

The logo for Graphika, featuring the word "Graphika" in a white, stylized, blocky font. The background is a dark, starry space with several bright orange-red light trails or fiber optic cables curving across the right side of the image.

Graphika

GRU and the Minions

Further Exposures of Russian Military
Assets Across Platforms, 2013-2020

Ben Nimmo, Camille François, C. Shawn Eib,
Léa Ronzaud and Joseph Carter

09.2020

Takedowns

GRU and the Minions

Further Exposures of Russian Military Assets Across Platforms, 2013-2020

Ben Nimmo, Camille François, C. Shawn Eib, Léa Ronzaud and Joseph Carter

Executive Summary

On September 24, Facebook [took down](#) some 300 assets that it attributed to members of Russia's military, including the military intelligence services. Several other social media platforms took down related assets at the same time.

Russian military units have been exposed for running numerous influence operations in recent years. Most notoriously, the military intelligence service known as the GRU [interfered](#) in the 2016 U.S. presidential election by hacking emails from the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton campaign and releasing them online. Other [known Russian military operations](#) have focused on the [Ukraine](#) and [Syria](#) conflicts, Russia's regional rivalries with Japan and in the Arctic, President Emmanuel Macron's emails in 2017 in France, the [poisoning](#) of former spy [Sergei Skripal](#) in the UK in 2018, and the [World Anti-Doping Agency](#), among others.

Facebook said that the networks it took down were "linked to the actors associated with election interference in the US in the past, including those involved in 'DC leaks' in 2016," but underscored that it had "not seen the networks we removed today engage in" hack-and-leak efforts or directly target the 2020 US election. In 2016, the GRU [used a persona](#) that had largely posted about geopolitics and conflict, [Alice Donovan](#), to create the DCLeaks Facebook page.

The assets that were taken down formed several distinct clusters, widely different in targeting and timespan, and running in Russian, English and Arabic: as such, this takedown appears to represent a range of different Russian operations run by different entities in different locations, rather than a single operation. Some of the assets were left over from efforts that ended in mid-2014; their detection is likely a result of the platforms' increased ability in uncovering such operations. Others were recent creations and may have been set up to replace earlier assets.

Shortly before the takedown, Facebook shared a list of the assets with Graphika for independent analysis. This report presents an initial overview of the findings.

The assets in this takedown aimed at targets beyond Russia's borders to the North, East, South and West. As with [earlier operations](#) from various Russian actors, different clusters posted about the Arctic; security and territorial claims in Japan and North Korea; the Syria and Ukraine conflicts; Russia's rivalry with Turkey; and NATO's presence throughout Eastern Europe. A very small proportion of the activity focused on U.S. domestic politics, notably by creating a fake outlet designed to appeal to Black audiences. Only the earliest assets, which focused on Ukraine in early 2014, were associated with hack-to-leak operations.

Most of the clusters in the takedown operated across multiple platforms. Beyond Facebook and Instagram, Graphika discovered related accounts on Twitter, YouTube, Medium, Tumblr, Reddit, Telegram, Pinterest, Wordpress, Blogspot and a range of other blogging sites. The majority of the content consisted of long-form articles, typically supporting Russia and its allies while attacking NATO, the United States, Japan, Ukraine and/or Turkey.

None of the clusters built a viral following. The largest group on Facebook, which posted in English on the Syrian conflict, had 6,500 members; the largest page, which posted in Russian about political and military news, had 3,100 followers.

The Takedown Set

The Facebook takedown consisted of 214 accounts, 35 pages, 18 groups and 34 Instagram accounts. The oldest dated from late 2011, the most recent were still active in September 2020: these were primarily focused on Syria.

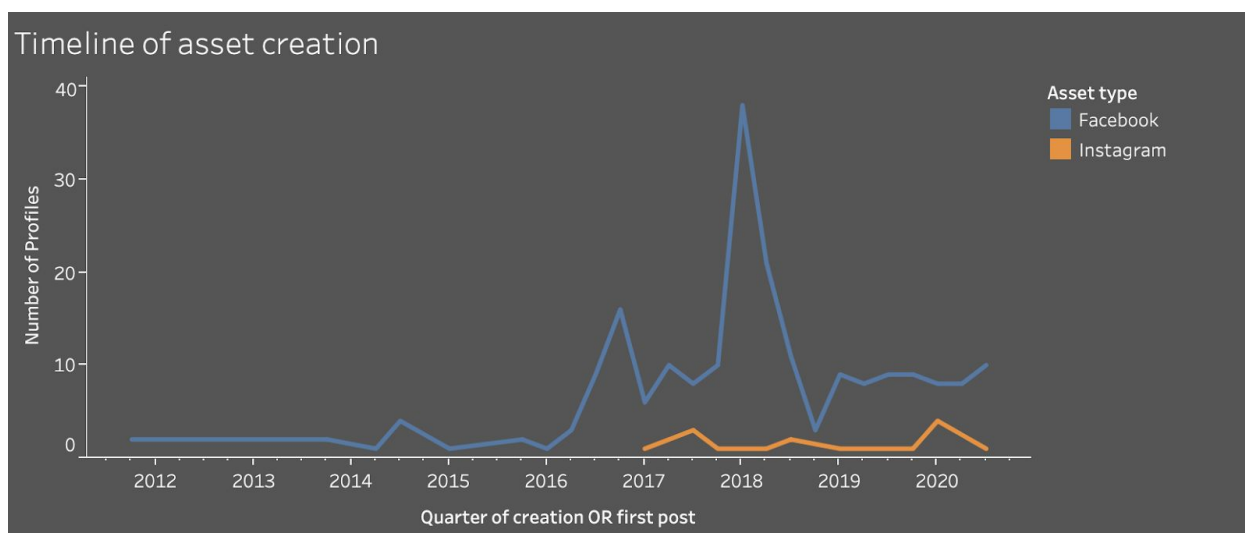
As it announced the takedown on September 24, Facebook said, "We identified several clusters of connected activity that relied on fake accounts — many of which had been detected and removed by our automated systems. This network appears to have centered around a number of regions including the Far East, Russia's neighboring countries, and Syria. ... Although the people behind this operation took steps to conceal their identities and coordination, our investigation connected these clusters to the Russian military including military intelligence services."

These assets formed the spine of a much larger and wider-ranging collection of operations. As is detailed below, Graphika identified further assets on platforms that included YouTube, Blogspot, Twitter, Medium, Reddit and a range of blogging sites. Assets that were associated with the same persona mutually cross-posted one another: for example, Facebook and Twitter accounts from the cluster of assets that focused on the Middle East shared links to Medium articles that were posted by the operation. This behavior was not uniform across different regions and at different times: early assets focused more on Twitter and YouTube, later ones posted on Medium and Wordpress. In Russian, LiveJournal and blogging sites such as cont.ws were frequently used.

Overall, this set does not represent a comprehensive “tour” of Russian military information operations, nor does it represent a consistent set of operations run by a central unit. It is best looked at as an ensemble of puzzle pieces coming to complete the broader picture of known Russian military information operations across the years.

Creation Dates

The assets in Facebook’s takedown set spanned a long period. The earliest - two Facebook accounts that did not show any posting history - were created in late 2011. Two pages focused on Ukraine that posed as hacktivists were created in late 2013. Few other surviving assets were created until late 2016, however, and the largest volume of creation came in 2018, with a smaller bump in early 2019. (The relatively small number of accounts in this takedown set that were created in the early years reflects the fact that many early assets were removed in earlier takedowns.)

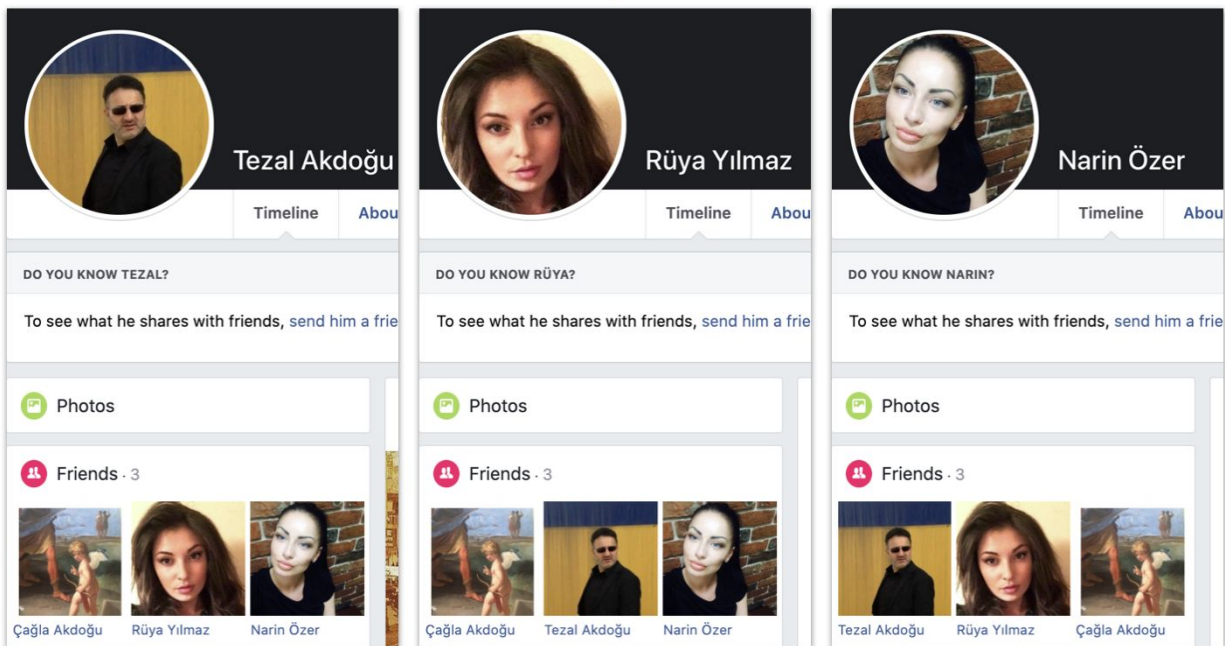
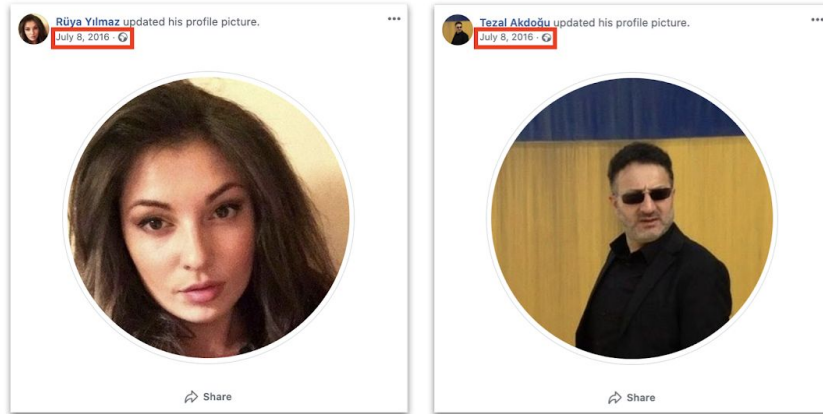
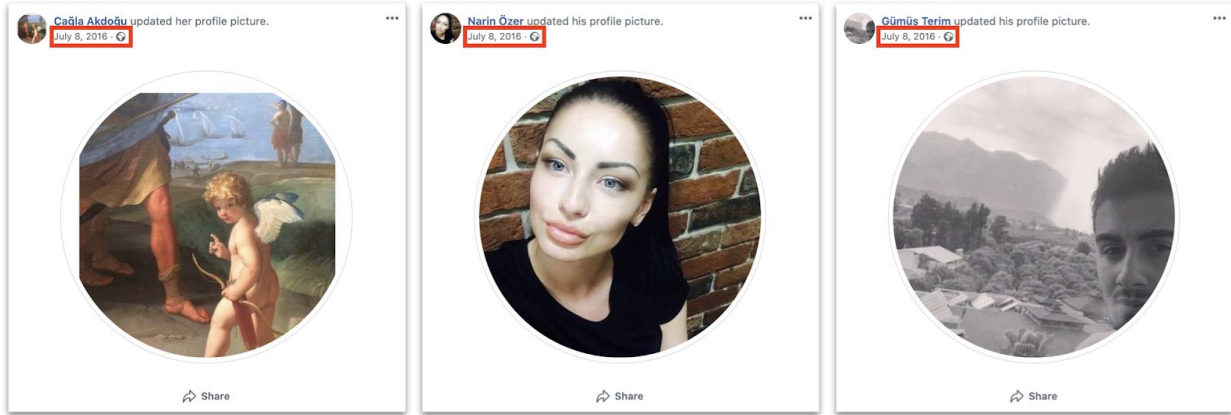


Timeline of asset creation across the takedown set. For pages and groups, we have used the given creation date. For Facebook and Instagram accounts, we have used the date of the first post as a proxy.

Fake Accounts

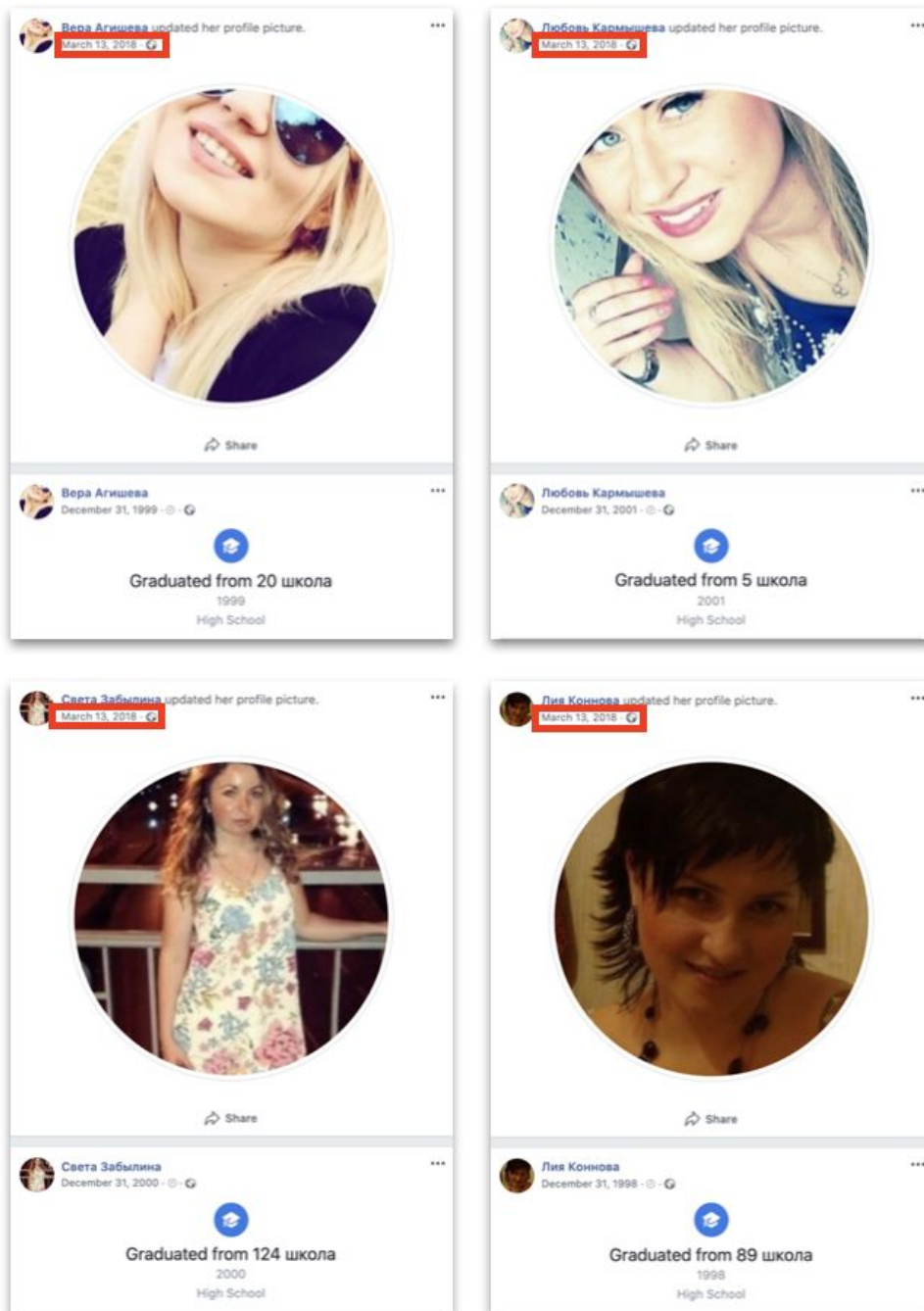
Among the takedown set provided by Facebook, some accounts displayed similar activity patterns and uploaded their first profile pictures on the same day (Facebook accounts do not show a creation date, but the date of the first profile picture gives a proxy indication of when they became active). The Russian networks featured two main batches, one with Turkish names, one with Russian ones.

The older of these two batches, activated on July 8, 2016, consisted of five accounts that all displayed Turkish names while using pictures stolen somewhere else on the Internet. Interestingly, the accounts did not show any activity, and three of them had other batch accounts as their only friends, leaving little doubt as to the ties between the accounts.



A batch of Turkish-named accounts was created on July 8, 2016. All the profile pictures are stolen.

The second, larger subset consisted of 26 accounts that were activated on March 13, 2018. They all displayed the same basic pattern, with a stolen profile picture, a cover picture and a Facebook Life Event celebrating a graduation from highschool that, for all the accounts, occurred on December 31 of various years. The profile pictures used by the accounts can be traced back to various Russian social media platforms and dating apps.



Examples of accounts batch-created on March 13, 2018.

Among the more developed personas, many claimed to be journalists, usually freelancers. One persona claimed to write for the Middle East Monitor, but a [search](#) for their byline on the website returned no results.

Sonya Clemens
April 21, 2019 · 🌐 · 🌐

Started New Job at Middle East Monitor
April 21, 2019 — Freelance Copywriter
London, United Kingdom

5 likes · 1 Comment

Ayman Ryad Follow

I'm an Investigative journalist, and I'm really into politics. I'm interested in all these stuff related to the Middle East region. Analytics and Ar to En news

1 Following · 7 Followers

Елена Широкая
May 12, 2010 · 🌐 · 🌐

Started New Job at Банк
May 12, 2010 — Топ-менеджер

начинающий журналист

1 like

Journalist personas on Facebook and Medium. The name “Sonya Clemens” did not feature on the Middle East Monitor website.

Cross-Platform Activity

Previous Russian military operations have been characterized by their use of multiple [social media platforms](#), websites and [blogs](#). The latest collection of assets was no exception: the

personas that appeared on Facebook and Instagram maintained a wide range of properties across other platforms, including Twitter, YouTube, Blogspot, Wordpress, Medium, Tumblr, Pinterest, Telegram, the Russian platforms VK and OK, and a range of Russian blogging platforms.

War is what happens
when language fails.

Margaret Atwood

Pamela Spenser
@spenserpolitics · Personal Blog

Learn More

twitter.com

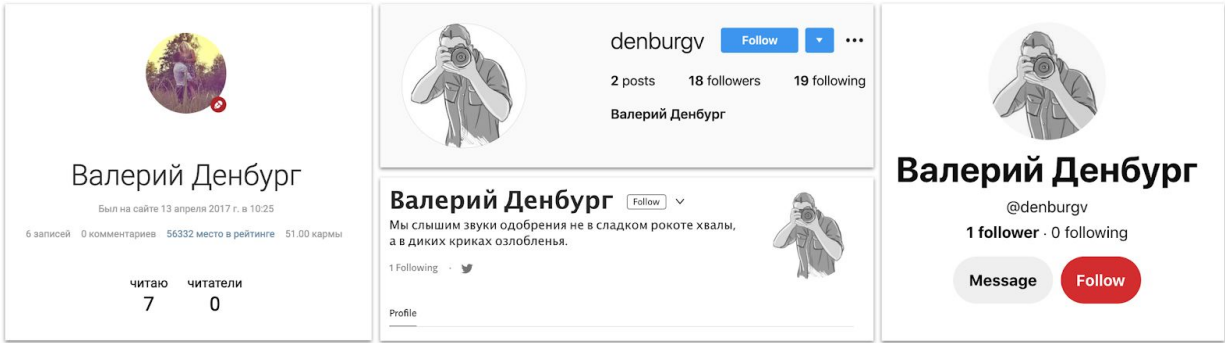
Terrorists Trained To Sabotage Iran Forces During Al Tanf Exercises

Pamela Spenser Follow

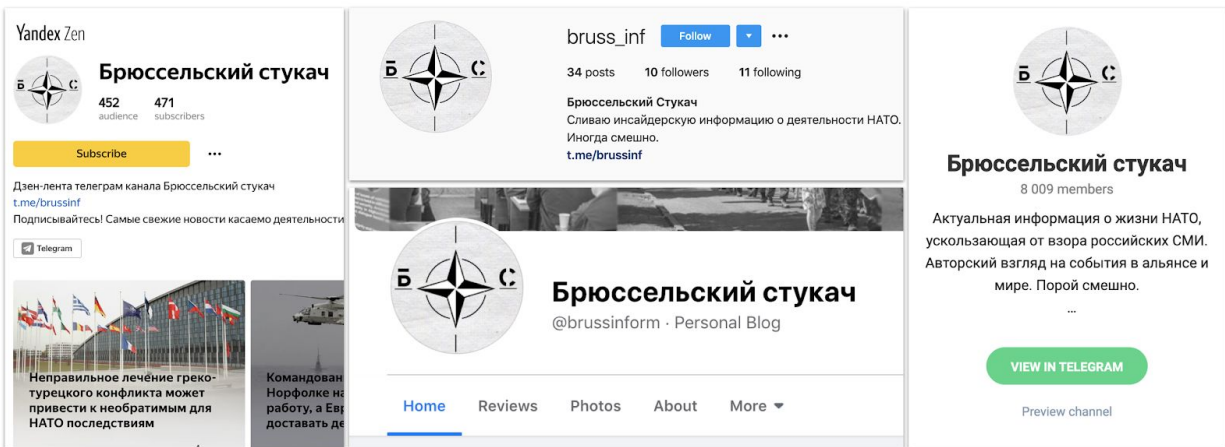
Jul 6, 2019 · 2 min read

Twitter LinkedIn Facebook Bookmark

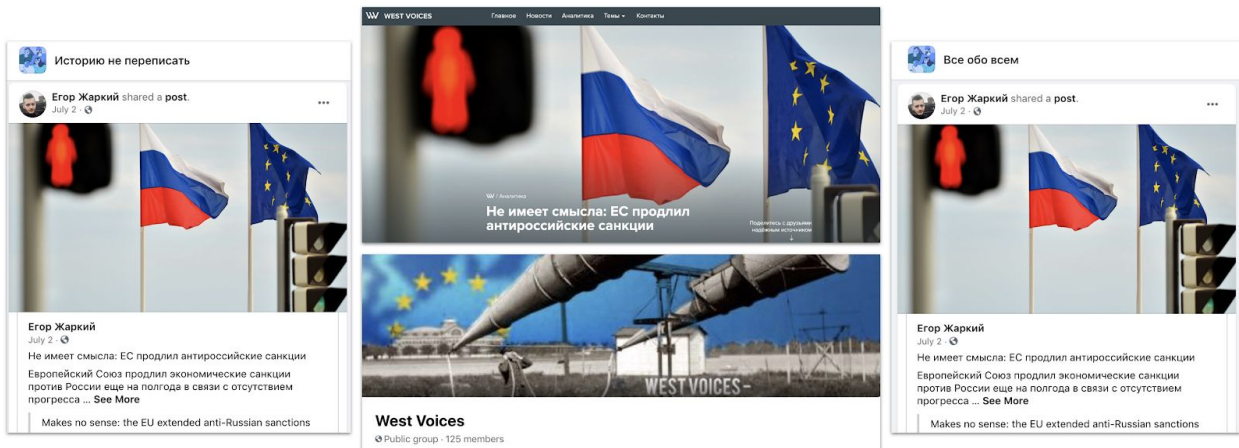
The persona Pamela Spenser on Facebook and [Medium](#). The related Twitter account was suspended some time before September 21, 2020.



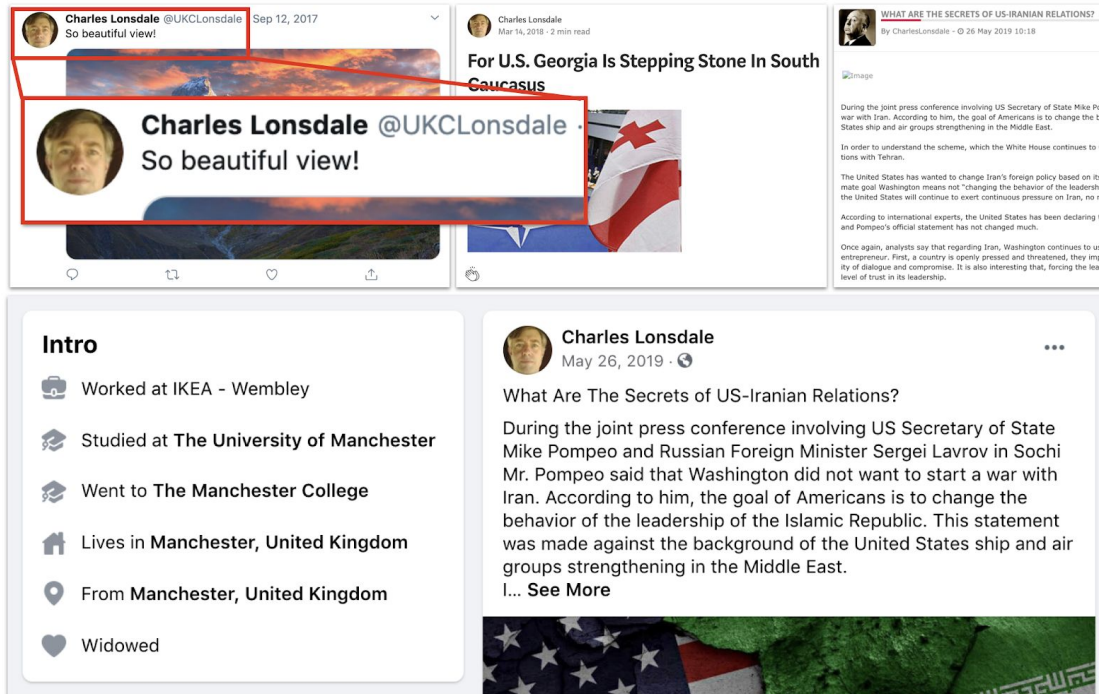
The persona Valeriy Denburg / Валерий Денбург on [cont.ws](#), Facebook, [Medium](#) and [Pinterest](#). The related Twitter account was suspended some time before September 21, 2020.



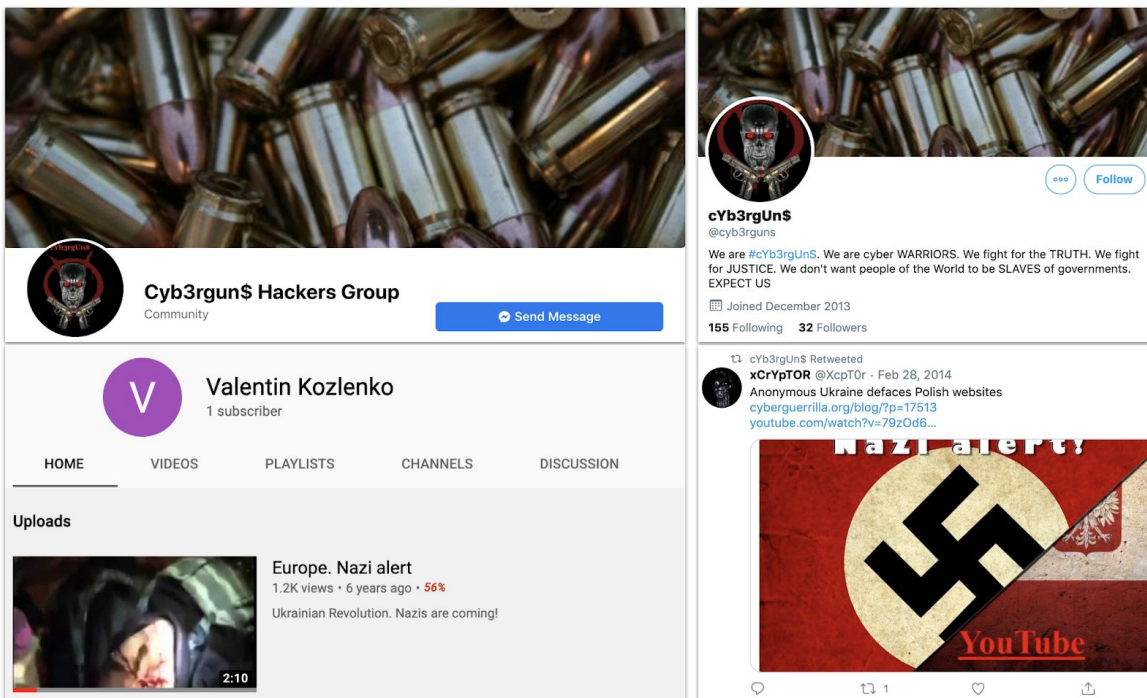
The persona Брюссельский стукач (Brussels Snitch) on [Yandex](#), Instagram, Facebook and [Telegram](#).



The persona Westvoices: [website](#) at the top, Facebook group at the bottom, and flanking it, two shares by an operation asset to two groups run by the operation.



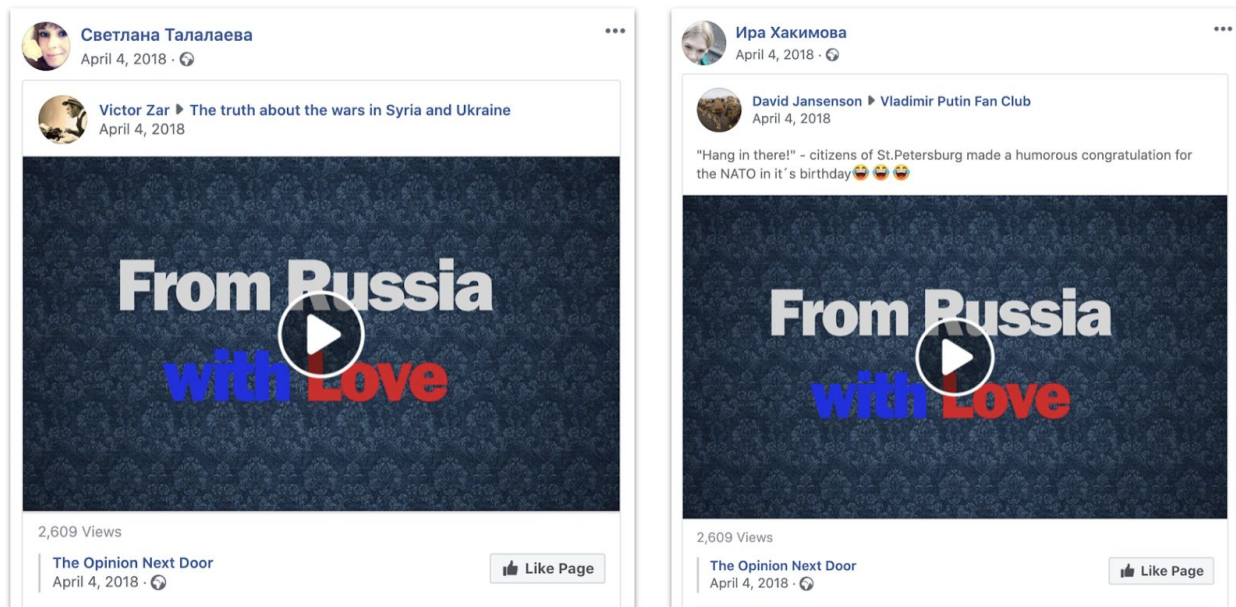
The persona Charles Lonsdale, apparently educated at Manchester University, but whose comment on a mountain view read "So beautiful view!" Clockwise from the top left, on [Twitter](#), [Medium](#), [politicsforum.org](#) and Facebook.



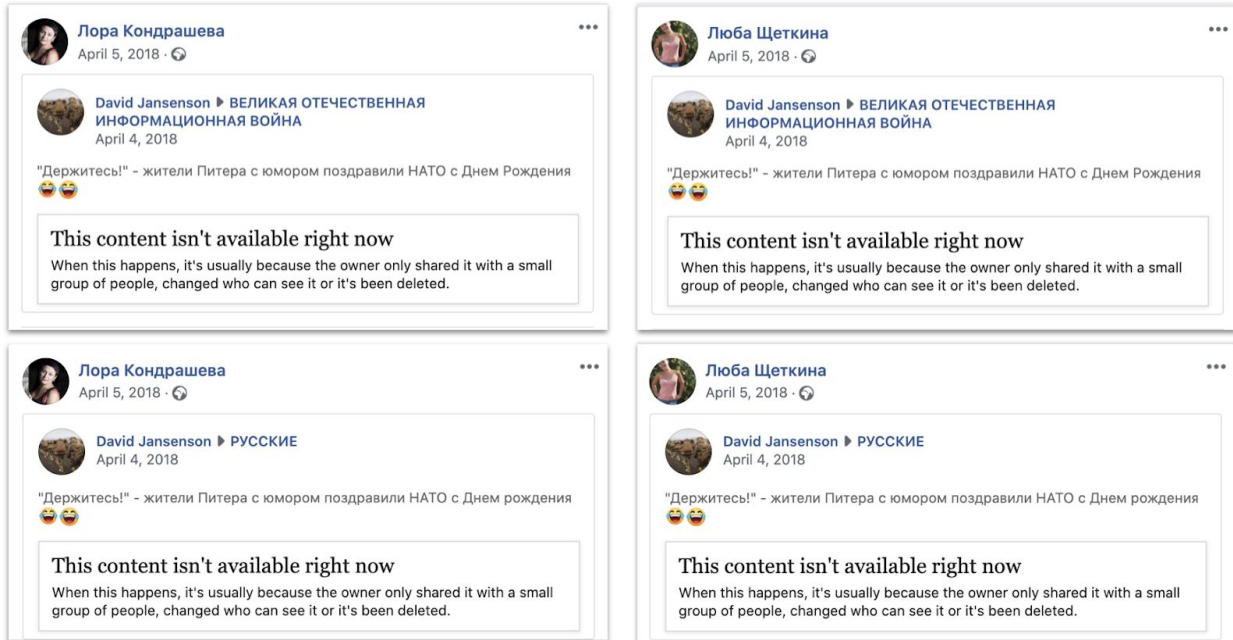
Clockwise from top left: Facebook page for the Cyb3rgun\$ pseudo-hacktivist group; Twitter account for the group; Twitter account @XcpTOr, a suspected asset retweeted by @Cyb3rgun\$ that pointed to a single-use YouTube account; and the YouTube account itself.

Coordinated Activity

The takedown set displayed signs of coordinated activity, both in their posting patterns and in the content they shared. Among the accounts that were created in a batch on March 13, 2018, at least four primarily amplified content from two more well-developed personas in the takedown set, named Victor Zar and David Jansenson. Typically, these better-developed personas posted content from pages run by the operation into groups run by the operation, and then the batch-created accounts re-posted them.



Posts from Victor Zar and David Jansenson in groups, firstly shared by asset page The Opinion Next Door, and then shared by assets from the March 13, 2018, batch.



Two assets sharing the same post from "David Jansenson" in two different Facebook groups

The Syrian-focused pages and assets, in the meantime, posted the same articles or shared content from what seemed to be the core of the Syrian network, the page "USA out of Syria". The content shared by the assets constantly criticized the Western coalition in Syria while praising Russia and Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad. The pages and accounts heavily relied on memes, cartoons, epic and graphic pictures in their posts, most likely in order to attract Facebook users.



Examples of coordination between Syrian-focused pages, accusing the United States of stealing Syrian oil.



Examples of coordination between Syrian-focused pages, picturing Recep Tayyip Erdogan as Hitler.



Example of post coordination between Syrian-focused assets. The pages claim that Syria is doing better at fighting the Covid-19 outbreak than the United States

Some Russian-language sets of accounts, which were relatively active among groups Facebook tied to the takedown set, recycled their visuals to promote their articles, sometimes with up to a year of difference between posts.

Андрей Чижиков
April 10 · 🌐

Собаки лают, караван идет.
Главной целью экономических санкции США против России, начавшихся в 2014 году в ответ на присоединение Крыма, было ограничение иностранных капиталовложений в российскую экономику. Тем самым правительства США и стран Евросоюза были намерены помешать развитию крупнейших российских энергетических проектов. Санкционная политика Америки сопровождалась, в том числе намерениями остановить продвижение России в Арктической зоне – это освоение арктических ш... [See More](#)



Ксения Петрова
May 22 · 🌐

Санкции – главный инструмент США для решения внутренних проблем.
В настоящее время правительство США сталкивается с множеством проблем, наиболее масштабными из которых является огромный внешний госдолг и, конечно же, высочайший в мире уровень заболеваемости и смертности от коронавируса. Однако, вместо того чтобы направить усилия на решение данных вопросов, американское руководство обвиняет в своих неудачах другие страны, в частности, Россию, Китай и Иран, которые постоянно по... [See More](#)



Andrey Trofimovich
May 30, 2019 · 🌐

АТР - регион мира, где концентрация геополитических интересов ведущих мировых держав приводит к серьезным противоречиям, характеризующимся стремлением Соединенных Штатов сохранить свое влияние в этом регионе, в том числе за счет наращивания в нем военного присутствия. Подтверждением тому являются новые доктринальные документы 2018 года - "Стратегия национальной безопасности", "Стратегия национальной обороны" и "Обзор ядерной политики", в которых Россию и Китай обозначают в ка... [See More](#)



1 Share

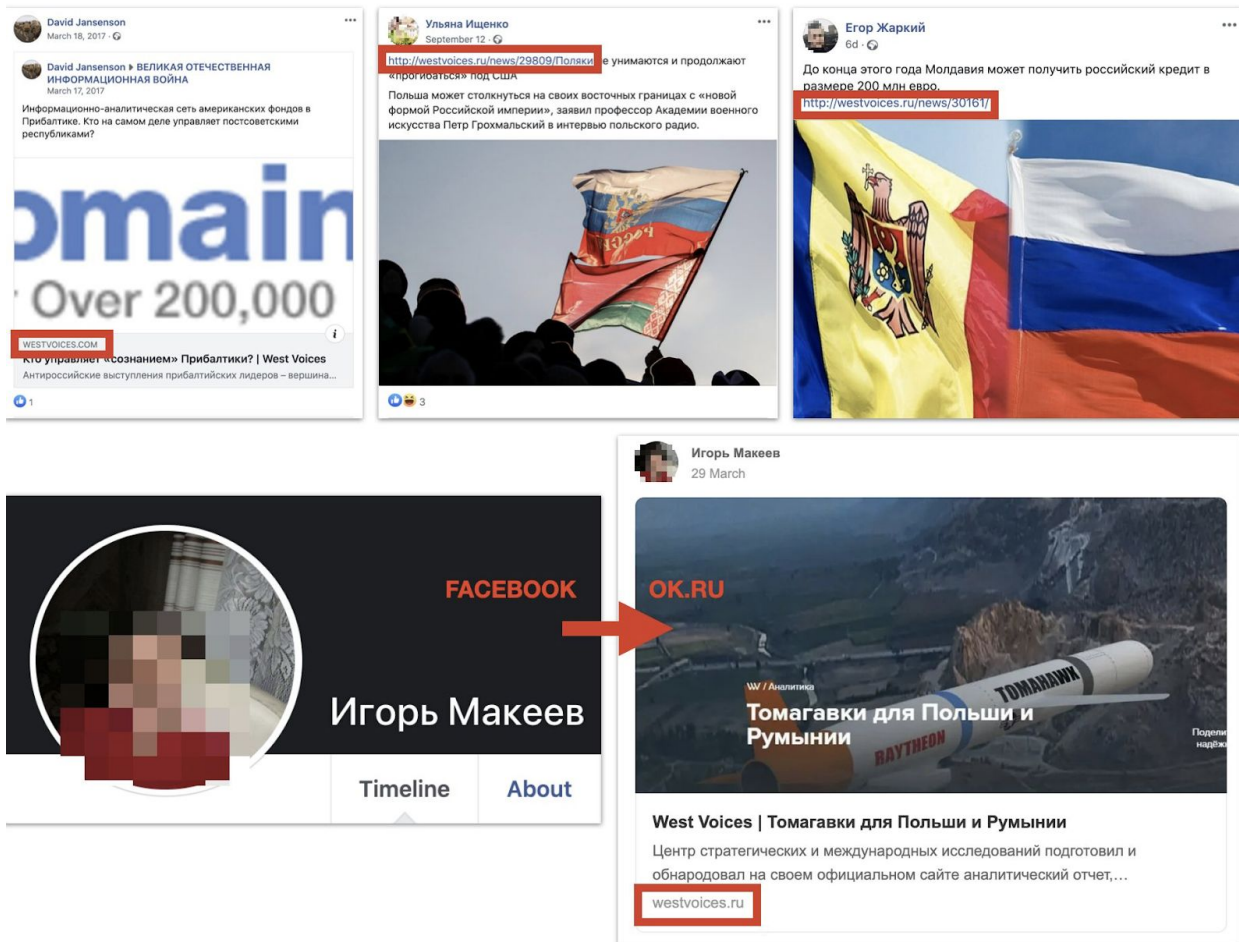
Ксения Петрова
March 4 · 🌐

Кому нужны ПРО США?
2 марта 2020 г. КНДР в очередной раз осуществила запуск двух баллистических ракет малой дальности, дальность полета которых составила около 240 км. Вооруженные силы Республики Корея были немедленно приведены в состояние повышенной боевой готовности, администрация президента Республики Корея провела экстренное заседание совета безопасности с целью принятия дополнительных мер по обеспечению национальной безопасности. Однако несмотря на серьезную обеспокоенно... [See More](#)



Examples of different Russian-speaking accounts sharing the same pictures over time, with different text

Various assets amplified content from the websites westvoices[.]com (now defunct) and westvoices[.]ru, which focused on security issues in Europe.



Shares of the West Voices domains by assets in this operation; the top left image shows that the .com domain was already defunct in September 2020.

North, East, South, West: The Topics

U.S. Politics

Very little of the content from these Russian operations mentioned U.S. politics: they were far more focused on geopolitical issues. However, given the timing of this report, the public interest in the U.S. election and potential interference, we have chosen to cover this topic first.

Only one entity focused specifically on U.S. domestic politics in English: this was a Wordpress blog called “Black and intelligent,” whose motto was “Knowledge is freedom, ignorance is slavery.”

We must **accept**
finite disappointment,
but never lose **infinite** hope.
— Martin Luther King Jr.

Black And Intelligent
@BlackAndIntel

This blog was created to unite black men and remind us of our brotherhood and value as men in this society.

United States blackandintelligent.wordpress.com Joined June 2019

506 Following **158** Followers

@BlackAndIntel on Twitter, screenshot taken on Sept. 23rd 2020 at 5:00pm ET

The central Wordpress blog was accompanied by a Facebook page, a Twitter account, a Tumblr account and a Medium account (the Wordpress site also displayed ads through [WordAds](#)). Its 57 articles were all copied from bona fide news sites, but the selection showed a clear interest in American racial tensions. A few of the posts directly related to electoral candidates: among these, one focused on Senator Bernie Sanders' positive image in the Black community (plagiarized from [Newsweek](#)), while another wrote of Vice President Joe Biden "blaming black America for its problems" (copied from an op-ed in the [Washington Post](#)). The blog and associated assets stopped posting in January 2020.

BLACK AND INTELLIGENT

Knowledge is freedom, ignorance is slavery



UNCATEGORIZED

'I'm Resisting You, B***h': Young Folk Gather The Kent State 'Gun Girl' Who Says Racism Doesn't Exist

January 16, 2020 — 0 Comments



BLACK COMMUNITY, U.S.

Majority of Black Voters Say They Could Vote for Bernie Sanders in the 2020 Election

January 16, 2020 — 0 Comments

Top of the "Black and Intelligent" blog as of September 22, 2020, showing the most recent posts, both dated January. The left-hand post was copied from blavity.com, the right-hand post from [Newsweek](https://www.newsweek.com).

Across social media platforms, "Black and Intelligent" seemed focused on creating an audience for itself in US Black communities: this took the form of gathering email addresses on Wordpress for the blog's newsletter (according to the site, 327 people had signed up by September 23, 2020), and of following US-based BLM activists on Twitter and Tumblr. The Facebook page had already been taken down at the time of writing this report, and therefore could not be analyzed by the Graphika team. Despite its two years of activity and its audience targeting efforts across platforms, the combined following of the *Black and Intelligent* assets remained low.

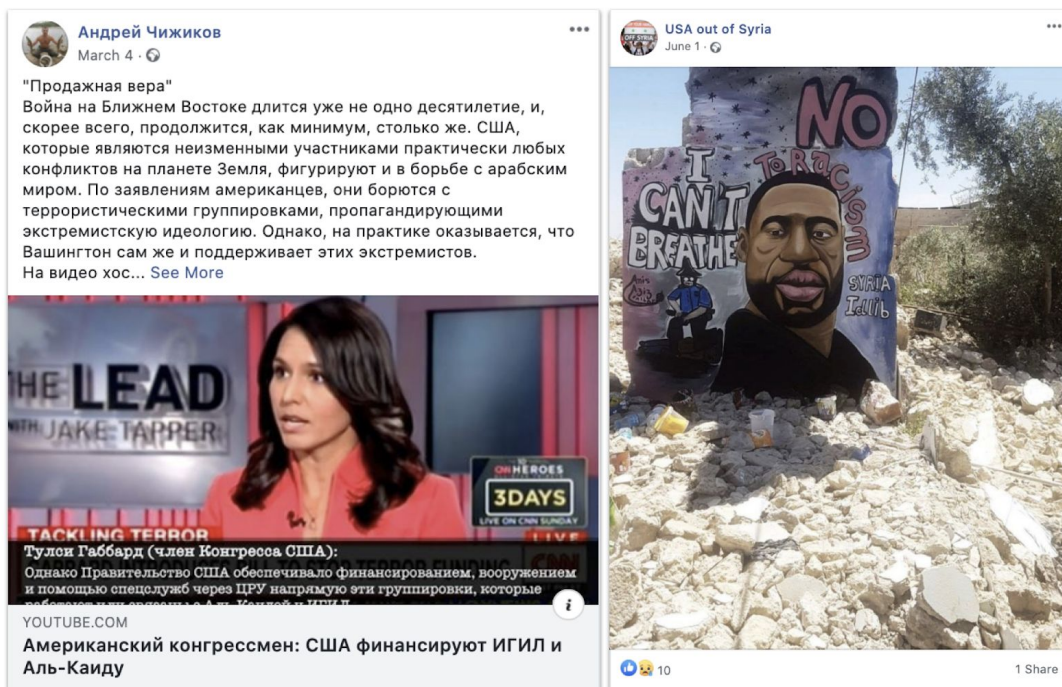
Platform	Content	Following
WordPress	57 articles spanning May 2018 - January 2020.	Gathered 327 email addresses for the blog's newsletter.
Twitter	33 tweets, very low engagement.	26 followers (for 66 following)
Tumblr	2 posts, no engagement.	
Facebook	N/A	
Medium	No content posted, no followers.	

In 2016, multiple Russian operations [targeted the Black community](#) with messaging that was designed to divert support away from Hillary Clinton, including by comparing her unfavorably with Sanders. The activity on the Wordpress blog recalls that attempt, but the volume of content was too small to establish a firm pattern.

Graphika also identified a number of Russian-language assets that focused on election-related topics from a strongly conservative point of view. For example, one blog blamed America's post-coronavirus economic depression on the protests against racial discrimination, and accused Democrats of astroturfing the protests.

"Americans are tired of negroes, Latin Americans, gays, transgenders, lesbians and all kind of imposed programs to destroy traditional values. And overall, the personality of [the Democratic Party's] candidate Joe Biden doesn't inspire confidence, even despite the voluminous information campaign."

More typically, when assets posted about U.S. politics, it was in connection with U.S. operations in the Middle East or the broader conflicts there. For example, a Facebook page called "USA out of Syria" published an image of a mural of George Floyd that was apparently photographed in Idlib, Syria. An account called Andrei Chizhikov shared a video interview with former candidate Tulsi Gabbard, alongside a comment that accused the U.S. of taking part in "practically every conflict on Planet Earth."

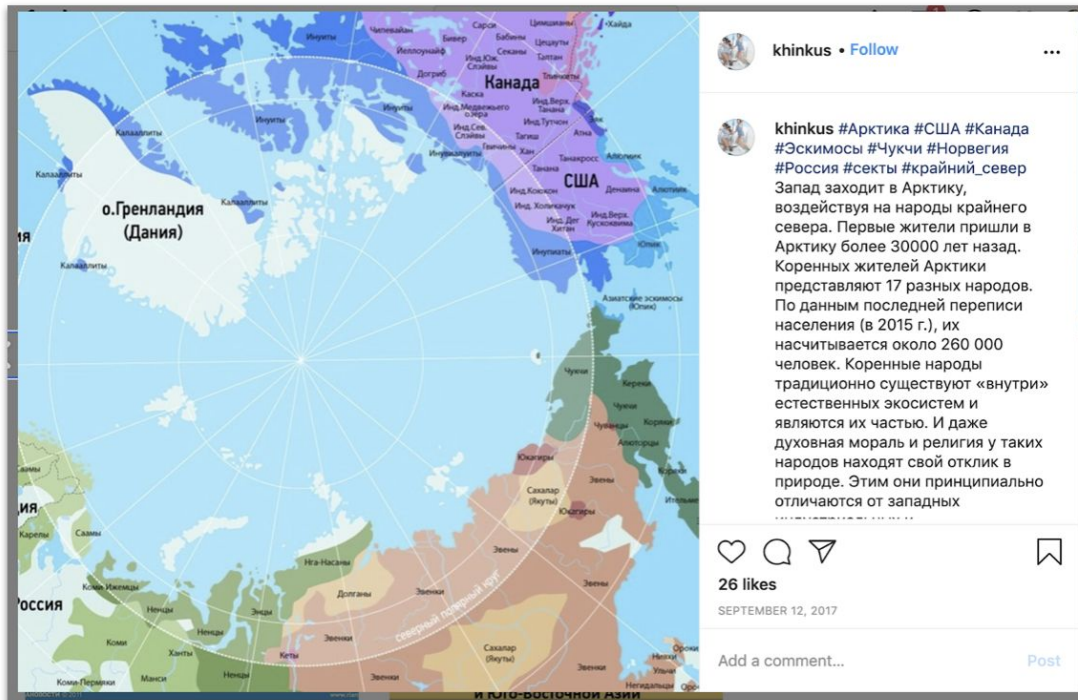


Posts by Andrei Chizhnikov (left) and USA out of Syria (right).

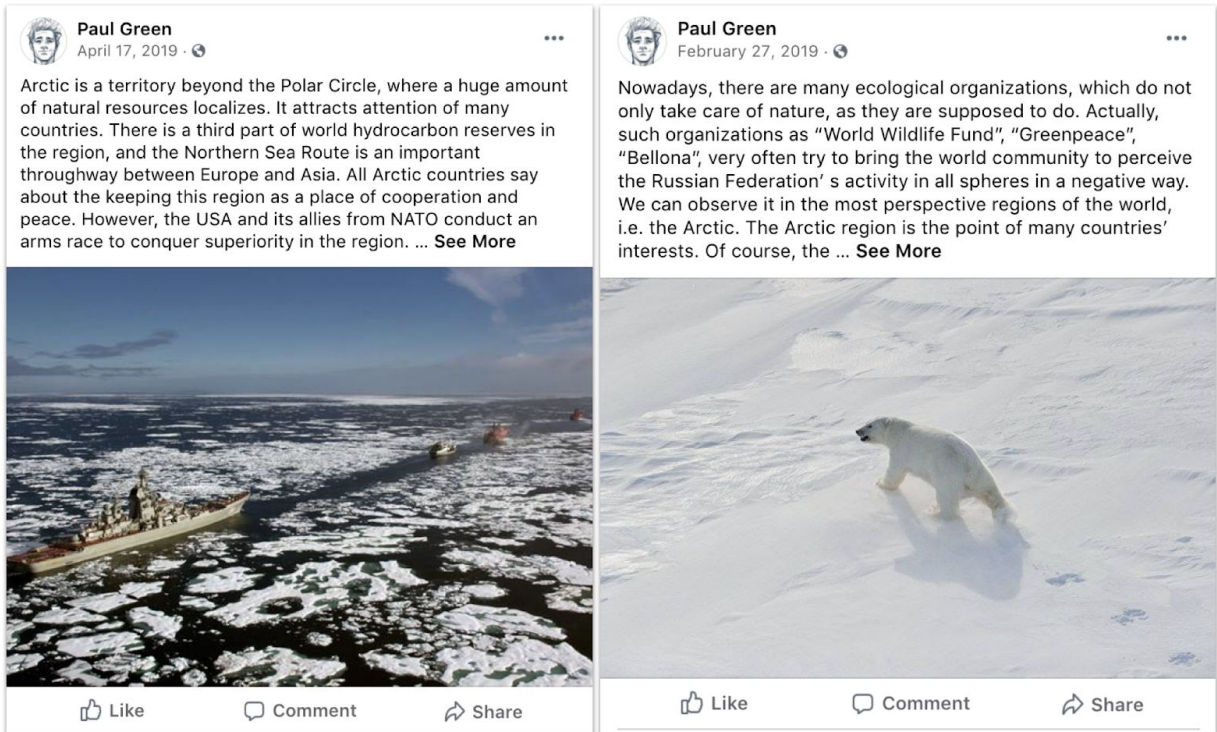
North

The Arctic

Some of the assets in this takedown set posted about the Arctic, often in combination with other topics. This was a relatively minor theme, but it ran consistently from 2017 through 2020. The content typically portrayed the High North as a zone of geopolitical confrontation, with the West, the United States or NATO behaving as aggressors, and Russia defending its legitimate interests in the region. Shrinking Arctic ice and the opening of new shipping lanes and access to natural resources have led to this area being increasingly [contested](#) between Russia and the US and its allies.



Posts from various assets on the Arctic. The topmost post claims that the traditional cultures of the High North are incompatible with Western lifestyles. The bottom right claims that a "Polar War" has already begun, while the bottom left, entitled "NATO's tentacles in the Arctic", explains why the Arctic belongs to Russia and how NATO has been trying to steal territory from Russia.



Posts by asset Paul Green, accusing the United States and NATO of an “arms race” in the Arctic (left) and accusing environmental NGOs of conducting smear campaigns against Russia (right).

East


Japan

Some assets focused heavily on Japan and, in particular, the status of the disputed Kuril Islands, which Russia occupies but both countries claim. Many of these assets appeared to be located in Khabarovsk, a city in Russia’s Far East which is home both to the Pacific State University and the headquarters of Russia’s Eastern Military District. The region is known as the home of an earlier online influence operation, in the shape of a website called the Nota Bene Group (nbenegroup.com, now defunct but archived). This claimed to be a student-led analytical group, and posted about Russia’s armed forces, the Far East and the Kuril Islands from a pro-Russian perspective. The website’s domain registration showed that it was registered to the Finance Department of Russia’s Far Eastern Military District (the forerunner to the Eastern Military District). The website went offline in the first half of 2020.

Domain name:	NBENEGROUP.COM
Name Server:	ns.s3n.com
Name Server:	ns3.redcom.ru
Creation Date:	2009.06.04
Expiration Date:	2013.06.04
Status:	DELEGATED
Registrant ID:	HWWQB6B-RU
Registrant Name:	Finance Department of the Far Eastern Military district
Registrant Organization:	Finance Department of the Far Eastern Military district
Registrant Street1:	Serysheva, 13
Registrant City:	Khabarovsk
Registrant State:	Khabarovskiy kray
Registrant Postal Code:	680000
Registrant Country:	RU


Domain registration information for NBeneGroup.com, showing the registration to the Far Eastern Military District. The domain became defunct in August 2020 and is now registered to a Chinese company.


Various assets that Facebook identified in the latest takedown posted about similar themes. For example, a Facebook account called Paul Green was ostensibly a young man from Khabarovsk who lived in Yokohama. This account created a group called "USA in the Asia Pacific Region" on August 1, 2018, and posted content there occasionally until January 2019. The content accused the U.S. of destabilizing the Pacific Basin and the Arctic, antagonizing the Japanese population and allowing American troops in the region to commit crimes with impunity. Other posts accused Japan itself of aggression and destabilizing behavior, and especially focused on the ownership of the disputed Kuril Islands.

 **Paul Green** shared a link.
August 1, 2018 · 🌐

Well, I want to start this group, telling you a news, that is very important for me. I live in Japan now, and I see how U.S. militaries carry themselves there. There was an incident last weekend, that anried me very much!
It's article from the paper "Stars&Stripes"
<https://www.stripes.com/.../sailor-accused-of-slashing...>


CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A sailor was arrested early Sunday after vandalizing a vehicle and then slas... **See More**



STRIPES.COM 

Sailor accused of slashing Okinawa man's neck after vandalizing vehicle

Post by Paul Green to the group the persona ran, USA in the Asia Pacific Region. The group only had two members.



Спорные» Курильские острова
Япония претендует на южные острова Курильской гряды. Позиция Москвы состоит в том, что по итогам Второй мировой войны Курильские острова вошли в состав СССР, завопременницей которого стала Россия

Вооруженные силы
18 в притененно-административной границе
Пограничные войска

Экономика
Добыча и переработка рыбы и морепродуктов. На островах Курильской гряды имеются минеральные запасы золота, серебра, железа, титана, платины, никеля, угля, слюды

Вооруженные силы
36 в притененно-административной границе
Пограничные войска

г. Курильск
Население, тыс. чел. 1,7

Всего
Площадь, кв. км 517,4
Население, тыс. чел. 16,4

о. Итуруп
Площадь, кв. км 3118,8
Население, тыс. чел. 4,3

Вооруженные силы
436 в притененно-административной границе (307 в дивизии 34 полк, 60 в полку 10)
Пограничные войска

о. Шикотан
Площадь, кв. км 264,1
Население, тыс. чел. 2,1

Вооруженные силы
Пограничные войска


Другие острова**
Площадь, кв. км 90,8
Население, тыс. чел. нет


Вооруженные силы
Пограничные войска

** На январь 2019 г. (Россия): Итуруп, Топольный, Топольный, Юный, Амурчан, Дивный, Ступень, и др. (Самое, Восток, Северный, Южный, Западный, Северо-Западный)

Япония, о. Хоккайдо

АНОЛОСТИ © 2011


 **khinkus** • Follow

 **khinkus** #Россия #Япония #Синдзо_Абэ #Курилы #Курильские_острова #Вторая_Мировая_Война #претензии_острова_Плохая историческая память

160w


19 likes
AUGUST 23, 2017

Add a comment... **Post**

 **Paul Green**
February 5, 2019 · 🌐

Recently, in some countries of the world such a phenomenon as "Russophobia" has become more common. In most cases, this is caused by influence from the outside. That is, someone stubbornly creates from Russia the image of the enemy and imposes this opinion on others. However, there are cases in which anti-Russian sentiments originate within the state at the suggestion of the country's leadership.

This situation can be observed in Japan. For more than half a century, the popul... **See More**

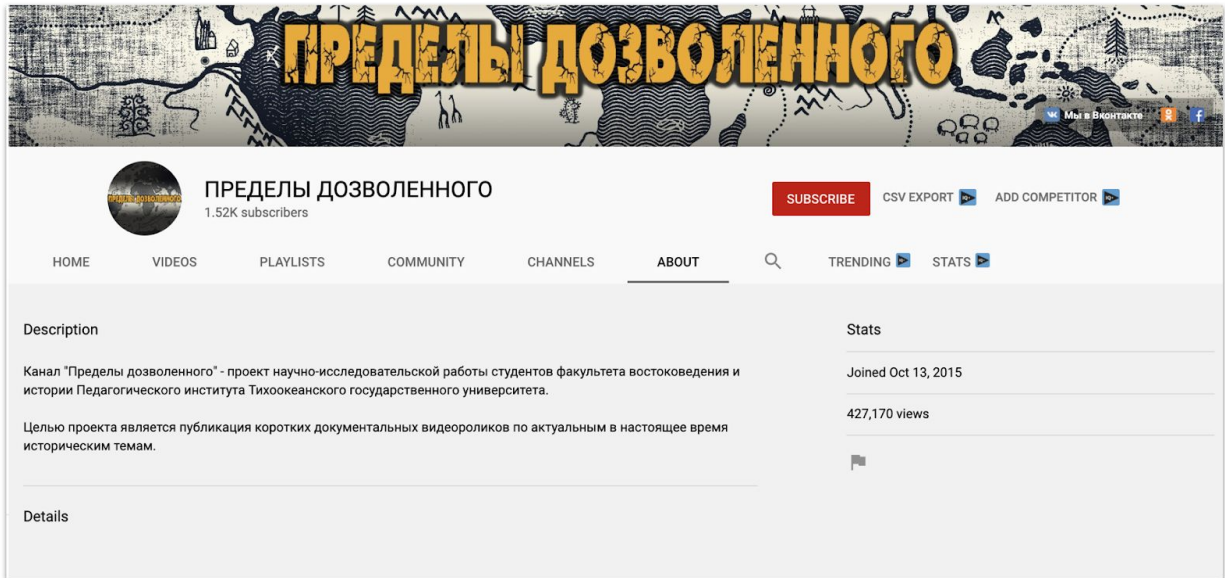


Posts by assets focusing on the Kuril Islands, a prominent topic in the takedown set.

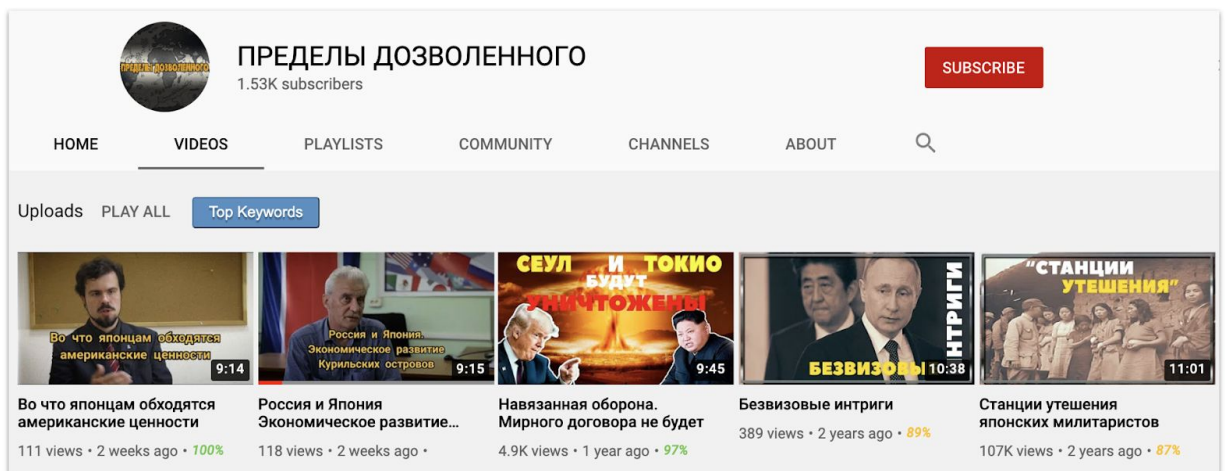


Facebook posts by asset Paul Green on Japan, North Korea and regional security.

A group that Facebook attributed to Russian military actors was called *Пределы дозволенного* ("the limits of what's allowed"). This pointed towards a [YouTube channel](#) of the same name that sporadically posted videos about Russia's relationship with Japan. The channel only posted twice in 2020, both in September: the first video explained why the Kuril Islands belong to Russia, while the second explained why American values are bad for Japanese culture. Posts from earlier years included similar themes. The channel's "About" page said that it was a "scientific research project by students of the Oriental Studies and History Faculty of the Pacific State University" in Khabarovsk. That faculty exists, but none of the [online literature](#) that Graphika has been able to identify makes any mention of the *Пределы дозволенного* project.



The YouTube channel "Limits of what's allowed," showing the attribution to students of the faculty of Oriental studies and history of the Pedagogical Institute and the Pacific State University.



Videos from the "Limits of what's allowed" channel, showing two recent videos on economic developments in the relationship between Russia and Japan and the damaging impact of American values on Japanese culture. Center, a video from February 2019 on North Korea's nuclear program headlined "Seoul and Tokyo will be annihilated" that accused the U.S. of fomenting tensions in the region. Right, videos from July 2018 accusing Japan of abusing Russia in the present, and rehearsing Japan's use of "comfort women" in World War Two.

Winter Olympics 2018: Sour Grapes

Another Far Eastern topic that the Russian military assets covered was the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics of February 2018. These games were of particular importance to Russia because it was [banned](#) for them because of its state-sponsored doping scheme. In the build-up to the ban,

[various Russian operations](#) targeted the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), whose testimony was crucial in the International Olympic Committee’s decision to ban Russia.

The latest takedown set included an Instagram page called StopPyeongChang2018. Its bio urged “national teams to stay away from the South Korean 2018 Winter Olympics,” and its posts spread alarming stories about potential security threats to the games, including hacking, the flu, the norovirus, and nuclear war. It also accused the Korean people of animal cruelty.



Profile and first post by the Instagram persona "Harrison Porter".

The same persona operated a blog on [Wordpress](#) and amplified it from an account on Twitter. These assets pushed the same essential message that the Winter Olympics would be far too dangerous for sports fans to attend, with a sideline in animal cruelty. The Twitter account’s very first tweet set the tone for all 220 other tweets that followed: “Neither the IOC nor Seoul can guarantee the safety of athletes and fans over North Korea-U.S. tensions.”



The first tweets from @stopPyeongChang, December 6-7, 2017.



Three posts by the StopPyeongchang [Wordpress](http://wordpress.com) blog, warning "Olympians" of hacking and norovirus. Other posts included warnings of nuclear war, avian flu and "North Korea's Aggressive Seasonal Flu." Most were copied from legitimate news sources.

The Twitter account also appealed for "new enthusiastic members" to keep the blog updated. The tweet had been retweeted six times by September 2020; there is no indication of any replies, which would not be visible through open sources if they came as direct messages.



Tweet by @stopPyeongChang, asking for “new enthusiastic members to help us to keep people updated.”

South

A separate cluster of activity focused on the countries to Russia’s south, especially Syria and Turkey. As with the Far Eastern content, this messaging reflected earlier operations: an [earlier takedown](#) of assets attributed to the Russian military included personas focused on a website, the Inside Syria Media Center, and a number of fake journalist personas, of whom the most notorious were [Alice Donovan](#) and [Sophie Mangal](#) - both the subjects of detailed investigations by Counterpunch in 2019. The GRU ultimately used the Alice Donovan account to create its DCLeaks Facebook page, according to a U.S. [indictment](#) of GRU operators.¹

¹ The taxonomy around leaks and the weaponized disclosure of hacked information is complex. We consider *leaks* to be material obtained and released by insiders, such as the activity of former NSA contractor Edward Snowden. We consider *false leaks* to be material obtained by outsiders by way of hacking, and released by outsiders usually disguising themselves as activists/insiders, such as the hacking and leaking of emails from the Clinton campaign in 2016 and the Macron campaign in 2017. We consider *tainted leaks* to be false leaks that contained doctored and altered content.

Syria

The latest takedown included a number of similar assets, most notably the persona Pamela Spenser. This was created on Facebook in May 2019, and also operated on Medium and Twitter, posting long-form articles about the Syrian conflict.


 Pamela Spenser
Apr 25, 2019 · 2 min read




US Hides Their Crimes Against Peaceful Syrians



In the Syrian camps for refugees and displaced persons...

 Pamela Spenser
Apr 27, 2019 · 2 min read



In the Rukban Camp New Jihadists Are Educated And Train

 Pamela Spenser
May 24, 2019 · 2 min read

The US Department of State, Its Allies In Idlib, and Chemical Attacks



 Pamela Spenser
Jun 12, 2019 · 2 min read



US Spec Rep for Syria: We Do Nothing Though This Is Russia To Be Blamed

 Pamela Spenser
Jul 8, 2019 · 2 min read

US Plans To Increase Troops At Al-Tanf Base



The international coalition continues to plan to increase its military contingent in...

 Pamela Spenser
Jul 6, 2019 · 2 min read



Terrorists Trained To Sabotage Iran Forces During Al Tanf Exercises

Medium headlines by Pamela Spenser, April-July 2019.

Other assets in the takedown set focused on Russia's role in Syria in a positive light, describing it as a peacekeeper and humanitarian player, and either denying or ignoring the many reports of [war crimes](#) committed by Syrian and Russian forces. This content came in English, Russian and Arabic.



كل الخليفة عن سوريا
Like This Page · August 4 ·

تواصل الشرطة العسكرية الروسية ومركز المساعدة الأطراف المتحاربة في سوريا، تقديم المساعدة الإنسانية للسكان المدنيين في المناطق الأكثر تضرراً من الإرهابيين في سوريا على الرغم من انهيار الوضع الإنساني في سوريا بسبب انتشار عدوى فيروس كورونا، وأن الأوبئة المصاحبة الروس الذين لا يدعرون صحتهم وحائهم ، يقدمون ليقوم الثالث على التوالي عمليات إسعاف إنسانية لسكان المحافظات الجنوبية السورية.

وصلت قافلة غذائية روسية اليوم إلى جديدة مغرور بمحافظة ريف دمشق، قام ضباط من مركز معالجة الأوبئة المتحاربة بوزيرة علاج قفارية كالتالي: شخصي آباء والأطفال والأسكر والشاي والحليب المكثف ، في المجموع ، طاق العمل الإنساني ، وزرع الجيش الروسي 250 طن غذائية ، بوزن إجمالي يزيد عن 1200 كغ.

في نهاية العمل الإنساني ، عبر سكان المنطقة عن امتنانهم لروسيا للمساعدة التي قدمتها لهم في أضعف الأوقات "شكراً لكم على كل شيء ، شكرًا لكم على كل ما جاهدتموه للمساعدة! شكرا لكم! " ذكر كي مواطنين ، وأمر برئيس البلدية عن استهائه لخصاص مركز التوقف بين الأطراف المتحاربة وممثلي الشرطة العسكرية الروسية "إن روسيا تدعم سوريا ونحننا منذ عام 2015 نحن نقدر هذا الدعم خاصة ونحننا بالامتحان الكثير كما وأمل أن يستمر التعاون بين قاعدتنا لسنوات عديدة قادمة " الإشرافي في العمل الإنساني ، وشكر أيضا الجيش الروسي على تقديم المساعدة للسكان المدنيين ودعم الجيش العربي السوري في مكافحة الإرهاب.

The Russian military police and the center for reconciliation of warring parties in Syria continue to provide humanitarian assistance to civilian population in the worst affected areas of Syria.

Despite the deterioration of the epidemiological situation in Syria due to the spread of coronavirus infection, Russian military personnel, who are not saving their health and lives, are providing humanitarian aid for the third day in a row to the residents of southern Syrian governorates. A Russian food convoy arrived today in New Artouz in the governorate of Rif Damascus. Officers from the Center for Disposing Party Reconciliation distributed food baskets to locals including rice, flour, sugar, tea and condensed milk. In total, during humanitarian action, the Russian army distributed 250 food baskets, with a total weight of over 1200 kg. At the end of humanitarian action, residents of the region expressed gratitude to Russia for the help it gave them during the most difficult time.

" Thank you for supporting us all these years! We really need this help! Thank you! " Repeat every citizen who came.

The mayor expressed his gratitude to the officers of the center of conciliation between the warring parties and the representatives of the Russian military police.

" Russia has been supporting Syria and its people since 2015. We truly appreciate this support and are very grateful to you. We hope that cooperation between our two countries will continue for many years to come! " I'm sorry



Arabic-language posts promoting Russia as a humanitarian player in Syria and celebrating the country as a major peace-keeping actor alongside Bashar Al-Assad

This pro-Russian and pro-Syrian government content was paralleled by anti-American, anti-Western and anti-NATO content. This routinely portrayed the United States as worsening the conflicts in the Middle East, supporting terrorists, committing war crimes and destabilizing the situation. This content was posted in all three of the operation's main languages.

كل الحقيقة عن سوريا
2d · 🌐

تحاول وسائل الإعلام المعارضة مرة أخرى إشعال "النار الثورية". وللقيام بذلك ، قاموا بنشر معلومات كاذبة بأن الأجهزة الأمنية السورية تقوم بتصفية الأعضاء السابقين في الجيش السوري الحر الذين قاموا بتسوية أوضاعهم. من الجدير بالذكر أنهم لا يقدمون حتى أي مستندات داعمة. وسائل الإعلام المطبوعة للغرب تصب الزيت على النار كل يوم بناء على طلب رعاتها. كلهم لن يهدأوا ، فهم لا يزالون غير قادرين على التعود على حقيقة أن الحياة السلمية تعود إلى سوريا وأن المواطنين قد تعلموا بالفعل من التجربة المريرة. حكومتنا تبذل قصارى جهدها لحمايتنا.

The opposition media is again trying to set a " revolutionary fire ". To do so, they spread false information that the Syrian security forces are filtering former members of the Free Syrian Army who have settled their situation. It's worth mentioning that they don't even provide any supporting documents. The obedient media of the West pours oil on fire every day at the request of its sponsors. All of them won't calm down, they still can't get used to the fact that peaceful life belongs to Syria and that citizens have already learned from bitter experience. Our government is doing its best to protect us.

🌐 · Hide original · Rate this translation



👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

SYRIA TomorroW
August 30 · 🌐

هناك نوع من الورم السرطاني على خريطة سوريا - قطعة أرض في جنوب شرق محافظة حمص ، لا تزال بعيدة عن متناول وسائل الإعلام العالمية ومؤسسات حقوق الإنسان الدولية. نحن نتحدث عن قرية التنف المتاخمة للأردن والعراق ، حيث تحاول واشنطن تحقيق أهدافها ومصالحها.

لجعل هذه الخطة الساخرة حقيقة واقعة ، نظم الحلفاء الغربيون للولايات المتحدة الفوضى (لحسن الحظ ، هناك خبرة) - من أجل محاربة دمشق ، وقبل كل شيء ، الأسد ، بدأوا في تدريب المسلحين في الصحراء.

المدرّبون الأمريكيون لا يتوقفون عن تعليم "زملائهم" السوريين العمليات التخريبية والتخريبية والعسكرية في المدينة. وبعد انتهاء دورة استمرت أسبوعين على الطريقة الأمريكية ، يتم الزج بالمجموعات في المحافظات الجنوبية للقيام بأعمال إرهابية وزعزعة استقرار الأوضاع. لماذا بالضبط في المحافظات الجنوبية من البلاد تسأل؟ هذا صحيح ، هذا هو المكان الذي بدأ فيه كل شيء في عام 2011. فلماذا لا نحاول إشعال النار مرة أخرى؟ علاوة على ذلك ، لا تزال مجموعات اللصوص السرية لما يسمى بالخلايا "النائمة" تقوم بغاراتها هنا.

There's some kind of cancerous tumor on the map of Syria - a plot of land in southeast of Homs Governorate, still out of reach for global media and international human rights institutions. We are talking about the village of Tanf adjacent to Jordan and Iraq, where Washington is trying to achieve its goals and interests. To make this satirical plan a reality, the Western allies of the United States organized chaos (fortunately, there is experience) - in order to fight Damascus and, above all, Assad, started training gunmen in the desert. American coaches never stop teaching their Syrian " colleagues " subversive, subversive, and military operations in the city. After an American-style-week course, groups are being put in the southern governorates to carry out terrorist acts and destabilize the situation. Why exactly in the southern governorates of the country you ask? That's right, this is where it all started in 2011. so why not try to set the fire again? Moreover, secret bandit groups of so called " sleeper " cells are still raiding here.

🌐 · Hide original · Rate this translation

Arabic-language content hostile to the United States, posted by operation assets.

Ayman Riad
May 26, 2018 · Medium · 🌐




MEDIUM.COM

US undermines negotiation process and build up an illegal military presence in Syria

1 Share

Abdul Azar
July 14 · 🌐

In the northeastern Syria, the deterioration of the military-political situation continues. In addition to the threat of increased ISIS activity and the temporarily suspended military operation of the Turkish armed forces, the "source of peace" the US military presence and the actions of the US-controlled armed group - SDF affected negatively. Washington, under the pretext of fighting against international terrorism and denying the legitimacy of the Assad regime, is financi... See More



👍 🗨️ 3

English-language content attacking the U.S.



The post reads: "How the US is fighting terrorism in the Middle East: Expectation vs. Reality"

One of the Pages, the Arabic-language [كل الحقيقة عن سوريا](#) or @SyriaBestNews, was cited in a number of Russian outlets. Generally cited as an on-the-ground source for information on Syria, it was [repeatedly referenced](#) and embedded in articles by the Russian Federal News Agency, or RIAFAN, which is [connected](#) with the Russian Internet Research Agency and was [sanctioned](#) by the U.S. Treasury in December 2018. The bulk of these references dated to mid-2019.

Turkey

While the operation's portrayal of the Syrian and Russian regimes was positive, its description of the Turkish government, and especially President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was strongly negative. Posts from a number of assets accused Turkey of inflaming the security situation in northern Syria, supporting terrorists and profiting from the Syrian conflict. This has been a theme of a number of [Russian influence](#) efforts over the years, both overt and covert, since Turkey shot down a Russian jet in November 2015.



Posts blaming Turkey for worsening the situation in Syria by supporting extremists



Posts claiming Turkey is behind ISIS and backing up Islamists in Syria

The Pamela Spenser persona was not the only prolific author that the operation maintained to cover the Middle East. Another persona, Ayman Rayd, also wrote in English on Medium. This persona claimed to be “an Investigative journalist”, adding “and I'm really into politics. I'm interested in all these stuff related to the Middle East region. Analytics and Ar to En news.” The persona posted on Facebook in both English and Arabic; its content covered Turkey, Syria, and a small amount of content on other conflicts in the Middle East, notably in Libya.

Ayman Riad
February 8, 2018 · Medium ·

منذ وقت ليس ببعيد انتقد أردوغان بشدة الرئيس السوري بشار الأسد، ولكن بعد اتفاق أردوغان مع الرئيس الروسي فلاديمير بوتين، لم يعد الرئيس التركي يذكر بشار الأسد بأنه أسوأ عدو له. من ناحية أخرى، أردوغان نفسه يبحث عن اتصال مع الأسد. أدرك أردوغان أن بشار الأسد لن يترك السلطة. لذلك، سيكون من الضروري التفاوض بطريقة أو بأخرى معه. وفي هذا الصدد، فإنهم يلعبون في أيدي حقيقة أن الأسد وأردوغان يؤيدان السلامة الإقليمية لسورية. اليوم، تحتاج تركيا إلى إقامة تعاون مع دمشق، مع وجود صراع مع الولا ...
See More ...
See Translation

TURKEY'S PLANNED SAFE AREA

SHARKATILAUSSAT.WORDPRESS.COM

وأهداف أنقرة ودمشق أقرب بكثير مما يبدو
منذ وقت ليس ببعيد انتقد أردوغان بشدة الرئيس السوري بشار الأسد، ولكن بعد اتفاق

1 Share

Ayman Riad
February 8, 2018 · Medium ·

TURKEY'S PLANNED SAFE AREA

MEDIUM.COM

The goals of Ankara and Damascus are much closer than it seems

Articles from asset Ayman Riad claiming that Turkey is willing to cooperate with Damascus

Ayman Ryad
Feb 11 · 3 min read

Will Russian-Turkish relations pass a test of strength

Ayman Ryad
Apr 11 · 3 min read

Did Washington allow ISIS to revive in eastern Syria?

Ayman Ryad
Apr 20 · 4 min read

Washington unsuccessfully trying to get out of the water

Ayman Ryad
Jun 20 · 2 min read

Is Turkey Preparing Infrastructure for a New Radical State?

Posts by the same persona on Medium. This was one of the most recent assets: its last post was on September 14.

Israel

Some assets also posted a considerable volume of content about Israel, primarily in Arabic. This content typically came from Arabic-language accounts, but was sometimes posted in English. Some posts also linked Israel with Turkey.




Post claiming Israel and Turkey are working hand in hand to destroy the Middle East.

Other posts compared Israel unfavorably with Russia, and argued in Arabic that Israel was supporting militant and terrorist groups. Still others accused Israel of destabilizing Syria: these may have represented an attempt to appeal to a largely Syrian audience.

كل الحقيقة عن سوريا
July 31 · 🌐

كون روسيا تعتبر الضامن في حل القضايا الصعبة واستعادة الحياة السلمية في سوريا ،
تعقد اجتماعات مستمرة بشكل مستمر مع ممثلي المدن الأكثر إشكالية في سوريا.
في الأسبوع الماضي ، عُقد اجتماع لـممثلي القوات المسلحة الروسية، مع لجنة تمثل
سكان مدينة طفس ، شارك فيه بدوي الزعبي ومحمود البردانة. مرة أخرى ، ناقش الطرفان القضايا الإشكالية
وتوصلا إلى بعض الحلول. المفاوضات صعبة. يحاول عدد من ممثلي المدينة التهرب ،
فقط لعدم قبول أي شروط للمصالحة.
الوضع في المدينة يجعل غالبية سكان طفس مستعدون ليعم السلام وتسليم أسلحتهم.
لكن الوضع معقد بسبب حقيقة أن المخابرات الإسرائيلية توفر "الرعاية" لبعض ممثلي
سكان طفس. لذلك ، فإن هؤلاء المواطنين ليسوا مستعدين بعد لتسوية أسلحتهم
وتسليمها ، مما يعني أن معظم السكان لن يفعلوا ذلك .
وفقاً لبعض سكان المدينة ، تخصص إسرائيل حوالي 50 ألف دولار شهرياً للحفاظ على
الاضطرابات في المنطقة. ليس دعماً مالياً سيئاً لمدينة يقل عدد سكانها عن 10 آلاف
نسمة. بالطبع نتيجة للظروف الصعبة يضطر بعض السكان ببساطة إلى تلبية متطلبات
حفنة من الخونة.
يجب علينا دائماً أن نتذكر الشيء الرئيسي أنه بمجرد أن يؤدي فناني الأداء مهمتهم ، لن
يحتاجهم "أسيادهم" بعد الآن. سيتم القضاء عليهم بالتأكيد

See Translation



1

SYRIA TomorroW
August 25 · 🌐

تعقد روسيا ، بصفتها الضامن في حل القضايا الإشكالية واستعادة الحياة السلمية في
سوريا ، اجتماعات مع ممثلي المدن الأكثر إشكالية في سوريا بشكل مستمر.
تم التوصل بالفعل إلى اتفاقات معينة بشأن التعويض مالياً عن الأسلحة المسلمة للدولة،
واستئناف عمل سلطات الدولة في طفس ، وتسوية الوضع القانوني للأعضاء السابقين في
الجماعات المسلحة ، إلخ. ومع ذلك ، يحاول عدد من ممثلي المدينة للمراوغة ، فقط
لعدم قبول أي شروط للمصالحة .
الوضع في المدينة هو أن غالبية سكان طفس على استعداد لعودة السلم وتسليم
أسلحتهم. لكن الوضع معقد بسبب حقيقة أن المخابرات الإسرائيلية تقدم "رعاية" لبعض
ممثلي الشعب في طفس. لذلك فإن هؤلاء المواطنين ليسوا مستعدين بعد للمصالحة
وتسليم أسلحتهم ، ما يعني أن معظم السكان لن يفعلوا ذلك.
وبحسب بعض سكان المدينة ، تخصص إسرائيل نحو 50 ألف دولار شهرياً لإبقاء
الاضطرابات في المنطقة. ليس دعماً مالياً سيئاً لمدينة يقل عدد سكانها عن 10 آلاف
نسمة. بالطبع يضطر السكان ببساطة إلى تلبية متطلبات حفنة من الخونة للبلاد.
يجب أن نتذكر دائماً الشيء الرئيسي أنه بمجرد أن يؤدي المرتزقة مهمتهم ، لن يحتاجهم
"أسيادهم" . سيتم القضاء عليهم بالتأكيد.

See Translation



2

Posts claiming Israel is behind extremist groups in Syria and financing unrest in Syria and in the Middle East, unlike Russia

West

A separate axis of activity focused on the countries to Russia's west. As in the Syrian example, the Western-facing content portrayed a world in black-and-white terms of a beneficial, peaceable yet resolute Russia, and an aggressive, duplicitous and fragmented West.

Ukraine

As is typical of Russian operations in the post-2014 era, much of the content from the Western-focused sets of accounts targeted Ukraine, and especially its pro-Western leaders.

Свобода Украине, мир славянам
March 26, 2019 · 🌐

500 оттенков Петра Порошенко

Недавно интернет всколыхнула история с беспощадной публикацией украинского телеканала «1+1» «50 оттенков Порошенко» в которой поднимались самые неприглядные факты из жизнедеятельности Петра. За 7 дней до выборов это была черная подстава и Порошенко заявил, что подает в суд, но телеканал ответил, что у них есть неопровержимые доказательства и теперь жадные до зрелищ украинцы ждут чем же их еще порадуют прониравшие журналисты. На самом деле, даже ...
Continue Reading



PANDORAOPEN.RU

Ящик пандоры – 500 оттенков Петра Порошенко

Недавно интернет всколыхнула история с беспощадной...

👍 1 2 Shares



chekist_v_gostyakh · Follow

chekist_v_gostyakh
#Госбезопасный_юмор
#Порошенко #Тимошенко #зрада
#предатели #воры #коррупция
#щевмерланопчти #выборы
#Украина #новости #политика

97w

👍 1 like

NOVEMBER 10, 2018

Пленарний Пінгвін - ПП
November 29, 2019 · 🌐

🐼 Хтось чув останнім часом щось про фракцію "Голос"? Схоже Вакарчук пише новий альбом і йому не до того. Але напередодні пленарного тижня "Голос" все ж подав голос, і вчергове наголосив на тому, що єдине, що має значення - це наявність агресора та наша боротьба із ним.

Детальніше у Telegram-каналі Пленарного Пінгвіна:
https://t.me/plenary_penguin/276

**РОСІЯ ВИКОРИСТОВУЄ ІНТЕРПОЛ
ДЛЯ ПЕРЕСЛІДУВАННЯ
УКРАЇНЦІВ**



👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Пленарний Пінгвін - ПП
December 9, 2019 · 🌐

🐼 Оскільки сьогодні та найближчими днями засідань Ради не буде - розглядаємо світлини з минулого тижня. Як вам такий "романтик" від Юлія Тимошенко та її палкого шанувальника Сергій Власенко ?

Детальніше у Telegram-каналі Пленарного Пінгвіна:
https://t.me/plenary_penguin/321



Posts posted by Ukraine-focused assets were constantly trying to undermine pro-European politicians, for instance here Petro Poroshenko, Yulia Tymoshenko and Svyatoslav Vakarchuk. As seen in several takedowns focusing on Ukraine, the content targeting Yulia Tymoshenko is disturbingly sexist



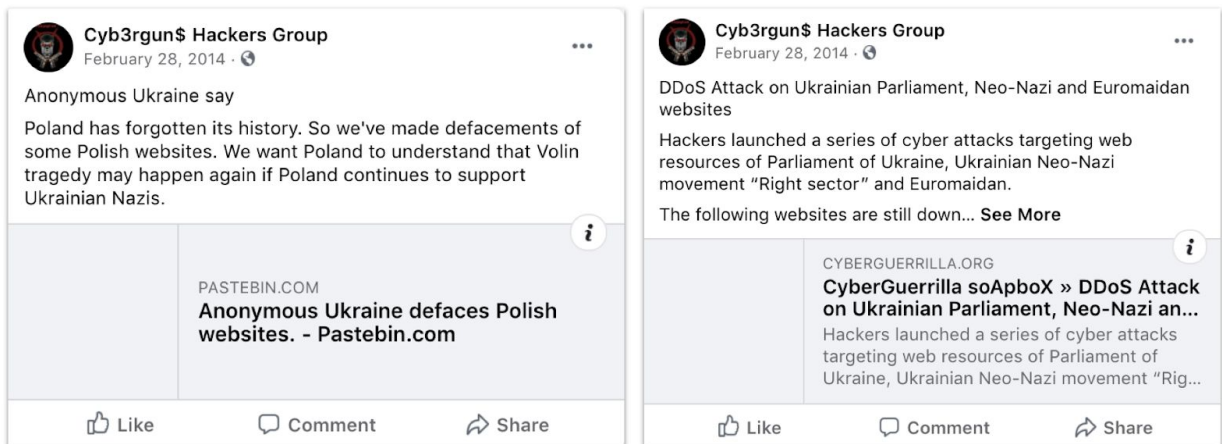
The left post undermines Ukraine as an European state, comparing it to an undeveloped and insecure country, whereas the right one mocks Ukraine in its negotiations with NATO



Post by the asset Пленарний Пінгвін (Plenary Penguin) on Telegram, linking Ukraine to the FinCEN money-laundering scandal.

Fake Hacktivists

The oldest cluster of assets in the takedown set - all of which fell silent by the middle of 2014 - also focused on Ukraine. On Facebook, two accounts posed as hackers under the name Cyb3rgun\$. In late 2013 and early 2014, one of them posted about a series of attacks on Western, especially Baltic, official websites in countries that had backed Ukraine and criticized Russia's annexation of Crimea. (The other had no posting history.) These typically led to statements on Pastebin and the website cyberguerrilla[.]org (now defunct) that claimed to come from the Anonymous hacking group, and to launch a so-called #OpIndependence against Ukraine. That claim was also [associated](#) with the hacking group Cyberberkut, which the UK's National Cyber Security Centre has [attributed](#) to the GRU. All this activity came while Russia was carrying out the annexation of Crimea, and formed part of the online accompaniment to that operation.



Typical posts by the Cyb3rgun\$ page, February 2014.

Even at this relatively early stage of influence operations, the hacktivist personas worked across platforms. The Cyb3rgun\$ Facebook page pointed towards an associated Twitter account with the same profile picture. This in turn retweeted similar "hacktivist" accounts that pointed, in turn, to a pair of YouTube channels that only ever posted one video each. Graphika assesses that it is likely that all these were controlled by the same set of operators.

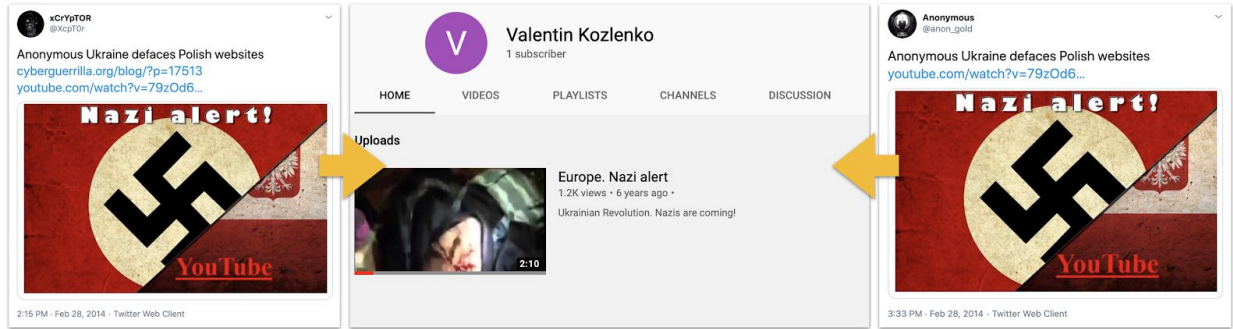


Facebook page pointing to Twitter account.

The Twitter activity appeared to form a particular cluster of “Anonymous”-themed accounts that were largely created in late 2013, and which retweeted @cyb3rgun\$ as soon as they were created. These accounts pointed to one of the single-use YouTube channels that was also amplified by @cyb3rguns.

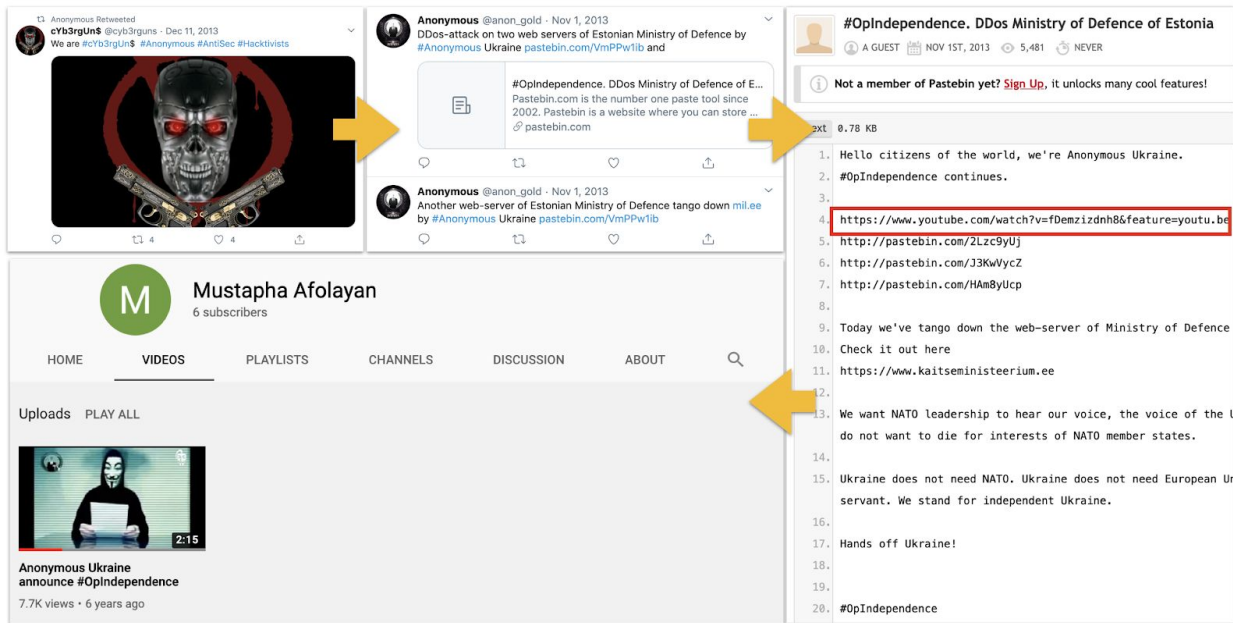


The very first tweets from @XcpT0r (left) and @4NT1S5C (right), showing their immediate amplification of @cyb3rguns.



Posts by @XcpTOR (left, retweeted by @cyb3rguns) and @anon_gold (right) sharing a link to the same video about Ukraine. This was the YouTube account's only post; the account was created on the day the video and tweets were posted, February 28, 2014 - the same day Russia invaded Crimea.

For a brief period in early 2014, these assets formed a repeating cluster that amplified various pro-Russian, anti-Ukrainian and anti-Western cyber attacks and DDoS attacks under the Op Independence brand.



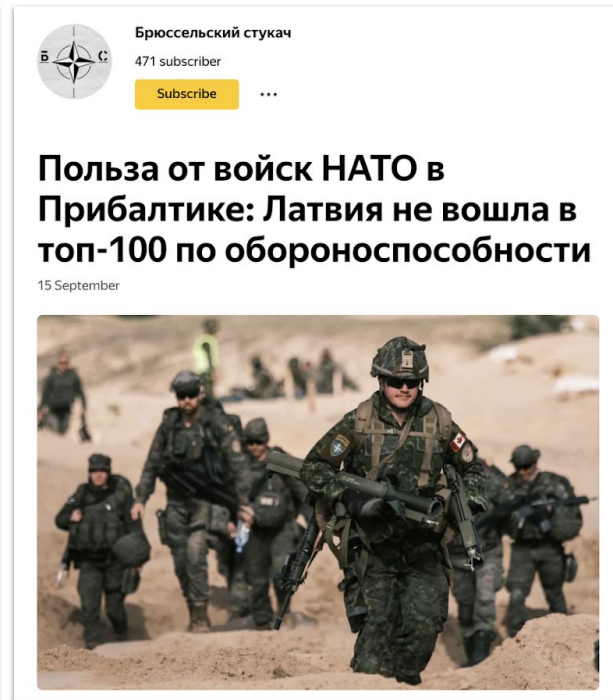
Clockwise from top left: @anon_gold sharing @cyb3rguns; @anon_gold earlier sharing Pastebin files after an attack on the website of the Estonian Defense Ministry; the Pastebin files, declaring #OpIndependence against Ukraine, with the YouTube link highlighted; the YouTube video from a single-use account.

An interesting element to the Anonymous accounts found was their sometimes wide geographic interest, which reflected the interests shown by other assets. This included boosting Anonymous operations against Korea, Turkey and Venezuela. This was most readily visible in the hashtags they used, which included #opgaza and #opvenezuela.

NATO and the Neighborhood

Further to the West, various assets in the takedown set posted hostile content about NATO, which they routinely portrayed as aggressive and destabilizing. This sort of content typically came from personas that claimed to be located in, or interested in, the Baltic States, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia.

Alongside these negative posts were positive posts about Russia's role and influence in the region - notably as a reliable and profitable partner, but also, after the outbreak of COVID-19, as a contributor to regional health.



Left, post claiming that the Estonian population is anti-NATO from operation persona The Opinion Next Door. Right, Russian-language post headlined, "The benefit of NATO's troops in the Baltics: Latvia didn't make it into the top 100 for military readiness."

For U.S. Georgia Is Stepping Stone In South Caucasus



Charles Lonsdale Follow
Mar 14, 2018 · 2 min read



The struggle between the U.S. and Russia for the influence in the world goes on. After Russia has won the victory in Syria, Washington tries to keep its position in the Middle East, but for this it needs to force Moscow to switch off from the Middle East by all means.

Georgia Can't Handle With Visa Liberalization



Charles Lonsdale Follow
Mar 15, 2018 · 2 min read



MIGRANTS SPARK HOUSING CRISIS

Now EU tells Britain to build more homes as open borders send population soaring

Germany is going to raise the issue of violation of visa-free regime by citizens of Georgia at the EU Council.

On 6 March, Brussels correspondent of Radio Freedom Richard Jozwiak said on Twitter:

“Germany will raise the issue of nationals from #Georgia

violating the visa lib regime when EU home affairs ministers meet in Brussels 8 March. No decision on the suspension mechanism will be taken then. Geo president will be asked about efforts when he is in Brussels 8–10 March”.

[Medium articles](#) by persona Charles Lonsdale on Georgia. The screenshot with the headline “Migrants spark housing crisis” was taken from the [Daily Mail](#) tabloid in May 2016, almost two years earlier. Georgia was not mentioned in the [Daily Mail](#) article.

Свобода Украине, мир славянам
February 11, 2019 · 0

Армения - купировали-оккупировали!?

Около пяти тысяч общественных организаций и фондов зарегистрировано в Армении, значительная часть наиболее активных из них финансируется армянским филиалом фонда Сороса. В этих обществах аккумулируются недовольные и слабые люди, которыми легко управлять. Более скрытно действуют околорелигиозные организации «наставляющие на путь истинный», еще более грамотно «берут свое» молодежные общества, навязывающие образ жизни, который приводит к выпа...

Armenia - bought - occupied!?

About five thousand public organizations and foundations are registered in Armenia, a large part of the most active of them is funded by the Armenian branch of the Soros Foundation. These societies accumulate dissatisfied and weak people who are easy to manage. More secretly acted more obscure organizations "guiding the true path", even more competently "take their" youth societies that impose a lifestyle that leads to a loss from socie... See More

[hide original](#) · Rate this translation

Аршак Балумян
17 апреля 17:06

Российские биологические комплексы для Армении

В связи со вспышкой коронавирусной инфекцией в мире, и, в частности, в странах бывшего Республике Армения, Россия является единственной страной, которая оказала Армении огромную помощь в борьбе с мировой проблемой. Для этого Россия направила в Армению уникальную мобильную лабораторию. Модульный комплекс для анализа патогенных биологических агентов (МКА П...

Two Russian-language posts on Armenia. Left, the persona Ivan Egorov claiming that pro-democracy NGOs in Armenia were Western regime change puppets. Right, the persona Arshak Balumyan writing on [cont.ws](#) that Russia was “the only country that gave Armenia enormous help” in the fight against COVID-19.

Article, video, channel, interest

Ульяна Ищенко
80 subscribers
Subscribe

США, НАТО и Молдавия

22 August 2019



Из истории последних вооруженных конфликтов, проводимых Соединенными штатами и НАТО можно провести отчетливую идейную линию – распространить свое «безумное влияние» над всем миром!!! История циклична, и начиная с военной операции 1991 года в Ираке, повторяется почти каждые 3-4 года.

Евразийский выбор Молдавии и Приднестровья ...
August 6

РОССИЯ БЕЗВОЗМЕЗДНО ПОДДЕРЖИТ МОЛДАВСКИХ СЕЛЬХОЗПРОИЗВОДИТЕЛЕЙ

Накануне в Москве состоялась встреча президента РМ Игоря Додона со специальным представителем Президента РФ по развитию торгово-экономических отношений с Республикой Молдова Дмитрием Козаком.

В ходе встречи обсудили широкий круг вопросов, затрагивающих двусторонние отношения между нашими странами. В частности, договорились о том, что в октябре нынешнего года в Кишиневе состоится очередное заседание Молдавско-р... [See More](#)

RUSSIA SUPPORTS MOLDAVSKIAN AGRICULTURES

On the eve of Moscow, the President of the Republic of Moldova, Igor Dodon, met with the special representative of the President of the Russian Federation for the development of trade and economic relations with the Republic of Moldova Dmitry Kozak

During the meeting we discussed a wide range of issues affecting bilateral relations between our countries. In particular, it was agreed that in October of this year Chisinau a regular mee... [See More](#)

[hide original](#) [Rate this translation](#)



Russian-language posts on Moldova. Left, the persona [Ульяна Ищенко](#) (Ulyana Ishenko) on Yandex portraying NATO and the U.S. as the Grim Reaper. Right, the page *Евразийский выбор Молдавии и Приднестровья* (Moldova and Transnistria's Eurasian choice) highlighting Russian support for Moldovan farmers.

A handful of posts looked further West still, and dealt with countries such as France and Germany. One persona in particular, “West Voices,” used its associated Twitter account to post anti-NATO content and attacks on Angela Merkel in many languages, far more than the operation usually deployed. In one striking incident, it praised French President Emmanuel Macron - formerly the target of Russian hacking attacks - for criticizing NATO.

Westvoices @westvoices72 · Jul 13, 2019
 This's great idea! I'm really proud of #France and #Macron! This great man said: fuck #NATO
theverge.com/2019/7/13/2069...



Vladimir Soloviev and 4 others
 3 replies 2 retweets 1 like

Westvoices @westvoices72 · Jul 13, 2019
 Replying to @westvoices72
 Das ist eine großartige Idee! Ich bin sehr stolz auf #France und #Macron! Dieser großartige Mann sagte: Fick #NATO
 1 reply 1 like

Westvoices @westvoices72 · Jul 13, 2019
 C'est une bonne idée! Je suis vraiment fier de #France et de #Macron! Ce grand homme a dit: fuck #NATO
 1 reply 1 like

Westvoices @westvoices72 · Jul 10, 2019
 IT's terrible, german people trying to rewrite the history, heroizing nazi! But it looks like stupid looser telling about his victory after dearth punch
welt.de/geschichte/zwe...



antifa_fm and 7 others
 5 replies 1 like

Westvoices @westvoices72 · Jul 10, 2019
 IT este teribil, oamenii germani care încearcă să rescrie istoria, eroi pe nazi! Dar se pare că e mai prost să spună despre victoria lui după o lovitură de pradă
 1 reply 1 like

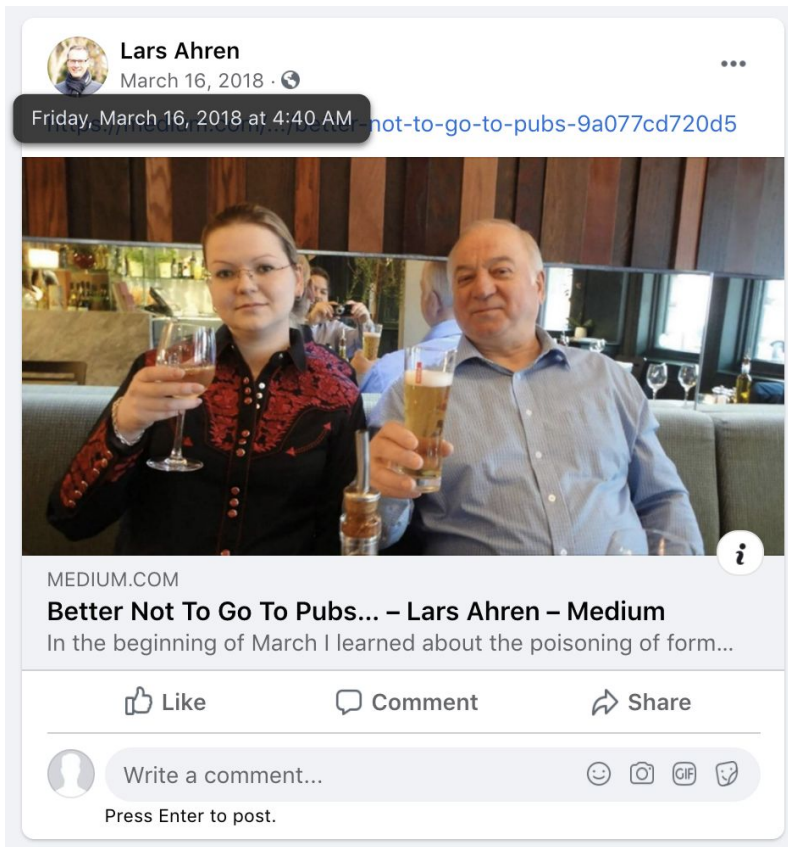
Westvoices @westvoices72 · Jul 10, 2019
 To okropne, niemieccy ludzie próbują przerobić historię, heroizując nazistów! Ale wygląda na to, że to głupie, luźniejsze opowiadanie o swoim zwycięstwie po nieudanym uderzeniu
 1 reply 1 like

Tweets by the account @westvoices72; note the range of languages.

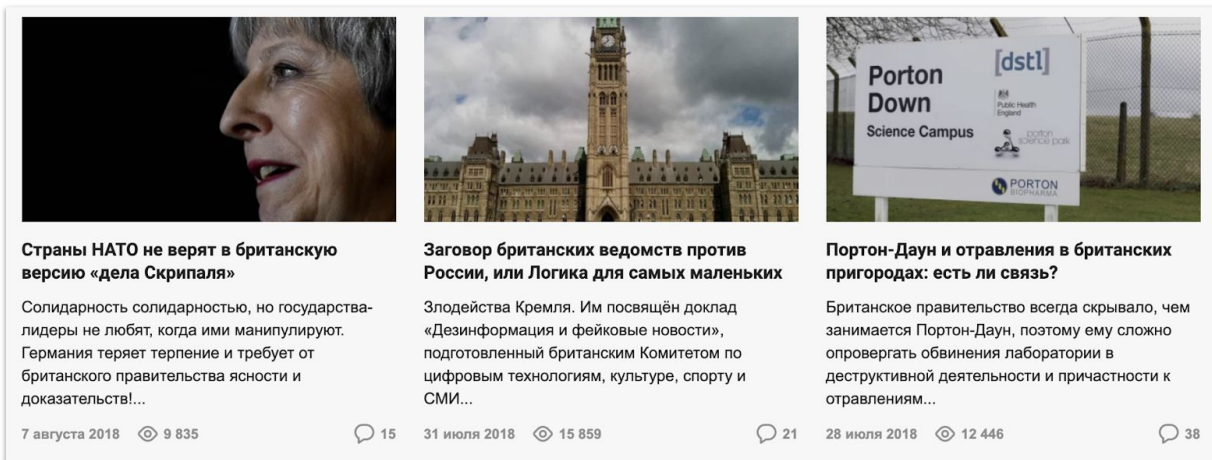
Other Concerns

Skripal

Predictably, some assets commented on the Skripal poisoning. Fake persona Charles Longdale wrote a [Medium](#) piece shortly after the British announcement that they had determined Russia was behind the poisoning. Shortly after, the persona wrote a [second](#) mentioning the damage caused in Russian-British relations by the allegations. Another asset, allegedly Swedish, maintained two separate Medium accounts; the associated Facebook account showed that one had included an article about Skripal, but this was later deleted, apparently by the account holder.



Asset "Lars Ahren" also wrote about the poisoning, posting it on Medium and linking to it on the Facebook account. The Medium post was deleted by the author at an unknown date.



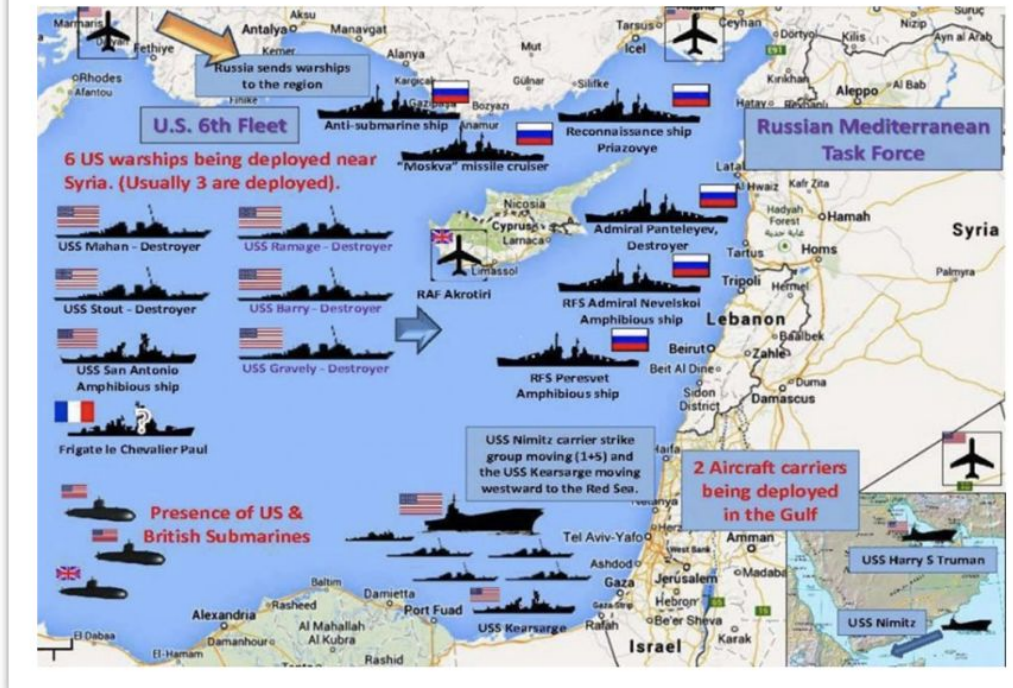
Three articles by the persona Viktor Zaretsky on Russian site topwar.ru, on (left to right) NATO states rejecting the British claim that Russian agents poisoned Skripal; an alleged UK conspiracy against Russia; and claims of a connection between the Skripal poisoning and the UK's chemical weapons lab at Porton Down.

Poison the Russian and blame Putin - The best way to distract the world from the attack on Damascus



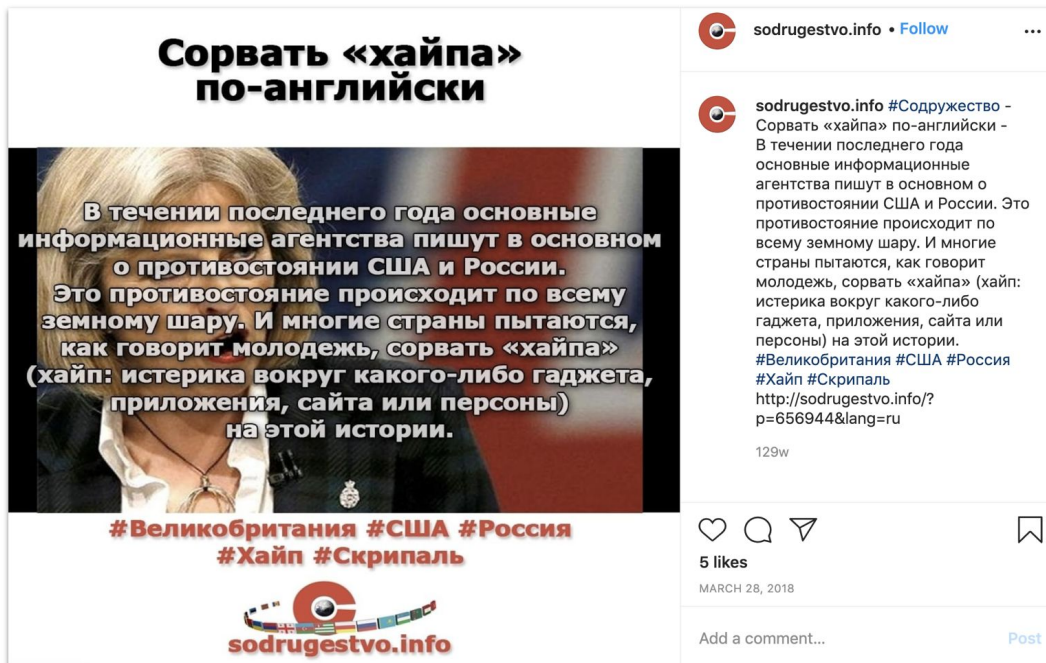
Ayman Ryad [Follow](#)

Mar 24, 2018 · 2 min read



Headline by the Syria-focused persona Ayman Rayd on Medium.

Assets posted Skripal content in both English and Russian, with the majority of it in Russian, seeming to show it may have been meant more for a domestic audience than an international one. These efforts were cross-platform, with content on Facebook, Instagram and Medium.



Post on Skripal by the Instagram account of persona Sodrugestvo (Содружество or Commonwealth), which also maintained a [website](#) and [YouTube](#) channel. The Sodrugestvo persona used an atypical way to build audience: it claimed to have run a beauty contest (below).



Photo from the sodrugestvo.info Instagram account showing a beauty competition that it claimed to host.

A small number of assets posted about Venezuela, primarily in the context of the Presidential crisis that erupted in January 2019. Russia continued to support President Maduro, while the US and many of its international allies supported the opposition leader Juan Guaidó. The narratives

generally supported the idea that the US and other Western powers were attempting a coup against Maduro, and that Guaidó was a puppet of the United States.

 **Свобода Украине, мир славянам**
January 30, 2019 · 🌐

<https://riafan.ru/1145819-vashington-predostavil-guaido...>



RIAFAN.RU 

Вашингтон предоставил Гуаидо доступ к активам Венесуэлы в США

 1

Post linking to RIAFAN article on the Venezuelan Presidential crisis.



Graphika

© Graphika All Rights Reserved 2020