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Cultural-Civilisational Dimensions of Public Consciousness Militarisation: A Study of Comments on Russian Pro-Government Telegram Channels

In the digital age, media outlets have expanded their presence onto social platforms and messaging apps while continuing to play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and legitimising specific behaviours (Nielsen & Ganter 2022: 6). A prominent phenomenon in recent years, particularly amidst the escalating Russian-Ukrainian conflict, has been the use of digital platforms, such as Telegram, by pro-government Russian media outlets. Owing to its anonymity, speed, and the absence of strict moderation, Telegram fosters an environment conducive to manipulating public consciousness and disseminating ideologically charged content. These characteristics make pro-government Telegram channels a compelling object of study.

One of the most widespread phenomena, particularly observed after the onset of the Russian-Ukrainian full-scale war, has been the militarisation of public consciousness, through which the necessity of war is justified, and the normalisation of violence and cruelty occurs. This study seeks to explore the manifestation of this tactic within the Russian pro-government media landscape, focusing on its implementation in key narratives and the linguistic markers that signify their use. For this analysis, four prominent pro-government Telegram channels were selected: "Russia Today" and "Tsar'grad" are established as official media outlets, while "Ran'she vsekh. Nu pochti" and

"Operatsiya Z: Voyenkory Russkoy Vesny" operate as independent channels. These outlets frequently employ various propagandistic tactics aimed at discrediting opposition groups, Western countries, and particularly Ukraine, amidst the intensifying armed conflict.

Within the framework of this study, the research material was not the news texts and publications themselves but rather the comments on these posts, regarded as responses to propagandistic rhetoric and imposed narratives. Moreover, since the militarisation of public consciousness through media has been extensively explored in the fields of sociology, political science, and media communication, this study aims to analyse this tactic and its verbal expression through a cultural-civilisational lens (Leszczak & Stefański 2024), identifying their alignment with characteristics such as turanism, tribalism, etatism, and others.

The study examines the period from February 2022, marking the onset of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian conflict, through June 2024. Over 1,500 comments were collected and analysed during this period, reflecting narratives related to the justification of war and the normalisation of violence and cruelty during wartime, sourced from the mentioned pro-government Telegram channels. Given the constraints of this article, only a selected sample of the most representative cases will be presented. The research employs the cultural-civilisational approach as a theoretical framework and critical discourse analysis to examine the lexicon and narratives used in selected Telegram channels. Using quantitative and qualitative approaches, content analysis is applied to identify key themes and post types containing dehumanisation and the justification of violence.

Russian Pro-Government Telegram Channels

Telegram is a cloud-based instant messaging service that facilitates the exchange of text and voice messages, multimedia content, and files alongside providing features such as channels for broadcasting information to unlimited audiences (Thomas & Bhat 2022: 289). Launched in 2013 by Pavel and Nikolai Durov, Telegram has experienced substantial growth in popularity due to its focus on speed and security. The platform reported over 700 million monthly active users, with particularly high adoption rates in countries subject to significant political censorship and restrictions on freedom of speech (How Many Users Does Telegram Have 2024). For these reasons, Telegram has gained significant popularity as an alternative medium with the increasing state control over media in Russia and the blocking of propagandistic channels on META platforms, such as YouTube (Vanetik et al. 2023: 1162).

Telegram's unique features, such as encryption, anonymity, and minimal regulation, have made it an effective tool for rapidly and widely disseminating information (Thomas & Bhat 2022: 297). While these features, on the one hand, enable some opposition media or independent channels to operate outside state influence and broadcast alternative viewpoints, they also play a significant role for authorities and propagandists. These qualities facilitate the dissemination of state-aligned rhetoric and enable the spread of false information, fake news, and manipulative narratives targeting public consciousness (Olzacka 2017: 67).

This shift is directly linked to the increased use of Telegram by pro-government Russian media alongside traditional platforms such as television and news websites. This trend intensified with the onset of the full-scale war, during which channels covering current events in a less formal tone, offering open access to comments yet maintaining state-aligned rhetoric, gained particular popularity. Notable examples of influential pro-government Telegram channels include "Russia Today" and "Tsar'grad," which serve as official state media outlets disseminating narratives aligned with Russian government interests, while "Ran'she vsekh. Nu pochti" and "Operatsiya Z: Voyenkory Russkoy Vesny," presenting themselves as independent entities, frequently echo official rhetoric. Most of these channels have over a million subscribers, except for "Tsar'grad," which has over 300,000 followers. Nevertheless, it occupies a critical position as it frames pro-government and propagandistic discourse through the lens of Orthodox Christianity and traditional values, frameworks that, at least in theory, might be perceived as countervailing forces to such narratives.

In addition to mirroring official government rhetoric, these channels foster "echo chambers" by creating insulated spaces where specific narratives are continuously reinforced and amplified without meaningful challenge or critique (Löblich & Venema 2021: 117). The rapid dissemination of disinformation and state-approved narratives within these echo chambers allows for the normalisation of ideologically charged content. It significantly enhances the government's ability to influence public opinion (Diaz Ruiz & Nilsson 2023: 18). The content typically emphasises themes central to the state's strategic objectives, such as the defence of national sovereignty, resistance to perceived Western aggression, and the vilification of adversaries, particularly Ukraine. Thus, Russian propagandists are among those who most effectively employ the tactic of militarising public consciousness through these Telegram channels, leveraging them to promote a cult of war, justify military actions, normalise human casualties, and dehumanise the opponent.

The comments analysed in this study provide critical insight into the audience's response to these propagandistic narratives. Comments reflect the acceptance or rejection of specific themes and demonstrate how users

internalise and adapt these narratives, contributing to their further dissemination. Moreover, comments often function as extensions of the "echo chambers" created by pro-government channels, reinforcing state-approved narratives through collective engagement.

Before delving into examining this tactic and its narratives, it is necessary to outline the cultural-civilisational approach employed in this study, which serves as a framework for understanding the emergence of violent narratives and the strategic use of militarisation.

The Cultural-Civilisational Approach

To begin with, it is essential to elucidate the fundamental principles of the cultural-civilisational approach and the defining characteristics of cultural--civilisational systems. As articulated by Oleg Leszczak and Ryszard Stefański, the cultural-civilisational system of societal organisation, grounded in Kantian philosophy, represents the most comprehensive framework for understanding the existence of a community. Within this framework, the value ideals and behavioural maxims that demarcate such systems are referred to as cultural-civilisational values and principles. Civilisations are not confined to specific geographical or temporal contexts but, instead, characterised by attributes such as collective versus individualistic value orientations, real versus ideological needs, and dynamic versus static modes of societal functioning (Leszczak & Stefański 2022).

The formation of a cultural-civilisational identity is influenced unevenly by its constituent features. According to Leszczak and Stefański, these features can be categorised into five hierarchical elements: dominant, subdominant, subordinate of the first and second degrees, and marginalia (Leszczak & Stefański 2022). Researchers identify eight key models (turanism, tribalism, corporatism, etatism, ideocracy, theocracy, consumerism, and the civic model) while emphasising that the mentality of each historical community represents a heterogeneous mix of these types (Leszczak & Stefański 2024: 92). Moreover, these types can be systematised according to several criteria: realism vs. virtualism, rationality vs. emotionality, and collectivism vs. individualism (Leszczak 2014: 11).

Applying this framework to cultural-civilisational analysis, Russia is conceptualised as a centralised, ideologically driven, expansionist, and mercantile state characterised by a high degree of systemic cybernetism. Within the Russian ethnic worldview, the dominant characteristic is identified as "expansionist turanism," while subdominant traits include tribalism, ideocracy, and etatism (Leszczak & Stefański 2022).

A brief characterisation of the mentioned values follows. The dominant axiological model, turanism, prioritises traits such as "autocracy, paternalism, trust in the leader as a father figure, distrust of collective governance, dynamism, a militaristic-masculine structure of social life, militarism, voluntarism, the sacralisation of duty and male camaraderie, intolerance of betrayal and traitors, the cult of physical strength, aggressiveness, extremism, and the glorification of the army" (Leszczak & Stefański 2024: 107). The primary path of development for this type is expansionism and militarism, while the absence of wars and territorial conquests leads to the self-destruction of such a community. Narratives of violence and cruelty are effectively justified by the dominance of turanist traits within the Russian sociocultural space, whether reflected in the media, official rhetoric, or public opinion.

Tribalism, another significant axiological model of socialisation, belongs to the naturalistic types primarily rooted in vital values (Leszczak 2014: 57). If turanism is characterised by dynamism and expansionism, tribalism, in contrast, is marked by stasis and a deep territorial attachment. Turanism represents movement, willpower, and emotions, while tribalism is associated with survival, feelings, and intuition. Both types share dominance of informal and non-institutional forms of behaviour, utilitarianism, and a lack of respect for laws or trust in formal problem-solving approaches (Leszczak 2014: 58–59). Tribalists uphold values such as "tribal collectivism (a natural local community), disregard for individualism, vitalism, traditionalism, distrust or rejection of institutional and legal solutions, ochlocracy and moral anarchism, irrationalism, panpsychism, naturalistic anthropology, and anthropomorphisation of the world ('the human factor'), along with a preference for familiarity and comfort (practicality of life)" (Leszczak & Stefański 2024: 126). Although tribalist values do not explicitly include militaristic elements, the "us versus them" dichotomy fosters animosity and may justify the perceived necessity of war.

The next subdominant features are servile etatism and passive protectionist and xenophobic ideocracy. These characteristics are linked to institutional systems: etatism is rooted in the all-encompassing power of the state, while ideocracy is based on a metaphysical worldview and state ideology's informational dominance over citizens' minds (Leszczak & Stefański 2022). Within the scope of this study, we will focus on etatism, which, while not manifesting in its pure form, appears in conjunction with turanism. Etatism is represented through values such as a "strong state with a significant role for security services, an extensive bureaucracy (division of power), the total penetration of the state into citizens' lives (both social and private), the dominance of state property over private property, an imperial state, and pathos" (Leszczak & Stefański 2024: 173). The idea of the imperial state and imperialism serves as an ideologically justified obligation to strengthen and territorially expand the Russian state. In the

context of narratives surrounding the militarisation of society, faith in the correctness of governmental decisions and loyalty to the state are combined with ideocratic attitudes, wherein military events and personal losses are perceived as justified in the name of higher, state-driven goals.

Corporatism, ideocracy, theocracy, consumerism, and civic values fall beyond the scope of this research, as they are only marginally represented in the linguistic examples analysed.

Militarisation of Public Consciousness in Russian Pro-Government Telegram Channels amid the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict

As previously mentioned, in the context of the escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the militarisation of public consciousness has emerged as one of the key tactics within the media landscape, particularly evident in pro-government Telegram channels. However, this trend cannot be attributed solely to the full-scale war or the media environment. Fundamentally, it is rooted in Russia's militaristic state structure, characterised by the pervasive influence of military values and relations across all spheres of society (Mann 1987: 27). For instance, according to the latest data presented by the Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC) in 2020, Russia ranked sixth in the Global Militarization Index (Mutschler & Bales 2020).

Alfred Vagts (1959: 13–15) defines militarism as a concentration of customs, ideas, and interests connected to wars and armies that go beyond merely meeting military needs, relying on caste-based and cult-like systems rooted in authority and belief. Vagts (1959: 453) further introduces the concept of "civilian militarism," which denotes the unconditional acceptance of military values, principles, and relationships as dominant in society. In such systems, military considerations precede others, and heroism is primarily associated with military service and actions. The state's primary resources and interests are directed toward preparing for military endeavours.

This militaristic orientation is deeply reflected in the Russian national consciousness. Russian authorities and propagandists, continuing Soviet traditions, frequently invoke the narrative of Russia as a "besieged fortress," historically surrounded by enemies' intent on its destruction. This rhetoric elevates the defence of the homeland to a near-sacred cult. Historical data underscores this perspective: Russia has historically spent 57.8% to 62.7% of its time engaged in wars across different periods, averaging 43–46 years of military activity per century. These wars include defensive campaigns and expansionist endeavours (Davydov 2003: 484–485). The myth of external enemies

has remained a persistent tool in Russian propaganda, framing war as both a necessity and an inevitability.

From a cultural-civilisational perspective, repeated exposure to militarised rhetoric and imagery conditions audiences to view war as a natural and justifiable means of achieving national or ideological objectives. This phenomenon illustrates the convergence of turanism (the normalisation of war through cultural and ideological frameworks) with etatism (the centrality and dominance of the state) and, to a lesser extent, ideocracy (the primacy of ideology). It is important to clarify that from the perspective of narrative construction, this rhetoric appeals to the core trait in its recipients, primarily rooted in turanism. Russian military propaganda builds heavily on this trait to resonate with its audience. However, when considering the creators of such propaganda, turanism, while dominant, does not usually appear in its pure form.

Next, let us examine some of the narratives that have emerged as a result of active militarisation promoted by propaganda in selected Telegram channels, including those that normalise war and violence. The examples illustrating cultural and civilisational features are presented in their original form, preserving grammatical errors and omissions to maintain authenticity. Key linguistic markers are highlighted in bold, and each example includes the original text and its English translation.

One of the narratives rooted in the key features of turanism, vividly reflected in the examined media discourse, particularly after February 2022, is the notion that "sacrifices are inevitable." This aligns with a key turanistic trait – a "disregard for life, both of others and one's own, and a disregard for individuality" – which underpins the normalisation of such sacrifices in the context of conflict (Leszczak 2014: 38). While the aggressive perception of the military in this context seems evident, under the influence of the turanistic dominant, indifference or full acceptance of civilian casualties becomes equally apparent. This characteristic is particularly striking in the rhetoric and narratives disseminated through Russian pro-government Telegram channels.

Symptomatic expressions of this attitude can be observed in public commentary, especially in response to massive missile strikes on Ukrainian cities that resulted in civilian casualties. In selected Telegram channels, comments often reflect a profound devaluation of human life. These remarks frequently glorify acts of aggression, dismiss civilian suffering, and perpetuate narratives that trivialise or justify violence, further embedding this cultural attitude into public consciousness:

ST (1) *сопутствующие **жертвы неизбежны***;
TT (1) *collateral **casualties are inevitable***;
ST (2) *Ну что поделать, **на войне так бывает***;

TT (2) *What can you do, **that's how it is in war***;

ST (3) *это война чего вы хотели; **война – это смерть, чему удивляться***;

TT (3) *This is war, what did you expect? **War means death, what's there to be surprised about***?;

ST (4) *и что что мирные, **война идет, а как они хотели***;

TT (4) *So what if they're civilians? **There's a war going on, what did they expect***?;

ST (5) *Всегда так было, **война есть война. Главное, чтобы наши вернулись живыми***;

TT (5) *It's always been this way, **war is war. The main thing is for our guys to return alive***;

ST (6) ***На войне как на войне, иначе не бывает***;

TT (6) ***In war, it's like in war – there's no other way***.

The examples illustrate a distinct narrative focused on the normalisation of war and the inevitable casualties. Statements such as "casualties are inevitable," "this is war, what did they expect?," and "in war, it's like in war – there's no other way" underscore the deterministic nature of wartime violence, portraying it as a natural and immutable condition, which is a direct reference to turanism.

The inevitability of casualties is further reinforced through phrases like "so what if they're civilians? There's a war going on, what did they expect?" and "always been this way, war is war." These examples reflect an attempt to shift focus from the human suffering caused by war to a generalised and resigned acceptance of its consequences. Similarly, statements such as "war means death, what's there to be surprised about?" and "on war, that's how it happens" normalise the brutality of conflict by portraying it as an unremarkable aspect of wartime.

The emergence of such comments in public discourse confirms that this narrative minimises moral responsibility and desensitises the audience to the horrors of war. It fosters the creation of an echo chamber that frames the suffering of civilians as inevitable, thereby discouraging critical reflection or resistance. The emphasis on statements like "the main thing is for our guys to return alive" (which reflects not only turanist but, to an even greater extent, tribalistic traits) redirects empathy and moral considerations exclusively toward one side. This further reinforces the notion that military losses are a necessary and justified price for achieving broader objectives.

Another consequence of the turano-tribalistic character is the reduction of empathy toward the opponent (Wahlstrom 1992: 177), creating a stark "us-them" dichotomy in which "we" are to be pitied, but "they" are not (Yuval-Davis 2010: 276). This dynamic normalises discriminatory practices and rationalises violence as a necessary response. The reduction in empathy is closely tied to dehumanisation, which legitimises cruelty by framing

violent actions not merely as "inevitable" countermeasures to a perceived threat but as deliberate means of reinforcing aggressive behaviour while diminishing accountability.

Dehumanisation, as a socio-psychological phenomenon, involves stripping certain groups or individuals of human qualities (Wincław 2016), framing them as "other," "undeserving," or "hostile." Such framing not only legitimises violence against the targeted group but also solidifies public support for aggressive actions, thereby escalating hostility further. From a cultural-civilisational perspective, this process aligns with tribalistic traits, which emphasise "tribal collectivism (natural local communities), disrespect for individualism, vitalism, traditionalism, and distrust or rejection of institutional and legal solutions" (Leszczak & Stefański 2024: 126). From a cultural-civilisational perspective, the complete dehumanisation of the Ukrainian population and the intense desire for revenge – frequently expressed in extreme and radical forms – are manifestations of pure turanism.

This phenomenon reflects a broader ideological framework that not only justifies but also amplifies aggression, consolidating it as an accepted and even encouraged norm within the propagandistic narrative:

ST (7) *не о чем жалеть; надо бить первыми*;
TT (7) *There's nothing to regret; we need to strike first*;
ST (8) *Надо ударить и полностью разрушить здание верховной рады в Киеве, это самый центр, будут ездить и смотреть на развалины*;
TT (8) *We need to hit and completely destroy the Verkhovna Rada building in Kyiv – it's the very centre, and people will come just to see the ruins*;
ST (9) *Тут массированная атака нужна с космоса*;
TT (9) *What we need here is a massive attack from space*;
ST (10) *Разнесите Тернополь, Львов и Луцк в труху; всех этих тварей надо сравнять с землей*;
TT (10) *Turn Ternopil, Lviv, and Lutsk into dust; all these creatures need to be levelled to the ground*.

These comments reflect the normalisation of aggression through dehumanising language, which legitimises cruelty by presenting it as a rational and necessary response to the opposing side (Harel et al. 2020). The emergence of such comments can be linked to manipulative propaganda techniques, including the framing of the enemy as an existential threat, the use of emotionally charged rhetoric, and the cultivation of an "us versus them" mentality (Gaufman 2017: 19). By presenting the opposing side as subhuman or inherently evil, propagandistic discourse reduces cognitive dissonance surrounding the justification of extreme violence. That, in turn, fosters an environment

in which radicalised language and violent desires are not only normalised but also encouraged as a legitimate form of expression.

However, potential casualties among the domestic population and the spillover of military actions onto Russian territory are perceived negatively. In such cases, turanism is gives way to tribalism, which prioritises attachment to one's own land and local community over broader militaristic ideals.

ST (11) *если не мы ударим, то завтра у нас будет также*;
TT (11) *If we don't strike first, tomorrow it will be the same for us*;
ST (12) *Почему мы их не бомбим? Наше население погибает, а этих мы жалеем*?;
TT (12) *Why aren't we bombing them? Our people are dying, and we're sparing those?*;
ST (13) *Вычислить от куда пускали и отутюжить местность*;
TT (13) *Find out where the launches came from and flatten the area*.

This selective framing, combined with fearmongering and portraying immediate threats, rationalises pre-emptive or retaliatory violence as essential for survival. The role of propaganda in shaping such responses is evident in its capacity to stoke fear, amplify a sense of injustice, and redirect empathy exclusively toward the in-group. By doing so, these channels cultivate a tribalistic mindset that justifies aggressive actions as necessary protective measures, reinforcing loyalty to the in-group while desensitising audiences to the moral and ethical implications of violence against the out-group.

A distinctly turanistic element in the comments is the invocation of an alleged sense of mercy attributed to Russian authorities, which is framed as a hindrance to the effectiveness of military actions. This narrative constructs a dichotomy between the ruthlessness expected in wartime and the perceived "kindness" of the Russian leadership, suggesting that the latter impedes swift and decisive action against the enemy:

ST (14) *На войне, ребят, другие законы. На войне нет места жалости*;
TT (14) *In war, guys, the rules are different. There's no place for mercy in war*.

Another example reads:

ST (15) *Все знают что надо уничтожить быстро этот режим! Но у власти нашей связаны руки и ноги добротой и жалостью к мирным жителям*;
TT (15) *Everyone knows that this regime needs to be destroyed quickly! But our leadership's hands are tied by their kindness and mercy toward civilians.*

These comments align with the turanistic narrative by glorifying aggression and portraying leniency as a deviation from the idealised, uncompromising nature of warfare. Attributing "kindness" and "mercy" to leadership serves a dual function: it criticises their perceived inefficacy while reinforcing the expectations that war should be waged with absolute ruthlessness. By framing the supposed "mercy" of Russian authorities as a limiting factor, this narrative shifts the blame for military failures from structural or strategic shortcomings and onto a constructed moral constraint, further legitimising calls for unrestrained violence.

A further critical aspect of dehumanisation is the construction of the "enemy image," wherein the dehumanised group is depicted as a threat or the root cause of societal problems (Bahador 2012: 196). Psychologically, reproducing such an image becomes necessary for modern warfare (Rieber & Kelly 1991: 4). The construction of the enemy image in propagandist media is accomplished through various rhetorical and discursive techniques.

One of the techniques of dehumanisation evident in the corpus of examples involves portraying a group as inherently inferior, dangerous, or incapable of change based on biological or cultural characteristics. This framing assigns immutable negative traits to the entire population, stripping individuals of their humanity and thereby legitimising violence as a form of collective punishment:

ST (16) ***Нацистское кровожадное бешеное зверьё***;
TT (16) ***Nazi bloodthirsty rabid beasts***;
ST (17) ***Хохломрази,****когда ж вас всех приберет наверх!!!*;
TT (17) ***Khokhol hates,*** *when will you all finally be taken to the afterlife?*;
ST (18) ***отколибровать и откинжалить мразь укрорейхскую***;
TT (18) *Time to **otkalibrovat'** and **otkinzhalit'** that **Ukro-Reich hates***;
ST (19) ***хохлов жалеть, себя не уважать***;
TT (19) ***Pitying Khokhols means not respecting yourself***;
ST (20) ***Додавить укрорейх необходимо***;
TT (20) ***The Ukro-Reich must be crushed***;
ST (21) *Сегодня будут обильные **ОСАДКИ и ГРАД** в хохляндии*;
TT (21) *There will be heavy **PRECIPITATION** and **HAIL** in **Khokhland*** *today*;
ST (22) *Посмотрим, как завоете, когда **хохляндию разъебём!***;
TT (22) *Let's see how you wail when we **blow Khokhland to pieces!***;
ST (23) ***Капут хохлам!***;
TT (23) ***Kaput to the Khokhols!***.

In the majority of comments, there is a clear instance of ethnic identity stigmatisation through the use of derogatory ethnonyms (Mullen & Leader 2005: 199). For instance, the ethnonym Ukrainians is replaced with pejorative and

dysphemic terms such as *Khokhols* or *Khokhlomrazi*, which serve to devalue and dehumanise the targeted group. The terms *Ukrofascists*, *Ukrainian Nazis*, *Naziki*, *khokhlomrazi* (scum Ukrainians), and *Ukrorreich* have emerged under the influence of state propaganda during the Russian-Ukrainian war, which is framed in pro-government media as a fight against fascism. This propagandistic framing has infiltrated the broader media sphere, embedding these terms into public discourse. Additionally, predicative neologisms such as *otkalibrovat'* (to calibrate, derived from the Kalibr missile system) and *otkinzhalit'* (to strike, derived from the Kinzhal missile system) have appeared, further reflecting the militarisation of language. These terms are frequently accompanied by processual markers of a turanistic nature, such as *ne zhalet'* (to show no mercy), *razbombit'* (to bomb thoroughly), *dodavit'* (to press until completion), *unichtozhat'* (to destroy), *ubivat'* (to kill), and *dobivat'* (to finish off).

Another important aspect of dehumanisation is the narrative portraying children from the target group as an inherent threat to future generations, depicting them as inevitable future enemies:

> ST (24) *и это украинские дети, а **завтра они опять на нас готовить нападение будут***;
> TT (24) *And these are Ukrainian children, but **tomorrow they'll be preparing another attack on us***;
> ST (25) *ЭТО **ВРАЖЕСКИЕ ДЕТИ,** КОТОРЫЕ **ПОДРАСТУТ И ПОЙДУТ УБИВАТЬ***;
> TT (25) *THESE ARE **ENEMY CHILDREN** WHO **WILL GROW UP AND START KILLING***.

This rhetoric positions pre-emptive violence as a necessary act of self-defence, portraying harm against children as morally justified to prevent greater harm in the future, which reflects not merely turanism but a fusion of turanism with tribalism. This logic shifts violence from being an ethical quandary to a perceived obligation and is further reinforced by texts saturated with highly derogatory terms:

> ST (26) *Они **вырастут уродами**, как их родители. В них уже **нацистское семя и нихера вы с этим не сделаете***;
> TT (26) *They'll **grow up to be freaks**, just like their parents. The **Nazi seed** is already in them, and **there's nothing you can do about it***;
> ST (27) *Я не питаю иллюзий, ведь **из них вырастут такие же нацистки мрази***;
> TT (27) *I have no illusions – they will **grow up to be the same Nazi hates***.

Under the subtle influence of theocratic and ideocratic frameworks, texts rationalising violence occasionally emerge, presenting it as a divinely or historically mandated duty:

> ST (28) **Когда Бог уничтожал Содом и Гоморру, он не пощадил детей.** *Потому что из них выросли бы новые содомиты.* **Так что дети детям рознь**;
>
> TT (28) **When God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, He did not spare the children,** *because they would have grown up to be new sodomites.* **So, not all children are equal**;
>
> ST (29) *если генетический пул, периодически (каждые 2–3 поколенья) производит «нациков», например немцы,* **то лучше и правильно вырезать весь род, по законам божественным, законам ветхого завета**;
>
> TT (29) *If a genetic pool periodically (every 2–3 generations) produces Nazis, like the Germans,* **then it is better and proper to wipe out the entire bloodline, according to divine laws, the laws of the Old Testament.**

This framing absolves perpetrators of moral responsibility by aligning their actions with a higher purpose, portraying violence not as a choice, but as an obligation imposed by transcendent or historical imperatives.

Conclusion

This analysis underscores the significant role of Russian pro-government Telegram channels in shaping public consciousness through narratives that normalise war and justify violence. These channels, functioning as echo chambers, as evidenced by the corpus of examples drawn from comments on posts within selected Telegram channels, amplify propaganda by fostering an environment conducive to its proliferation.

They employ cultural-civilisational frameworks, particularly turanistic and tribalistic traits, to cultivate public acceptance of militarisation and dehumanisation. In analysing comments or audience reactions, clear markers of turanism are frequently observed, underscoring its pervasive influence in shaping public perception and justifying militaristic values. This approach not only numbs individuals to the realities of violence but also fosters a shared ideology centred on militaristic principles such as loyalty, discipline, and self-sacrifice. Narratives such as the inevitability of sacrifices and the glorification of aggression further desensitise audiences to human suffering by portraying violence as an intrinsic and unavoidable aspect of statehood. The "us-them" dichotomy, deeply rooted in tribalistic values, exacerbates this dynamic by fostering empathy exclusively toward one's own group while legitimising hostility and discriminatory practices against the perceived "other."

As a result, the public becomes increasingly tolerant of prolonged conflict and its attendant societal costs, with propaganda reinforcing public support for aggressive state policies and emphasising the cultural foundations that sustain such narratives.

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse the narratives of Russian pro-government Telegram channels that normalise war and justify violence, focusing on their cultural-civilisational foundations and impact on public consciousness. The material consists of user comments collected from open discussions on these channels, which serve as echo chambers. The study's methodological framework includes critical discourse analysis to identify key narratives and lexical markers, along with a cultural-civilisational approach to interpret the militaristic and dehumanising elements of the discourse.

Keywords: Telegram channels, propaganda, militarisation, dehumanisation, Russian-Ukrainian conflict

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