

Russian Military Studying Putin's History of Ukraine



Flags of Russia and Ukraine.

Source: <https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/en/view-image.php?image=280507&picture=flag-of-russia-and-ukraine>
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By Ray Finch
OE Watch Commentary

In mid-July, President Putin published a long historical article on the Kremlin website, where he spelled out his view toward Russian-Ukrainian relations. As the first excerpt from the official news agency TASS points out, Putin again asserted “that Russians and Ukrainians are one people, a single whole.” He went on to blame “Western authors” for the current deterioration of Russian-Ukrainian relations, claiming that “Ukraine is being dragged into a dangerous geopolitical

game, the goal of which is to turn Ukraine into a barrier between Europe and Russia, into a bridgehead against Russia.”

The second brief excerpt comes from the mostly independent source Nezavisimaya Gazeta and describes how Putin's historical article will become mandatory reading for those serving in the Russian military. The author points out that the “system of military-political work (MPW) has been operating for several years,” and similar to its Soviet predecessor, “the Kremlin and the Ministry of Defense believe that this strengthens the morale of the army, and therefore serves the cause of defending the Fatherland from enemies.” He posits that “it is not yet clear how much MPW training time will be spent studying Putin's article, but apparently at least three training hours.”

“I said that Russians and Ukrainians are one people, a single whole.”

The author goes on to explain that according to the “order of the Minister of Defense No. 95 (signed on February 22, 2019), knowledge on all topics studied by the MPW is checked during control checks ‘in the form of a credit with an assessment or testing.’” He stresses that “this provision is especially important for officers, warrant officers and contract soldiers, for whom the amount of their salary is directly related to the results of military labor.” Besides the possible monetary benefit, this training, according to the author, “forms in servicemen the political knowledge and ideological attitudes necessary for the leadership of the state.” Studying Putin's latest treatise could also prove valuable in the event of a wider conflict with Ukraine.

Source: “Статья Владимира Путина, ‘Об историческом единстве русских и украинцев’ (Vladimir Putin, ‘On the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians’),” TASS (official news agency), 12 July 2021. <https://tass.ru/politika/11884999>

Recently, answering a question about Russian-Ukrainian relations during the Direct Line, I said that Russians and Ukrainians are one people, a single whole. These words are not a tribute to some conjuncture, current political circumstances. I have spoken about this more than once, this is my conviction. Therefore, I consider it necessary to state my position in detail, to share my assessments of the current situation.

Let me emphasize right away that I perceive the wall that has emerged in recent years between Russia and Ukraine, between parts of, in fact, one historical and spiritual space, as a great common misfortune, as a tragedy. These are, first of all, the consequences of our own mistakes made in different periods. But also the result of the purposeful work of those forces that have always sought to undermine our unity. The formula that is used is known from time immemorial: divide and conquer....

Step by step, Ukraine was being dragged into a dangerous geopolitical game, the goal of which is to turn Ukraine into a barrier between Europe and Russia, into a bridgehead against Russia.

...Western authors of the “anti-Russia” project set up the Ukrainian political system in such a way that presidents, deputies, ministers change, but there is a constant orientation towards separation with Russia, towards enmity with it.

...I am convinced that the true sovereignty of Ukraine is possible precisely in partnership with Russia.

Continued: Russian Military Studying Putin's History of Ukraine

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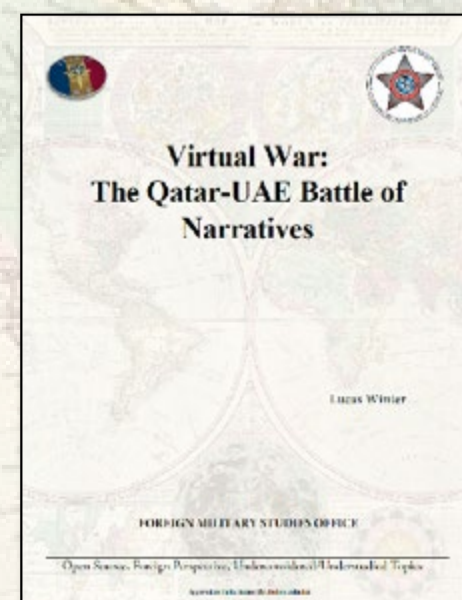
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VIRTUAL WAR: THE QATAR-UAE BATTLE OF NARRATIVES

Lucas Winter

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For much of the past decade, Qatar and the UAE have been engaged in a battle of narratives. Their ongoing dispute dates to 2011 and is rooted in foreign policy and ideological disagreements. Following a hack of the Qatari News Agency in 2017, the nature of Qatari-Emirati competition shifted from being primarily the purview of government officials, spokespeople, journalists, analysts and authors, to one where coders, influencers, trolls and cybersecurity experts played a vital role. Since then, both countries have worked to increase their capabilities in the cyber and informational domains. Their relationship in these domains has evolved into one of strategic competition. This paper looks at how these dynamics may affect the regional operational environment, with a particular focus on the cyber and informational domains.



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