

## **Abstract**

This bachelor's thesis analyses the legitimization strategies of the authoritarian regime in Belarus during the period 1994–2020. The typology of legitimization strategies by Christian von Soest and Julia Grauvogel serves as the theoretical framework of the thesis. This thesis not only identifies which strategies were used by the Lukashenko regime but above all analyses how they manifested themselves. This allows the topic to be examined comprehensively and the evolution of these strategies to be taken into account. Attention is first of all paid to the persona of Alexander Lukashenko and his role as “batka” (i.e. father in Belarusian), the protector of the collective memory of veterans, the guarantor of the country's “economic stability”, and the defender of Belarusian sovereignty. The importance of the formal existence of elections in Lukashenko's rhetoric is also addressed. The thesis examines the formation of Belarusian state ideology, which is based on the official understanding of “Belarusianness”, and the ideologization of the so-called Great Patriotic War. Last but not least, the thesis examines Lukashenko's social contract as well as how the regime refers to its role on the international stage and how it uses the rhetoric of external threats. The main finding of the thesis is that the Lukashenko regime employs a combination of all types of legitimization strategies. The thesis concludes with a summary of the findings and a discussion of the evolution of Lukashenko's legitimization strategies during the period under review.