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CHRISTCHURCH FALSE FLAG CONSPIRACY THEORY IN THE CZECH CONTEXT: THE AERONET CASE STUDY

Markéta Šonková¹

The terrorist attack in Christchurch of March 2019 marked a watershed moment in history, among others, since it was the first attack of this kind that was live-streamed on the Internet by the perpetrator himself. Since then, the footage has been reappearing online across the globe, and so have various conspiracy theories related to the attack, clearly showing the cross-boundary and cross-cultural nature of the phenomenon. The objective of this article is to examine a set of texts published on a Czech conspiracy site *Aeronet* and to look at how their author uses broader conspiracy contexts to explain an alleged 'false flag' operation in Christchurch. The overall aim of this article is to provide an in-depth analysis of texts published in the Czech language and contribute to the mosaic of research conducted in relation to this attack.

Keywords: Terrorism; Christchurch; Conspiracy; False Flag; Aeronet; Czech Republic.

Introduction

For a long time, conspiracy theories have been a source of fascination for some, with the digital revolution, overall globalisation, and the post-truth age significantly facilitating the circulation of conspiracy theories to achieve a worldwide audience. Despite the general feasibility to verify information thanks to the possibilities (not only) the

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Internet has provided, conspiracies have not disappeared. In fact, the Internet has eased and accelerated the processes, and has allowed for the establishment of like-minded communities, where echo chambers and conspiracy biases flourish. Moreover, with this happening globally and often online, various scenes can now more easily feed into each other, potentially leading to real world implications in the long-term. As such, conspiracy theories continue to be not only an anti-establishment and anti-mainstream phenomenon but can also help polarise – and potentially mobilise – societies, allowing them to become weaponised when politicised.

The white extremist terrorist attack on the two mosques in Christchurch of March 2019 was a watershed moment. It was not the first time that a large-scale terrorist attack was conducted by a right-wing extremist, as Anders Breivik committed a series of attacks in Norway in 2011. However, the attack by the perpetrator in Christchurch, who had been inspired by Breivik, was the first attack of its kind as it was streamed live on the Internet by the perpetrator. Since then, the footage – despite efforts of tech platforms and governments – keeps reappearing online, and so do various conspiracy theories related to the attack, clearly showing the cross-boundary and cross-cultural nature of the phenomenon. Moreover, the (live)streaming of terrorist attacks with gamification¹ elements, has been more frequent since as well.²

The objective of the article is to examine a set of texts published on Czech conspiracy site *Aeronet* – a site notorious for complex and at times influential conspiratory texts. The intention is to look at how the author(s) of these texts uses broader conspiracy contexts to explain an alleged ‘false flag’³ operation in Christchurch. The overall aim is to provide, by the means of a single case study, an in-depth analysis of texts published in Czech, and contribute to the mosaic of research conducted in relation to this specific attack. In order also to function as a standalone text, without presuming detailed knowledge of the attack and conspiracies at large, the article first introduces conspiracy theories in political and legal context, provides a background to the attack, and includes the necessary Czech contexts.

Due to the limitations in its scope, this article focuses primarily on the specific case analysis and sets it in the Czech context, rather than on an all-encompassing effect of conspiracies on their consumers or those exposed to them and possible risks that may follow, or a larger analysis of conspiracies around mass shootings in general. Similarly, the legislative context and efforts of governments to fight disinformation, propaganda, and conspiracies cannot be included at length here. The context used is mostly Czech and by extension also European.

Background

On March 15, 2019, during the Friday Prayer, a shooter entered two mosques one after the other – Masjid Al Noor Mosque and Linwood Islamic Centre – where he killed 51

people and injured 50 more. Before the attack, he advertised his plans and published a manifesto online on smaller Internet platforms, which were earlier used also by ISIS and al-Qaeda. Shortly before the attack, he shared a link to said manifesto on Facebook, Twitter, and 8chan⁴ – a decentralised and unmoderated site known for being a breeding ground of racist, violent, and sexist content.⁵ Then, he live-streamed the rampage over Facebook⁶ with the help of a mounted camera – thus being an active communicator and streaming agent in his crime – resembling the video game first-person-point of view.⁷

Facebook claims that fewer than 200 people watched the video live, with no users reporting it during the broadcast.⁸ Numerous internet providers then battled a heavy re-upload of the content – there were 1.5 million re-uploads within the first 24 hours on Facebook alone, while YouTube reported tens of thousands re-uploads within the first 24 hours after the attack.⁹ Excerpts – but in some cases also the material in full – of the video and the manifesto appeared even in some mainstream media.¹⁰

The perpetrator, a white extremist, initially pleaded not guilty to the multiple charges he faced, changing his plea to guilty in March 2020,¹¹ thus ensuring he did not give testimony.¹² He was sentenced to life without parole in 2020, although sought leave to appeal the sentence in late 2022.¹³

Conspiracy Context

‘False Flag’ conspiracy – “named for a naval manoeuvre in which a ship flies a different country’s flag in order to trick enemies into retreating or to facilitate an escape”¹⁴ – is a type of conspiracy whose originators claim a specific event was in some way staged or faked, often by government-staged crisis actors, or carried out by someone else than the official account is making the public believe. Lately, this type of conspiracy tends to follow mass shootings, since “people who are drawn to false flag conspiracies about mass shootings will predictably be those with strong beliefs about gun ownership and gun rights who are mistrustful of government in general and liberals in particular.”¹⁵ False flags have also appeared more frequently among those who believe they are on the ‘losing’ side of the culture war, which in effect also includes the Great Replacement conspirators, thereby absolving figures on their side, and redirecting the attention and blame to the opponents.¹⁶ In this regard, for example the FBI, in an internal memo from May 2019, warned that conspiracy theories are likely to motivate domestic extremists to commit violent activity, even domestic terrorism¹⁷ and indeed the attacker who committed the terrorist attack in New Zealand did so with the motivation of preventing “white genocide,”¹⁸ also known as “Great Replacement” conspiracy.

In general, conspiracies are hardly a new phenomenon. However, the globalised world, with the nearly global presence of some Internet platforms and the emergence of alt-tech platforms and services, where conspiracies can thrive, has made them more easily accessible and harder to avoid. As such, conspiracies are often in conflict with official

explanations and understandings of an event. They also have the power to erode public trust in media and politics – and subsequently undermine effective action and public discourse, can lead to racism, populism, and polarisation of societies, as well as promote theories of secret plans or anti-establishment stances.¹⁹ From a psychological point of view, they can help some people understand the world they live in, offer a sense of belonging, “exert control over or within unstable, complex systems”.²⁰ Yet, they can also be a “symptom of a crisis of legitimacy among representative institutions,”²¹ while in the context of the information overload, they can become one of its functions. Thus, conspiracies can be an instrument of control as well as of resistance, and when politicised and aimed at the right audience, they can make a powerful tool, even a weapon. In the security context in practice, conspiracy theories and theorists can also make use of the period of chaos after an attack, before any official information starts coming in, and try to fill (and abuse) the information void and/or the lack of confirmed information.

The question thus arises as to how to tackle disinformation and conspiracies in a more systematic way. Nonetheless, any legislation aiming at disinformation is a sensitive issue and any new rules must be designed so as not to impede on the freedom of speech and of not leading to censorship, which may be, alongside cultural and political differences and historical approaches, one of the reasons why there are usually more softer tools available compared to “hard legislation”. Another possible downside of legislating in this area are the risks in case undemocratic forces came to power and used such tools as a means of control, contrary to their original purpose. However, considering the global effect of disinformation and conspiracies during the COVID-19 pandemic and later also in the aftermath of the Russian war against Ukraine, both largely aided by online activities and both having security implications, there has been an upsurge of interest in curbing the possibilities to spread disinformation and conspiracies.

In the European Union, the legislative area of which is very pertinent to the Czech Republic, these efforts have been of legislative as well as non-legislative nature and have been on the agenda of the policymakers at least since 2015.²² The non-legislative strand comprises of, for example, the establishment of the report of the High-Level Expert Group on fake news and online disinformation of March 2018, the Code of Practice on Disinformation of October 2018, an Action Plan against disinformation of December 2018, and most recently the Strengthened Code of Practice of June 2022.²³ The Defence of Democracy package, prepared by the Czech Commissioner and the European Commission’s Vice-President Věra Jourová and made public in mid-December 2023, will also, inter alia, “step up the fight against disinformation and [...] support media freedom and pluralism”²⁴ In the legislative strand, the most recent is the Digital Services Act package.²⁵

As such, the Christchurch attack was – at least partially – committed as a result of a consumption of (a) conspiracy theory(ies). Out of them, the ‘false flag’ conspiracy has probably been the most prominent one and has not been limited to New Zealand,

but proliferated elsewhere, too. In the U.S., for example, this theory – and branches thereof – have been popular on Alex Jones’s platforms, including his radio show. There were supposedly also New Zealanders calling in, claiming e.g. that “there was a link between the recent Measles outbreak in Christchurch and the terror attack” (the same person also supposedly claiming that “the attack didn’t make sense, because there was no animosity towards New Zealand’s Muslim community”) or that “United Nations orchestrated the attack.”²⁶

EU vs. Disinfo, a site run by the European External Action Service’s East StratCom Task Force, also identified a piece of disinformation which claimed that “the shooter in the New Zealand terror attack and Ukrainian nationalists share the same psychological profile.”²⁷ It was reported by *Rossiya 1*, trying to convince the audience that “If the West turns a blind eye to the crimes of the Ukrainian nationalists, these kind [sic] of events will repeat themselves in every Western country,”²⁸ with *EU vs. Disinfo* disproving the claim. The ‘false flag’ conspiracy, as it appeared on *Aeronet* in a text dated August 5, 2019, was also noticed and debunked by *EU vs. Disinfo*.²⁹

Nonetheless, the mistruths, rumours, and disinformation above and below show how one attack can serve multiple actors when falsely – either purposefully or inadvertently – reported on: pro-gun lobbyists, anti-gun activists, alt-right, white supremacists, Kremlin propaganda, but also those who simply tend to believe and spread conspiracy theories for various other reasons.

Czech Context

Although New Zealand is not an area regularly discussed on Czech news, the Christchurch attack has received a broad media attention as well as reactions from the public and politicians. The attack was widely denounced; however, hateful reactions still appeared on social media and in online discussions, some of which even condoned the attack. To that end, the then Minister of the Interior Jan Hamáček announced on his Twitter, now X, account:

In connection to the terrorist attack in New Zealand, I would like to reassure the public that as of yesterday, the Czech Police have been looking into all activities that could be understood as approving of a criminal offence,³⁰ they are carefully examining them, and are collecting evidence for possible criminal proceedings.³¹

He was followed by the then Police President Jan Švejdar, who retweeted the Minister’s tweet, adding:

The police will not tolerate any expressions of consent to terrorism,³² extremism, or incitement to hatred. We have a number of tools how to

detect the perpetrators of this type of criminal activity. We pay close attention to these activities and every detected act will be thoroughly investigated.³³

Both the announcements led in certain streams of public discourse to criticism, for example, by the Freedom and Direct Democracy Party (SPD), a radical nationalist populist party, that the police should be helping and protecting the Czech citizens instead of being repressive and intimidating through the Minister and the Police President.³⁴

In the Czech Republic, there is currently no specific law to prosecute disinformation and conspiracies.³⁵ Although, the Czech Criminal Code allows for the prosecution of individual acts that are part of other criminal activity as defined in the Criminal Code, law nr. 40/2009 Col.³⁶ That includes, for example, Art. 312e support and promotion of terrorism, for which the penalty is between 2 to 10 years in prison or between 5 to 15 years of imprisonment and a possibility of financial sanctions – depending on the nature and extent of the criminal act.³⁷ In connection to the Christchurch terrorist attack, these charges were widely used for the first time and resulted in multiple sentences being handed out. However, they have so far ranged from suspended sentences to financial fines – often due to the proclamations being an isolated action and the perpetrators not being members of any extremist organisation.³⁸ Only one prison sentence has been handed over but was later commuted to a suspended sentence.³⁹

Soon after the attack, the fear of possible anti-Muslim violence also led the then chairman of the Prague Muslim community (and lawyer) Leonid Kušnarenko to announce that he was prepared to help arm those Muslims, in the spirit of protection, who might be interested. The proclamation was denounced by the Czech Muslim community.⁴⁰ Kušnarenko was expelled from his function, ceased to be a member of the community,⁴¹ and the chairman of the Board of the Czech Bar Association has brought a disciplinary action against him.⁴²

***Aeronet*: Description of the medium**

Aeronet is a Czech conspiracy site describing itself:

AE News is an alternative news site run on a volunteer basis by American European News, LLC, a New York City-based publishing company that provides comprehensive and in-depth political and security analysis. Our content is published in Czech. We focus on publishing clear and direct explanations of global geopolitical issues of the 21st century. Our project is funded entirely by donations from our readers, and our goal is to become a real and viable alternative to mainstream media outlets that fail to provide objective political perspectives on current world events.⁴³

According to the European Values think tank, the site started operating after the annexation of Crimea.⁴⁴ The site is run quasi-anonymously⁴⁵ and a large majority of the articles are anonymous as well, signed only “VK.” The ownership structure is not known, and the site is registered in the U.S., so as the owner(s) can avoid having their identity revealed, considering different legal frameworks and obligations. However, the Czech public TV has, after a prolonged investigation, managed to uncover the identity of an individual allegedly connected to the management of the site.⁴⁶

Since the site appears to be primarily financed by donations, it has an open call for such donations permanently advertised:⁴⁷ “The biggest tragedy of a nation is an enemy on the inside, brought up by globalisation and alienated from own family! That is a conceptual liquidation! Support our – still free – news also in [following month].⁴⁸ Thank you!”⁴⁹ Currently, the site claims it needs 1,835 EUR⁵⁰ a month for its operation. It also allows advertising upon being contacted by the prospective advertisers via a form.⁵¹

The site is responsible for being the originator of several prominent conspiracies in the Czech context⁵² and often merges several largely unrelated topics in one article to prove there are consistent, larger, and deeper conspiracies. The content consistently refers to the alleged New World Order, various Zionist conspiracies – as the site is largely anti-Semitic, as well as the Great Replacement and related conspiracies.

The content is openly pro-Russian, against Ukraine, against the U.S. – or “the West” in general, against NATO and the EU, as well as the intelligence services, especially BIS – Security Information Service (Czech counterintelligence). Opposition to immigration, Middle East related content, and distortion of current events are also common themes. Lately, big and repetitive topics include COVID-19 pandemic, and a constant is the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The author(s) do not shy away from using negative, expressive descriptions for those they oppose, including specific politicians, parties, civil society, and institutions. The published texts are not only disinformative, but they can also contribute to spreading panic, as well as to the polarisation of the society.

The content very often lacks reliable sources, or sources altogether, and opinion pieces tend to be presented as regular news; *Aeronet* also applies a method of linkage and refers to its older texts containing either problematic sources and/or misrepresenting quotes of certain sources.⁵³ At times, the texts contain quotes from “experts,” which could seemingly legitimise the claims – these experts, however, tend to be either anonymous or supposedly come from the readers’ community without clear and verifiable identity or expertise. Most often, though, the author himself presents seemingly “expert” insight without any source whatsoever. The published texts tend to be long and complex – which may give the impression of both diligent reporting as well as to support the extensive conspiracy claims and contain rich visual material. The headlines tend to span over several lines, as they correspond with the entire lead paragraph. The site publishes around one article per day.

Aeronet has been regularly mentioned in the annual extremism report of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic in relation to the media spreading polarising content,⁵⁴ as well as it can be understood as corresponding with a warning issued by BIS in 2015 related to pro-Russian propaganda.⁵⁵ Since the Czech and Slovak languages are mutually largely comprehensible, the audience is not limited to the Czech Republic only. Although the identity of the editor-in-chief is still largely contested, he regularly appears on a fringe radio site *Svobodný vysílač* (Free Transmitter). *Aeronet* also has a work symbiosis with Adam B. Bartoš, an anti-Semitic and racist fringe politician, whose publishing house the editor-in-chief uses for publishing his books.

After the Russian invasion to Ukraine in February 2022, *Aeronet* was one of the eight websites spreading foreign disinformation access to which was suspended by the Czech internet association NIC.CZ pursuant a government recommendation and expert consultations, on the grounds of posing a threat to national security.⁵⁶ This marked an unprecedented step, implemented historically for the first time. However, the state did not have any tools at its disposal to take steps by itself, showing limits to capacities to act flexibly in this area in crisis times. A law that would enable such action in the future alongside more structured efforts aiming at prevention was announced two months after the invasion by the Minister of Justice.⁵⁷ However, it has not materialised yet and it now seems rather unlikely that it will happen.⁵⁸ The NIC.cz association stopped blocking seven out of the eight websites in May 2022, with *Aeronet* remaining the only one not accessible due to incorrect data of the owner in the register and the domain was not allowed to be switched back on.⁵⁹ *Aeronet* now functions under a different domain (<https://aeronet.news>), where it started publishing soon after being blocked in the first place, and where the content from the original site was transferred.

***Aeronet* Conspiracies: Analysis**

Aeronet published five fully dedicated articles in the immediate aftermath of the Christchurch terrorist attack dated March 16,⁶⁰ 17,⁶¹ 18,⁶² 19,⁶³ and 20,⁶⁴ 2019, providing a detailed analysis of a supposed complex ‘false flag’ operation.⁶⁵ These articles form the main body of the discussion below.

The attack was then further referenced in eleven other articles:

- in relation to the alleged likeness, staginess, and repressions in the case of the Halle shooting (October 13 and October 15, 2019);⁶⁶
- alleged “gun control” ‘false flag’ related to the El Paso shooting (August 5, 2019)⁶⁷ as well as the El Paso manifesto (August 6, 2019);⁶⁸
- alleged link between the Christchurch attack and the Sri Lankan Easter terrorist attack of 2019 and both of them being a part of a wider Zionist conspiracy (April 23, 2019);⁶⁹

- a vague reference to the manifesto was made in connection to a Czech mass shooting in the Ostrava hospital⁷⁰ (December 10, 2019);⁷¹
- another reference was made in connection to the Czech Minister of the Interior and his proclamation on prosecuting those condoning the attack and two initial cases of such prosecution (July 30, 2019);⁷²
- symbolism related to the attack was referenced in an article dedicated to Rammstein's music video "Deutschland," which is supposedly also speckled with symbolism of upcoming genocide of the white race (April 7, 2019);⁷³
- an anti-Semitic article related to the Ukrainian presidential election, where a link is being made due to Zelensky's making an OK gesture that *Aeronet* claimed to have been alike to the one made by the shooter in New Zealand, which are both supposedly linked to a secret cultural war (April 22, 2019);⁷⁴
- to the Notre Dame fire, where there allegedly were "Templar connections," similarly as it was supposed to be the case with Christchurch and Breivik, as well as further references to the Christchurch manifesto, supposedly helping explain the cultural war (April 16, 2019);⁷⁵
- and lastly in a surprisingly short article of March 17, 2021,⁷⁶ which is also the only text on *Aeronet* that addresses the Czech courts dealing with multiple cases of support and promotion of terrorism in connection to Christchurch. Specifically, it focuses on the one case for which a prison sentence was initially given by the court, though it was later commuted. All the other cases that were handled by Czech courts are not anyhow mentioned. It was suggested by the author that the original sentence was delivered on the order of the Ministry of the Interior, links the decision to a strategy of the Ministry "Concept of combating extremism and prejudiced hatred for 2019," tries to undermine the credibility of Czech public institutions, and states that the sentence aims at creating an exemplary case to scare the Czech population against expressing opinions online before the Parliamentary election which was due to take place in October 2021, dangerously suggesting supposed totalitarian efforts of the political establishment.

Article I: March 16, 2019

The first article came out one day after the attack:

"VIDEO: Uncensored footage of the Christchurch Muslim massacre raises suspicion that it was a False Flag operation with crisis actors! No screaming of the victims, no bullet holes in the walls, no blood when shooting into the victims' bodies, clean clothes without any blood, shooting in the head without any blood, a victim wearing a Fantômas mask, and other nonsense! What happened when the shooter shot through the windshield while driving the car?"

The text is 2,875 words-long (including heading, subheadings, and the lead paragraph, excluding image captions and recommendations for further reading), with bolded passages in the text to highlight certain claims, and contains twelve captioned images (one of the attacker; one of the attacker's firearm with 6 identifications of the names written on it;⁷⁷ one with a detail of the magazines; eight screen grabs from the attack footage with misleading captions; and one of the apprehension of the attacker by the police), and one opening image with no caption, as well as two locally embedded videos: one of the attack in full and one made by one of the victims in one of the prayer houses. The author(s),⁷⁸ just as in the following texts, abused the poor AV quality of the original footage to boost their 'false flag' claims.

The hypothesis of the article is that "everything points to the fact that we have been witnessing another fake massacre," the aim of which is "to provoke the society so that there is a call for a firearms ban and for an adoption of strict laws against everyone who refuses Muslim migration and silent Jihad through Muslim high birth rates." The text first introduces the situation, mentions the manifesto (which the author claims is more important than the "massacre" itself), and then describes the attack, while identifying the supposed "holes" in the "script."

The text contains technical "explanations", for example, a description of how some of the firearms, ballistics, and bullet-proof gear supposedly work, which might seemingly further support the supposed lapses in the "operation." Linguistically, the text uses expressions like "and that's not even all" (repeatedly), "spectacle," "WTF," "absurd theatre that makes me sick," "peak of the absurd," and "B movie production" to highlight the supposed impudence, as well as using a misleading claim that the original footage was "leaked." There is only one external source in the entire article: an *ABC News* feature on the attacker.⁷⁹ The attempts of the authorities and tech platforms to take the video down (here referenced as "attempts to keep it secret") are supposedly only an attempt to mask the "very poor screenwriting work because the footage contains incredible mistakes and nonsense."

Throughout the text, the author continues to comment on the supposed lack of blood and claims that "the footage reveals an incredibly amateurish work and naive production, which is denounced by all those who had never held a firearm in their hands. What you can see in the video is just an incredible patchwork of nonsense." There are also numerous references to the supposed lack of damage on the victims' clothes and the mosque walls and windows, odd positions of some of the victims' bodies (supposedly not corresponding with the damage caused by a scattergun or not corresponding with the way the attack was carried out), lack of bleeding (including the lack of blood spatters on the walls; bleeding that is seen supposedly does not correspond with the way the victims were shot; one of the victims is supposedly wearing a bulletproof vest), and screaming, panic, and chaos. Two victims are supposedly wearing masks.

The author also claims that “a pile of corpses” is to be found in the right corner of the prayer room before the attacker entered and another “pile” is to be seen in the left corner, even though the attacker had not yet shot in that direction. One of the “corpses” also supposedly stood up from the “pile” to run outside. Another supposed hole in the “script” is the “blasphemy” of a woman and a child in a men’s prayer room. The “only real victim” – who is not a “crisis actor,” unlike the rest – is supposedly the woman outside the mosque who got shot in the head by the attacker.

The Nordic runes and names on the firearms are also commented on by the author, who claims they are there “so that none of the viewers doubted that [the attacker]⁸⁰ follows in the footsteps of Anders Breivik as an avenger of the white race.”

The attacker’s shooting into the windshield of his getaway car is further used to support the false flag claim, as the glass did not shatter, even after 3 shots, while the window in the driver’s door does after one: “Oh yeah, that’s what happens when the scattergun is stacked alternately with live and blank cartridges and one has to know how to count which shot is blank and harmless and which will be live.”

There are also several references to 9/11 (for example, in the sense that there are also “holes” in the supposed “script” or that people can die even in a ‘false flag’ operation). A video from the second mosque is also discussed: it supposedly paints a more realistic picture, as there are blood stains on the walls and carpets, although it still supposedly points to a false flag operation. The article concludes with a claim that:

It is not normal for people to be misled so easily, but we must reiterate once again that the media these days does not provide information about what really happened, but creates its own versions of reality in order to enforce laws against the legal possession of weapons, laws to punish racism and xenophobia against Muslims, and laws against all those who reject and resist migration,

and that it is not the first time a massacre and footage thereof make little sense, which is supposedly why it is necessary to stay critical of the official news.

Article II: March 17, 2019

The second article:

“VIDEO: The second video from the Christchurch massacre reveals a crisis actor who broke the script and rose early from the dead! Hillary Clinton’s election campaign chief arrived in New Zealand just before the attack and warned the government against Russian hackers and terrorists! A city with Christ in its name as the centre of attacks on Muslims is

supposed to provoke ethnic riots and racial wars between Christians and Muslims so that draconian laws can be passed to curtail civil liberties! And it has already begun in the Czech Republic, Hamáček threatens his own citizens!”

is predominantly dedicated to the video made by one of the victims in the second mosque. It is 2,524 words-long (including heading, subheadings, and the lead, excluding image captions) and contains a locally embedded video made by one of the victims, and 13 images (one collage showing the attacker, the mosque, and the attacker being taken away on a stretcher; eight screen grabs from the footage; one screen grab from the attacker’s footage; an image of the apprehension of the attacker; an image of John Podesta⁸¹ from a TV appearance; and a press image of the Czech Minister of the Interior and the Police President), and an opening image of three likely Muslim men holding a sign “This will NOT divide us!” and “No place for hate.” Parts of the text are again bolded, as is the case in all the articles. There are altogether four external references: one to an article on the *Zero Hedge*, a far-right controversial site,⁸² one to a 2016 BA thesis written at Brno University of Technology,⁸³ one to a *Herald Sun* video on election hacking warnings by Podesta,⁸⁴ and one to a Czech online news site *Novinky.cz* discussing the statement made by the then Minister of the Interior in relation to the comments condoning the attack.⁸⁵ Similar to the previous article, the text also contains supposedly scientific explanations to give the author’s claims credibility, as well as phrases such as “and that’s not even all” in addition to other degrading interjections.

The article continues in line with the previous text, calling the situation connected to the attack a “hysteria,” and that “the media in hysteria deletes discussions, comments, user accounts, and all links to truthful information, factual analyses, and namely the original footage,” with the situation supposedly being “petrifying,” namely in New Zealand, where the local “socialist government started threatening with draconian prison sentences of up to 14 years for anyone owning or spreading the leaked massacre footage from the crime scene, including photos.” This text concentrates more on the second video, where there supposedly is a “fatal lapse of the crisis actor,⁸⁶ who failed to follow the script of the entire production and spoiled the final effect of the otherwise drastically looking video aimed at igniting compassion in goyim and the stupefied public with Muslims.” There is also a connection made to the chemical attack footage by the White Helmets in Syria which, according to the author, is also fake, and which the current attack supposedly resembles.

The main analysis concentrates on the above-mentioned “crisis actor,” the lack of blood, and other supposed inaccuracies (medical, forensic, and “factual”), a “smiling” man in a chequered shirt who is supposed to be “clicking in some app, either chatting on Facebook, taking a selfie and uploading it on Instagram, or reading his email inbox and

messages delivered in the past few hours,” as well as a woman wearing a hijab, who is “not hysterical,” although her husband is likely at her feet covered in blood, claims the author.

The next focus is on a body in a puddle outside the mosque: the author is questioning its position (the man is supposed to have an arm folded under his face so as to lie more comfortably and be able to breathe above the water), his supposedly clean feet, and shoes lying next to the body (“I understand that in some Western-genre movies, there are scenes where a woman grabs a gun and shoots a guy with a Henry rifle so hard he flies out of his shoes.”).

Further, the text questions the authenticity of a blood stain on a man’s chest (“We don’t doubt there is an excessive concentration of miracles on one spot in this prayer room, where the dead rise up and leave, they easily walk off two bullet shots in an elbow and don’t even soil the carpet, so even blood on one’s heart is possible.”). The author also calls out those, who, in the comment section, questioned some of his earlier deductions and reiterates his argument regarding the windshield, this time supporting it with a BA thesis, presenting it as a “scientific study.”

The second thematic part of the article continues with the thesis on why there are attempts by the authorities to “censor” the video and questions the number of victims: “It is difficult to count the corpses when some of them stand up and just walk away.” Overall, the author claims, it is “necessary to spread this information and analyses, to open people’s eyes on how the governments, regimes, and the mainstream media lie, just as they lied about 9/11, the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the usage of chemical weapons by Bashar al-Assad in Syria” and asks, “what is the actual driving force of these events?” The answer, according to him, is

... of course, the migration and silent islamisation of the white man’s environment and his Christian family. A terrorist and a white man came to a city bearing Christ’s name (Christ’s Church – Christchurch)⁸⁷ and allegedly killed Muslims out of hate. Muslims in Christ’s city. Of course, it is a provocation against the white population in order to tighten even more the personal freedoms, freedom of speech, and publishing,

complaining that a “censorship-free platform,” *Dissenter*, was preventatively closed by the New Zealand government, since “the Zionists do not want the goyim to have access to truth and materials about the Christchurch massacre.”

He also predicts that “it will all lead to the Nuremberg laws in reverse.” The presence of Podesta, who is according to the author “the main suspect in the pedophile-satanist scandal Pizza Gate,” and who came to warn the local government against possible election

hacking by China and Russia, is supposedly another sign that New Zealand will too be affected by “managed Zionist islamisation and the regime will lock up anyone who will protest against the Muslims, their intifada through their high birth rate.”

The article concludes that this “hysteria” was also spread by the then Czech Minister of the Interior and the Police President who started “threatening” the Czech citizens that “the Police watches and sees everything the citizens write and say on the Internet and that the Police will focus on prosecuting those persons who condone the terrorist attack in Christchurch.”

Article III: March 18, 2019

The third article:

“VIDEO: Another leaked video from Christchurch reveals a massive conspiracy from the New Zealand government, have the police started falsifying evidence? Amateur footage captured the arrest of the shooter, but there were no bullet holes in the windshield of the car! Today, an official police photo of the car tow emerged, and suddenly there are 3 huge holes in the glass! Evidence manipulation as a desperate damage control response to the leaked analyses of images taken on the day of the massacre!”

is 1,612 words-long (including heading, subheadings, and the lead, excluding image captions and recommendations for further reading), contains seven images (five of the arrest of the attacker; one picture of the shooter’s car on a towaway; and one screen grab from the shooter’s original video), and one opening image (the shooter’s car being towed away with a small image of the shooter from his court appearance with his face blurred), and a video of the attacker’s apprehension captured likely by a passer-by. There is one external source, which is however broken (likely referring to a site with the police photograph of the shooter’s car).

The text focuses predominantly on continuing to substantiate the ‘false flag’ claims by analysing the moment of the arrest, and discusses the windshield in the shooter’s car, which was supposedly lacking any bullet holes, which were, however, present in the police pictures. This article proceeds to delve deeper into other conspiracy realities, linking the attack to other supposedly secret operations and plans, and substantiates the claims with interpretation of various “hidden symbols.”

The author comments on the “frenzied” actions by the New Zealand government, such as taking down the footage of the attack or arresting people who uploaded the footage online. The reason supposedly is that:

the entire massacre was just a conspiracy from the New Zealand government against their own people to disarm the New Zealand population before a planned project to convert both islands into refugee islands for millions of Muslim refugees from the Indonesia and other countries takes place, which is a plan of the Zionist project Gladio Pacific.

The article then continues to examine in detail the pictures of the windshield, attempting to prove that there were no bullet holes. The author further argues that although the armed shooter could have killed the police officers, he let them arrest him without any fight, just like Anders Breivik.

In terms of symbolism, the author argues that the racist “OK” hand gesture⁸⁸ made by the attacker at court, was in fact a “symbol of Satan’s synagogue 666 (thumb and index finger create a circle and three fingers form a fan), which the stupid mainstream media interprets as White Power, while that is an utter idiocy and of course a lie.” He further continues that

the Zionist media will of course not announce that the shooter is, in fact, under the protection of Kabbalah and Satan’s synagogue. ... [He] has simply carried out a mission, used agreed upon symbols on the weapons to have a “just cause” for his behaviour.

According to the author, whenever laws against people need to be adopted, there is a need to have public approval, which is “easiest to be achieved by terrorism, thanks to which people will agree to exchange some of their freedoms for feeling safe.” The author also claims that “it is not a coincidence there were symbols, runes, and inscriptions on [the shooter’s] weapons bearing a link to Sophia, mother of Kabbalah, the Masonic rites of the Sun, and contained a message for John Podesta.” There were also links to 9/11 made, as the “missing” bullet holes and supposed cover-up are linked to the “missing passenger windows” on one of the planes hitting the WTC, and subsequent takedowns of witnesses’ report.

Lastly, the author claims that “holes in a script” are natural and present in any conspiracy. Yet, since any of such mistakes can work as a “smoking gun,” the next step is

falsifying the evidence, additional perforation of the windshield by the police for the media, cartridge cases in the mosque which the shooter was supposedly not allowed to enter into, since a brave Muslim man with a portable payment terminal chased him away, the dead rise from the floor, and other lapses.

Article IV: March 19, 2019

The fourth article:

“Conspiracy and Kabbalah: The Christchurch attacker has so far been accused of one count of murder only, Muslims are furious, and ISIL has called on its followers to take bloody revenge! An analysis of the inscriptions and symbols on the shooter’s firearms leads to John Podesta and the Satan’s Synagogue, worshipping of Horus,⁸⁹ and occult cabalism! Al-Noor Mosque brought up 2 terrorists who trained in Yemen alongside the terrorists from France who were killing in Charlie Hebdo! The Christchurch police arrived in armour because they held a drill on that day! The memory of 9/11 is back!”

is 2,727 words-long (including heading, subheadings, and the lead, excluding image captions). It contains eleven images (one of a Muslim man “preaching jihad;” a close up on the shooter’s hand making the “OK” hand gesture / 666 symbol; three screen grabs from the shooter’s footage; one collage of images supposedly connecting Podesta with the symbols on the shooter’s firearms; a collage explaining the “Eye of Horus;” a photo of a 666 symbol / gesture; a picture of Podesta with “14” and a “fish” symbol on his palms; a photo of the shooter’s firearm; a picture of the shooter at his court appearance with his face blurred), and an opening image (an edited photo from the court appearance of the shooter, wearing an imitation of Templar armour), one video (a subtitled cut from the shooter’s footage explaining supposed inaccuracies), and five links to external sources: a *Mail Online* article on the charges against the shooter,⁹⁰ a broken link to *Blacklisted News* on the police training, two *iDnes.cz* articles (one on then head of the Prague Muslim community⁹¹ and one on ISIS calling for a revenge)⁹², and an article on *Newshub.co.nz* on certain links between the mosques and al-Qaeda suspects).⁹³

There are five thematic sections in the article: comments on the nature of the crime the shooter was accused of, further analysis of supposed mistakes, analysis of symbols and “hidden” cues – which forms the main part of the article, further similarities with 9/11 (linked to the members of special forces being able to arrive quickly due a planned drill held nearby)⁹⁴, and comments on the supposed main motivation behind the attack.

The author now argues that the shooter streamed the attack live to have “an insurance” since supposedly any “competent lawyer and forensic expert, who would get their hands on the video, would only find one murder in the entire recording,” which is allegedly the reason why he was initially accused of one count of murder only, and also why he took some seemingly illogical steps during the attack. He then repeats some of his earlier claims.

The second theme focuses on a short video from the original footage, now cut shorter and subtitled, claiming the original footage must have been edited, as there were no cartridges to be seen ejected from the weapon. The author even takes into account a counterargument on the poor AV quality, yet, claiming that even the poor quality was not a sufficient enough explanation.

An analysis of the “hidden symbolism” is the main part of this article: a symbol of a fish and number 14 that were on one of the rifles are supposedly linked to Horus and his all-seeing eye – a symbol of “Jewish-Mason secret and occult organisation Illuminati.” The author makes another link to Podesta and claims he might have been the initiator of the massacre, since “he has signalled earlier that he is a member of the Satan’s Synagogue.” The author then goes into detail on the meaning of the Eye of Horus, making both “medical” and “spiritual” claims on how individuals can be manipulated (as well as manipulate) when initiated into relevant rituals, all linked to Kabbalah, occultism, and Freemasonry.⁹⁵ The “OK” sign the shooter made was, according to the author, a “666 symbol” – another symbol of Horus – which was supposed to signal “his masters that he accomplished the task and that he is a part of a conspiracy through higher management processes on this planet.”

As the author believes the purpose of the attack is a planned conspiracy aimed at starting a war between the Christians and the Muslims, he mentions some reactions of ISIS as well as Kušnarenko to confirm such claims. In line with the overall anti-Islamic tone of *Aeronet*, the author also mentions two converts and suspected al-Qaeda fighters who had ties to Christchurch and who died in a US drone strike in Yemen: “And we are supposed to cry over such a house of prayer?” He concludes by claiming there are similar “Jihadi beds” in the Czech Republic, too, which are not being closed down either.

Article V: March 20, 2019

This article is 1,640 words-long (including heading, subheadings, and the lead, excluding image captions and a two-paragraph plea for financial contributions to the site).

“VIDEO: When the shooter entered the Christchurch Al-Noor Mosque for the first time, a prepared painted automatic rifle magazine was already placed on the floor in the corridor, just like in a computer game! And another leaked photo suggests that blood on the clothes of Muslims from the second house of prayer in Linwood is likely raspberry lemonade! One of the survivors carries it with him! The funeral of the first two Muslims took place in secrecy behind tarps so no one could see or make any footage!”

This article contains seven images (three screen grabs from the shooter's footage; one of Lateef Alabi wearing bloodied clothes; one of a Powerade bottle; one of a body in a coffin; and one of a group of people who survived the attack), an opening image (an overview of a mosque and a police line), one video (a subtitled cut, of which parts are slowed down and there are explanatory arrows added, from the shooter's footage), and two external sources: *Per Second News* article⁹⁶ and *iDnes* article.⁹⁷

The last text in the Christchurch attack analysis series keeps commenting on supposed inaccuracies in the attack footage and repeating claims about "censorship." Its primary focus is on a magazine that had been supposedly already present in the mosque and the attacker only picked it up when he needed it, and allegedly unnatural reaction of the victims. The author claims a long-term reader – referred to by his first name only, without any verifiable identification – who "works in forensic medicine," and is described as an expert, reached out to point out inaccuracies in physiological reactions of the victims upon being shot.

The author also comments on a photograph of Alabi, whose clothes were soaked in blood, questioning whether it indeed was blood, as a man behind him in the same photograph carries a bottle with red liquid, which might be according to the author either raspberry lemonade, but also a colourant. He also mentions there was a lack of ambulance and coroners' cars on the scene to be seen in the media. The author also criticizes "lack of information and details" surrounding the first funerals of the victims: "Body as a proof? Hardly. God knows what was packed in the bag."

Conclusion

The complex and interconnected conspiracy claims made on *Aeronet*, accompanied with seemingly expert commentaries, abuse of the poor audio-visual quality of the footage, distortion of forensics, ballistics, natural information delay, and possible information gaps, with disregard and ridicule of other possible and reasonable explanations, might make the texts and their claims believable for certain readers, or at least make the readers doubt and pose questions as to any possible lapses in the official account.

The use of – albeit sporadic – external sources, both conspiratory (or tabloid) and serious, may also seemingly lend the texts credibility. This supposed credibility is further induced by the complexity and thoroughness of the published material and detailed knowledge of the context and links, both real and imaginary.

The five main texts on the Christchurch attack align with the narratives presented on *Aeronet*, work with usual conspiracy contexts presented on the site, including the developing nature of the "hidden" conspiracy context (which can and does even contradict each other). They also follow the tendency that 'false flag' conspiracies follow mass shootings. Nonetheless, the number of texts dedicated solely to this attack and the num-

ber of subsequent references is less usual for the site, although the former might have been linked to the amount of primary material readily provided by the shooter. The one text discussing the sentencing for support and promotion of terrorism, surprisingly omitting all the other court cases, and not making any link to them whatsoever, then continues with the narratives against the credibility of the Czech public institutions, specifically the Ministry of the Interior, and contributes to undermine the authority of Czech legal system and functioning democracy, which are common for the site.

Aeronet further points to the weaker areas of the current legal system, which does not have any dedicated provisions for fighting flagrant disinformation. This trend is however not specific to the Czech context and points to larger issues in democratic societies that need to carefully balance the freedom of speech and speech that may be legal but is harmful and/or can lead to polarisation and even radicalisation.

Sites like *Aeronet* are also an example highlighting the need for comprehensive strategic communication and disinformation strategies. The *Aeronet* articles rarely attract such reactions and the proclamations by the Minister of the Interior and the Police President in case of Christchurch, which were linked to the condoning of the attack and conspiracies in general, not specifically to those made by *Aeronet*, were a rarity at that time.

The Christchurch terrorist attack, albeit happening very far from the Czech Republic, helped mobilise the legal system in judicating as regards supporting terrorism online, which has set a precedent into the future and could lead to more consistent approach to this kind of illegal activity online. Despite the unprecedented nature of the legal impact, *Aeronet* dedicated only very little attention to this aspect, pointing to the opportunistic nature of its content by discussing only what is convenient to the mission of the content creator(s) at the time.

As such, the site has undoubtedly helped in spreading conspiracy claims in the Czech context in relation to Christchurch. This was even more sensitive as there had been ongoing prosecutions related to the condoning of the attack on the Internet, which have been setting a precedent in dealing with this type of criminality in the aftermath of a terrorist attack in the Czech Republic.

Considering the fact that the articles are written in the Czech language, which does not have a large number of speakers worldwide and is easily understandable only to Slovak speakers, the impact of these specific articles globally, even though they are still publicly accessible online, is likely limited. They, however, point to the worrying trend of conspiracies in general and in security context in particular, which is why they and their possible effects should not be taken lightly.

- 1 Adding game elements to a non-game environment, in this case streaming from the first-person shooter perspective, as is common in some videogames.
- 2 “It’s All Fun and Games, Until It’s Not: The Risks of Gamified Violent Extremism and How We Can Tackle It,” November 11, 2022, RUSI. Available at <https://rusieurope.eu/the-risks-of-gamified-violent-extremism/>
- 3 Explained further in the text.
- 4 “Analysis: New Zealand attack and the terrorist use of the internet,” n.d., Tech Against Terrorism. Available at <https://www.techagainstterrorism.org/2019/03/26/analysis-new-zealand-attack-and-the-terrorist-use-of-the-internet/>
- 5 “New Zealand attack: How nonsensical white genocide conspiracy theory cited by alleged gunman is spreading poison around the world,” March 16, 2019, Independent. Available at <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/australasia/new-zealand-christchurch-mosque-attack-white-genocide-conspiracy-theory-a8824671.html>
- 6 “Christchurch mosque attacks: NZ has ‘fundamentally changed’ says PM,” March 13, 2020, BBC. Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-51850210>
- 7 “New Zealand attack: How nonsensical white genocide conspiracy theory cited by alleged gunman is spreading poison around the world,” March 16, 2019, Independent. Available at <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/australasia/new-zealand-christchurch-mosque-attack-white-genocide-conspiracy-theory-a8824671.html>
- 8 “Update on New Zealand,” March 18, 2019, Facebook Newsroom. Available at <https://about.fb.com/news/2019/03/update-on-new-zealand/>
- 9 “Analysis: New Zealand attack and the terrorist use of the internet,” n.d., Tech Against Terrorism. Available at <https://www.techagainstterrorism.org/2019/03/26/analysis-new-zealand-attack-and-the-terrorist-use-of-the-internet/>
- 10 Ibid
- 11 “Christchurch mosque attacker Brenton Tarrant changes plea to guilty, to be sentenced for 51 murders,” March 25, 2020, ABC News Australia. Available at <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-26/christchurch-mosque-attack-brenton-tarrant-pleads-guilty/12091872>
- 12 “Christchurch mass killer appeals against conviction and sentence,” November 8, 2022, BBC. Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-63552011>
- 13 Ibid
- 14 “‘False Flag’ Theory on Pipe Bombs Zooms From Right-Wing Fringe to Mainstream,” October 25, 2018, The New York Times. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/25/business/false-flag-theory-bombs-conservative-media.html>
- 15 “Why Do False Flag Conspiracy Theories Follow Mass Shootings?,” August 14, 2019, Psychology Today. Available at <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/psych-unseen/201908/why-do-false-flag-conspiracy-theories-follow-mass-shootings>
- 16 Jared Holt quoted in “Rush Limbaugh claims New Zealand mosque shootings were false flag operation, offers no evidence,” March 15, 2019, Newsweek. Available at <https://www.newsweek.com/rush-limbaugh-claims-mosque-attacks-false-flag-1365260>
- 17 As mentioned in “Exclusive: FBI document warns conspiracy theories are a new domestic terrorism threat,” August 1, 2019, Yahoo! News. Available at <https://news.yahoo.com/fbi-documents-conspiracy-theories-terrorism-160000507.html>
- 18 “New Zealand attack: How nonsensical white genocide conspiracy theory cited by alleged gunman is spreading poison around the world,” March 16, 2019, Independent. Available at <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/australasia/new-zealand-christchurch-mosque-attack-white-genocide-conspiracy-theory-a8824671.html>
- 19 “Conspiracy Theories,” n.d., Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Available at <https://www.iep.utm.edu/conspira/>
- 20 “5 Theories About Conspiracy Theories,” February 6, 2020, Intelligencer. Available at <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/02/why-do-people-believe-in-conspiracy-theories.html>
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 “A strengthened EU Code of Practice on Disinformation,” n.d. Available at <https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/european-democra->

cy-action-plan/strengthened-eu-code-practice-disinformation_en#chronology-of-eu-actions-against-disinformation

23 Ibid

24 “Defence of democracy package, including an initiative on the protection of the EU democratic sphere from covert foreign influence,” August 20, 2023. Available at <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/spotlight-JD%2023-24/file-defence-of-democracy-package>

25 Moreover, the EU also focuses specifically on terrorism and extremism online, for example thanks to the non-legislative work of the EU Internet Forum and Radicalisation Awareness Network, which also tap into borderline content and gamification. Legislation-wise, there is a Regulation on addressing the dissemination of terrorist content online (2021/784) and the so-called Counter Terrorism Directive (2017/541), which also addresses the terrorist use of the Internet.

26 “Thousands don’t believe official Christchurch terror attacks story,” April 4, 2019, Radio New Zealand. Available at <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/386367/thousands-don-t-believe-official-christchurch-terror-attacks-story>

27 “Disinfo: The shooter in the New Zealand terror attack and Ukrainian nationalists share the same psychological profile,” n.d., EU vs. Disinfo. Available at <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-shooter-in-the-new-zealand-terror-attack-and-ukrainian-nationalists-share-the-same-psychological-profile/>

28 Ibid.

29 “Disinfo: Christchurch shooting was a false flag operation,” n.d., EU vs. Disinfo. Available at <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/christchurch-shooting-was-a-false-flag-operation/>

30 A crime defined in the Penal Code 40/2009 Coll. Section 365.

31 Unless stated otherwise, all Czech quotations were translated by the author of the article. Cit. Jan Hamáček, Twitter post, March 16, 2019, <https://twitter.com/jhamacek/status/1106859083200516096>

32 A crime defined in the Penal Code 40/2009 Coll. Section 312e.

33 Jan Švejdar, Twitter post, March 16, 2019, https://twitter.com/jan_svejdar/status/1106871122107289601

34 “Hamáček vyhróžuje, tvrdí Okamura. Vadí mu, že policie řeší nenávistné komentáře,” March 20, 2019, iDnes.cz. Available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/tomio-okamura-spd-novy-zealand-policie-nenavistne-komentare-podpora-terorismu.A190319_105129_domaci_lre

35 There was however a post of the Government Representative for disinformation and media, which was created in the aftermath of the Russian war, though, the post ceased to exist in February 2023 and the agenda now falls under the purview of the National Security Advisor.

36 “Trestněprávní úprava,” n.d. Available at <https://www.mvcr.cz/chh/clanek/dezinformacni-kampane-trestnepravni-uprava-christchurch-soud.aspx>; translated into English by the author of the article.

37 “Zákon č. 40/2009 Sb.,” n.d. Available at <https://www.zakonyprolidi.cz/cs/2009-40>

38 “Za schvalování útoku v Christchurchi platí podmínka, žalobce původně navrhol pět let vězení,” March 30, 2022. Available at <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/svet/3462275-za-schvalovani-utoku-v-christchurchi-plati-podminka-zalobce-puvodne-navrhoval-pet-let>

39 “Nejvyšší soud odmítl dovolání muže, který schvaloval teroristický útok na Novém Zélandu. Dostal podmínku,” November 8, 2021, iRozhlas. Available at https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/teroristicky-utok-novy-zealand-christchurch-soud_2111081009_ako

40 “Pražská muslimská obec odmítla výroky svého předsedy, který na facebooku vyzval k vyzbrojování,” March 19, 2019, iRozhlas. Available at https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/leonid-kusnarenko-prazska-muslimska-obec-muslimove-v-cesku-islam-nabozenstvi_1903191548_haf

41 “Kušnarenka kvůli výzvě k ozbrojování vyloučili z muslimské obce,” March 25, 2019, ČT24. Available at <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/domaci/2769170-kusnarenka-kvuli-vyzve-k-ozbrojovani-odvolali-z-cela-prazskych-muslimu>

42 “Kušnarenko čelí kárné žalobě za výzvu k ozbrojování muslimů,” September 12, 2019, Radio Prague International. Available at <https://www.radio.cz/cz/rubrika/zpravy/kusnarenko-celi-karne-zalobe-za-vyzvu-k-ozbrojovani-muslimu>

- 43 “Kontakt,” n.d., Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/kontakt/>
- 44 “Aeronet,” n.d., Evropské Hodnoty. Originally available at <https://www.evropskehodnoty.cz/aeronet/>; no longer available (accessed in 2020 for the purposes of this article)
- 45 The editor-in-chief uses a nickname “VK”, standing for “Vedoucí kolotoče” (Carousel Chief).
- 46 “Po stopách dezinformátora. Reportéři ČT odhalili utajeného provozovatele Aeronetu,” March 2, 2020, ČT24. Available at <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/domaci/3056786-po-stopach-dezinformatora-reporteri-ct-odhalili-utajeneho-provozovatele-aeronetu>
- 47 In the early 2020, when the first draft of this article was being prepared, it read: “In a society, where free opinion is described as disinformation, and an opposition as a pro-Russian narrative, censoring and blocking of emails is the last means of how to silence a nation. However, with us, you can still find an island of freedom.”
- 48 The name of a month is stated in Czech as well as Slovak, showing the audiences the site aims at.
- 49 “Spolupráce,” n.d., Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/spoluprace/>
- 50 A rise compared to early 2020 when the amount was 1,290 EUR a month.
- 51 “Reklama,” n.d., Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/reklama/>
- 52 “Aeronet,” n.d., Evropské Hodnoty. Originally available at <https://www.evropskehodnoty.cz/aeronet/>; no longer available (accessed in 2020 for the purposes of this article)
- 53 “‘Neoznačené’ lety aneb dezinformační konspirace o importu migrantů do ČR,” n.d., Ministerstvo vnitra. Available at <https://www.mvcr.cz/chh/clanek/neoznacene-lety-aneb-dezinformacni-konspirace-o-importu-migrantu-do-cr.aspx>
- 54 All the reports are available on the website of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic at <https://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/extremismus-vyrocní-zpravy-o-extremismu-a-strategie-boje-proti-extremismu.aspx>
- 55 “Výroční zpráva Bezpečnostní informační služby za rok 2015,” September 1, 2016, BIS, p.9. Available at <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocní-zpravy/2015-vz-cz.pdf> and BIS varuje před ruskou propagandou. Komunistický poslanec Ondráček ji šíří, přitom ale kontroluje BIS...,” September 19, 2016. Available at <https://hlidacipes.org/bis-varuje-pred-ruskou-propagandou-komunisticky-poslanec-ondracek-ji-siri-pritom-ale-kontroluje-bis/>
- 56 “Internetové sdružení CZ.NIC zablokovalo kvůli útoku na Ukrajinu osm dezinformačních webů,” February 26, 2022. Available at <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/specialy/rusko-ukrajinsky-konflikt/3447594-internetove-sdruzeni-cznic-zablokovalo-kvuli-utoku-na>
- 57 “Vypneme dezinformační weby, chystáme k tomu zákon, plánuje ministr,” March 21, 2022. Available at <https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/domaci-kauzu-vypneme-dezinformacni-weby-chystame-k-tomu-zakon-planuje-ministr-194370>
- 58 “Zákon proti dezinformacím zřejmě nevznikne. Stačí bojovat pravdou, míní Benda z ODS,” March 20, 2023. Available at <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/zakon-proti-dezinformacim/r~739a7c-12c71611ed8b4e0cc47ab5f122/>
- 59 “Dezinformační weby v Česku opět fungují. Sdružení CZ.NIC je po třech měsících přestalo blokovat,” May 25, 2022. Available at https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/cznic-dezinfoweby-dezinformacni-weby-fake-news_2205251226_ako
- 60 “VIDEO: Necenzurované záběry masakru muslimů v Christchurch vyvolávají podezření, že se jednalo o False Flag operaci s krizovými herci! ..,” March 16, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/video-necenzurovane-zabery-masakru-muslimu-v-christchurch-vyvolavaji-podezreni-ze-se-jednalo-o-false-flag-operaci-s-krizovymi-herci-zadny-krik-obeti-zadnediry-od-kulek-ve-zdech-zadna-krev/>
- 61 “VIDEO: Druhé video z masakru v Christchurch odhaluje krizového herce, který porušil skript a předčasně vstal z mrtvých! ..,” March 17, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/video-druhe-video-z-masakru-v-christchurch-odhaluje-krizoveho-herce-ktery-porusil-skript-a-predcasne-vstal-z-mrtvych-sef-volebni-kampane-hillary-clinton-prijel-tesne-pred-utokem-na-novy-zealand/>
- 62 “VIDEO: Další uniklé video z Christchurch odhaluje obrovské spiknutí novozélandské vlády, policie začala falšovat důkazy? ..,” March 18, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/video-dalsi-unikle-video-z-christchurch-odhaluje-obrovske-spiknuti-novo->

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63 “Konspirace a Kabala: Útočník z Christchurch byl zatím obviněn jen z jediné vraždy, muslimové jsou vzteky bez sebe a ISIL vyzval své stoupence ke krvavé odvetě! ...,” March 19, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/konspirace-a-kabala-utocnik-z-christchurch-byl-zatim-obvinen-jen-z-jedine-vrazdy-muslimove-jsou-vzteky-bez-sebe-a-isil-vyzval-sve-stoupence-ke-krvave-odvete-analyza-napisu-a-symbolu-na-zbranich/>

64 “VIDEO: Když střelec vstoupil do mešity Al-Noor v Christchurch poprvé, na podlaze v chodbě už ležel připravený pomalovaný zásobník do automatické pušky jako v počítačové hře! ...,” March 20, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/video-kdyz-strelec-vstoupil-do-mesity-al-noor-v-christchurch-poprve-na-podlaze-v-chodbe-uz-lezel-pripraveny-pomalovany-zasobnik-do-automaticke-pusky-jako-v-pocitacove-hre-a-dalsi-unikla-fotografie/>

65 The author mentioned several times that he was preparing a standalone article on the shooter’s manifesto and/or its translation, but neither is to be found on the website.

66 “Teroristický útok v Halle byl zinscenovaný od začátku až do konce! ...,” October 13, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/teroristicky-utok-v-halle-byl-zinscenovany-od-zacatku-az-do-konce-muz-nestrelil-ze-skutecne-brokovnice-ostre-patrony-ale-vytiskl-si-plastovou-zbran-na-3d-tiskarne-a-jako-naboje-pouzil-petardy/> and “Střelba v El Pasu: Kamerové záběry z obchodů zmizely, střelec měl u sebe jediný zásobník, svědci z místa činu ale potvrzují 3 až 4 různé střelce, média začínají volat po zákazu prodeje zbraní! ...,” August 5, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/strelba-v-el-pasu-kamerove-zabery-z-obchodu-zmizely-strelec-mel-u-sebe-jediny-zasobnik-svedci-z-mista-cinu-ale-potvrzuj-i-3-az-4-ruzne-strelce-media-zacinaji-volat-po-zakazu-prodeje-zbrani/>

67 “Střelba v El Pasu: Kamerové záběry z obchodů zmizely, střelec měl u sebe jediný zásobník, svědci z místa činu ale potvrzují 3 až 4 různé střelce, média začínají volat po zákazu prodeje zbraní! ...,” August 5, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/strelba-v-el-pasu-kamerove-zabery-z-obchodu-zmizely-strelec-mel-u-sebe-jediny-zasobnik-svedci-z-mista-cinu-ale-potvrzuj-i-3-az-4-ruzne-strelce-media-zacinaji-volat-po-zakazu-prodeje-zbrani/>

68 “The Inconvenient Truth: Analýza manifestu střelce z El Pasa v Texasu, kvůli kterému se v amerických médiích strhla hysterie a padají slova o rasismu, xenofobii a bílé nadřazenosti! ...,” August 6, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/the-inconvenient-truth-analyza-manifestu-strelce-z-el-pasa-v-texasu-kvuli-kteremu-se-v-americkyh-mediich-strhla-hysterie-a-padaji-slova-o-rasismu-xenofobii-a-bile-nadrazenosti/>

69 “Černý kolovrat: K bombovým útokům na Cejlonu se přihlásil Islámský stát, mělo jít o odvetu za podivně zinscenovaný útok na dvě mešity v Christchurch na Novém Zélandu! ...,” April 23, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/cerny-kolovrat-k-bombovym-utokum-na-cejlonu-se-prihlasil-islamsky-stat-melo-jit-o-odvetu-za-podivne-zinscenovany-utok-na-dve-mesity-v-christchurch-na-novem-zelandu-cejlonska-vlada-mela-informace/>

70 An attack of December 10, 2019, when an illegally-armed shooter, suffering from health and psychiatric issues, entered the Ostrava University Hospital and shot 7 people dead, wounded 2, and later committed suicide.

71 “Děsivá konspirace: Masakr v ostravské nemocnici bude využit k odvedení pozornosti od večerní demonstrace Milionu chviliek v Praze? ...,” December 10, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/desiva-konspirace-masakr-v-ostravske-nemocnici-bude-vyuzit-k-odvedeni-pozornosti-od-vecerni-demonstrace-milionu-chviliek-v-praze-v-cekarne-strilel-profesional-zasahy-na-rozhlednu-hlava-krk-hlava/>

72 This proclamation was also mentioned in a feature on the Minister dated March 28, 2019, available at <https://aeronet.news/lidovy-dum-lobuje-za-vystavbu-tovarny-na-stepny-material-z-uranovych-rud-pod-okny-talibanu-v-zemi-s-nejvyssi-korupci-na-svete-rusove-z-uranovych-tovaren-v-tadzikistanu-odesli-kvuli-obavam-z-utoku/>; “Terorista z nádraží ve Frankfurtu je švýcarský rezident, který dostal azylový status a pobytové povolení již v roce 2008! ...,” July 30, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/terorista-z-nadrazi-ve-frankfurtu-je-svycarsky-rezident-ktery-dostal-azylovy-status-a-pobytove-povoleni-jiz-v-roce-2008-svycarska-policie-jej-stiha-od-25-cervence-kdy-se-pokusil-v-zurichu/>

73 “Deutschland: Saracenská černá královna Německa přichází vyhubit bílou rasu, ženy přestanou rodit děti a budou místo nich chovat psy! ...,” April 7, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/deutschland-saracenska-cerna-kralovna-nemecka-prichazi-vyhubit-bilou-rasu>

rasu-zeny-prestanou-rodit-deti-a-budou-misto-nich-chovat-psy-kralovna-sezere-hlavu-bileho-bojovnika-a-zustanou-jen-bili-otroci/

74 “Ukrajina padla! Izrael po Slovensku dosadil svého prezidenta i na Ukrajině, zemi povede Žid, který však prý konvertoval ke křesťanství, ...,” April 22, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/ukrajina-padla-izrael-po-slovensku-dosadil-sveho-prezidenta-i-na-ukrajine-zemi-povede-zid-ktery-vsak-pry-konvertoval-ke-krestanstvi-syna-kirilla-nechal-pokrtit/>

75 “Katedrála Notre-Dame byla zapálena už jako druhá křesťanská stavba v pořadí za poslední měsíc! ...,” April 16, 2019, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/katedrala-notre-dame-byla-zapalena-uz-jako-druha-krestanska-stavba-v-poradi-za-posledni-mesic-parizska-policie-dosud-marne-patra-po-zharich-z-kostela-sv-sulpicia-kde-probihalo-nataceni-sifry/>

76 “Režim přitvrzuje proti českým občanům a svobodě slova, za 2 věty vysloveného svobodného názoru dostal muž 6 let kriminálu, zatímco vrah, který strčil muže pod soupravu metra, dostal jenom 3 a půl roku! ...,” March 17, 2021, Aeronet. Available at <https://aeronet.news/rezim-pritvrzuje-proti-ceskym-obcanum-a-svobode-slova-za-2-vety-vysloveneho-svobodneho-nazoru-dostal-muz-6-let-kriminalu-zatimco-vrah-ktery-strcil-muze-pod-soupravu-metra-dostal-jenom-3-a-pul-roku/>

77 Likely not an original image, although no attribution is made, as the explanations are in English.

78 The article is signed “VK”, just like the rest of the analysed texts here; however, at places, there is a “we” reference as to the entire alleged editorial board.

79 “Christchurch shooter Brenton Tarrant was a personal trainer in Grafton,” April 5, 2019, ABC News. Available at <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-15/christchurch-shooting-brenton-tarrant-what-we-know/10904744>

80 He is being named directly throughout the texts on *Aeronet*.

81 A former White House Chief of Staff under President Clinton and a Counsellor to President Obama.

82 “NZ Threatens 10 Years In Prison For ‘Possessing’ Mosque Shooting Video; Web Hosts Warned, ‘Dissenter’ Banned,” March 18, 2019, Zero Hedge. Available at <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2019-03-16/nz-threatens-10-years-prison-possessing-mosque-shooting-video-web-hosts-warned>

83 Full text is available at https://www.vutbr.cz/www_base/zav_prace_soubor_verejne.php?file_id=126508

84 Full video available at <https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/world/hillary-clintons-campaign-chair-warns-nz-about-election-hacking/video/5ca5b27846c8b88f6406048b2223b84a>

85 “Sledujeme vás a víme, jak na vás. Policie varovala veřejnost před schvalováním útoku na Zélandu,” March 16, 2019, Novinky.cz. Available at <https://www.novinky.cz/domaci/clanek/sledujeme-vas-a-vime-jak-na-vas-ceska-police-varovala-verejnost-pred-schvalovanim-utoku-na-zelandu-40274511>

86 It was supposedly discovered by one of the readers.

87 Explained for the purposes of the non-English speaking readers.

88 Explanation of the gesture and its racist context was described by the Anti-Defamation League at <https://www.adl.org/education/references/hate-symbols/okay-hand-gesture>

89 An ancient Egyptian sky god.

90 “Christchurch shooter could AVOID terror charges amid fears a drawn-out trial could provide a platform for him to tout his extremist views and traumatise victims’ families,” March 18, 2019, Mail Online. Available at <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6823939/Brenton-Tarrant-avoid-terror-charges-murder-easier-prove-legal-experts-say.html>

91 “Šéf pražských muslimů vyzval k ozbrojování. Ústředí se od něj distancuje,” March 19, 2019, iDnes.cz. Available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/leonid-kushnarenko-vzkaz-zbrojni-pas-reakce-teroristicky-utok-muslimska-obec-cr.A190319_123736_domaci_cern

92 “Islámský stát vyzval ke krvavé pomstě za masakr muslimů na Novém Zélandu,” March 19, 2019, iDnes.cz. Available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/zahranicni/ii-islamsky-stat-novy-zeland-terorismus.A190319_104122_zahranicni_remy

93 “Christchurch mosque linked to al-Qaida suspect,” June 4, 2014, Newshub. Available at <https://www.newshub.co.nz/nznews/christchurch-mosque-linked-to-alqaida-suspect-2014060417>

94 “NZSAS soldiers in Christchurch for snipers event responded to mosque terror attack,” March 18, 2019. Available at https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12213956

95 Black Sun / Black spinning wheel are also mentioned several times, which is a frequent conspiracy reference on the site.

96 “Nigerian born Imam Lateef Alabi a survivor of New Zealand Mosque attack narrates horrifying ordeal,” March 17, 2019, Per Second News. Available at <https://persecondnews.com/2019/03/17/nigerian-born-imam-lateef-alabi-a-survivor-of-new-zealand-mosque-attack-narrates-horrifying-ordeal/>

97 “Muslimové na Novém Zélandu pohřbívají oběti střelce Brentona Tarranta,” March 20, 2019, iDnes.cz. Available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/zahranicni/novy-zealand-terorismus-christchurch-pohreb-mesita.A190320_060901_zahranicni_evam