

Roman Protasevich

foiaresearch.net/person/roman-protasevich

By Anonymous on Mon, 08/17/2020 - 21:40

Roman Protasevich is one of the key regime change operatives in the Belarusian color revolution of 2020. His name appeared in the context of a Telegram channel called Nexta that overnight was made the voice of the Belarusian opposition.

According to a Ukrainian article sympathizing with Protasevich's activities¹:

Back in 2012, he was detained as an administrator of opposition groups on social networks.

Protasevich was then a member of the Young Front, a center-right pro-European organization that organized street activities against Lukashenko. And also fought for the expansion of the use of the Belarusian language (to the detriment, of course, of Russian).

He was a journalist for the Polish-Lithuanian-funded Euroradio, as well as Radio Liberty.

Image



Logo of the Young Front

Image Source

<https://en.wikipedia.org...>

The nationalist, anti-communist and anti-Lukashenko "Young Front" (Малады Фронт, Malady Front), founded in 1997, emerged out of the intensified 1996-1997 protests in Belarus. It is officially registered in the Czech Republic. The Youth Front is known for its provocative political agitation against Lukashenko, and encourages its members to do

military training. For example, in 2015 a Youth Front sports and patriotic club called "Warrior" was inaugurated,² offering training sessions with airsoft guns, according to a Radio Liberty report (Belarusian: Radio Svaboda).³

Protasevich was part of the Maidan protests in Kiev 2013/2014, as a picture on Facebook shows, where, clad in a Belarusian People's State flag, he is taking part in the destruction of a Lenin statue.

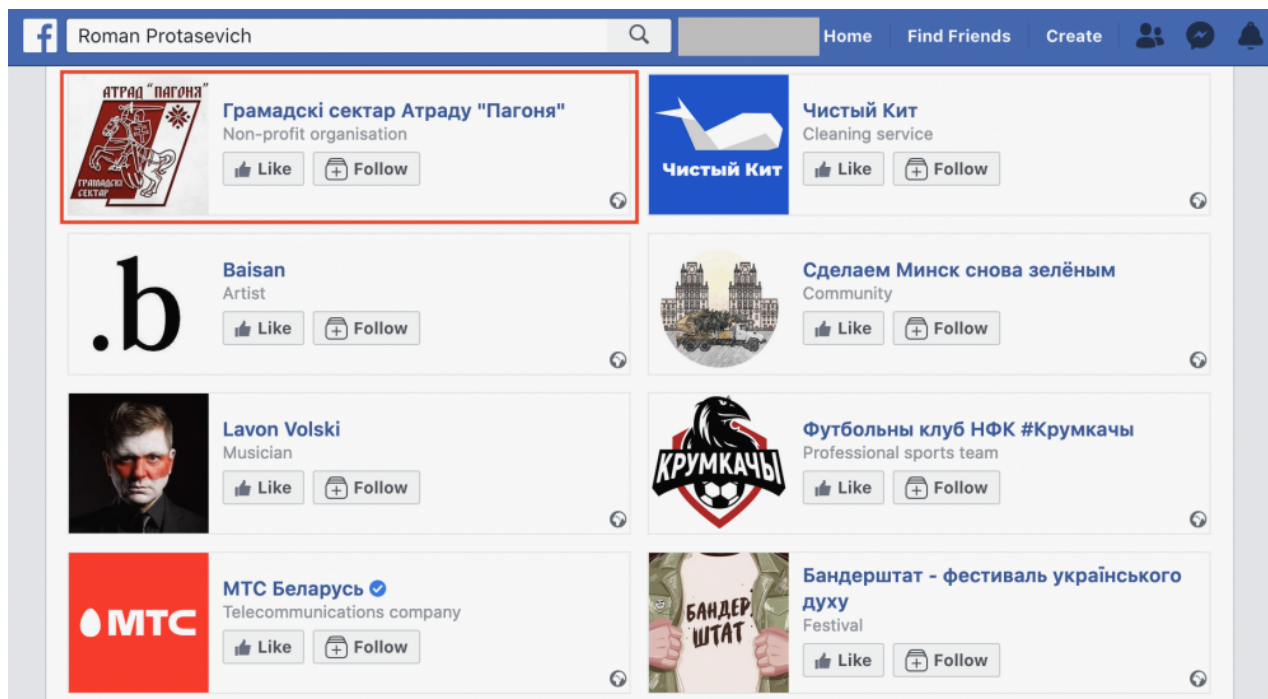


Picture of Roman Protasevich during the Maidan protests 2013/2014, subtitled "Found this old photo. Maidan, winter, head of Lenin."

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/16435297690...>

Protasevich has a neo-Nazi and anti-communist background. He is a sympathizer of the Pahonia Detachment⁴, a Belarusian militia that has fought alongside the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion in Ukraine's post-Maidan civil war.⁵



Roman Protasevich liked the Pahonia Detachment on Facebook.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/likes>



Roman Protasevich as “Belarusian knight.”

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/15621858271...>

The group describes itself as a “non-governmental organization that helps Belarusian volunteers in Ukraine,” on Twitter.⁶



Facebook banner of the Pahonia Detachment.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/belpahonia/photos/a.1451...>



Armed members of the Pahonia Detachment. The image subtitle says: "Retro photo, 2015."

Image Source



Picture posted by the Pahonia Detachment on April 4, 2018, on Facebook, subtitled: "On the way to the front."

Image Source



Members of the Pahonia Detachment. Note the Odinist tattoos on neck and face.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/belpahonia/photos/a.1453...>

2017

In February and March 2017, Belarus was swept by a series of demonstrations throughout the country, which Protasevich eagerly "documented," always just a step away from the neo-Nazi black block.

On March 4 he took part at the installment of a temporary nationalist memorial, going along with a symbolic book burning.



Picture by Roman Protasevich showing Zmitser Dashkevich holding a speech in front of the temporary nationalist memorial.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=122245182...>



Book burning in front of the temporary nationalist memorial.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=122245527...>



Picture by Roman Protasevich showing the temporary nationalist memorial.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=122245540...>

One day later, he appeared amidst the black block of a demonstration in Brest, Belarus.



Roman Protasevich among the Black Block of a demonstration in Brest, Belarus, on March 5, 2017.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=122176685...>



Roman Protasevich among Black Block during the Brest demonstration.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=122176793...>

On March 10, 2017, Protasevich took part in a demonstration, where again he was right in the middle of the neo-Nazi black block. He posted pictures that show a man wearing a balaklava sporting the Coat of Arms of the Belarusian People's Republic (1918-1919), as well as a Thor Steinar jacket, a brand favored by neo-Nazis.



Picture by Roman Protasevich from a neo-Nazi rally in March 2017. Note the Thor Steinar jacket, a brand favored by neo-Nazis.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1228342000552527&set=a.318905844829485&...>

On March 28, 2017, the Committee to Protect Journalists reported that Protasevich was detained on charges of hoolianism for 10 days shortly before.^{[7](#)}

According to his Facebook page, Protasevich moved to Prague, Czech Republic, on December 1, 2017.^{[8](#)}

2018

On April 12, 2018, he arrived in Warsaw, Poland.^{[9](#)} On April 20, 2018, he flew via Brussels to Washington.^{[10](#)} On April 23, 2018, he posted a picture with the subtitle "The most important week in my life begins."^{[11](#)} The same day he posted a picture of himself inside the US State Department, stating "Never had so many important and interesting encounters in my life. Tired but very pleased."^{[12](#)} In DC he met with fellow regime change swamp creature, the Ukrainian-American Gleb Zhavoronkov.^{[13](#)}



Picture of Roman Protasevich inside the State Department on April 23, 2018.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/15950659105...>



Picture of Gleb Zhavoronkov by Roman Protasevich

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/15987257635...>

From Washington he flew via Brussels to Prague on May 7, 2018.¹⁴ On May 31, 2018, he continued his journey from Prague to Minsk, Belarus.¹⁵ From Minsk, he traveled on to Kyiv, Ukraine, on June 15, 2018.¹⁶

According to his Facebook page, he started working for the USAID-supported radio in Belarus Euroradio.fm on August 31, 2018.¹⁷



Entities supporting Euroradio.fm, the former employer of Nexta's Roman Protasevich, including USAID and the Polish Solidarnosc Foundation.

Image Source

<http://euroradio.fm>

2019

According to his Facebook page, Protasevich left his job with Euroradio on December 1, 2019.¹⁸

2020

In February 2020, Protasevich announced his new job as future editor of the Nexta Telegram network on the Polish-Belarusian channel Belsat: "In 10 minutes live on Belsat I will talk about the first media in Belarus of the 21st century as the future editor-in-chief of Nexta."¹⁹ He confirmed his new stint with a status message on Facebook, stating that he started working for Nexta in Warsaw, Poland, on March 19, 2020.¹⁷

If one is to believe the BBC, Nexta has started out as a anti-Lukashenko YouTube channel created by a Belarusian teenager, Stepan Putila, also known under the moniker Stepan Svetlov, in 2015.²⁰ According to Strana.ua: "In Belarus, the channel became famous for inside information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the republic. It did not disclose the sources of its information."¹ While in the course of the August protests in Belarus the independent Belarusian news landscape was practically shut down, only Nexta managed to continually publish reports from inside the country. As the BBC wrote, "the popular Telegram messaging app called Nexta ... has managed to bypass many of the restrictions." The answer why Nexta succeeded where others failed, may be that the hitherto practically unknown channel is not a local grassroots effort, but operates out of neighboring Poland, where both, Protasevich and Putila currently reside.

Protasevich's partner at Nexta, Stepan Putila, aka Svetlov, has "... worked for ... Belsat (his father also works there as a sports commentator), which is based in Warsaw and is funded by the Polish Foreign Ministry."¹ The channel's website says²¹:

Formally, the creation of the TV channel was the result of an agreement signed in 2007 between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland and Polish TV. The agreement provides for long-term cooperation and financing of the Belsat TV channel.

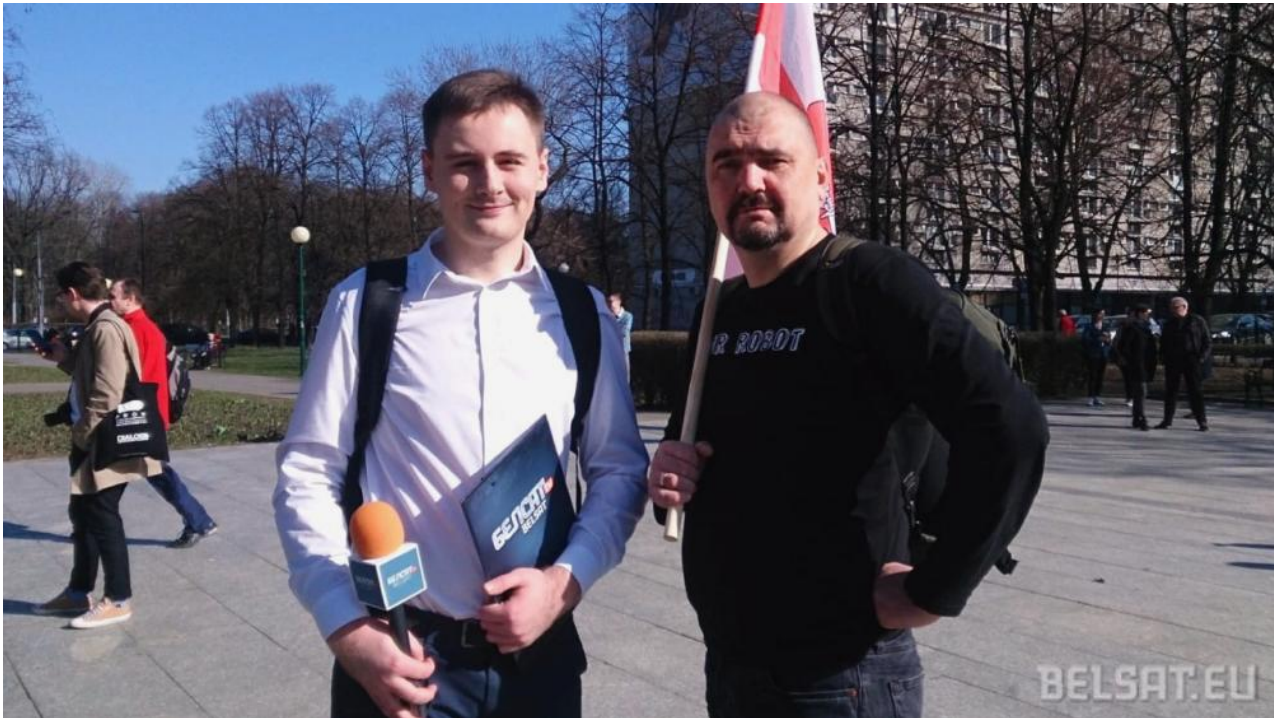
Belsat's motivations are more than shady. In 2015, an article that appeared on the channel encouraged people to join as volunteers on the side of Ukraine in the war with the "Novorussiya" states, including a contact email address and phone number.²² The station does regularly give a platform to Belarusian nationalists and neo-Nazis as well.



Facebook post by Ales Karnyienka showing Yanechak Yasav on Belsat. Notice the Odinist tattoos and Thor's hammer around his neck.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=102204354...>



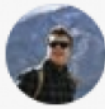
Stepan Putila of Nexta interviewing the Belarusian nationalist Ales Karniyenko for Belsat TV, who, like Putila, spurs on the Belarusian color revolution from Poland.

Image Source

<https://www.facebook.com/aleskarniyenka/posts/102...>

2021

Politico reported that on May 23, 2021, Protasevich had boarded a Ryanair flight from Athens, Greece, to Vilnius, Lithuania, but when the plane entered Belarusian airspace it was intercepted and ordered to land in Minsk, where Protasevich was arrested.²³ The article dubs Protasevich a journalist, not an extremist, as a Belarusian court had rightfully ruled in 2020 in regards to *Nexta* hirelings. No mention of what Protasevich may have actually done in Athens, or intended to do in Vilnius. His presence in Greece roughly coincided with a visit of the Western-backed regime change leader in exile, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, with the President of Greece, Katerina Sakellaropoulou,²⁴ and US Ambassador to Greece, Geoffrey Pyatt.²⁵ According to Protasevich's Twitter account, during Tsikhanouskaya's stay in Athens he worked as her photographer, and took pictures of her in different settings.²⁶



Roman Protasevich
@pr0tez



Посчастливилось поснимать @Tsihanouskaya в ходе её визита в Афины.

Было безумно круто получить такой опыт! Больше фото — в официальных аккаунтах Светланы Георгиевны.



1:15 PM · May 16, 2021



739



59



Copy link to Tweet

Twitter post by Roman Protasevich from May 16, 2021, where he says he worked as Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya's photographer during her stay in Athens.

Image Source

<https://twitter.com/pr0tez/status/139388778378207...>

To clarify: FOIA Research does not endorse intercepting airplanes in mid-air, unless there is an acute danger emanating from the person or cargo in question, something which seems difficult to assess in this case. However, this does not change the fact that Protasevich is a neo-Nazi-affine Western-backed regime change activist. Nor that the EU is clearly applying double-standards in this case, if one just recalls the incident of Bolivia's president Evo Morales being forced to land in Austria, on the phoney grounds that he seemed inclined to grant asylum to Edward Snowden.

Links

- 1. a. b. c. Александр Шахов, Два "нехта" из Варшавы. Как Телеграм-канал Nexta управляет протестами в Минске и кто за ним стоит [Alexander Shakhov, "The two 'nextas' from Warsaw. How the Nexta Telegram channel manages the protests in Minsk and who is behind it], strana.ua, August 11, 2020, <https://strana.ua/news/283607-nexta-cto-izvestno-o-telehram-kanale-nekhta-kotoryj-upravljaet-protestami-v-belarusi.html>.
- 2. Пачынае працу спартова-патрыятычны клуб «Ваяр» ["Warrior" sports and patriotic club starts its activity], Maladi Sport, November 11, 2015, <http://web.archive.org/web/20170331115806/http://mfront.net/paczynaie-pracu-spartova-patryiatyczny-klub-vaiaar.html>.
- 3. «Малады фронт» стварае спартова-патрыятычны клуб «Ваяр» ["Young Front" creates sports and patriotic club "Warrior"], Radio Svaboda (=Radio Liberty), November 23, 2015, <https://www.svaboda.org/a/27382593.html>
- 4. Pahonia Detachment on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/belpahonia/>.
- 5. Facebook Likes of Roman Protasevich, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/likes>.
- 6. Pahonia Detachment on Twitter, <https://twitter.com/belpahonia>.
- 7. "At least eight journalists still jailed for reporting on Belarus protests," March 28, 2017, Committee to Protect Journalists, <https://cpj.org/2017/03/at-least-eight-journalists-still-jailed-for-report/>.
- 8. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, December 1, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1458010284252363>.
- 9. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, April 12, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1584755251577865>.
- 10. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, April 20, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1592319770821413>.
- 11. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, April 23, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1594752827244774>.
- 12. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, April 23, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1595065910546799>.
- 13. Facebook page of Gleb Zhavoronkov, <https://www.facebook.com/gleb.zhavoronkov>.
- 14. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, May 7, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1607727985947258>.
- 15. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, May 31, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1629741297079260>.
- 16. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, June 15, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1646069235446466>.
- 17. a. b. About section Roman Protasevich's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez?sk=about§ion=education>.
- 18. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/1769086246478097>.
- 19. Facebook post by Roman Protasevich, February 6, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/pr0tez/posts/2632744993445547>.

- 20. Diana Kuryshko, "Belarus election: How Nexta channel bypassed news blackout," BBC, August 12, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53753412>.
- 21. "Пра нас [About Us]," Belsat, <https://belsat.eu/about/>.
- 22. "Беларускія ваяры на Данбасе: Добраахвотнікі ствараюць антырэжым украінскай уладзе," Belsat.tv, <https://belsat.eu/programs/belaruskiya-vayary-na-danbase-dobraahvotniki-stvarayuts-antyrejtyng-ukrainskaj-uladze/>.
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- 24. "Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya met with the President of the Hellenic Republic during the working visit to Athens," Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, May 13, 2021, <https://tsikhanouskaya.org/en/events/news/ffed51e3515c39d.html>.
- 25. Twitter post by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, May 13, 2021, <https://twitter.com/tsikhanouskaya/status/1392842556271169542>.
- 26. Twitter post by Roman Protasevich, May 16, 2021, <https://twitter.com/pr0tez/status/1393887783782072321>.