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Title	Proliferation of Conspiracy Narratives in Post-Soviet Russia: The “ Dulles ’ Plan ” in Social and Political Discourses
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Citation	Acta Slavica Iaponica, 37, 21-45
Issue Date	2016
DOI	10.14943/ASI.37.21
Doc URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2115/84082
Type	bulletin (article)
File Information	37_02_pp.21-45.pdf

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Acta Slavica Iaponica, Tomus 37, pp. 21–45

Proliferation of Conspiracy Narratives in Post-Soviet Russia: The "Dulles' Plan" in Social and Political Discourses*

Serghei Golunov, Vera Smirnova

Introduction

Conspiracy theorizing is common in many countries worldwide. It plays a particularly important role in contemporary Russian politics. The substantial part of such "theories" focuses on the sinister plans of foreign enemies, among which the United States and its allies are mentioned most frequently. A wide range of actors, varying from high-standing officials to ordinary people, resort to such conspiracy theorizing. In the 1990s, the authorities and their supporters rarely resorted to this kind of conspiracy theorizing; however, lately it has become an increasingly important element of Russian official discourse in the second half of the 2000s.

The Dulles' Plan (DP) is an existing narrative that discusses how the USA could corrupt the Soviet/Russian society with the help of internal accomplices. It is claimed to be a genuine US official plan that graphically demonstrates American enmity and malignity towards Russia. Despite the fact that this plan's authenticity has since been called into serious question, it is still used by various actors in different contexts and plays an important role in anti-Western conspiracy discourse in Russia.

What is the role of employing DP in post-Soviet Russia's social and political contexts? What actors appealed for DP and for what purposes? How has the narrative survived the harsh criticism that has targeted its vulnerabilities? To respond to these questions, the following issues will be addressed. First, we consider the relevant theoretical issues discussed by contemporary conspiracy studies. Secondly, we examine DP's key features; including structure, textual evolution, and interrelationships with other similar narratives. Thirdly, we analyze the social contexts of citing the plan's text, including the range of actors, functional importance, functional purposes, and targets. Finally, we examine both of those arguments that have challenged the text's authenticity and the ways that have been used by conspiracy theorists to defend it.

* The authors are deeply thankful to the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center whose generous support made it possible to conduct this research. They are also thankful to the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center's library staff and to Ms. Assel Bitabarova, whose kind help was particularly important in the course of conducting this study.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

"Conspiracy theory" is typically defined as a non-conformist (not mainstream) explanation of an event by referring to some secret actions of conspirators who, as a rule, pursue evil (illegal and criminal) purposes.[1] There are at least two problems with this definition. First, conspiracy-related explanations can be quite mainstream, as they are often officially supported and accepted by the public. Secondly, conspiracy theorizing as a mode of thinking is not necessarily wrong or flawed and this problematizes a largely condescending attitude towards it within the existing literature. Indeed, attempts to refute conspiracy theorizing because of its methodological fallacy face a standard counter-argument: from time to time, conspiracies really do take place and some of them are, at least partially, successful. Indeed, many *coups d'état* in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as well as the many evidently unlawful operations of special services globally, demonstrate that conspiracies can be real and have important consequences.[2] One also can argue that the logic of conspiracy theorizing is rather similar to that which can often be observed in respectable academic social studies: scholars try to find hidden links (e. g. regularities) between isolated events which one cannot observe, as well as seek new evidence of the existence of such "invisible forces" in response to criticism.[3]

Despite these considerations, conspiracy theorizing deserves special scholarly attention as an important, controversial, and distinctive social phenomenon. Indeed, in many cases its prevalence poses significant challenges. This is because persistently portraying some actors as conspiring enemies can reinforce totalitarian ideologies; provoke violence, repression, harassment of political opponents and minorities.[4] Yet in other cases, conspiracy theorizing can be not so much harmful as useful, in that it performs functions such as increasing public vigilance against non-transparent actions of those who have vast power.[5] This discourages them to resort to such manipulations. Conspiracy theorizing can also sometimes reveal real conspiracies.

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1 See for example: David Coady, "An Introduction to the Philosophical Debate about Conspiracy Theories," in David Coady, ed., *Conspiracy Theories: The Philosophical Debate* (Aldeshot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 2; Daniel Pipes, *Conspiracy: How the Paranoid Style Flourishes and Where It Comes from?* (N. Y.: The Free Press, 1997), p. 20.

2 Charles Pigden, "Popper Revisited, or What Is Wrong with Conspiracy Theories?" in David Coady, ed., *Conspiracy Theories: The Philosophical Debate* (Aldeshot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 34; Martin Parker, "Human Science as Conspiracy Theory," in Jane Parish and Martin Parker, eds., *The Age of Anxiety: Conspiracy Theory and the Human Sciences* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), pp. 191–207.

3 Parker, "Human Science as Conspiracy Theory," pp. 191–207.

4 See for example: Pipes, *Conspiracy*, pp. 176–777.

5 Matthew Gray, *Conspiracy Theories in the Arab World: Sources and Politics* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 22, 31–32.

In attempting to consider the mentioned problems and still target socially dangerous kinds of conspiracy theorizing, some scholars seek to narrow down the subject. Some distinguish between warranted and unwarranted conspiracy theories[6] while others focus on conspiracism that is the belief in the key and omnipresent role of conspiracies in the historical process.[7] Still, even unwarranted and conspiracism-driven conspiracy theories sometimes can prove to be true and thus such definitions can hardly be used for distinguishing between "good" or "bad" or between "true" or false accounts.

Why do some people resort to conspiracy theorizing? Some researchers attribute this to a flawed style of thinking, while others emphasize various social explanations.

A range of arguments is employed to demonstrate why conspiracy theories represent a flawed style of thinking. One of the most common arguments of this kind is that conspiracy theorizing contradicts the Occam's razor principle. This requires people not to multiply entities beyond necessity and to choose the simplest explanation among available ones. Popper argues that conspiracy theorists systematically underestimate the powerful role of various random factors and the numerous unintended consequences caused by them. These factors and consequences would likely thwart any "grand" and far-reaching conspiracy.[8] Clarke criticizes conspiracy thinking as a fundamental attribution error (misinterpreting an actor's behavior by its evil intentions rather than by reaction to some external circumstances) and as a degenerating research program (an inclination to defend one's own "theory" at any price by inventing new arguments in its favor instead of refuted ones).[9] Finally, Hofstadter and Pipes conceptualize conspiracy theorizing as a paranoid style of thinking characterized by enemy seeking and the systematic interpreting of seemingly unconnected facts as links in the same chain; testifying to existence of conspiracies.[10] Again, the two main problems with finding logical faults with conspiracy theorizing are that conspiracies sometimes really happen and that almost everybody (not excluding the bulk of criticizing academics) can be caught occasionally practicing a somewhat a similar style of flawed thinking as conspiracy theorists are accused of. Another trend in conceptualizing conspiracy theories is a tendency to focus on those social functions that resort them to plays. Showalter considers the rising popularity of conspiracy theorizing as

6 Brian L. Keeley, "Of Conspiracy Theories," *The Journal of Philosophy Columbia University* 96:3 (Mar., 1999), pp. 109–126.

7 Frank P. Mintz, *The Liberty Lobby and the American Right: Race, Conspiracy, and Culture* (Westport: Greenwood, 1985), p. 4.

8 Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Social Knowledge* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 123–124.

9 Steve Clarke, "Conspiracy Theories and Conspiracy Theorizing," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 32:2 (2002), pp. 131–150.

10 See: Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics, and Other Essays* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966).

a symptom of mass hysteria, when enemy-seeking substitutes are in place of having to deal with real problems.[11] Jameson and Kravitz portray conspiracy theorizing as an unsuccessful attempt to find sense and provide systematic and totalistic explanations for the workings of this chaotic post-modern age.[12] Other researchers put conspiracy thinking in the context of specific relations between groups and institutes within society. In particular, Gray argues that conspiracism can be an important anti-governmental discourse for actors marginalized by the ruling regime; a symptom of internal social conflict, a means to legitimize a regime for those who oppose it or, on the contrary, a means to strengthen the regime's legitimacy and to discredit its opponents, as well as a media show. According to Gray, one should take into account all such factors. Attempts to explain the pervasiveness of conspiracy theories by just one of these factors would be erroneous.[13]

This theoretical framework has several important implications for conceptualizing DP. First, it is an unwarranted conspiracy theory that legitimizes a conspiracist worldview, in which Russia is a target of a long-term US plot and conspirators with their agents can be found virtually everywhere. Secondly, resorting to DP should be put to a broader social context and considered in the light of the functional importance of the narrative. Thirdly, the fact that there are very strong arguments against the plan's authenticity makes it especially interesting to identify and conceptualize the rhetoric and other ways that were used by the Plan's proponents to resist its delegitimizing. These issues will be paid special attention in the empirical part of our work.

CONSPIRACY THEORIZING ABOUT EXTERNAL ENEMIES IN RUSSIA: PAST AND PRESENT

Conspiracist attitudes towards foreign actors are deeply rooted in the Russian historical past. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, non-Orthodox foreigners were commonly considered as accomplices of devilry and communication (especially any physical contact) with them was regarded to be defiling.[14] After Russia started to Westernize in the eighteenth century, suspicion towards foreigners as a whole softened to some extent. They were now considered not as accomplices of devilry but rather as potential spies.[15] The

11 Elaine Showalter, *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture* (London: Picador, 1997).

12 Bennett Kravitz, "The Truth Is Out There: Conspiracy as a Mindset in American High and Popular Culture," *Journal of American Culture* 22:4 (Winter 1999); Frederic Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," in Cary Nelson, ed., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Crossberg, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 347–360.

13 Gray, *Conspiracy Theories,* pp. 20–21.

14 Nikolai Kostomarov, *Byt i nravy russkogo naroda v XVI i XVII stoletiiakh* (Smolensk: Rusich, 2011), pp. 340–342.

15 See for example: Astol'f de Kiustin, *Rossiia v 1839 godu* (St. Petersburg: Kriga, 2008), p. 221.

suspicion instead became more selective, focusing mainly on perceived agents of Russia's particular enemies (such as "German spies" at the time of World War I). However, after the Bolshevist revolution, the overwhelming majority of foreigners (not excluding those who adhered to the "only true" kind of Marxist-Leninist ideology) started to be considered again as potential devilry agents. They were seen as potential agents of the hostile capitalist world that was seeking to destroy the young Soviet state. During the Stalinist period, accusations of assisting "foreign enemies" and particularly of being spies of various foreign countries cost the lives of a huge number of Soviet citizens; either through death or many years spent in forced labor camps. After the Stalinist period, suspicious attitudes towards foreigners started to soften and become more selective again. It was now predominantly the USA and their "satellites" that were considered really dangerous, along with nefarious actors seeking to undermine the USSR using various means, including the malicious assistance of spies and other accomplices residing in the Soviet Union itself.

The collapse of the Soviet Union, accompanied by the decline of communist ideology, political and economic liberalization, and a severe economic crisis, dramatically changed the conditions in which conspiracy theorizing could develop. Democratic and, at the same time, "weak" Russia could not be perceived anymore as a "besieged fortress," trying to set an economic, political, and ideological pattern for "progressive mankind." At the same time, widespread sentiments of nostalgia and frustration about the USSR's collapse and the perceived losses in the "cold war," as well as disappointment with current economic conditions, political turmoil, and perceived "moral degradation," were still here. The responsibility for all of these troubles was often ascribed not to spontaneous processes but to the purposeful efforts of some external enemies. Such alarmist sentiments were shared by a large part of the influential military and security officers, who declared their loyalty to democratic Russia but kept their Soviet-style "besieged fortress" and "enemy seeking" mentality.

No wonder that in such conditions conspiracy theories appeared quickly; particularly those blaming external enemies (first of all, the USA but sometimes also clandestine Zionist and Mason organizations) for the collapse of the USSR and current Russian economic troubles. Apart from reflecting popular sentiments, conspiracy theorizing was entrenched in several influential directions of post-Soviet Russian political thought: in radical nationalism, Eurasianist geopolitics, and national security studies. While radical nationalism has been quite straightforward in searching for and blaming Russia's perceived enemies, Eurasianist geopolitics proclaimed the existence of immanent and irreconcilable geopolitical contradictions between Russia and the USA (who thus have been directly interested in destroying or at least subduing its "natural enemy").[16] As for national security studies, attempts were made to anticipate all of the numerous potential threats to Russian security and thus these studies

16 See for example: Aleksandr Dugin, *Osnovy geopolitiki* (Moscow: Arktogeia, 1997).

were naturally guided by suspicious sentiments. Both Eurasianist geopolitics and national security studies (and even radical nationalism to a lesser extent) found numerous supporters among the influential military and security officers. They also found support among a wide range of "patriotically minded" politicians, including communists. Their liberal and pro-Western opponents also sometimes resorted to conspiracy theorizing but these theories tended to target not external but perceived internal enemies, especially powerful security services (whose representatives were accused of plotting in order to come to power and eliminate political adversaries[17]).

Vladimir Putin, a former security officer himself, initially refrained from resorting to conspiracy theorizing when he came to power; systematically maintaining good relations with the USA and other Western countries. As Putin's regime grew more authoritarian, however, conspiracy theories that portrayed the USA as the main adversary trying to undermine Russia became more persistent and aggressive.[18] After Vladimir Putin took office again in 2012 and, especially after he placed his bet for aggressive external political campaigns to consolidate support and marginalize his opponents, conspiracy theorizing about external enemies finally became a self-sufficient feature of the official discourse.

The majority of those post-Soviet Russian conspiracy theories, which make foreign actors (states, organizations, or communities) the main malefactors, maintain that these actors supposedly want to destroy or subdue Russia or tear off some part of its territory. The USA (sometimes together with its allies) and clandestine organizations (usually US-controlled, Zionist, or Masonic) usually have been attributed the intention of destroying or subduing Russia in order to eliminate the main geopolitical competitor and/or to secure access to its vast natural resources. According to conspiracy theorists, these purposes could be achieved by a range of means, including promoting decentralization and "managed instability" in vulnerable regions; organizing civic protests with the help of civic activists receiving Western grants; manipulating public opinion via the Internet and other media; promoting Western culture and vices to undermine Russian cultural identity. "Regional" conspiracy theories most typically involve nearby countries (Finland, Estonia, Germany, China, North Korea, Japan etc.) supposedly trying to achieve annexation of some particular Russian territory by means of creeping demographic, economic, and cultural expansion. The majority of Russian domestic accomplices of external malevolent actors have been attributed the important role of either participating in plots directly (e. g. organizing social unrest) or, at least, indirectly lobbying for

17 See for example: Alexander Litvinenko and Yuri Felshtinsky, *Blowing Up Russia* (London: Gibson Square Books, 2007).

18 Serghei Golunov, "The 'Hidden Hand' of External Enemies: The Use of Conspiracy Theories by Putin's Regime," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no 192, http://www.ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/pepm192.pdf

the interests of Russian enemies, by advocating particularly "liberal" policies and making a mockery of "vigilant patriots."

As of the 2010s, anti-American conspiracy theories were the most popular kind of conspiracy theories represented in the Russian public discourse. Conspiracy theorizing involving other alleged enemies (including conspiracy theories accusing China of planning creeping occupation of the Russian Far East) are much less popular now[19] despite anti-Chinese conspiracy theorizing being very widespread in the 1990s.

WHAT IS THE DULLES' PLAN?

The DP has been just one of many conspiracy theories placing a range of real or imagined external enemies to the forefront. Most typically, DP is usually referred to as an apocryphal statement, attributed to the first Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Allen Dulles, who ostensibly made it in his speech before the US Congress in 1945. This statement stresses the ways in which the USA could undermine the USSR by corrupting Soviet people and promoting various vices. Alternatively, DP is sometimes referred to as a National Security Council 20/1 Directive, setting forth the strategic goals towards the USSR (containment) and US priorities for the case of its military victory over the Soviet Union (weakening the USSR and granting independence to Baltic states and autonomy to some ethnic minorities).[20] This directive was actually prepared not by Allen Dulles but by George Kennan.[21]

Up to now, the grammatically and stylistically correct text of DP has been available only in Russian. The first known citation of the plan dates back to 1992, when it appeared in Ukrainian writer Boris Olyinik's book, which was published twice in Moscow[22] and Zaporizhia (Ukraine). The book's text was re-published many times after. The initial text of DP, introduced in this book, was as follows:

> The war will be over. Everything will be settled down and put in order. We shall spend everything we have (all gold, all economic power and resources) on duping and fooling people. Human brains and conscience can be changed. Having wreaked havoc there, we will insensibly replace people's values with false ones... We will find like-minded people—allies and supporters—in Russia itself. [This is] grand tragedy of ruining the most disobedient people on earth with the final extinction of their conscience happening episode by episode.

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19 Serghei Golunov, "What Should Students Know about Russia's Enemies? Conspiracy Theories in Russian Geopolitical Textbooks," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no 358, http://www.ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm358_Golunov_Feb2015_0.pdf

20 "NSC 20/1 U.S. Objectives with Respect to Russia, Washington, August 18, 1948," http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS

21 Wilson D. Miscamble, *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947–1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 197.

22 Boris Oleinik, *Kniaz' t'my: Dva goda v Kremle* (Moscow: Paleia, 1992).

> We shall gradually exterminate the social substance in literature and art, we shall discourage artists from portraying and, so to say, analyzing the processes happening in the depths of the masses. Literature, theatre, the cinema—everything will depict and glorify the basest human feelings. In every way we shall support so-called artists who will disseminate and implant into the conscience the cults of sex, violence, sadism and betrayal—in short, all sorts of immorality.
>
> We shall create chaos and confusion in state governance. We shall insensibly, but actively and constantly, promote abuse of power by state officials, bribe taking, and unscrupulousness. Honesty and moral rectitude will be ridiculed; nobody will need it, they will become old prejudices. Loutishness and impudence, lies and deceit, alcohol and drug abuse, animal fear of each other, shamelessness, treachery, nationalism and ethnic enmity—all of these we shall smartly and insensibly cultivate and all of this will thrive.
>
> And only a few, a very few people will guess and understand what is happening. But we shall put those people in helpless position, make a mockery of them, find ways to belie them and declare them to be the scum of society... This way we shall shake generation after generation... We shall target people starting from a young age, making focus on the youth; we will demoralize, corrupt and deprave it. We will make cosmopolites of them.
>
> We will eradicate the spiritual roots of Bolshevism, vulgarize and destroy the foundations of people's morality. We will undermine generation after generation, eroding this Leninist fanaticism. We will take people in hand from their childhood, teenage years. We will always make the main focus on youth, we will be vitiating, corrupting, and defiling it. We'll make them spies and cosmopolitans. That's how we'll do it.

In February 1993, DP was cited by metropolitan Ioann (Ivan Snychev) in his article "The Battle for Russia."[23] This is erroneously claimed by some sources (including the Russian Wikipedia[24]) to be the earliest publication when the plan was cited. It should be noted that the version cited in this context was different from Boris Olyinik's version; not only in some small stylistic nuances but also in two conceptual points. The phrase "*First of all, enmity and hatred towards the (ethnic) Russian people*" was added to specify who was to be the main target of "nationalism and ethnic hatred." Meanwhile, the last paragraph, referring to the spiritual roots of Bolshevism and Leninist fanaticism, was removed entirely. These changes probably reflected a shift from communism to nationalism in the ideological agenda of the conservative opposition to Yeltsin's regime and to liberal pro-Western reforms. From now on, the Russian people as a special target of ethnic hatred was mentioned in the vast majority of the plan's subsequent citations; while the last paragraph from the Olyinik version was usually abbreviated without mentioning Bolshevism and Leninism but with a special emphasis on the conspirators' "main focus on the youth."[25]

23 Mitropolit Ioann, "Bitva za Rossiiu," *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 20.02.1993.

24 Plan Dallesa, *Wikipedia*, https://goo.gl/Z2Tx6T

25 See for example: "Direktivy Allena Dallesa o razrushenii Rossii," *Sokrovennik.ru*, http://sokrovennik.ru/direktivy-allena-dallesa-o-razrusheniyu-sssr-i-rossii

Overall, the narrative represents rather sketchy conspirator aspirations to promote social vices, addiction and ethnic conflicts, while placing a special emphasis on corrupting the youth of Russia. Among other matters, the narrative indirectly defends those who would expose the conspiracy, while implying that those who attack exposers of the Dulles plan are likely involved in implementing it. It is important that, unlike the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, DP is not supplemented by any story explaining how the secret text became known in the USSR and Russia.

Very soon after the plan started to proliferate in Russia, it became known that the first and last paragraphs were an almost verbatim copy of a text of Anatolii Ivanov's 1981 (and later editions) novel "Eternal Call," where this text is uttered by a negative character, an ethnic Russian Nazi officer Lakhnovskii.[26] In 1993, Boris Olyinik, after citing the plan in the *Molodaia Gvardiia* journal edited by Anatolii Ivanov himself, wrote in a note that he had just became aware of that it was Ivanov who referred to DP's text previously.[27] It should be stressed, however, that in no earlier publications of the same text, including the one that appeared in 1993 in *Roman-Gazeta*,[28] any acknowledgement of Ivanov's authorship was made.

It is sometimes argued[29] that Ivanov's novel and, indirectly, the DP itself, were inspired by the speech of US General Dumbright from Yurii Dol'd-Mikhailik's 1965 novel "With the Black Knights." This negative character proposes to spread non-Marxist ideas with help of academics, to promote religious sects, to corrupt the youth and foster a split between the younger and older generations.[30] Some also believe that both Ivanov's novel and the DP were inspired by Dostoevskii's *Besy,* in which an immoral revolutionary Piotr Verkhovenskii proposes to encourage alcoholism, promiscuity, and some other vices in order to weaken potential resistance to the emerging revolutionary dictatorship.[31] It does appear that the list of vices to be encouraged, according to DP, coincide to a much greater extent to the list of vices that can be found in an earlier apocryphal conspiracy narrative "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." This text describes the putative global Zionist conspiracy for seizing power and establishing a global dictatorship. Among the list of evil purposes to be achieved to weaken the potential resistance are: creating chaos, substituting genuine val-

26 See Part Five of: Anatolii Ivanov, *Collected Works in 5 Volumes*, *Volume 4, Vechnyi zov* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1981).

27 Boris Oleinik, "Kniaz' t'my," *Molodaia Gvardiia* 7 (1993), p. 38.

28 Boris Oleinik, "Kniaz' t'my," *Roman-gazeta* 1202 (1993), pp. 55–56.

29 A. Vasserman, N. Latypov, "Reaktsiia Vassermana i Latypova na mify, legendy i drugie shutki istorii," 25.10.2012, http://territa.ru/load/1-1-0-5636

30 Yurii Dol'd-Mikhailik, *U chernykh rytsarei*, trans. Elena Rossel (Moscow: Pechatnoe Delo-Diana, 1994).

31 Fedor Dostoevskii, *Besy* in *Sobranie sochinenii v piatnadtsati tomakh,* T. 7 (Leningrad, Nauka, 1990).

ues with fake ones, finding internal accomplices, corrupting the youth, and promoting nationalism, alcoholism, red tape, and bribery.[32]

Yet, neither the text of Ivanov's novel, nor the DP, contains verbatim concisions with any of the mentioned previous sources. It should be stressed that a large number of the vices mentioned in all of these texts are rather trivial and could be found even in some existing ancient texts. For example, proliferation of false values, promiscuity, treachery, cynicism, mutual hostility, and alcoholism can all be found in Mahabharata's representation of the coming last epoch of Kali Yuga.[33] It is not a problem to compose a list of such vices for any text denouncing them in some way.

RESORTING TO THE NARRATIVE: WHO? WHY? IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES? AGAINST WHOM?

DP was not the only anti-Western apocryphal narrative proliferated by conspiracy theorists in post-Soviet Russia. There was also the 1995 Bill Clinton speech at the Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting[34]; the former US State Secretary Madeleine Albright's statement claiming unjustly the fact that Russia possesses Siberian natural resources alone[35] and so on. Yet, among narratives of this kind, DP has been probably been the most detailed and the most sinister; "revealing in full" all US evil designs, not only towards Russia as a state but, even more importantly, towards Russian society and its people.

The fact that DP's authenticity has been put into serious doubt limits the range of those actors who use the narrative. Probably for that reason, citing the plan could be considered inappropriate for official statements. In particular, Vladimir Putin himself has never cited DP, although in principle he not infrequently resorts to talking about ungrounded conspiracy theories and inauthentic statements, such as the aforementioned Albright's apocryphal statement.[36] For a similar reason, many other public figures avoid citing DP or at least have reservations about its authenticity.

Still, the range of actors who cite DP as a true source publicly remains wide. Considering major political forces, members of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), including the leader of the party Gennady

32 "Protokoly Sionskikh Mudretsov," *Lib.ru*, http://www.lib.ru/POLITOLOG/AE/protokoly.txt_with-big-pictures.html#3

33 "Kali Yuga," http://www.hinduism.co.za/kaliyuga.htm

34 "Rech' Klintona na soveshchanii Ob"edinennogo komiteta nachal'nikov shtabov," *Cyclowiki.org*, http://goo.gl/mmfNaF In this speech the former U.S. president allegedly expressed his satisfaction that the USA managed to destroy the USSR and set the task to partition Russia.

35 Yuliia Latynina, "Chto skazala Madlen Olbrait?" *Ezhednevnyi zhurnal*, 23.10.2007, http://www.ej.ru/?a=note&id=7495#

36 "Bol'shaia press-konferentsiia Vladimira Putina. Stenogramma," *The official website of the president of Russian Federation*, 18.12.2014, http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47250

Zyuganov, have been particularly active in employing and propagating the narrative. DP is frequently cited by members of the far right Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR), including its leader Vladimir Zhirinovskii.[37] It doesn't mean that members of other major parties, including the ruling party United Russia, don't cite DP at all, but it is cited much less frequently and systematically by these parties' members. Considering other influential public figures, DP has been actively and publicly cited by many regional politicians and officials (including some governors and majors), current and retired high-standing defense and law enforcement officers (including the last Soviet KGB heads Vladimir Kriuchkov[38]), and also prominent artists.

Among those who have cited DP are highly qualified scholars who have doctoral degrees in political, historical, philosophical, and other sciences. Some of them even actively cited the Plan's texts in their academic monographs,[39] textbooks,[40] and doctoral theses.[41] The readiness of some scholars to consider DP as a legitimate source can probably be explained by the virtually non-existent academic reputation mechanisms in post-Soviet Russia and also by the immaturity of Russian political sciences. This subject was not officially recognized during the Soviet period. Therefore, virtually any text devoted to political issues and desirably arranged in accordance with formal academic style guidelines could be considered as a legitimate political study if an author had sufficient capability to promote it in some way.

The range of functions the Plan's applications serve and contexts in which it is used is extensive. While considering particular cases, one can usually identify not one but several functions and contexts that are often intertwined. For the sake of convenience, let us consider the most typical of such functions and contexts separately.

EXPLANATION FOR THE USSR'S COLLAPSE

The disintegration of the USSR is portrayed as a result of the plan's successful implementation. Most typically, this implementation was identified with perestroika and democratization. Correspondingly, its major proponents, including the last Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and the first Russian

37 "V priamom efire radiostantsii 'Ekho Moskvy' Vladimir Zhirinovskiy—vitse-spiker Gosdumy RF, lider LDPR. Efir vedet Sergei Buntman," *Stenogrammy press-konferentsii radio "Ekho Moskvy,"* 30.07.2003.

38 E. A. Viktorov, "Psikhologicheskaia voina," *Duel'* 52 (28.12.1999).

39 Vladimir Lisichkin, Leonid Shelepin, *Tret'ia mirovaia (informatsionno-psikhologicheskaia) voina* (M.: Institut sotsial'no-politicheskikh issledovanii, 1999).

40 Aleksandr Gorelik, "Raz fal'shivka, dva fal'shivka," *Komsomol'skaia pravda v Peterburge*, 1.04.2009.

41 Maksim Valov, *Sotsial'no-filosofskie osnovaniia sovremennogo sotsial'nogo darvinizma* (synopsis of a Candidate of Philosophical Sciences thesis) (Sankt-Peterburg: Baltic State Technical University, 2003).

president Boris Yeltsin, were portrayed as US agents charged with the task of destroying the USSR.[42]

It is interesting that those who blame DP in bringing about the collapse of the Soviet Union usually deliberate about the Plan's implementation only in relation to the period beginning in the second half of 1980. This therefore implies that the Plan started to be implemented efficiently only forty years after it was introduced. Only a few conspiracy-minded authors have traced DP implementation to the earlier Nikita Khrushchev's de-Stalinization,[43] fostering alcoholism by introducing additional celebration days (used by many people as pretexts to drink),[44] the rise of cosmopolitism and dissident movements, and the development of "dead-end" directions of scientific research.[45] As Vladimir Lisichkin and Leonid Shelepin state in their 1999 academic book, there was "actually" no confrontation between conspiring high-standing ideologists of the Communist Party and dissidents, since the former just manipulated the latter to achieve their malicious purposes.[46]

EXPLANATION OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD

Another function of the DP is to explain a range of contemporary troubles. In line with the above-cited insight of Jameson and Kravitz, it can be argued that such explanations represent attempts to create ordered insights into chaotic events and to discover some sense in senseless and unfriendly environments. Sometimes such explanations could also mean trying to absolve one's own responsibilities for these problems. While in some cases, discussing some particular difficulties, injustices, or vices led to enemy-seeking among domestic opponents; in other cases it was just a castigation of such injustices and moral vices in order to deal with them, not with some personalized domestic enemies.

The idea that post-Soviet Russia's present supposedly resulted from the DP's successful realization has been quite gloomy. The criticism of existing realities typically combined denouncing oligarchic capitalism with moralistic insight. In terms of economics, it is the country of victorious predatory capitalism destroying public property and industrial potential of the Soviet period.[47] As for the social life, it is a country where the new bourgeoisie and corrupted officials dominate, while education and health care are degrading, and where various moral vices and inter-ethnic conflicts are promoted by the mass media

42 V. Moskalik, "Vyzhivanie po prigovoru," *Nash golos*, 09.08.2007.

43 V. S. Minchuk, "Navstrechu 68-i godovshchine Pobedy sovetskogo naroda v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," *Trudovaia Samara*, 26.04.2013.

44 Viktor Shvadronov, "V ob'iatiiakh zmiia," *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 11.08.2012.

45 Lisichkin and Shelepin, *Tret'ia mirovaia.*

46 Ibid., p. 140.

47 "Kakovo pod novymi znamenami," *Trudovaia Samara*, 29.04.2009.

(especially TV), unscrupulous politicians and other external enemy's intentional or unintentional internal accomplices.[48] Above all, Dulles' plan is deemed to be responsible for various particular incidents, beginning with technological disasters (such as the massive power outages that occurred in Moscow in May 2005[49]) and ending with child abuse in an orphanage in the city of Ulan-Ude[50] or with poor quality ballet shoes which were supposedly supplied to ballet schools by enemies in order to destroy the Russian ballet.[51]

Those authoritative artists and other intellectuals, who felt themselves particularly obliged to contribute to resisting moral decline, focused on castigating contemporary vices that supposedly were proliferated by DP. Such people traced DP's implementation in increasing pervasiveness of egoism, consumerism,[52] promiscuity, homosexuality, graffiti,[53] computer games,[54] alcoholism, narcomania, venereal diseases,[55] gambling,[56] foreign words cluttering up the Russian language,[57] and vulgarity and violence in TV and other media shows.[58]

DEFENDING ONE'S OWN IDEOLOGY AND WORLDVIEWS

Some ardent defenders of the Soviet ideology and, particularly, of an orthodox Stalinist interpretation of Soviet history, fiercely condemned critical assessments of the Soviet past and especially pro-Stalinist narratives of World War II. Such criticisms and even attempts to "belittle" the role of Joseph Stalin in this war were considered as attempts to implement DP by wreaking chaos, substituting true values with false ones, fooling the Russian people, and corrupting the youth.[59]

Conversely, DP was also used for justifying Stalinist repressions and subsequent prosecutions of dissidents. It was argued, for example, that the Stalinist leadership tried to prevent internal destabilization, knowing US secret plans,

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48 Ibragim Shamov, "Dallesizatsiia vseia Rusi," *Sovetskii Dagestan*, 3.03.2009.

49 Stanislav Yablonskii, "Chitaite plan Dallesa—budete znat' istinnuiu prichinu tehnogennoi katastrofy 25 maia 2005 goda," *Ekonomicheskaia gazeta*, 15.11.2005.

50 Ivan Zhbanov, "Pobeg iz detstva-2," *Tsentral'naia gazeta*, 13.05.2009.

51 Ol'ga Selivanova, "'Smertel'nyi tanets' russkogo baleta," *Moskovskaia pravda*, 16.07.2013.

52 Yurii Mikhailov, "Nel'zia shutit' s istoriei," *Kuzbass*, 29.03.2000.

53 "Graffiti—Eto chast' plana Dallesa," *Moskovskie novosti*, 12.05.2003.

54 Timur Akulov, "Rossii ob"iavili komp'iuternuiu voinu," *Moskovskii komsomolets*, 15.04.2009.

55 Yu. Leisov, "Kol' korni sgnili, to pobegov ne vidat'...," *Omskoe vremia*, 15.08.2007.

56 Roman Romanovskii, "Poleznyi miting," *Trideviatyi region Kaliningrad*, 06.07.2007.

57 Vladimir Yudin, "Russkii—Eto tot, kto liubit Rossiiu," *Sibirskoe vremia*, 12.01.1996.

58 Anastasiia Buga, "'Dom-2' v topku!" *Amurskaia pravda*, 28.04.2009; Ol'ga Demidova, "Oleg Otroshko: 'Navernoe, ia naivnyi chelovek...'," *Yunost'*, 15.08.2007.

59 See for example: N. Gudkov, "My zhdem drugikh pozdravlenii," *Smolenskaia pravda*, 17.05.2007; "Ocherednoi vitok predatel'stva," *Magnitogorskii rabochii*, 12.04.2007.

while the subsequent leaderships were too careless. This, it was said, finally led to the collapse of the USSR.[60]

DENUNCIATION AND DELEGITIMIZATION OF ENEMIES

Not surprisingly, the most common kind of enemies mentioned by those who referred to DP included figures perceived to be pro-Western and liberal. Most typically, they were deemed to be internal agents involved in executing their US masters' plans for undermining the Russian statehood (proponents of liberal reforms in Russian government and liberal protesters against Putin's regime),[61] destabilizing the economy,[62] corrupting morals ("immoral" TV shows, Pussy Riot's Punk Prayer in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior),[63] broadcasting their ideas via friendly (and thus subversive) media,[64] and distorting history (anti-Stalinists).[65]

One more important form of those who are perceived as implementing the Plan's objectives is non-traditional religious organizations (labeled as "totalitarian sects") such as Jehovah's Witnesses, the Unification Church, the Church of Scientology, and Mormons etc.[66] Not surprisingly, Orthodox priests and other public figures have often resorted to blaming "sectarians" of being enemy "agents." It should also be mentioned that a pseudo-documentary "*The USSR: Ordered to be Destroyed*" issued in 2008 by the REN TV channel, was particularly focused on the role of foreign "totalitarian sects" in the implementation of DP.[67] Above all, this film demonstrated the extraordinary session of the Irkutsk Province Governor's Interchurch Council specially assembled for this purpose.[68]

As in many Russian nationalists' worldviews, the belief in DP's authenticity combined with anti-Semitism means that "Zionists" and prominent figures of Jewish background (including not only politicians but also artists) are sometimes proclaimed to be conspirators' agents of influence.[69] Similarly, nationalists were proclaimed agents of influence by publicists from North Caucasian republics (such as Dagestan and Chechnya), who claimed that nationalists were organizing ethnic conflicts and destroying Russia.[70]

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60 "Plan Dallesa—bred, stavshii real'nost'iu," *Russkii dom*, 06.04.2007.

61 Stanislav Klochkov, "'Plan Dallesa' nikto ne otmenial?" *Vpered*, 31.01.2012.

62 A. Lebedev, "Plan Dallesa ili plan Putina," *Nash golos*, 6.03.2008.

63 Leonid Shakhov, "Otstupat' nekuda," *Zhizn' za vsiu nedeliu*, 29.08.2012.

64 Leonid Nikitinskii, "Duma ni o chem," *Novaia gazeta*, 1.03.2013.

65 Leopold Starchik, "Novaia kniga so staroi lozh'iu o Staline," *Spetsnaz Rossii* 1:36 (15.01.2008).

66 Ivan Ibragimov, "Rossiiu prikazano unichtozhit'?" *Argumenty i fakty—Belgorod*, 4.06.2008.

67 Tatiana Pavlova, "Prikazano unichtozhit'!" *Orlovskaia pravda*, 17.06.2009.

68 Semen Polotskii, "Religioznaia rozn'," *Baikal'skie vesti*, 11.06.2008.

69 "Lider Russkogo natsional'nogo edinstva (RNE) v Saratove V. Kondrashov o sozdannom v Saratove antifashistskom komitete," *Rossiiskii regional'nyi press-biulleten' (VPS)*, 27.08.1998.

70 Salman Batukaev, "Rossiiskii pirog ne kormit Kavkaz," *Groznenskii rabochii*, 15.03.2012.

Not as infrequently, the key figures of Putin's regime, including Vladimir Putin himself[71] are also included in the list of DP's domestic perpetrators by conservative opponents, especially by provincial supporters of the KPRF. In particular, Vladimir Putin's and Dmitry Medvedev's administrations, as well as the ruling pro-governmental party United Russia, have been accused of continuing Western-style liberal socio-economic policies involving education, health care, and welfare cuts,[72] not supporting deprived regions,[73] entrusting liberals (such as Aleksei Kudrin and Anatolii Chubais) to continue their "disastrous" reforms,[74] rises in prices and tariffs,[75] selling natural resources to foreign states and companies,[76] corruption, not using monetary reserves for covering the social needs of ordinary people,[77] supporting alcohol businesses[78] and "amoral" TV shows,[79] and abandoning Soviet symbols.[80] Such criticism was especially harsh during election campaigns, when United Russia and individual pro-governmental politicians were also accused of falsifying elections and fooling voters according to DP.[81] However, this criticism tends to weaken as the regime's rhetoric becomes more anti-American and anti-liberal.

For some of those people who had no significant power to tackle social injustices, corrupted and inaccessible bureaucrats were among the most important conspiracy perpetrators.[82] In this sense, in line with the mentioned insights of Gray, DP serves as a tool for empowering marginalized groups and concurrently delegitimizing powerful officials. In 1996, an elderly war veteran, who was displeased with the governor of Rostov province (who failed to fulfill his previous promise to fund one publication), accused this governor of being an enemy's agent. This was based on the fact that, during an official meeting, the US president Bill Clinton shook the governor's hand twice while greeting other participants only once.[83] In 2012, a small entrepreneur from the city of Saransk accused local authorities of performing DP because these authorities created unfavorable conditions for small and medium business.[84] Curiously, in some of these types of cases, anti-bureaucratic criticism can even blur to some extent the

71 Nikitinskii, "Duma ni o chem."
72 "Po chuzhezemnym proektam," *Nash golos*, 11.10.2007.
73 N. B. Aref'ev, "Vtoroe izdanie Dallesa," *Astrakhanskaia pravda*, 13.07.2011.
74 "Kuda vedut narod?" *Veteran*, 29.01.2008.
75 "Eto ne oshibka!" *Brianskaia pravda*, 20.06.2008.
76 V. N. Fedotkin, "Lozh'—glavnoe oruzhie vlasti," *Priokskaia pravda*, 17.05.2002.
77 P. A. Gimon, "Rasplata za terpenie naroda," *Brianskaia pravda*, 12.09.2008.
78 Evgenii Bratsev, "Razum Rossii utopaet v vodke," *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 10.09.2009.
79 A. Shesterikov, "Kremlevskoi vlasti litso. Fenomen V. Putina," *Patriot*, 13.08.2009.
80 A. P. Neliubov, "Za kogo otdadim svoi golosa?" *Veteran*, 26.02.2008.
81 Petr Safronov, "Pozhaleite dushi uchitelei, ili o 'chestnykh' vyborakh na primere odnogo izbiratel'nogo uchastka," *Pul's Osetii*, 13.12.2011.
82 "Nakhlebniki," *Veteran*, 20.03.2012.
83 Evgenii Losev, "Ne zabyvat' i ne pokoriat'sia!" *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 26.09.1996.
84 Asia Glumova, "Arenda boevykh deistvii," *Stolitsa*, 20.11.2012.

DP's intrinsic anti-American and anti-Western elements. In 2012, a Dagestani activist, after condemning the corrupted Dagestani bureaucracy as an agent of the Dullesian conspiracy, referred to pro-American and pro-Western Georgia as a model example of a country that had managed to defeat corruption.[85]

While condemning would-be internal agents of DP, exposers rarely suggested particular punishments for them. In 2013, State Duma deputies Yevgenii Fedorov, Anton Romanov and Magomed Selimkhanov proposed to restrict the range of activities of those media that were considered to be contributing to the Plan's implementation.[86] In 2009, DP was used as a valid argument by a state expert appraisal made by philosopher from Kuban State University. The appraisal considered that the slogan "Freedom is not given, it is taken" was supportive of DP and on this ground supported the decision of the provincial prosecutor office to issue an official warning. This warning was on the impermissibility of extremist activity towards a human rights activist who displayed this slogan during his picket.[87]

Ironically, in 2015, a leaflet with DP itself was recognized as extremist material by the court of the town of Asbest in Sverdlovsk Province. This decision was based on work at the crime laboratory of the provincial branch of the Federal Security Service. The experts concluded that the leaflet incited hatred and enmity towards Russian government officials.[88]

LEGITIMIZATION AND RALLYING SUPPORT

DP can be used as a means of legitimization of and rallying support for some forces, who claim to be able to resist the conspiracy and justify their actions. Yet, as mentioned before, it is important that while conspiracy theorizing becomes an increasingly legitimate and prominent part of official discourse, the DP's legitimizing and rallying potential for official propaganda is seriously limited by the existing strong arguments against the narrative's authenticity. This probably explains why the DP is rarely found in the high profile speeches of top officials, while it can be easily found in the speeches of secondary officials, prominent public supporters of Putin's regime, and prominent figures of pro-governmental and quasi-opposition parties.

First of all, the Plan's text was actively used by some supporters of the existing regime; portraying the latter as the only force capable of resisting the conspiracy. In 2008, a columnist of the pro-governmental military newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* claimed that the only efficient response to DP is modernization

85 Magomed Kebedov, "Zhivem po planu TsRU?" *Makhachkalinskaia pravda*, 20.07.2012.

86 Nikitinskii, "Duma ni o chem."

87 Ol'ga Serebrianaia, "Svoboda s pozitsii zakonodatelei Krasnodarskogo kraia," *Gorod 812*, 20.07.2009.

88 "Na Urale sud priznal tekst mificheskogo 'Plana Dallesa po unichtozheniiu SSSR' ekstremistskim," *Znak.com*, http://www.znak.com/svrdl/news/2015-06-05/1040929.html

in the form of national priority projects, for which Vladimir Putin's successor Dmitry Medvedev was officially responsible at that time.[89] In the same year, when Medvedev was already president of Russia (and shortly after the war with Georgia), some pro-governmental columnists claimed that the Russian government had to be resolute as conspirators tried to destabilize the Northern Caucasus using Georgia as a means.[90] In 2012, shortly before presidential elections, prominent Russian actor and producer Nikita Mikhalkov, who played an important role in Vladimir Putin's presidential campaign, called him the only obstacle standing against the implementation of DP and claimed Putin's opponents were acting "against Russian interests, independence, and future."[91] In 2014 and 2015, supporters of Vladimir Putin's offensive policy towards Ukraine referred to DP to claim this policy necessary and defensive. It was argued that Moscow had to react to the US plot aiming to manipulate Ukraine by DP-inspired technologies and turn it into a hotbed for exporting anti-governmental riots to Russia.[92]

Numerous appeals to the necessity to counteract DP are also made at the regional level. In 2008, a vice-governor of Krasnodar province, Galina Zolina, cited the DP during her meeting with teachers; stressing that both federal and provincial authorities need to do their best to stop extinction of the nation, strengthen families and boost fertility.[93] In February 2012, the governor of Volgograd province, Sergei Bozhenov, appealed to the capacity of both Vladimir Putin and provincial authorities to resist the conspiracy during his meeting with university students.[94]

Apart from official and evidently pro-governmental structures, a range of other organizations appealed to DP as a means of self-legitimization and as a way of rallying supporters. As mentioned, one of the most active users of the narrative is the KPRF. More than any other organization, they have tried to use the narrative for legitimizing themselves as a force resisting the plan. In 2012, a much smaller People's Party developed its "Anti-Dulles' plan" as one of its key program documents.[95] Of course, the range of those who employed the narrative to rally supporters hasn't been limited to political parties only. It also included religious sects of domestic origin. One such sect, in 2008, predicted

89 Nikolai Sorokin, "Kak ostanovit' nashestvie?" *Krasnaia zvezda*, 08.02.2008.

90 Mikhail Vilin, "Poslednyi ekzamen," *Komsomol'skaia pravda v Magadane*, 14.08.2008.

91 Kirill Martynov, Nikita Mikhalkov, "Plokho vse, esli ne Putin," *Komsomol'skaia pravda v Vologde*, 7.02.2012.

92 Aleksandr Bartosh, "ODKB v pritsele tsvetnykh revoliutsii," *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie,* 11.04.2014, http://nvo.ng.ru/nvo/2014-04-11/1_odkb.html

93 Anastasiia Kuropatchenko, "Spasenie iunykh grazhdan—v neravnodushii vzroslykh," *Krasnodarskie izvestiia*, 7.06.2008.

94 "Sergei Bozhenov: V Volgograd mozhet priekhat' prints, a zhit' emu negde," *Vysota 102*, http://v102.ru/politics/32109.html, 28.02.2012.

95 Dar'ia Fadeeva, "My vmeste!" *Argumenty i fakty—Chernozem'e*, 29.05.2013.

the arrival of Doomsday, which would be caused by globalizers implementing DP, and as such they decided to wait until this doomsday in a vault.[96]

One of the more remarkable kinds of organization who are positioning themselves as resisting the conspiracy and thus attracting more supporters is temperance and other healthy lifestyle societies; many of which have been dominated by conservative orthodox and nationalist activists. A prominent temperance movement activist of the late Soviet and early post-Soviet period, academic Fedor Uglov, claimed in his books that DP made special emphasis on promoting alcoholism and aimed to eliminate ninety per cent of Russians by way of alcohol and narcotics.[97] This idea was repeated in many later healthy lifestyle tutorials that naming not only alcohol consumption but also smoking as a means to destroy Russia.[98] Ways in which such propaganda rallies maintain their existing supporters and attract new ones can be illustrated by the story of a young woman who started by attending a society's educational lectures and then, after learning about DP, stopped drinking and became one of the society's volunteer lecturers.[99]

LOBBYING, PROMOTION, AND RENDERING POLITICAL PRESSURE

Those who refer to DP with such purposes try to justify the necessity either to adopt a policy or abandon it. Concurrently, they have also tried to silence potential opponents who would risk being included in the category of conspiracy supporters if they chose to object to proposed measures or denounce criticism.

In the State Duma, the LDPR tried to appeal to the plan's narrative while lobbying their legislative initiatives. In 2008, they lobbied for a draft law on handicrafts, claiming that genuine folk handicraft organizations were eliminated according to the Plan.[100] In 2010, the LDPR expressed its resentment over the fact that parliament declined their offer to abolish Article 282 of the Criminal Code on inciting ethnic and religious hatred. They claimed that the article repressed ethnic Russians and disenfranchised them.[101]

Denouncing DP not infrequently targeted some specific policies, most typically liberal and modernization reforms. Most often, it targeted the Unified State Exam (a series of centralized university graduation exams that, in the

96 "Pravda i lozh' o razreshennykh narkotikakh—Glava 3. O chem umalchivaiut ili dezinformiruiut nas pressa i televidenie," *Fedor Grigor'evich Uglov. Neofitsial'nyi sait*, http://www.uglov.tvereza.info/knihi/pilorn/3.html

97 "Kapkan dlia Rossii—1. Kapkan dlia Rossii," *Fedor Grigor'evich Uglov. Neofitsial'nyi sait,* http://www.uglov.tvereza.info/knihi/kdr/1.html

98 Aleksandr Vasil'ev, "Posobie po...," *Argumenty i fakty—Yaroslavl'*, 7.05.2008.

99 "Alkogol'naia ruletka," *Riazanskie vedomosti*, 20.03.2012.

100 Dmitrii Kamyshev, "Sredi detei podrostkov," *Kommersant"-Vlast'*, 28.07.2008.

101 "Nichego ne poluchitsia bez resheniia problemy russkogo naroda," *LDPR*, 29.03.2010.

2000s, replaced entrance exams administered by individual universities). It labeled this as a means to destroy Russian education by encouraging corruption and compelling entrants to memorize exam questions mechanically instead of using creative learning. According to the president of the all-Russian Education Foundation, Professor Sergei Komkov, the Unified State Exam was designed by the Higher School of Economics (one of Russia's top universities founded in 1992) with the help of Western advisers who also participated in the conspiracy.[102] Modernization of the Russian army was also a popular target of "revelations," as it was deemed to be an attempt to undermine its fighting capacity.[103] Some other modernization reforms were also denigrated; for instance, in 2008, a pilot claimed that the Russian aviation industry functioned in the state of Dullesian manageable chaos and thus proposed to cancel a disastrous reform of crew training and also to restrict purchases of Western planes.[104]

TOPIC FOR ARTWORK AND ENTERTAINMENT

DP has inspired some artists to create pieces portraying the disastrous results of the powerful foe's evil plot for Russian society. In 2007, a local Chechen newspaper published a long poem by a former official. This poem's content was mainly a retelling of the Plan's text, supplemented by the suggestion that Russia would remain great and strong nevertheless.[105] In 2008, a graduate of a theater department of the East Siberian State Academy of Culture and Arts, staged a graduation performance portraying Russia (and Russian youth in particular) as being degraded under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, permissiveness and false democratic ideologies according to a plan implemented by some secret masonic organization ruling the world.[106] In the same year, an artist from the city of Volgodonsk made a portrait of Allen Dulles, depicting him as an infernal figure who staged a clandestine war against the USSR that now continued against Russia.[107] In 2012, a rock band from the city of Belgorod issued an album called "The Dulles' Plan" that was devoted to castigating social vices.[108]

As mentioned in the theoretical section, broadcasting conspiracy theories (as shows, feature films, or pseudo-documentaries) can be an efficient way to boost media's popularity. While DP was often cited in various media, it rarely

102 "Akademik RAEN: EGE—prodolzhenie plana Dallesa, SShA dobivaiutsia unichtozheniia potentsiala Rossii," *Newsru.com*, 26.06.2008, http://www.newsru.com/russia/26jun2008/dalles.html

103 Liudmila Kudriashova, "Ofitsery, vashe serdtse pod pritselom," *Krasnoe Znamia*, 20.03.2007.

104 "Tainy cheloveka za shturvalom," *Vozdushnyi flot*, 22.12.2008.

105 Zaindi Achkhoev, "Adskie prednachertaniia Dallesa," *Iman*, 8.05.2007.

106 Il'ia Stolbovskii, "Chto trevozhit dushu rezhissera?" *Molodezh' Buriatii*, 7.05.2008.

107 P. Romanov, "Filosofskoe osmyslenie obraza," *Vechernii Volgodonsk*, 31.05.2008.

108 Olesia Andreevich, "'My delaem chestnuiu muzyku'," *Argumenty i fakty—Belgorod*, 27.03.2013.

became a focus of TV shows. Still, in 2008, one of the largest Russian federal channels, REN TV, issued the already mentioned pseudo-documentary by Yevgeniia Kozyr and Aleksandr Ageev, "*The USSR: Ordered to Be Destroyed*." This was devoted to the sixty year anniversary of the National Security Council 20/1 Directive but was also focused on the apocryphal Dulles' plan that was supposedly implemented with the help of non-traditional religious organizations.

Even some of those producers and artists, who either were skeptical regarding DP's authenticity or aimed to subvert it, had to acknowledge its popularity among Russian audiences and try to exploit this for promoting their own shows. In 2007, comedian Yevgenii Petrosian claimed that his shows prevented the implementation of DP as they were ostensibly focused on promoting a negative and gloomy atmosphere in Russian society.[109] In 2012, large Russian channel NTV issued Andrey Loshak's and Pavel Bardin's anti-conspiracism mockumentary "*Russia: Total Eclipse.*" In the film, DP was represented as something real at the beginning (it was even claimed that Russian intelligence services managed to find the original English language copy of the document) but was denounced and mocked at the end of the movie's final (fifth) series. The movie was met with a mixed reaction and part of its audience was annoyed by the fact that they were misled and that DP has been made a mockery of and "wrongly" claimed to be false.[110]

REFUTATIONS AND DEFENSE

Refutations: One could argue that DP's authenticity is too dubious to take it seriously. Indeed, the text is available only in Russian and is "too Russian" stylistically. Even more importantly, the majority of it literally coincides with the mentioned text of Anatolii Ivanov's novel that was recognized by Boris Olyinik in 1993. Yet the information about verbatim coincidences was not widely known for a long time, which gave the Plan much time for discursive entrenchment. Meanwhile, its stylistic non-authenticity was not evident for most of the public.

The first systematic attempts to invalidate DP's text date to the end of the 1990s. The main line of argument of such attempts was initially focused on the fact that the text was not available in English and that any attempts to find it in US archives led nowhere.[111] The second key argument was that, in 1945, Allen Dulles was not a high-ranking officer. He then had little power for promoting such strategies as he worked in The Swiss branch of US intelligence.[112]

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109 "Evgenii Petrosian spaset Rossiiu iumorom," *KP-Cheliabinsk*, 04.10.2007.

110 Sergei Efimov, "Shou Andreia Malakhova—eto 'zhdi menia' naoborot," *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, 12.09.2012.

111 E. Goncharov, "Plan Dallesa ili plan Yakovleva?" *Duel'*, 16.03.1999; Il'ia Butenko, "Um, chest' i sovest' nashey epohi," *Novaia Sibir'*, 14.03.1999.

112 Ibid.

The argument about the Plan's verbatim coincidences with the text of Anatolii Ivanov's novel was introduced to a broad audience by a journalist Mark Deich. In December 2004, he made a statement during a TV show at the TV Center channel. A month before, he had also published an article, in which he mentioned inter alia Boris Olyinik's acknowledgement of Anatolii Ivanov's authorship.[113] Mark Deich's revelation was a serious blow for supporters of DP's authenticity. It made many of them resort to reservations (e. g. "I don't know if it is true or false but these things really happen anyway"[114]) before citing it.

Finally, there is one more group of arguments against the narrative's linguistic, logical, and historical relevance. As a translator, Ilya Butenko argued, the text evidently is not a translation from an English source. It contains too many pleonastic statements, such as "settled down and put in order," "duping and fooling people," "vitiating, corrupting, and defiling" that are not typical in the English language.[115] Other publicists argued that the key results of DP's realization could be easily identified not only in Russia but also in the USA and other Western countries.[116] Alcoholism, bureaucracy, and other vices are, unfortunately, a typical part of Russian life as they are in most countries around the world, and their persistence is caused by internal reasons rather than an external plan.[117] As Sergei Petrunin argued, the USA actually didn't spend "all gold, all economic power and resources" on supporting dissidents and other potential allies within the USSR, but instead rather modest sums of money.[118]

The last KGB chief, Leonid Shebarshin, who had worked for the KGB's First Chief Directorate since 1962, claimed that he didn't believe DP's authenticity. He said that this was because "*The Americans are hypocrites and even planning aggression against some country they speak not about how to corrupt this country but about freedom and democracy*."[119] In a similar vein, *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*'s columnist Yurii Solomonov compared the self-revealingly malicious rhetoric of the plan with that of a villain from a puppet show. He did not see that it could have been spoken by a US high-standing official without Soviet propaganda taking full advantage of obtaining such an impressive piece of evidence of US' maliciousness.[120] Yakunin, Sulakshin and Bagdasarian argued that the plan's alleged authors not only infernalized themselves but also aggrandized their

113 Mark Deich, "Zloveshchii 'plan Dallesa'," *Moskovskii komsomolets*, 20.01.2005.

114 Yu. Mukhin, "Plan Dallesa. Pochemu seichas?" *Duel'*, 1.03.2005.

115 Il'ia Butenko, "Um, chest' i sovest' nashei epokhi," *Novaia Sibir'*, 14.03.1999.

116 Nikolai Vokuev, "Interv'iu s redaktorom 'Tvoei paralleli' Il'ei Bakanovym. 'Zhurnalisty respubliki poteriali khvatku'," *Molodezh' Severa*, 10.02.2012.

117 Sergei Petrunin, "Plan Dallesa srabotal i bez Dallesa," *Duel'*, 4.08.1998.

118 Ibid.

119 Oleg Roldugin, "Idet voina kholodnaia," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 28.03.2007.

120 Yurii Solomonov, "Mirovaia zakulisa v teatre absurd," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 29.05.2012, http://www.ng.ru/stsenarii/2012-05-29/15_zakulisa.html

adversary. The authors, however, also put forward another conspiracy theory, maintaining that DP could be deliberately promoted by the USA to discredit revelations of the US true conspiracies.[121] Indeed, it looks as if the Dulles's Plan implicitly sympathizes with and admires the Soviet society of the time; portraying it as a Golden Age to be corrupted. It is hardly probable that the designers of any anti-Soviet subversion plan could praise their enemy to such an extent while avoiding focusing on the USSR's current weaknesses; weaknesses that could be fully exploited in specific ways. Instead the text only discusses rather vague and unrealistic priorities instead.

Defense: The fact that the DP was partially a verbatim version of Anatolii Ivanov's novel was a serious blow for those who believed in the text's authenticity. Despite this, several defense lines were elaborated very soon.

The first line stressed that the DP is true inasmuch as the results of its implementation are seen everywhere and these results are the best proof of the plan's authenticity.[122] As already mentioned, there was also a more sophisticated modification to help a narrator avoid criticism for citing a fake document. This line included a preliminary disclaimer, stating that it was of no consequence that the plan was true or false as all of its aims have actually come true in contemporary Russia.[123]

The second line of defense involved the allegation that Anatolii Ivanov was shown the plan by his acquaintances from the KGB and subjected the text to deep literary adaptation to conceal its origin.[124] According to Moscow State University Professor and historian Aleksandr Vdovin, who wrote one of the most detailed articles in defense of DP's authenticity, Moscow did not publicize the plan in order not to expose to risk its agent network in the USA. The authorities also wanted to hide its awareness about the adversary's strategic plans.[125]

The third line of argument in favor of DP's authenticity emphasized prior and subsequent testimonials of retired high-ranked security officers and other figures. These individuals, unlike the aforementioned KGB chief Leonid Shebarshin, insisted that the plan was authentic and even that they had seen the text many decades ago. Among such authoritative figures were the former head of KGB's illegal intelligence agency, Yurii Drozdov,[126] and high-ranking KGB figure, major-general Viacheslav Shironin. In his book, written in 1996, he

121 Vladimir Yakunin, Vardan Bagdasarian, Stepan Sulakshin, *Novye tekhnologii bor'by s rossiiskoi gosudarstvennost'iu* (Moscow: Nauchnyi ekspert, 2009), pp. 40–41.

122 Mikhail Morozov, "Kak unichtozhit' Rossiiu," *Tribuna*, 21.08.2008.

123 Mukhin, "Plan Dallesa."

124 V. Plotnikov, "'Horosho-plokho', ili 20 let spustia," *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 28.10.2003.

125 Aleksandr Vdovin, "'Plan Dallesa', 'zolotoi milliard' i rossiiskie liberaly-kosmopolity," *Ekonomicheskaia i filosofskaia gazeta*, 25.04.2012.

126 Yurii Drozdov, *Zapiski nachal'nika nelegal'noi razvedki* (Moscow: Olma-Press, 2000).

specially stressed that in 1968 he had seen a secret document containing phrases about introducing false values and promoting enmity and, above all, inducing hatred towards ethnic Russians.[127] As mentioned before, the latter phrase was absent in the earliest known version of the plan. In 2007, during their public discussion, both a former Deputy Chairman of the KGB, Fedor Bobkov, and the rector of Moscow Humanitarian University, Igor Il'inskii, claimed that they both knew about the Dulles plan since the 1960s. Il'inskii claimed that he had known about the text since 1962 or 1963 when he was a Komsomol member. Yet, neither of them explicitly confirmed that they actually saw the very text that is discussed in this article.[128]

It is important to state that virtually all of these lines of argument have also been used for defending other similar conspiracy narratives and thus are rather trivial. The argument that the text is true because these things really happen was employed for defending the authenticity of the Protocols of the Elders of Sion, Bill Clinton's speech at the Joint Chiefs of Staff's meeting,[129] and also the "Communist Rules for Revolution" (a US equivalent of DP describing the ways in which American society would be corrupted by communists).[130] In his 1993 article, "The Battle for Russia," the metropolitan Ioann initially claimed that he was "far from being able to become a judge in the dispute" about the Protocols' authenticity. However, immediately after this he supported the authenticity with several arguments, including the claim that "all of this really happens."[131] Supporters of the Protocols' authenticity also used two other similar lines of defense. They claimed that the verbatim coincidences with an earlier text (Maurice Joly's "Dialogue in Hell") is explained by saying that its author had access to the Protocols[132] and also that several people supposedly read the Protocols long before they got publicized.[133]

Conclusion

The existing arguments against DP's authenticity look too strong for anyone to take the text very seriously. A large part of the text is virtually a verbatim

127 Viacheslav Shironin, *Pod kolpakom kontrrazvedki. Tainaia podopleka perestroiki* (Moscow: Paleia, 1996).

128 Igor' Il'inskii, "Mir—eto voina," *Il'inskii Igor' Mikhailovich*, http://www.ilinskiy.ru/publications/sod/mirvoina-sod.php

129 "Rech' Klintona."

130 "Communist Rules for Revolution 1919, 84 Years Later We're There," *Red Ice Creations*, http://www.redicecreations.com/specialreports/1919documents.html

131 Mitropolit Ioann, "Bitva za Rossiiu."

132 "Sionskie protokoly," *Lib.ru*, http://www.lib.ru/POLITOLOG/AE/protokoly.txt_with-big-pictures.html

133 K. Begunov, "Bernskoe delo 'sionskikh mudretsov'," http://rus-sky.com/history/library/articles/begunov.htm

copy of Anatolii Ivanov's novel. Even if we do not take this fact into account, the "plan" is unspecific and unrealistic, its rhetoric is self-infernalizing, while at the same time idealizing the Soviet society of the time. The text style is typical of the style of the Russian, but not the English language.

Though these arguments to some extent have undermined the conspiracy theory's proliferation (in particular, high-standing officials and governmental media outlets now prefer not to cite DP), it has managed to survive even such seemingly fatal criticism. It has even been able to respond to such criticism in several ways that have been sufficiently persuasive for DP's supporters. Many Russian conspiracists probably couldn't renounce DP too easily as it has occupied a prominent position in the anti-American discourse for many decades.

Being promoted since the beginning of the 1990s on a wave of democratization, the DP found a favorable ground and was readily accepted by various audiences as an impressive narrative, which provided detailed and spectacular evidence about the perceived enemy's plans towards the USSR and Russia. Suspicion towards foreign actors is deeply rooted in the Russian mentality and it was a particularly prominent feature of Soviet propaganda. As such, mass perceptions were informed by it. Xenophobic suspicion survived the collapse of the Soviet ideology and easily integrated into the new (quasi-)ideologies that came to replace it, including nationalism, conservative Eurasianism, and geopolitical thinking. For a significant part of the Russian public, conspiracy theorizing made sense of the chaotic post-Soviet conditions and provided an easy and clear explanation for the traumatic disintegration of the USSR, the current social economic difficulties, and the chaotic developments in the 1990s. This allowed the public to shift responsibility for problems from oneself towards powerful, faceless external forces that were easier to blame.

Many various actors, including communists, the conservative military, security officers and radical nationalists, resort to citing DP for multiple purposes. These often include criticizing the new oligarchic capitalist order that replaced "socialist justice"; defending their own worldviews and symbols; attacking, discrediting, and silencing their opponents; mobilizing and rallying supporters; lobbying or subverting specific policies; challenging powerful bureaucrats; castigating social vices; entertaining audiences and so on. As already mentioned, DP could be easily combined with various ideologies and used to bolster and generate support. For communists, it could serve to legitimize Stalin's rule and delegitimize those who criticized Stalinism and initiated perestroika. For adherents of geopolitical ideas, it could serve to represent the irreconcilable opposition between the USA and the USSR/Russia. For radical nationalists, it served as an illustration of the sinister plans of Russia's enemies; designed and implemented by a country supposedly controlled by clandestine groups (e. g. Zionists and Masons). As for the role of nationalists in the proliferation of DP, it is telling that some of its early disseminators even modified the very text of the Plan to suit their own purposes; replacing outdated references to communist ideology with references to the special role of ethnic Russians.

However, the fact that the arguments against DP's authenticity are strong have seriously limited its legitimization potential, as well as its utility for the ruling regime; despite increasing resorts to anti-Western conspiracy theorizing. DP is rarely used by top officials in high-profile speeches, despite the fact that it is willingly utilized by secondary officials and pro-governmental public figures. Political parties, such as KPRF and LDPR, have smaller and more ideologically homogenous core audiences. These audiences are more conspiracy-minded and are not inclined to believe any refutations that contradict their worldviews. While addressing audiences of this kind, DP can be used for self-legitimization much more successfully. For similar reasons, DP has been efficient in rallying supporters of groups and organizations based on conservative ideological principles, such as some radical nationalist organizations, religious and temperance societies.

In the 1990s and even at the beginning of the 2000s, DP was actively used for the delegitimization of existing political regimes by communist and nationalist opposition groups. However, soon after this time period, the situation started to change significantly. Though economic and social conditions were claimed to be the result of DP's successful implementation, the regime itself became more and more anti-Western and thus generating more "believers in DP." Though some communist and nationalist figures still sporadically blame the government (and even Putin himself) in contributing to the DP's implementation, Putin's regime in general and its leader in particular are definitely marginal targets for such criticism in comparison with pro-Western liberal opposition and with those governmental officials who are considered to be "liberals."

Like many other conspiracy theories, the one based on DP has both positive and negative social importance. In some cases, applying it empowers those who fight against corrupted officials and try to overcome bureaucratic barriers. In other cases, it even can mobilize people to overcome significant individual or social vulnerabilities (e. g. getting rid of alcoholic addiction). Yet, the negative importance of the narrative looks to be much greater as it provokes aggression against liberals, minorities, and other actors labeled as contributing to the implementation of the enemy's sinister and disgusting purposes. Though accusing opponents of being involved in DP's implementation still rarely results in violence or repressions, the current Russian political situation, which is characterized by increasing enmity towards non-conformist political and other minorities, unfortunately creates favorable ground for transforming verbal aggression into more dangerous actions.