



# Western machinations and “denazification” problems

Anti-Belarusian propaganda online in January-March 2022

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## Causes of the “Kazakh Maidan”

In January 2022, the attention of post-Soviet media, including propaganda sites, was focused on the events in Kazakhstan. Most stories promoted conspiracy theories regarding the West’s involvement.

Many stories blamed Nazarbayev for going too far with liberal reforms and for moving away from an alliance with Russia. According to one *Ukraina.ru* **column**, “A great country with a great history is unable to come up with a great idea for a new society or a great meaning for a renewed existence. It did not happen. And then it turned towards another civilization – not Russian, but American...”

One article **suggested** five factors as cause of the bloody Kazakh protests. First, there was indecision on the part of the central authorities. Second, was the presence of a “post-Soviet oligarchy” connected to with underdeveloped statehood. The third factor was joint projects of Kazakhstan with Russia and China, which displeased Western countries. Added to these was the fact that young people were seen as “the main driving force of any color coup.” According to the article, there are many followers of Salafism and even ISIS among young Kazakhs.

The fifth factor, the article maintains, is Russophobia: “Both rulers of Kazakhstan turned a blind eye to this disgusting phenomenon. Did Kazakhstan officially switch to the Latin alphabet? Yes, in 2017. Does Kazakhstan jail pro-Russian activists? Oh, and how.”

The author concludes that the “color revolution” was organized according to methods outlined in Sharpe’s book, and that “Tiananmen Square should have been repeated already yesterday.”

As a way out of the situation, the article **suggests** a “cultural reconquest of the country” take place “through a genetically close and organically homogeneous matrix of Russian civilization.”

In practice, this would mean a return to the Cyrillic alphabet, an increase in the status of the Russian language, the arrival of Russian scientists and “a massive transfer of Kazakh students to Siberian universities, where technical specialties are opened that are integral to Kazakhstan’s technological breakthrough,” the news story explains.

## On the meaning of the constitutional referendum

The topic of the Belarus constitutional referendum was actively covered in online media in January-February 2022. One Sputnik Belarus commentator **identified** the referendum as one of the key events that will determine Belarus’s foreign and domestic policy. The resource **published** many comments by observers from the CIS that were invariably about the excellent organization of the work of election commissions and the electoral process generally.

**According** to one of Sputnik Belarus’s guest commentators, the essence of the new constitution is to anticipate “what happened in Kazakhstan and how to ensure a balance of interaction among authorities.” One *Imhoclub* articles **called** Belarus’s abolition of the non-nuclear and neutral status a key advance in the new constitution:

“First, the location of strike installations capable of releasing nuclear charges will shift significantly to the southwest. And residents of, for example, the border towns of Bialystok

and Biala Podlaski will be able to see for themselves what the nuclear sword of Damocles means, watching the relevant structures through binoculars. But these are far from the only people. Warsaw is also very close.”

**According** to one interlocutor from Sputnik Belarus, the new constitution should have established that the roots of the state lie in ancient Russia and that an alliance with Russia is seen in the future. In addition, “the fact that Belarusians born in the USSR should have the opportunity to be elected to high government positions should be considered.” At the same time, **according** to a more critical view, “a mass of people were involved, promoting what is no longer relevant,” and citizens had too little time to familiarize themselves with the constitutional proposals in detail.

## **Again, a Nazi and racist West**

The popularity of the “Nazi West” theme has only grown recently. The concept of “denazification” is relevant not only for Ukraine, but also for Western countries to no lesser extent, claim many online propaganda resources in articles.

One **article** compares contemporary Western leaders to Charles XII, Napoleon, and Hitler, and Western countries to Nazi Germany:

“Assessing the balance of power in the European theater of operations, the modern strategies of the current ‘Reich,’ just like 70 years ago, mask their own very specific military plans with a terrible Russian threat.”

Another **article** claims that the values of the West are based on racism:

“The ‘Aryan race,’ in today’s politically correct terminology, is called the ‘golden billion.’ However, it turns out that it still ‘has the right’ to consume the lion’s share of the planet’s resources and overthrow the regimes it does not like. And even if you remove all the rich verbal gloss used by the West for self-justification, under it all is the same European racism.

The article presents Russia, or rather Eurasia, as an alternative to the racist West. It makes clear that the terms “Russian World,” “Greater Russia,” and Eurasia are used as “essentially equivalent.”

Another **article** claims that Europe operates only reflexively, with the most enduring being a “Russophobic reflex.” It also sets about demonstrating that Europe has plunged itself into a “different Nazism”:

“The Soviet Union and its peoples have won, they have survived, and they have conquered life. The Nazism of the first half of the twentieth century ended its inglorious age in a dim bunker. But another Nazism appeared in the second half of the twentieth century. No one was serious in 1945 about abandoning the project to bury Russia.”

## **An aggressive West and its manifestations**

The multiple comparisons of modern Western states with Nazi Germany are intended to emphasize its aberrance and aggressiveness, primarily in relation to Russia. Ukraine is often portrayed as a weak-willed Western tool.

“Biden’s speech confirms that Washington’s main goal today is ‘regime change’ in Russia, and the military conflict in Ukraine serves as a tool to draw Russia into a debilitating war and a pretext for accusing the Russian leadership of ‘war crimes,’ says one **article** from Sputnik Belarus.

A similar vision is also **laid out** by another author: “And Washington certainly does not want peace. The American war lobby has long been waiting for a reason to unleash an open conflict against Russia through the hands of Ukrainians, and now, from their point of view, everything is going well. And the longer it goes on, the better.”

Many propaganda sites have pushed articles conveying that many, if not all, armed conflicts in the world after the Second World War were started by the U.S. and other Western countries to subsequently change their political systems and cash in on national wealth. As one **maintains** that “Americans propagate the notion that civil wars somehow happen by themselves, like a local dictator losing control and rushing to suppress democracy in their own country or in their neighbor’s. The surname of that ‘dictator’ could be absolutely anyone – Chavez, Maduro, Lukashenko, Milosevic, Putin... The main thing is that these and other destructions of states became possible only thanks to a unipolar world and the destruction of the USSR.”

At the same time, the West does not shun anything, another article **says**: “The work is conducted through Nazis, Islamists, and the mafia as instruments of its foreign policy around the world. The Americans have created a mechanism from Ukraine for the introduction of pathogens that are deadly to humans with the help of migratory birds.”

As is clear, Ukraine is again presented only as a U.S.-controlled instrument of mass murder. The same article says that the West has built a totalitarian world system on the model of George Orwell. In general, the message about the development of biological weapons in Ukrainian laboratories was very popular during the period under review. One article from RuBaltic **asks**, “Why do the States conduct their biological research abroad in the strictest secrecy? This is not only about Ukraine. Similar programs exist in other countries, many of which border Russia.”

At the same time, statements about Poland’s imperialism and its aggressive plans for Belarus and Western Ukraine have continued. More particularly was the promotion of the idea of Lithuanian imperialism and the concept of Lithuania Minor in Kaliningrad. “The current percentage of the Lithuanian population in the region (12,000 people) is not such that one can generally speak of it as a significant factor. But, again, in the event of some geopolitical changes, anything is possible,” **writes** one article.

## **The collapse of the West and useless sanctions**

In the first quarter of 2022, as usual, one of the most frequent topics was the collapse of the West. With largely consensus among propaganda media on this point, the differences concern only the timing and depth of this collapse. The total decline of Western countries, values, and the capitalist system is inevitable. The only question is the number of years, or even months. According to one **article**, “modern capitalism is suffering more and more from a deficit. It lacks literally everything – people, ideas, resources, and markets. It no longer develops outward, as it has done throughout the history of mankind. Today, the center of capitalism is devouring its own slower-developing peripheries.”

The sanctions pushed by the U.S. are hitting the euro and the dollar and will allow Russia to restart the global financial system in its favor, say many articles. “The sanctions ‘apocalypse’ promised by the West will most likely undermine the world positions of the dollar and the euro as reserve currencies, while in Russia it will become a driver for restarting the entire financial system with an eye towards strengthening economic sovereignty,” Sputnik Belarus **predicts**. It is also **maintained** that the U.S. pushed the European Union into their “absolutely frenzied, suicidal anti-Russian sanctions.”

The sanctions imposed on Belarus and Russia are presented as an additional factor that is hastening political and economic collapse in Western states. As one article **says**, “The new sanctions against Russia and Belarus are just designed to justify mistakes made earlier by Western financial elites. By whipping up a speculative tsunami in the markets, the West is writing off its debts and this money bubble. This explains the high prices for oil products, gas, rare earth metals, and food products.”

Against the backdrop of the decline of Western countries, the value of good relations with Russia is increasing many times over, **according** to an article by Imhoclub:

“Russia is becoming a country where primary energy sources and energy-intensive and long-cycle technological production are concentrated. Having good relations with it will not only be beneficial, but also vital.”

## The war in Ukraine: its causes and predictions

The media agenda for Ukraine on propaganda sites in the first quarter of 2022 changed as rapidly as the events taking place. At the beginning of the year, many articles denied and ridiculed the possibility of a military invasion of Ukraine. For example, the site *Ukraina.ru* **wrote**:

“Over the past year, the Western media have delighted us with articles about how exactly Russia will take over Ukraine. It seems that the topic has been exhausted, but no. Over just a few days, authoritative Western publications dispensed a new portion of the ‘Kremlin’s plans’ for us.”

When the military invasion began, many articles and comments appeared that attested to its inevitability and expediency. “The crisis that has been building up in Ukraine for the past 8 years was designed to spread to Belarus and weaken and even destroy Russia the extent possible. To halt this multifaceted Western plot the special operation announced by Vladimir Putin in Donbass was required,” **explains** Sputnik Belarus.

“It was impossible to tolerate a country full of biological laboratories and Nazis whose authorities, at the instigation of the Anglo-Saxons, continually provoke Russia, demonstratively rattling their sabers. It was also impossible to tolerate the fact that the Slavs in Donetsk and Luhansk – people with Russian passports – were subjected to shelling and their lives were endangered,” another commentator from the same media resource **justified**.

“It is the elimination of the Nazi regime and the elimination of the potential opportunity to threaten Russia’s security from the Ukrainian side – and not the transformation of Ukraine, which has been incinerated by the Nazis, into a flowering garden – that is the goal of the

operation,” **echoes** Ukraina.ru. There are other incredible statements in the materials about Ukraine. For example, that in 2012 there **were** “14 million opposition bloggers” in the country.

One article **estimates** that due to the growing number of refugees from Ukraine, about 20 million Ukrainians will soon find themselves in European countries. It also suggests the following, which is described as “not very humane and somewhat Jesuit”:

“In those territories that will become part of Russia, a short period for obtaining citizenship (replacing Ukrainian passports with Russian ones) six months to a year needs to be established. Similar conditions for the changing of documents should be established in those territories that will become quasi-independent republics.”

According to one Imhoclub **article**, the issue goes back to the 1990s: “Ukraine also became the target of such methods, as the West needed an AntiRussia. Smart scoundrels hired talented scum, and they set to work. It did not start in 2014, and not even in 2004. It started back in the late nineties.”

On the third day of the war, the Ukraina.ru website **predicted** the following development:

“The most combat-ready Ukrainian units will be partially destroyed and partially besieged in several large cities. The Russian army, after a quick regrouping, will begin the second stage of the offensive, the purpose of which may be either to reach Ukraine’s current western border, or to reach the western border of the USSR according to the 1921 Riga Peace Treaty.

Also on the third day of the war, one Russian deputy in an interview with Sputnik Belarus **said**, “I think that the active phase will last another two days, and then there will be a very long process. After all, you remember what happened in Ukraine after the Patriotic War, when they cleared out this fascist vermin. It took decades.”

The views of propaganda sites on the beginning of the process of “Nazification” and “Russophobia” of Ukraine differ. “After the 2014 coup, Nazism actually essentially the state ideology of Ukraine,” **writes** one Sputnik Belarus article.

**According** to another Sputnik Belarus commentator, the countdown began much earlier than 2014: “Since the beginning of 2000, well-known experts have been saying that Ukraine is being prepared “for slaughter,” setting before it only one task: to become an anti-Russia. It was advantageous for the West that Russians fought against Russians, and it should be said that they achieved this, inciting an enormous stream of hatred in Ukrainians for their brothers, for their ancestors, and essentially for themselves.” According to the same commentator, Poland is looking to take Volhynia and Galicia.

Ukraine itself is portrayed as an unfriendly state towards Belarus. As **stated** in one story, “Ukraine [in 2020] actively joined in the persecution of the government in Minsk, following in the wake of Western policy to isolate the ‘Europe’s last dictatorship.’ Moreover, Kyiv has become one of the main centers for the non-systemic Belarusian opposition along with Vilnius and Warsaw.”

However, the situation may become even more threatening due to the possible “Polish expansion” in the northwestern part of Ukraine and the threat from the “amber republics,” one article **argues**:

“The most important challenge for Belarus is the gradual disintegration of the Ukrainian state, chaos in the border regions, as well as the prospect of gathering retreating Ukrainian armed

forces in these territories and their own defense forces. There is a risk of their merging with local mafia groups, primarily the amber republics, and penetration into Belarusian territory.”

At the same time, not all articles from propaganda resources consider the declared goals of “denazification” generally achievable. For example, one **article** admits that the process of “demilitarization and denazification” “may well stretch for years and even decades, if at all possible.”

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