Tomorrow's Affairs

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Russia is camouflaging its imperial expansion with anti-fascist sentiments

Vladimir Putin once again resorted to anti-Semitism and a bizarre rewriting of Second World War history when he recently accused the Ukrainian leadership of being Nazis and justifying the Holocaust.

"Western curators have put a person at the head of modern Ukraine - an ethnic Jew, with Jewish roots, with Jewish origins. And thus, in my opinion, they seem to be covering up an anti-human essence that is the foundation of the modern Ukrainian state", Putin said.

On that occasion, The Jerusalem Post insightfully pointed out that none of Putin's accusations against Ukraine had ever been proven to be true.

These accusations regarding Ukrainian Nazis produced by the Kremlin are not just standard Kremlin disinformation operations. They define the Russian cultural identity and, most importantly, help the Kremlin galvanise Putin's Russia's national purpose.

In Putin's Russia, if someone rejects Russia, they are Nazis because Russia cannot be wrong according to Russian falsified history and its current national agenda.

WW2 at the centre of fabricated Russian history

Contemporary Russia has been fabricating history and producing alternative realities to define and advance the Russian national agenda. Everything in that process revolves around the Russian interpretation of the Second World War.

By drawing a parallel between Ukraine and Nazi Germany, Russia tried to justify its aggression and further mislead and recruit the

Russian majority already detached from reality.

In the absence of any achievements that would place the USSR, and later Russia, among the nations responsible for the development of civilisation, the only thing that maintained Russian pride was the victory over Hitler.

Russia is shy of its incompetency and backwardness. This is why it has been emphasising its great past related to victory over Nazi Germany, and even accusing other countries of attempting to undermine Soviet/Russian heroism during WW2.

How to maintain a sense of false superiority?

Putin's Russia is desperately clinging on to the 1945 victory because this is the only tangible justification Russia can use to claim its supremacy. The USSR and present Russia have significantly falsified their role and many other USSR accomplishments from 1939-1945.

In the falsified and perverted Russian reality, by defeating Nazi Germany, Russia had been awarded the status of unique saviour of Western civilisation, which gives it a special role in global affairs.

Russians and people in the West view defeating Nazi Germany differently. According to the West, the defeat of Nazi Germany was due to shared allied efforts, which included the USSR.

While falsely claiming that the USSR conquered Nazi Germany during the Great Patriotic War with some insignificant assistance from the USA, the UK, and other countries, Russia, on the other hand, attaches

little to no value to WW2.

It is forbidden to say that the USSR collaborated with Hitler

Russian fake and falsified history plays a dominant role in Putin's Russia cultural identity. Any rejection of the Russian version of the Great Patriotic War Russia instantly classifies as glorification of Nazism.

It is even illegal to claim that the USSR and Nazi Germany were allies or that both Nazi Germany and the USSR jointly occupied Poland in 1939.

In the Soviet ideology, the USSR used the Soviet victory over Hitler to cultivate a sense of perfection and superiority among the Soviet people, which, during the years Putin has been in power, has developed into a unique sense of aggressive Russian exceptionalism.

It should be alarming when a country like Russia declares that if someone rejects Russia or Russian doctrine, they are identified as fascists.

In reality, Russia has been camouflaging its imperial expansion with anti-fascist sentiments.

Justifying aggression

Every country has nationalists. When Russia ignited the Donbas region in 2014, and when Russian mercenaries triggered unrest and pro-Russian sentiments there, they were either Russian intelligence officers such as Igor Girkin (Strelkov), who led pro-Russian proxies in Donbas, or Russian nationalists, many of

whom shared Nazi views.

Some of the Ukrainian defenders are Ukrainian nationalists. Can someone explain what is wrong with being a Ukrainian nationalist when a much larger country attacked Ukraine and has been committing horrific war crimes trying to raise the Ukrainian cultural identity to the ground?

Russia identifies Ukrainian authorities as Nazis, not because there are Ukrainian nationalists among the defenders of Ukraine.

Russia does this because it is the easiest way for the Kremlin to justify Russian aggression and gear up the Russian patriotic and chauvinist majority who spent decades under glorious intoxication and indoctrination related to the 1945 Soviet victory over the Nazis.

The Kremlin was able to incite the Russian people against false Nazis in Ukraine because they were already convinced that Russia was the anti-fascist shield of the world.

Russia also makes claims regarding the Ukrainian nationalists and spins fake Nazi sentiment to mislead the West and to attract Putin's sympathisers among Western politicians and journalists.

Anyone who opposes the Russian cause is a Nazi

Over the years of brainwashing, the Russian majority has been convinced that someone is a Nazi if they deny Russian superiority and the Russian way of life, because only a Nazi would deny peaceful Russia.

Russian propaganda identifies the American, UK, German and French governments as enablers of the Ukrainian Nazis, which means these countries are also Nazis.

The Russian public is convinced that someone is a Nazi if they do not welcome Russian soldiers in their country to advance the Kremlin's interests.

Therefore, it was easy for the Kremlin to convince the Russian majority that Zelensky was a Nazi because he led a country which rejected the Russian imperial lunacy and alternatively embraced European values.

In the period after the end of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, historians and other scholars will have a significant task reconfiguring the foundations on which aggressive Russian exceptionalism grew.

According to the statements of the Russian president, it is still very much alive and based on historical falsifications and dangerous prejudices.