does not aim to cover the themes of literally all topics aimed at Belarusian audiences but focuses on those most frequently repeated.

The proposed categorization of narratives, however practical, is only one of those possible. It should be noted that each of these narratives can be broken down into many different parts, thereby forming a whole tree of (sub)narratives.

PRO-KREMLIN PROPAGANDA IN BELARUS

1

Belarus

- Belarus is part of the Russian world.
- A future for Belarus is possible only in an alliance with Russia.
- The history of Belarus is disgraceful.
- Russophobia and the supplanting of the Russian language.
- Statehood, language, and culture are deficient.
- Historical symbols are pro-Nazi and shameful.
- The Belarusian opposition and activists are the West's puppets.

2

Ukraine

- Ukraine is under external control.
- Ukraine is in the hands of fascists and Nazis.
- Without an alliance with Russia, Ukraine is doomed to collapse.
- Russia has nothing to do with the conflict in Donbass and the annexation of Crimea was justified.
- Ukraine's aggressive plans towards Belarus.
- Ukraine shot down the Malaysian Boeing.

3

Poland and the Baltic states

- Imperialism and Poland's plans for conquest.
- Russophobia and anti-Russian plans.
- Socio-economic degradation in Poland and the Baltic states.
- Puppets of Brussels, NATO, and the United States.
- Totalitarianism and neo-Nazism.

4

The collective West

- Aggressive Western plans, including 'colour revolutions'.
- The European Union as Nazi Germany.
- The EU countries as vassal states of the US and NATO.
- Socio-economic, political, and moral decline.
- Russophobia and anti-Russian actions of Western countries.
- Lack of solidarity and inevitable collapse.
- The West is attacking Russia through Belarus.