

Abstract

In my thesis, I focus on the phenomenon of Soft Belarusization, which I contextualize within the historical politics of the state led by authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko. The focal point of the work is the year 2014 when following the Russian annexation of Crimea there was an increase in national motifs in the public sphere, along with the support for Belarusian culture and language. I approach the issue by analyzing primary sources – Russian disinformation websites, reactions of Belarusian politicians and ideologists, which I interpret in connection with the specific type of Belarusian regime, adaptive authoritarianism. The key contribution of this thesis comes from structured interviews with representatives of the Belarusian opposition, who operate both in exile and directly in Belarus, enriching the subject matter with direct, authentic experiences of the individuals involved. The aim of the whole thesis is to unravel the complex relationships between historical politics and manifestations of Soft Belarusization, describe its impact on historical politics and deepen awareness of these phenomena from the perspective of the Belarusian opposition.