

Nataliia Karpchuk*

ORCID: 0000-0002-9998-9538

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION PROPAGANDA NARRATIVES**

ABSTRACT

The article seeks to research the propaganda narratives of the Russian Federation in Europe. The Russian Federation has a long “successful” history of creating propaganda narratives since Soviet times. Even today, it spreads national and grand narratives to influence the external and internal audience. The narrative method is used to analyse both the content and the structure of the stories. The author makes the conclusion that the main purpose of Russia’s propaganda narratives is to convince its citizens and the whole world of Russia’s indomitable greatness and power, as well as to demonstrate the degradation of Europe and the West in general. To form the image of an invincible fighter for Christian values, the only outpost of stability, development, security (at least in Europe), Russia promotes a grand narrative, which is disseminated through daily disinformation, fakes and propaganda messages. The article finds out how the EU counteracts these destructive influences, specifically owing to the activity of the EUvsDisinfo site.

Keywords: propaganda, narrative, Russian Federation, EU, disinformation

1. INTRODUCTION

Every day we are influenced by marketing campaigns, commercial and political advertising, and other forms of PR, which often claim unproven, exaggerated, and hidden beliefs, which are reminiscent of propaganda (Schmid, 2014). Our perceptions and emotions are constantly under external pressure and, as a result, we are confused and do not know who to believe and what truth to trust. Especially in times of crisis, we need clear meanings, simple judgments,

* Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University (Lutsk, Ukraine), e-mail: karpchuknata@gmail.com

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order and structure in life. Propaganda that uses old, “comforting” myths, familiar symbols, soothing rhetoric, comes to the rescue if we support a political force or a leader who is identified as an ideal to whom we can entrust our destiny. When such a story helps us organize our lives, it gives us hope, and later such a narrative becomes a culture (Delbanco, 1999).

Having originated from the Papal attempt to propagate the Roman Catholic faith (in the 17th century), nowadays “propaganda” is treated as a special form of manipulative information with a sometimes subliminal “spin”, mixing (half-) truths and falsehood in an effort to influence attitudes and behaviour of targeted audiences so that these are inclined to reach certain conclusions and encouraged to engage in certain actions. Propaganda reduces complex phenomena to simple clichés, creating dichotomies of black and white, “us” and “them”, good and evil, often linked to incitements to disapprove of an opponent or hate an enemy (Schmid, 2011, pp. 676–677). After the Second World War, the term has been largely used in a derogative way in everyday language since both sides used it to undermine the power of rivalry (however, propaganda may serve the positive aims as well). Propaganda is usually linked to war (including the Cold War) and is often disguised as information, but also reaches us in peacetimes and takes many forms, including sometimes even entertainment (Goodall Jr., 2010, p. 58). Any war presumes the usage of propaganda as any war is aimed at succeeding (Romarheim, 2005; Pacek & Truszczyński, 2020). “War predetermines the use of propaganda” (Page, 1996, p. 41) since each war needs information support and verbal description.

The Russian Federation is a “well-recognized” producer of propaganda messages; they are among the cornerstones of its information warfare aimed at “influencing the policies of another government; undermining confidence in its leaders and institutions; disrupting its relations with other nations; and discrediting and weakening governmental and nongovernmental opponents” (Lucas & Pomeranzev, 2016). The older Soviet “4D” strategy – “dismiss, distort, distract and dismay” (Nimmo, 2015) outlines the RF current propaganda.

2. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this article is to analyse the propaganda narratives of the Russian Federation in Europe. We intend to prove the next hypothesis: the RF typical national and grand narratives are aimed at destabilization in the European states and glorification of the RF and its leadership.

Narrative analysis refers to a cluster of analytic methods for interpreting texts or visual data that have a storied form. A common assumption of narrative methods is that people tell stories to help organize and make sense of their lives, and their storied accounts are functional and purposeful. The narrative analysis of the content focuses on the thematic version interrogating what a story is about, while the structural version asks how a story is composed to achieve particular communicative aims (Figgou & Pavlopoulos, 2015).

The next theories help us substantiate the analysis of propaganda narratives in terms of such criteria as content, technique or asymmetry of interests. According to Leonard Doob (1948) the nature of the content of communication determines whether we are dealing with propaganda or not. Such definitions focus on questions of information/disinformation and objective truths, half-truths or deliberate lies (Doob, 1948). As to technique, Harold Lasswell (1995) claims that propaganda has more to do with how things are communicated than with the substantial content of what is communicated. Propaganda should be understood as a means: it can be applied towards ends that may be immoral or moral (Lasswell, 1995).

Roger Brown (1958) emphasizes that there is the asymmetry of interest between persuader and persuadee. It is sometimes claimed that we are dealing with propaganda if the desired ends of the persuader “will be advantageous to the persuader but not in the best interest of the persuadee” (Brown, 1958, p. 300).

In this research the author considers appropriate to refer to the ritual model of communication by James Carey (2009) as the theoretical background. By using the concept of the diachronic (developing over time), Carey focused on ongoing meaning creation over time, instead of focusing on the transmission or the effectivity of messages, or on the interaction between actors as people involved in communicating (Ruler van, 2018). In other words, the very nature of propaganda is to develop new symbols, to create new meanings, concepts, convictions, to implant them into individual and mass consciousness and then to either unite or divide people. Emotions, fantasy, subversion are key features of propaganda which turns into “the weapon of mass seduction” (O’Shaughnessy, 2005).

3. DISCUSSIONS

3.1. NARRATIVES IN PROPAGANDA

Alex P. Schmid (2014) claims that in common Western understanding, propaganda is (mainly due to its strong association with Nazism and Communism) a discredited activity – something attributed to totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. Democracies generally do not (like to) engage in direct propaganda, except in wartime when reaching out to the enemy’s population in an effort to weaken a regime’s control over its subjects makes it necessary (Schmid, 2014, p. 1). Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell (2012) describe the purpose of propaganda as “the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist” (Jowett & O’Donnell, 2012, p. 7). Such deliberate manipulative influence makes propaganda similar to violence, i.e., violence aims at behaviour modification by coercion while propaganda aims at the same by persuasion (Schmid, 2014).

Propaganda is a communication practice, but it has got no invitation to dialogue. “[Propaganda] does not tolerate discussion; by its very nature, it excludes contradiction and discussion” (Ellul, 1973, p. 11). Consequently, the propagandist is not interested in an interactive process involving mutual influence.

Nicholas Jackson O’Shaughnessy, in his book *Politics and Propaganda* (2004), argues that effective propaganda is the synthesis and manipulation of symbolism, rhetoric and myth:

Rhetoric, symbolism and myth are the interwoven trinity that has underpinned most propaganda through history. [...] To work effectively, rhetoric must “resonate” with attitudes and feelings within the target; great rhetoric is substantially a co-production between sender and receiver. [...] [A] symbol can be defined as condensed meaning and as such is an economical form of propaganda, for symbols are universally understood in ways that language can never be; a symbol eludes precise scrutiny and can be “read” in many ways, endowed with multiple meanings. Old symbols can also be re-used, for symbols have inherent plasticity. The power of myth is the power of narrative. Propaganda rejects intellectual challenge, and it seeks refuge in the structure of myths. Old myths can be re-created, but new myths can also be invented (O’Shaughnessy, 2004, pp. 4–65).

Propaganda tells stories, even collection of stories that illustrate a common topic like “good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people” (Schmid, 2014, p. 3), i.e., it uses narratives.

Military theorist David Kilcullen (2018) defines “narrative” as “[a] simple unifying, easily expressed story or explanation that organises people’s experience and provides a framework for understanding events” (Kilcullen, 2018). George Dimitriu (2013) claims that “narratives are a resource for political actors to construct a shared meaning to shape perceptions, beliefs and behaviour of the public”, they offer a structure through which “[a] shared sense is achieved, representing a past, present and future, an obstacle and a desired end-point” (Dimitriu, 2013, p. 13). According to Steven R. Corman, narratives are powerful resources for influencing target audiences; they offer an alternative form of rationality deeply rooted in culture, which can be used to interpret and frame local events and to strategically encourage particular kinds of personal action (Corman, 2011, p. 42). The target audience perceives the story as objective and true.

A. Miskimmon et al (2013) defined the following three levels of narratives:

- 1) geopolitical narratives explain the world order; these are stories about how the world functions, what laws govern it, what great concepts of “good” and “evil” are realized in the world. These are “grand narratives”;
- 2) national (identification) narratives are stories about states, namely their history, aspirations, desires, actions; about how they see themselves and how the others perceive them;
- 3) narratives on political issues explain current public policy: why certain decisions are made, how they will promote development, who are decision-makers, what is the problem, how to perceive certain events, etc. (Miskimmon et al., 2013).

All of these narratives are interrelated and interconnected as their aim is to promote and support the might of the state, its institutions and leaders.

Geopolitical (grand) narratives and national (identification) narratives are addressed primarily to foreign public (however, it is worth mentioning that national narratives are aimed at the domestic public as well as before convincing the world it is necessary to convince the national population) while narratives on political issues target domestic audience. In this paper we will not consider the third level of narratives.

According to William Labov (1972, pp. 354–96), most narratives have a three-component form: 1) structure: what has happened, who is involved, how conflict has developed, how to assess the events, how to resolve the conflict (how the conflict has been resolved); 2) the Parties: “hero”, “villain”, supporting forces, some unique, magic power (mission) of the hero, a prize etc.; 3) deep cultural codes: the features of national character, myths inherent in it, cultural imperatives, traditions (including religious and historical factors).

We start our analysis from the level of national narratives since they constitute the ground for the grand narratives.

3.2. THE RF NATIONAL NARRATIVES

At the beginning of the 21st century the leadership of the Russian Federation has used the concept of the so-called separate “great Russian civilization” to set a goal to strengthen power and increase the influence of the state in the international arena. Russian civilization is understood as a state together with the “*Russkiy mir*” (in Russian “*mir*” means both “world” and

“peace”, this ambiguity creates the additional connotative meaning): a network of people and communities outside the Russian Federation, which are included in the Russian linguistic and cultural space. It is based on the concept of “Holy Russ” and the associated ethnocultural community of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians (Zdioruk & Yablonsky, 2014; Shanhina, 2012, p. 91).

The concept of Russia’s revival after the collapse of the Soviet Union (defined by the Russians as a geopolitical catastrophe) and its revenge in the post-Soviet space is based on the following principles: “division of the Russian people” and their right to reunification; the “artificiality” of the new state borders, which is interpreted as a great historical defeat for Russia and a threat to its security; the need to protect compatriots, by force as well. As a result, a national project of “land collection” – the Eurasian Union – was formulated (National Institute for Strategic Studies, 2015).

Modern ideological policy of reconstruction of the Russian imperial identity is based on the following components: 1) history and 2) messianism (which also has a religious component).

The use of historical science for ideological and propaganda purposes has a long tradition in Russia and is associated with the creation and dissemination of historical myths that replace objective historical knowledge. The basic historical myths are the following: the mythologized history of the so-called Ancient Russia and the myth of the common origin of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians; the civilizational greatness of the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire; multiculturalism of the Russian Empire; state power and the ability of the Russian people to turn a backward and destroyed country into a world economic and political leader at the cost of great sacrifices in a short time; a single victory over Hitler and the salvation of European civilization; world leadership during the Cold War; revival of the Russian Empire after the “erroneous” orientation to liberal values (Horbulin, 2017, pp. 135–140).

The second element of the imperial identity reconstruction is the desire to fill the historical image of Russia with spiritual, messianic content. To this end, at the turn of the millennium, the concept of “*Russkiy mir*” was introduced into the socio-political discourse, which is formed on the basis of a single language and culture, historical memory, faith and devotion to today’s Russian state. This concept echoes Russia’s imperial ideology, which was based on “Orthodoxy”, “autocracy”, and “nationality”. The idea of the “*Russkiy mir*” is passionately propagated and promoted by the Russian Orthodox Church, in particular by Patriarch Kirill. (The concept of “*Russkiy mir*” essentially copies the idea of the unification of “divided” Germany by A. Hitler or the unification of the “divided Serbian people” by S. Milošević) (Horbulin, 2017, pp. 135–140).

Thus, we believe that in the basis of the Russian Federation national narrative there is the struggle against the “inferiority complex” that Russia feels after the loss of its power with the collapse of the USSR; in the structure of the narrative, they try to explain how it happened and to transfer the blame to some hostile (not clearly identified) forces. Myth-making narrative is focused on restoring the lost greatness and persuasion of its citizens and the external audience, while the main mission of the Russian Federation is understood as religiously coloured messianism. The parties to the narrative are “we”, that is the Russian Federation, the citizens of the Russian Federation, the entire Russian-speaking population (Europe, above all), “they”, i.e., all those who do not share the values propagated by the Russian Federation. The national narrative recognizes only the black-and-white picture of the world, that is, “you are either with us or against us”; this is facilitated by cultural codes developed and enshrined in imperial ideology.

3.3. THE RF GRAND NARRATIVE

The “Colour Revolutions” in Georgia and Ukraine were a wake-up call for Russia. The resulting internal debate on what had gone wrong led Moscow to conclude that it needed to build up its own soft power, partly by making more attractive offers, but partly also by developing the machinery to promote itself through media, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other key players – from business lobbies to political parties. The “attractiveness gap” between Russia and the West, specifically the EU had to be bridged by improving Russia’s standing – mainly through the promotion of the “*Russkiy Mir*” – but also by reducing that of the EU. The launch of Russia Today (RT), a dedicated TV channel, just one year after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, was the first tangible outcome of Russia’s lessons learned (Lutsevych, 2016).

While the economic crisis that has dominated much of the last decade did not give much for Russia to boast about, it did generate a stream of negative news about the outside world, especially the EU. The focus on attacking others, rather than advertising itself, also granted Russia the possibility of reaching out to social groups that were disappointed with the political and economic situation in Europe (In-depth Analysis, 2016, p. 6). Russia’s strategic communications do contain grand narrative as a series of core themes that consistently appear in most communications efforts. However, these themes vary (according to Russian opportunism) and often contradict one another. Nevertheless, there are a number of recurrent storylines that the Kremlin-inspired media systematically promote (In-depth Analysis, 2016, p. 8).

The RF narratives are daily analysed by the experts of the EUvsDisinfo (the site operates under the EU East Stratcom Task Force and publishes Disinformation Review weekly). They find out and refute disinformation, fakes, and propaganda narratives that contain biased, subjective, misinterpreted information.

Europe and the EU in particular are under the sight of such a grand narrative of Russia: Europe is decaying, liberal values are leading to economic, political, cultural, etc. decline, and therefore the EU must seek help, support, even protection in a powerful, value-oriented Russia. “We” are the RF, its leader; “they” – Europe, the EU, and specific European states; the US / Deep State are represented as an evil force that hinders Russia to realize its mission.

For the period of 2020 we have found out such “stories” that substantiate the RF grand narrative:

- December 2020: pro-Kremlin media outlets carried a story claiming that the European Union was in negotiations with the Russian developer of the Sputnik V vaccine. In order to promote a narrative that the Russian vaccine was in high demand in the EU, the Russian media outlets ran misleading headlines, creating the impression that it was the European Medicines Agency, which initiated talks with the Russian vaccine producer (EUvsDisinfo, 2020b) (the connotative message is “Russian vaccine is highly efficient and it is recognised in the EU”);
- December 2020: the pro-Kremlin outlets provide with their well-worn, comfortable old Christmassy yarns: EU bureaucrats want to limit the use of Christian symbols and Brussels has decided not to display a Christmas tree. All over Europe Muslims also want to forbid Christmas trees. An Italian town has forbidden Christmas carols to avoid insulting Muslim migrants. In order to appease the migrants, 40 percent of Germans will not celebrate Christmas at all. Even the restrictions connected to the

- pandemic, in the view of Russian state-owned Sputnik Moldova, are merely a pretext for the battle against Christianity. This type of disinformation is part of a larger narrative, suggesting an imminent breakdown of moral and social values in the West (EUvsDisinfo, 2020l) (the connotative message is “Russia is the only strong outpost of Christian traditions and Christianity in Europe”);
- November 2020: *following the US Election Day, pro-Kremlin media claimed that the US democracy is an illusion, election was fraudulent, and thus the US has no right to lecture others about human rights or democracy* (EUvsDisinfo, 2020d). One key theme in pro-Kremlin disinformation is to describe Russia as a *besieged fortress*. The country is surrounded by enemies, perpetually scheming with malicious intent, encircling Russia, preparing a war, representing evil (EUvsDisinfo, 2020k) (the connotative message is “Only Russia is a righteous state and that is why it is hated”);
 - March 2020: the RF disseminated such a response to broad public discussion on Soviet occupation in the Baltic states: main reason for the myth of the “Soviet occupation” is the policy of apartheid and de-Russification; they just want to find an excuse for discrimination against the Russian-speaking minority. The “Soviet occupation” will be constantly heard as long as NATO is in the Baltics, the policy of apartheid will continue, and the country’s leaders will continue their anti-Russian rhetoric (EUvsDisinfo, 2020g) (the connotative message is “Soviet occupation brought prosperity to the Baltic states, but they are ungrateful and support Russia’s haters”);
 - August 2020: “A colour revolution, instigated by the Anglo-Saxons/America/the West” – is the knee-jerk reaction of pro-Kremlin media whenever crowds gather in the streets to protest corruption, government abuse and curbing of civil rights (e.g. in Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine, Hong Kong, the US) (EUvsDisinfo, 2020f). In the Kremlin’s worldview, the people are a passive mass in need of guidance and all the protests are always provoked, staged and managed by outside forces bent on destruction. Individual rights are a cornerstone of democracy. The Kremlin’s view on democracy is fundamentally different. Russia’s president conception of democracy is to build a mechanism for a political system in a way that allows it to adopt and mirror the interests of the big social groups and secure a public concord on those interests (EUvsDisinfo, 2020i).

EU experts emphasize that Pro-Kremlin disinformation outlets eagerly employ conspiracy theories to back their narratives. When you cannot use existing parties as villains in a conspiracy, fantasy villains work just as well. One very popular villain is The Deep State which implies an existence of rulers behind the scenes, i.e., the real power lies in the bureaucracy, in the military, with the bankers and industrialists. There are, according to the pro-Kremlin media, secret, global elites that rule in the shadows. The EUvsDisinfo claims that the Vatican, the Liberals, the Rothschilds, George Soros, the British Empire, the Zionists are a few of the Dragons in the Kremlin fairy tale. Any kind of dissent in Russia is described as tools of malign forces abroad (EUvsDisinfo, 2020h). The WHO is part of the global government and the coronavirus is a pretext for a global colour revolution; that the coronavirus is a game coordinated by the pharmaceutical and media industries; and that the Freemasons have begun “chipping” Ukraine’s population (EUvsDisinfo, 2020a) (the connotative message is “Only Russia sees that the global processes are governed by some secret powerful evil groups and only Russia can counteract them”):

- April 2020: The trope “The West/Europe/US is dead” is another comfortable old claim that, with some variations, pro-Kremlin media have been using ever since the Soviet times. Pro-Kremlin outlets have continued predicting, or stating, the demise of the European Union, the Schengen Zone, Brussels and Europe’s role in the world. An example of repetitive lying is the claim that Poland stopped Russian aircraft loaded with supplies for Italy from using Polish airspace. When this claim was published it had already been debunked by the speaker of the upper house of the Russian parliament, suggesting disciplinary measures against a senator who spread the claim (EUvsDisinfo, 2020e) (the connotative message is “Russia does only good but some forces / states try to discredit it”);
- February 2020: The pro-Kremlin media is loyally following the Kremlin “historians” recommendations to select Poland as a target for a disinformation campaign on World War 2. Russian state agency Sputnik spits out accusations on Poland starting the war. Poland is also under attack for “not showing gratitude” towards Russia’s support after the war. The campaign against Poland is not limited to historical events or processes – modern Poland is also attacked for instigating conflicts with Russia and getting money from it. The main message is “Poland is insignificant and lacking independence” (EUvsDisinfo, 2020j) (the connotative message is “Russia could and can give independence but is also able to deprive of it”);
- January 2020: The pro-Kremlin media started its well-oiled disinformation machinery along well-known narratives: profit-hungry Ukrainians used an old, derelict aircraft, ready for scrapping; only the US had the capacity to shoot down the aircraft – and is methodically shooting down civilian planes; PS752 collided with a US spy drone; the US shot down the aircraft to put the blame on Iran, and selected an Ukrainian aircraft, as the Ukrainians always will support their puppet-masters; the video, allegedly showing a missile hit, is likely staged; and generally, falling Boeings have become a US secret weapon (EUvsDisinfo, 2020c) (the connotative message is “The US is a totally malign state and everyone should fear the US rather than the RF”).

The analysis conducted by the EU Directorate-Generale for External Policies (2016) emphasizes that Moscow’s ultimate goal is to convince European audiences that the EU is focused on imagined threats from Russia and neglecting the real ones from the south. Russia also regularly involves itself in other controversial issues inside Europe, be it the Scottish referendum, the Brexit campaign, or the Assange affair. Any potential cleavage or actual divide within the EU is picked up on and amplified (In-depth Analysis, 2016, p. 10). For instance, concerning the Eastern Partnership Russia attacks the EU policies, and the EU is often equated with the Soviet Union and described as a hostile geopolitical project. The underlying message is that Eastern Partnership states escaped the Soviet Union only to lose their freedom again to a similar entity, now equally on the verge of economic collapse. In cultural terms, Europe is presented as a morally decadent civilisation turning its back on Christian traditions. A second line of attack targets the leaders of the EU Member States and institutions: the worse European leaders look, the weaker the EU as a whole will appear – and the more impressive the Russian leadership will seem in comparison. Accordingly, messages often convey a distorted interpretation of declarations to portray the EU as disrespectful, self-serving and largely uninterested in the Eastern Partnership states. EU membership is deemed unattainable while the EU leadership is depicted as being in the thrall of the US. The EU is

also often accused of covering up for corrupt governments or openly interfering in domestic affairs (In-depth Analysis, 2016, p. 10).

As regards some European states, Moscow often plants stories in local media about territorial claims (by Romania or Hungary against Ukraine, for example) or other emerging “security threats” (e.g. ‘Roma gangs’ from Romania). Russia also presents the Baltics, Romania and Bulgaria as failing states, economically depressed and depopulated second-rate EU members, prophesising the same fate for the Eastern Partnership countries should they join the EU. In Belarus, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Russian narratives portray the EU as seeking to weaken governments to gain access to natural resources or industrial assets on privileged terms. In Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova Russia uses uniform messaging on the destructive consequences of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements and visa-free regimes. States are threatened with the risk of refugee reallocation, terror attacks, imposed legislation on LGBT rights, and restrictions on eastward mobility (In-depth Analysis, 2016, p. 11).

Recognizing the destructive impact of disinformation and the RF propaganda not only on the decision-making system, but also on the mass consciousness, assessments, judgments and beliefs of citizens, in January 2018 the European Commission established a High-level group of experts (the HLEG) to advise on policy initiatives to counter fake news and online disinformation. In the Group’s view, such response should be based on the following five “pillars”:

- 1) to increase the transparency of online news, including adequate and confidential exchange of data on systems that provide their exchange on the Internet;
- 2) to promote media and information literacy to counter disinformation and assist users in navigating the digital media environment;
- 3) to develop tools to empower users and journalists to combat disinformation and promote positive interaction based on rapidly evolving information technologies;
- 4) to preserve the diversity and sustainability of the European news media ecosystem;
- 5) to promote further research as to the impact of disinformation in Europe in order to assess the measures taken by the various actors and to continuously adjust the necessary responses (A Multi-Dimensional Approach, 2018).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Propaganda narrative is the method of manipulative information / story telling that mixes (half-) truths and falsehood in an effort to influence attitudes and behaviour of targeted audiences. With the help of simple, even primitive, but necessarily emotionally coloured stories (based on national stereotypes, myths, etc.) the audience is inclined to reach certain conclusions and is encouraged to engage in certain actions.

The main purpose of Russia’s propaganda narratives is to convince its citizens and the whole world of Russia’s indomitable greatness and power, as well as to demonstrate the degradation of Europe and the West in general. To this end, national and grand narratives are formed and disseminated. National narratives are trying to belittle “inferiority complex” that Russia feels after the loss of its power with the collapse of the USSR and focus on the “historically sound” greatness of the Russian Federation and its grand mission to preserve Christian values. Concerning the grand narrative, it has been essentially unchanged since Soviet times, i.e., Russia is the only state (in Europe, at least) that can counter the destructive influence of

the United States and save Europe from any negative influences and crises. To support these narratives and consolidate the main messages, the pro-Kremlin media broadcast daily European-oriented messages, which the EUvsDisinfo debunks. The Russian propaganda machine is so well organized and heavily funded that it requires the joint efforts of all European countries (not just the EU) to effectively counter Russia's disorganizing influence.

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