



“PUPPETS” AND THEIR “HANDLERS”: WHO IS IN CHARGE?

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“Puppets” and their “coordinators”: Who is in charge?

The basis of the lexicon of pro-Kremlin propaganda is a dozen words and expressions such as “Anglo-Saxons,” “Russophobia,” “hybrid war,” and “color revolutions,” with which “puppets” and “coordinators” invariably coincide. Describing any socio-political events and the world “behind the scenes” without the involvement of “puppets” and “coordinators” by pro-Kremlin media is as impossible as smoke without fire.

The “puppet-ing” of all neighboring countries of Belarus, except for Russia

As before, in the first quarter of 2021, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia were repeatedly called dependent and accountable to their “big brother” in various anti-Belarusian and anti-Russian provocations. Here are just a few examples of illustrative quotes:

- “Ukraine can hardly be called an independent state, and therefore it cannot be a full-fledged partner for Belarus... After all, Ukraine is not an independent country! It is completely dependent on [what is said in Washington](#).”
- “The hottest news came from the territory of the puppet and buffer-state Lithuania, where the advanced positions of the intransigent fighters [against Lukashenko](#) are deployed.”
- “**Biden** was known in 2014-2017 as the coordinator for Ukraine; the person who sanctioned the war against Donetsk and Luhansk, without which the Ukrainian elites would not dare to enter the [hot phase of the conflict](#).”
- “The elites, with the support of the Anglo-Saxons, artificially indoctrinate Russophobia. If it were not for the imposed development of an atmosphere of hatred towards Russians, Poland and Russia could be very close and friendly countries. There are no territorial problems between us, and our economies do not compete; on the contrary, they [complement one another](#).”
- “The West cynically uses the controlled territories of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia only as a possible springboard [for war with Russia](#).”
- “The role of Poland should be especially noted here, which, along with the Baltic states, is trying to be Washington’s ‘beloved wife’ in Europe. Poland played the role of ‘first violin’ in the failed color revolution in Belarus, and now the Poles are looking to take the baton from Germany as the main initiator of the [confrontation with Russia](#).”

Large EU countries such as Germany and the EU generally are depicted as “Anglo-Saxon” toys:

- “But it is precisely this nationally oriented independence that is so difficult to understand for the current German elite, still held captive by the past. That is, they depend (primarily mentally) on their Anglo-Saxon [victors and manipulators](#).”
- “The EU can neither take Ukraine for itself (this will lead to a conflict with Russia) nor abandon the EU carrot for Ukraine. It also cannot recognize it as part of the Russian world. But at the same time playing the Ukrainian card is beneficial not for the Germans and the French, but for the Anglo-Saxons... European leaders are well aware of the purpose of this “trap with **Navalny**.” As in Ukrainian history, Europeans will have to act as actors in a strange, Anglo-Saxon play on the theme of ‘isolating Russia.’”

The “puppet-ing” of Belarusian leaders of change

Belarusian state and pro-Kremlin propaganda portray not only Ukraine, Poland, Germany, and other countries as “puppets,” but also domestic political rivals. All of them also invariably fall into the category of weak-willed dolls and “puppets” of the evil West, where no action or inaction of any politician or activist or group stems from their preferences and decisions but are instead a Western provocation. Some examples of statements made during the period under review include the following:

- “In addition, we must not forget that Tikhanovskaya, Pavel Latushko, and other opposition dissidents are under the complete control of Western countries, which consider Navalny one of their [tools in fighting Putin](#).”
- “Apparently, the Western coordinators are preparing protests in connection with the opening and ongoing work of the All-Belarusian People’s Assembly. They were counting on widespread actions of disobedience, including in regional centers, to prevent the authorities from concentrating [power structures in Minsk](#).”
- “The impostors acting on behalf of the Belarusian street protests are preparing to rule Belarus. In Warsaw and Vilnius, the ‘kept women’ of the Western special services create fake structures, compare eccentric titles, and develop the [bogey of a ‘Russian occupation](#).”
- “The project of **S. Tikhanovskaya** is of a colonial nature. Svetlana Tikhanovskaya’s team published a draft of a new constitution. According to their version, the country needs to establish a parliamentary republic, introduce dual citizenship, allow foreigners to participate in elections, consider international treaties more important than the law and [many more interesting things](#).”
- “Western governments have no choice but to continue to ignore Lukashenko and pretend there is an irreconcilable struggle to spur on their Vilnius and

Warsaw puppets to all sorts of [outrageous antics](#).”

- «Behind the notorious NEXTA is a specific British-Polish unit of psychological warfare; a whole special battalion of ideological warfare [consisting of 250 people](#).”

As an exception, the independence of certain political figures is sometimes not denied: “Yes, there is such an independent figure as Alexander Lukashenko. Apparently, **Viktor Babariko** is similarly independent. Coordinators and sponsors are often seen standing behind others,” [says one Sonar 2050 article](#).

Who is the coordinator of the “Anglo-Saxons?”

Amazingly, the U.S. “Anglo-Saxons” are not necessarily at the head of the “puppet chain” propaganda. Often, pro-Kremlin media outlets portray the U.S. leadership as a victim of secret deep-seated elites, if not a victim of Britain. One of Sputnik’s commentators [believes](#) that the dramatic events in the United States are a provocation of the British special services:

“And the alleged assault on the Capitol is like the icing on the cake. This whole situation resembles the story of the State Emergency Committee, which is a conspiracy within a conspiracy. This is a classic false flag for British intelligence.”

This conspiracy theory is [echoed by another Sputnik commentator](#): “The general headquarters of the globalists – the Soros followers, the Clintonites – is London-based, and directs operations of hybrid war in the form of attempts at color revolutions in Burma, in the U.S., in Russia, and in Belarus.”

In the propaganda chain of international relations such countries as Lithuania or Poland are only weak-willed performers and “puppets” – if not of the “Anglo-Saxons” directly, then at least of Berlin and Brussels. These, in turn, are “puppets” of the U.S. or of the “Anglo-Saxons.” And, most interestingly, the U.S. and the «Anglo-Saxons» are also not full-fledged actors, but toys in the hands of deep secret elites, which are apparently based in London.

De-Russification under the wing of the Vatican

During the period under review, groundless allegations of the suppression of Russian language and “de-Russification” in Belarus continued.

The website Together with Russia posted an absurd [appeal](#) to participants of the All-Belarusian People’s Assembly that talks about the “washing out of Russian language from the names of streets; from information boards and announcements on public transport; and from road signs.”

As usual, the situation is turned upside down. It is in these few areas that you can still see or hear Belarusian language, since in all others, including national television, the educational sphere, and in the legislative process, it has already been washed away and replaced by Russian.

[According to Regnum](#), the remnants of Belarusian language and culture in Belarusian society exacerbate the social split. The title of one publication from behind the looking glass is “In Belarus, the ‘year of national unity’ will be the year of oppression of Russian speakers.”

[Another column](#) from the same publication complains about “Russophobic Belarusianization,” accusing the Prosecutor General’s Office and the Ministry of Information of “promoting Russophobia” and the Belarusian Language Partnership of “praising Hitler’s accomplices and Chechen thugs.”

According to the same source of pro-Kremlin propaganda, an important leader of Belarusianization in Belarus is... the Vatican! It is [alleged](#) that Minsk, along with Baku, “actually swore allegiance to Pope Francis.” They say that he is helping Lukashenko to maintain his power, for which [in return he receives](#) the following: “Russian-speaking Catholicism, loyal to the Vatican and wary of the West. This is probably what Lukashenko is interested in today. Because the Belarusianization of Catholics is pushing them to oppose the president.”

The Vatican often appears in conspiracy theories about the events in Belarus. As described in one of [last year’s monitoring reports](#), pro-Kremlin sources suggested replacing Catholic priests of Polish origin in Belarus with Brazilians.

Various forms of discrediting Belarusian history

A separate layer of propaganda during the first quarter of 2021, as usual, was devoted to discrediting Belarusian history and, more specifically, historical symbols. Such iconic natives of Belarus as Francysk Skaryna, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, and Kastus Kalinowski were attacked.

This time, the famous humanist of the Middle Ages, **Francysk Skaryna**, was called a “local nationalist” and non-existent pages of his biography were invented for him:

“In fact, Russians – this is how the ancestors of modern Belarusians called themselves – got acquainted with the Holy Scriptures long before Skaryna, who hailed from the glorious city of Polotsk. That in no way diminishes the accomplishments of the publisher, but it does destroy the remnants of the reputation of the small-town nationalist who shamefully fled to Warsaw,” [says the Regnum article](#).

In the story “[Tadeusz Kosciuszko as an enemy of Belaya Rus](#),” the site Together with Russia, associated with the Russian embassy in Belarus, not only denigrates Kosciuszko, but promotes conspiracy theories about the imperialist tendencies of Poland. Supposedly, in 2006, it adopted a certain “program for the construction of the Fourth Commonwealth” – a mythical, non-existent document.

“The ideas of Polishness are being promoted in Belarusian society under the cover of so-called ‘Beraruschyny’ and are aimed at eliminating the general Russian basis of the national identity of Belarusians. At present, through Polishness / Belarusian people, the Belarusian public consciousness is gradually preparing for Belarus’s geopolitical and civilizational break with Russia,” the article says.

Another story on Together with Russia is aimed at discrediting **Kastus Kalinowski**.

“Calling himself a Belarusian peasant Yaska-gospodar, speaking with the Belarusians in a made-up trasyanka (a colloquial mixture of Belarusian dialect and literary Russian), nobleman Kalinowski urged them to join the ranks of the rioters. For greater audience coverage, he published the newspaper Muzyckaja prauda in the Belarusian dialect, but with Latin script,” [the story says](#).

There are also speculations about the imperialism of modern Poland and the conditions for granting scholarships to Belarusian students who have suffered from repression: “If a student is a true patriot of Belarus and he refuses to shake up his own state from within to please Warsaw, he will not get a scholarship.

Poland announced an increase in the number of scholarship-funded places in universities for young fugitive oppositionists from Belarus.”

The editor of Teleskop **Lev Kryshchapovich** sharply criticizes the Belarusian-Polish ties and attacks the Belarusian intelligentsia, [calling it “Polish-gentry”](#):

“And the ‘Belarusianization’ of this intelligentsia is only a cover for the Polish-gentry desires for Belarus, since all this ‘Belarusianization’ follows from the Polish-gentry views and concepts based precisely on the denial of the Russianness of Belarusians.” The article claims that peace and a happy future for Belarusians are possible only in close alliance with Russia, and any cooperation with Western countries threatens Belarusian sovereignty.

[As before](#), numerous articles discredited the white-red-white flag in every way possible.

“The entire history of this flag (since 1918) is a history of betrayal, collaboration, and other crimes against the people of Belarus,” [says Regnum](#). The publication blames Belarusian officials for poor ideological work, because of which the flag has been popularized among Belarusians.

The editor of Imhoclub.by [advocates](#) a ban on the white-red-white flag both in Belarus and in Russia, since it supposedly “has become a symbol of extremist groups planning a coup.”

Sputnik Belarus’s carefully selected commentators have promoted the same idea. The flag should be declared extremist, and “all efforts [of government agencies] should be aimed at discrediting this symbolism for future generations,” said one Russian [publicist](#). Another guest [said on air](#) that the Belarusian historical flag is “the flag of Polish puppets” and an “anti-Russian symbol.” He also lamented that “because of the colossal failures in working with young people,” most Belarusian youth became “pro-Polish.”

The editor-in-chief of the aforementioned *Together with Russia* site [writes](#), “What kind of ‘resistance’ of white-red-white ‘amazing’ people can be claimed, referencing hopelessly the Great Patriotic War, if these very same protestors are marching under the flags of polizei and traitors?!”

“It is no coincidence that the flag has become a symbol of today’s protests; it symbolizes collaboration and conflict with Russia, which Western coordinators are struggling to face,” writes the newspaper Teleskop. It also provides a rather unexpected perspective, [broadcasting the idea](#) of one commentator that “the protestors in Belarus must show themselves as real men and Russian people to overthrow Lukashenko.”

Imperiyanews shares a radical view of Belarus and other post-Soviet countries, [accusing](#) them of “occupying” Russian territories: “I am forced to conclude that the pseudo-state limitrophes who temporarily occupied the western and southwestern territories of Russia are politically and mentally homogeneous.” The publication with the self-explanatory name “Pseudo Non-Independent Syndrome” also claims that in the so-called limitrophes “most of the population is affected by the virus of a local variety of Nazism.” And it portends a territorial redistribution in favor of Moscow: “Russia has gone through a lot, and you, non-independents, will survive and will certainly return its territories. This is inevitable. Pax Russo.”

Totalitarianism and chaos in the United States: mass persecution of citizens, Texas secedes

Assertions of an imminent and inevitable disintegration of the European Union have been circulating for years throughout pro-Kremlin media. They intensified with the exit of the UK from the EU and [increased](#) in frequency during the coronavirus pandemic. There were even “prophetic” statements about the imminent disappearance of several states in connection with the coronavirus. After Brexit, however, pro-European sentiments in the EU only intensified, and no redrawing of the European map took place on account of the coronavirus.

Declarations about the destabilization of the EU in pro-Kremlin media have subsided; on the other hand, Biden’s victory and the massive Black Lives Matter protests caused a sharp increase in these kinds of stories regarding the U.S. Pro-Kremlin media began to regularly assert the alleged falsification of elections and a slide into totalitarianism, as well as the destabilization of the U.S. At the very least, the decline and fall of U.S. and Western influence is asserted.

“By the beginning of 2020, a lot had been done towards this, and the internal crisis that began in the core of globalization – that is, in the Anglo-Saxon countries (manifested in Brexit and the reaction to Trump’s victory) – only confirmed the tendency of decline for the Atlantic project,” one Sputnik Belarus column says.

The reference to “Anglo-Saxon” countries is very revealing. It is one of the favorite terms in pro-Kremlin media. In their picture of the world, it is the Americans or the “Anglo-Saxons” who stand behind any action (or inaction) of any European state, especially to aggravate Russia.

Russian publicist Anatoly Wasserman, known for his limitless conspiracy vision, believes that the Democratic Party has seized power in the country by rigging the

presidential election and committing many serious crimes. He [heralds](#) even more terrible crimes to cover up earlier ones:

“It is rather difficult to predict any serious events, and most likely the crime will be seen through to the end with many more crimes to follow, including renewed pogroms under the slogan ‘White Lives Matter,’ including extrajudicial killings of many witnesses. Democrats have a wealth of experience in this area. Look how many people who tried to investigate the crimes of the Clintons died under very strange circumstances!”

Many publications unfoundedly broadcasted about the practical persecution and pogroms against citizens who support Trump, or Americans with white skin. The [fabrications](#) of one of the commentators of Sputnik Belarus are very revealing:

“What is happening now in America is the flourishing of McCarthyism in reverse, only more brutal, vile, vulgar, and universal...Today the atmosphere in the U.S. is such that no one dares to open his mouth against the rampant “reverse McCarthyism...” Today, 80 million people have been declared potential criminals; people who need to be expelled from society, restricted in their rights, and have their mouths shut.”

Another Sputnik publication [describes](#) the oppressive atmosphere of American society as follows:

“You can’t even express your opinion to friends on any issue without looking over your shoulder, and at school and university it is impossible to do so with a 100% guarantee... As a result, you have a totalitarian society, a society of collective persecution and mutual destruction, when not only freely expressing your views but even keeping silent becomes dangerous.”

Repressive practices and lawlessness in U.S. domestic politics are only part of the problem, because at stake is the existence of the U.S. as a whole nation in principle, pro-Kremlin propaganda claims. [According](#) to one commentator from Sputnik, the U.S. may soon plunge into war, and 11 states, such as Texas and Louisiana, will secede. The foreshadowing of collapse is far from isolated, with one column of Sputnik writing the following:

“America is no longer not just the same, but is, in fact, experiencing a global catastrophe – leaving the leading position in the world. But at the same time, it does not need sudden improvisations, as under Trump, but a clearly defined goal. For example, to stay at least among the top five powers while not falling apart.”

The topic of the “collapse of the EU” in the pro-Kremlin media has recently been obscured by the rhetoric of the destabilizing of the U.S.

Navalny and Tikhanovskaya as weapons of the West

In the first quarter of 2021, pro-Kremlin media continued to cite parallels between Svetlana Tikhanovskaya and Alexei Navalny, saying that both politicians are tools in the hands of the West to destabilize Belarus and Russia and relations between them. This propaganda trend was clearly manifested at the end of 2020 and is described in more detail in our [December monitoring](#).

Regnum [outlines](#) the big conspiracy as follows:

“The dissidents who run away are simultaneously returned to Russia and Belarus, which is an indicator of their interconnection as an element of a single strategy... The crisis in Belarus should push the crisis in Russia. In fact, the West considers Russia and Belarus a single and connected political space.”

Together with Russia has [developed](#) conspiracy theories about Navalny's decision to return to Russia:

“Naturally, Navalny had a choice. But this was a choice of burning in a room engulfed in fire or jumping out of a window from the third floor. Navalny jumped out. That is, he went to Russia. He could not stay, because there is no messing around with Western special services. They could have eliminated him, at the same time claiming that Putin did it.”

RuBaltic [considers](#) that Lithuania is interested in the sacrificial return of Tikhanovskaya to Belarus, following the example of Navalny:

“President Sveta” is a symbol of the protest activity of Belarusians in the summer of 2020, and by sacrificing herself, she can revive the protests at least a bit. This shake-up is foremost needed by Lithuania, which has invested a great deal in the promotion of Tikhanovskaya and now is not seeing a proper return on its investment.”

According to pro-Kremlin conspiracy theorists, the insidious West is in some ways transferring the mechanisms of influence in Russia for use in Belarus, and in other ways the reverse. For example, sports sanctions were first tested in Russia. “As soon as sports were fully integrated with anti-Russian policy, in just a couple of years it became a stopgap in any barrel in the fight against countries that were undesirable or inconvenient for the West. Now Belarus has been included in this,” [says Imhoclub](#).

On the other hand – and Alexander Lukashenko often attacks this narrative – the West supposedly learned the lessons of the “color revolution” in Belarus to make full use of the valuable developments in Russia.

“After the attempted color coup in Belarus failed, the events in Belarus can be viewed as a testing ground for interference in Russian affairs, since in the 2021 elections to the State Duma [...] the Russian side needs to take into account the experience of countering hybrid aggression against Belarus,” [thinks](#) one commentator from Sputnik Belarus.

A lot of disturbing reports in pro-Kremlin media about the powerful West, which easily applies “methods” from country to country, are mixed with optimistic aplomb. In an article with the telling title “[Russia will not surrender Belarus under any conditions](#),” Together with Russia explains that even “the propaganda employed on a mass scale and the enormous financial resources of the collective West” is powerless. Vzglyad is [even more expansive](#):

“At the same time, the future of Ukraine is not a question for Russia. That is, we have no other options but to restore the unity of the Russian world. Not to return it to itself, but specifically to reunite what has been divided. And this is not about Donbass and not about Little Russia, but about Ukraine as a whole, Ukraine as such.”

A propaganda remake of the Second World War

Pro-Kremlin and Belarusian state propaganda outlets continue to create ridiculous parallels with World War II, where the modern European Union and other Western countries (and even Ukraine!) are compared to Nazi Germany and the supporters of the movement for free elections are compared to collaborators.

For example, Teleskop [claims](#) that “the current admirers of Western ‘democracy’” in Belarus are no different from Hitler’s accomplices during the Great Patriotic War.”

“The North Atlantic Alliance is determined to methodically ‘set fire’ to the borders of Russia and Belarus. NATO’s multinational battalion tactical groups with standard weapons and equipment (under the command of the U.S. in Poland; under Canada in Latvia; and under Germany in Lithuania) were deployed on a rotational basis within the framework of the NATO Allied Forces Operation

Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP),” frightens a [Sputnik military observer](#) with the menace of the aggressive West.

“Nobody has forgotten how the Pentagon created and resolved the ‘crises’ in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yugoslavia. The concept behind Defender Europe 21 resembles a rehearsal for World War III, but the effect is ruined by poor direction,” Sputnik further exaggerates [in another piece](#).

One of the commentators for Sputnik Belarus is [living mentally in June 1941](#):

“A full-fledged attack is being waged on the nation from three sides: from the north, south and of course, from the West. Under these conditions, holding a sporting event in Minsk [e.g., the ice hockey world championship] is about the same as organizing a parade of athletes in Minsk at the end of June (1941), were it that the tanks had long passed Brest and are heading directly to the capital.”

Imhoclub goes further and [claims](#) that the war is already underway with its main target being Belarusian children:

“You already understand that a war against you is taking place. No one could ever afford to be neutral in a war. The fighting has at last begun for real. The Soviet Union won because its war became the people’s war. But if Stalin’s headquarters in ‘41 tried to become part of the Third Reich, the war would have ended in ‘41. In Moscow.”

A passionate fighter against Western influences, Lev Krishtapovich also [raises the specter](#) of modern Western conquistadors:

“In this regard, market relations, which are imposed on our people by the Western oligarchy, are programmed not to build a capitalist society, or even to transform post-Soviet establishments into colonial or semi-colonial territories of the West, but to transform the post-Soviet area into the ‘living space’ of Western conquistadors.”

In his opinion, market reforms in Belarus and in the post-Soviet space will lead to approximately the same disastrous consequences that the Nazis planned: “60-70 percent will die out from hunger, cold, disease, and loss of the meaning of life, while the rest will be relegated to positions similar to residents of American reservations and African American slums, under the careful ideological, political, and biological control of the U.S. bourgeoisie.”

Since Belarus is supposedly under military attack from the West, radical measures must be taken towards much closer integration with Russia, as explained in the next section.

A union with Russia as the only guarantee for survival

From the rhetoric about the preparing of or already ongoing military actions of the West and the absurd parallels of modern Western countries with Nazi Germany, propaganda clichés about how Belarusians are destined to survive only in close alliance with Russia, or even by giving up their sovereignty and independence and becoming a part of it, logically follow.

Some publications by pro-Kremlin sources talk about this directly while others promote this view indirectly, criticizing the concept of “multi-vector” policy. In such cases, “multi-vector” is equated with an independent foreign policy. For example, the functionary **Andrei Savinykh**, on the air, [reflected on the fact](#) that a multi-vector foreign policy is not only illusory, but also a “dangerous tendency.” According to a Russian Sputnik Belarus commentator, multi-vector policy is a “mess” and the [opinion of another](#) is that it is a manifestation of “Russophobia.”

The publication Teleskop [sees](#) only one positive way forward: “[T]he earliest completion of the construction of the Union State is the only basis of true freedom for the Belarusian people and the independence of Belarus.”

According to [those](#) writing for Sputnik Belarus, Europe is morally decaying, while the Russian civilization is the embodiment of justice and the guarantor of the preservation of Belarusian culture:

“Those who are against the unification of Belarus and Russia have nothing of positive substance except ‘We will be Europe.’ Is it Europe where Islam is increasingly professed, and which is mired in the devilry of same-sex marriages and the loss of family values? Where there is no concept of ‘father’ and ‘mother’ and instead ‘parent 1’ and ‘parent 2’? This Europe? This Europe will into the abyss and will perish within one and a half generations.”

Several pro-Kremlin sites are insisting that the special status of an alliance with Russia be spelled out in the Belarusian constitution. For example, RuBaltic, together with inventions including “Belarusians are Russians who have their own historically developed cultural specifics,” [writes](#):

“If Russia is fundamentally necessary for the existence of Belarus, then the value of relying on it must not only be recognized, but also written into the Constitution, indicating what an alliance with Russia means for Belarus.”

Other sources of propaganda openly advocate the forfeiture of Belarusian independence and sovereignty.

“When the West speaks openly about the ‘Great Reset’ and the destruction of national identity in all countries, it is unlikely that Belarus alone is able to compete against the big players. The need for unification with Russia is dictated by one single reason – survival for Belarus and Belarusians. Either that or orderly steps into the ‘bright future’ of the new world order under rainbow flags,” [writes Impreriyaneews alarmingly](#).