

## Political Uses of the Great Patriotic War in Post-Soviet Russia from Yeltsin to Putin

*Olga Malinova*

After the collapse of the USSR all the former Soviet republics faced the problem of reconstructing their national identities within the new geographical and symbolic boundaries and adapting the established narratives of their collective pasts to the new political context. In the case of the Russian Federation, this task has been particularly complicated due to the special and ambiguous position of the Russian republic within the USSR. On the one hand, Russians played a dominant role in the Soviet system, and Russian was the Soviet lingua franca, for example; but there were also ways in which the Soviet modernization project effectively prevented the development of a strong Russian national identity. As Geoffrey Hosking (2006) put it, “Russians were the state-bearers of the Soviet Union, but they were also rendered anonymous by it” (405), and “their” republic, the RSFSR, which lacked the republican-level structures granted to the other Soviet republics, was something of an anomaly “in a country where ethnic identity had become paramount” (377).

---

O. Malinova (✉)

National Research University Higher School of Economics,  
Miasnitskaia Street 20, Moscow, Russian Federation 101000  
e-mail: [omalinova@mail.ru](mailto:omalinova@mail.ru)

Furthermore, as the successor to the historical core of the former tsarist empire, the RSFSR did not possess a “national” identity similar to other Soviet republics where a specific form of nation building compatible with the communist ideology was encouraged by the Soviet “affirmative empire” (Martin 2001). Much like the English identity, the Russian one had historically tended to be associated with the whole country rather than with a specific part, and dominant historical narratives confirmed this vision. The problem was further compounded after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, when the Russian Federation had to create a substantially new identity. While Russian history provided a large stock of symbolic resources that could potentially be used for building a new national identity, this legacy was ideologically loaded and hence highly contested. Both the pre-revolutionary imperial narratives and the dissident anti-Soviet counter-narratives were deeply controversial, sparking fierce political conflicts and tending to divide society rather than foster greater coherence.

The fact that the Russian Federation declared itself the legal successor to the USSR made the demarcation between “the Russian” and “the Soviet” a difficult challenge for the political elites (Morozov 2009; Kaspe 2012). Initially, an attempt was made to define a new Russian democratic identity in opposition to the Soviet “totalitarian” past. This attempt failed, and the governing political elite subsequently embarked on a selective adoption of the Soviet legacy, avoiding its critical reassessment. The more uncompromising critics of this policy have labeled it “re-Stalinization.” A more accurate label has been suggested by Ilya Kalinin, who has dubbed this policy one of “nostalgic modernization” aimed at “the positive recording of nostalgia for the Soviet past into a new form of Russian patriotism, for which ‘the Soviet’ lacks any historical specificity, but is rather seen as part of a broadly conceived and comically heterogeneous cultural legacy” (2011: 157).

Last but not least, Russia does not have an external Significant Other who could be blamed for the current political troubles in the same way that other post-communist countries are able to blame Moscow. Externalizing communism as an alien regime imposed on their nations from outside, the political elites of the former communist countries managed to mobilize their populations around the project of “returning to Europe.” In Russia, the awareness that the destructive Soviet regime was a homegrown phenomenon made building a positive collective self-image somewhat problematic. Those attempts that have been made to

find an external scapegoat for the shape of Russia's twentieth century tend to be based on conspiracy theories and a reluctance to confront the past honestly and openly.

Given these difficulties, and in the absence of a commonly accepted grand narrative of the past, the memory of the Great Patriotic War has proven to be the most "politically usable" element of Russia's past. First, the commemorative cult of the Great Patriotic War was effectively institutionalized during the late-Soviet period and internalized by the majority of the population via multiple channels of socialization (such as education, the media, and popular culture). Second, this narrative has consistently enjoyed a high level of social acceptance and has rarely been subjected to criticism. Third, the memory of the war is versatile and capable of fitting various cultural frames, ranging from "heroic sacrifice," "national glory," "defense of freedom," and "salvation of civilization" to "mass suffering," "unrecoverable losses" and "national victimhood." Consequently, it is hardly surprising that the memory of the war has become the cornerstone of official history politics in post-Soviet Russia.

The adaptation of the Soviet commemorative cult of the Great Patriotic War to the Russian nation-building agenda did, however, require a rearrangement of the established official Soviet discourses and practices of commemoration. The methods and strategies adopted by the Russian ruling elite in this connection have evolved throughout the post-Soviet period. In the early 1990s the official symbolic policy was aimed at legitimizing the ongoing reforms as the necessary dismantling of the old "totalitarian" order. The contrast between the new, "democratic" and the old, "totalitarian"/"autocratic" Russia was the central idea of the official narrative of the national past. In this context, the victory in the war was re-narrated as a great feat of the people that was achieved not *due* to the Communist leadership, but *in spite* of it. It became a story of everyday heroism and the double victimhood of the people at the hands of the Nazi and Soviet regimes alike. Quite soon, however, the radical reassessment of the Soviet past in the midst of the troubled transition turned out to be politically costly because it was too painful for the national self-esteem. As a result, from the mid-1990s some elements of Soviet symbolic policy, in particular commemorative practices associated with the war, were partially "rehabilitated."

In the 2000s the official narrative of the national past underwent a substantial change. The idea of the contrast between the "old" and the "new" Russia gave way to the concept of the "thousand-year-long"

Russia, focused on its development as a “great power.” The critical attitude to the Soviet past was replaced by its selective appropriation. The Great Patriotic War became the culminating point of the new concept of Russian history, but the emphasis of the official discourse now shifted to reincorporate the idea of *the great state* (its Communist nature now largely left unmentioned). The idea of double victimhood virtually disappeared from the official discourse, and the theme of the heroism of the Russian people who won a triumphant victory, brought freedom to half of Europe, and made the USSR a world superpower, became more salient.

Since the 2000s the triumphalist narrative of the Great Patriotic War became the main pillar of the post-Soviet-Russian identity. This made it particularly vulnerable to challenges posed by alternative interpretations of the events of World War II that focused on the unseemly aspects of Soviet policy (such as the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, the Yalta agreements, or the repressions directed against “disloyal” groups in the liberated territories). As a result, since the mid-2000s Russia has been perpetually involved in “memory wars” with other East European and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries whose national narratives relied upon anti-triumphalist versions of the history of World War II. Later, in the context of the international conflict caused by the annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and Russia’s de facto involvement in the military conflict in East Ukraine, the triumphalist narrative of the Great Patriotic War acquired a new dimension: it came to be used as a marker of post-Soviet imperialist identity and became closely associated with pro-Putin “patriotic” attitudes. As soon as this took place, both heroism and suffering were overshadowed by another theme: the notion of taking pride in a glorious past that raises national self-esteem in the present.

In this chapter I examine the political uses of the Great Patriotic War in post-Soviet Russia as part of the official policy aimed at the (re)construction of Russian national identity.<sup>1</sup> A “usable past” has little to do with historiography; rather, it is “an invention or at least a retrospective reconstruction to serve the needs of the present” (Olick 2007: 19). The need for “creating a usable past” was first articulated in 1918 by the US literary critic Van Wyck Brooks who argued that the young American culture lacked shared historical references. Similarly to the USA one century ago but for different reasons, contemporary Russia also suffers from the incoherence of its national historical narrative; but unlike its

counterparts in the USA, the ruling elite in Russia considers the construction of a “usable past” one of its political tasks. My understanding of the *political use of history* corresponds with the definition proposed by Markku Kangaspuro (2011), who argues that this notion refers to the “use of history as an instrument of political argumentation” or to the “attempts to attain power over history in the sense of hegemony of a particular interpretation” (295).

Memory politics in post-Soviet Russia is an object of growing academic interest, not least due to recent heated public battles over the interpretation of the Soviet past. Many authors have analyzed Putin-era memory politics (Ferretti 2004; Zvereva 2004; Wertsch 2008; Malinova 2009; Miller 2009, 2012b; Kangaspuro 2011; Torbakov 2012). According to Aleksei Miller, it is during the Putin era that Russia has developed traits of a full-fledged history policy, in other words, that a whole raft of methods has been assimilated aimed at “the use of the administrative and finance resources of the state in the sphere of history and memory politics in the interests of the governing party” (Miller 2012a: 19). The Yeltsin era has received less attention in the academic literature (Zubkova and Kupriianov 1999; Smith 2002; Merridale 2003; Koposov 2011; Gill 2012). Drawing on both this secondary literature and my own research, I set out here to compare the Yeltsin and Putin periods with a view to tracing continuity and change in Russian memory politics in the post-Soviet decades to date.

Contributing to the existing body of literature, this chapter focuses on political uses of the war memory by the governing political elite, that is, by those who speak on behalf of the state or who have sufficient resources to influence the official symbolic policy. The governing elite is represented first of all by politicians and top state officials, leaders of the “party of power” (currently United Russia, previously Russia’s Choice (1993–1995), Russia is Our Home (1995–1999) and Unity (1999–2001)). It also includes functionaries of the Presidential Administration and the party apparatus, political advisers, and some journalists and historians close to the regime who are engaged in decision making in a non-public or semi-public format. In my understanding, these actors promote particular interpretations of the collective past in the course of pursuing political goals such as legitimization of power, justification of political decisions, mobilization of electoral support and reinforcement of social cohesion (cf. Malinova 2011). A variety of political and social actors are usually involved in interpreting the past at different societal levels, but

the state has exceptional resources for the enforcement of a particular version of the past. In Russia's political system, decision making on issues of symbolic politics is very much in the hands of the president and his administration, and therefore in this chapter I mainly focus on presidential speeches and decrees. By analyzing political speeches<sup>2</sup> and media coverage of commemorative ceremonies I shall identify the main frames of representation of the war in Russian official discourse from Boris Yeltsin to Vladimir Putin and Dmitrii Medvedev, revealing links between the political use of history, on the one hand, and Russia's domestic and foreign policy, on the other. The following two sections address political uses of the Great Patriotic War in the 1990s and 2000s respectively.

### THE YELTSIN ERA: ABANDONING THE SOVIET PAST, SEARCHING FOR A NEW CONSENSUS

In the early 1990s the interpretation of the past in the public rhetoric of the new Russian leadership served first of all to legitimize the radical transformation of the Soviet regime which had been denounced as "totalitarian." The triumph of the democratic forces in August 1991 seemed to have opened up the opportunity to turn Russia into a prosperous democratic country with a market economy. Yeltsin's reforms, introduced in 1992, were supposed to create the Western-style institutions necessary to embark on the road to "civilized," "liberal capitalism." This final choice in favor of the Western economic and political model was paradoxically imagined in quasi-Marxist terms as a revolutionary leap forward, a transition from failed socialism to a new historical formation. This radical political agenda required a total rejection of Soviet ideology and values. Certainly, the collective memory of the previous seventy years could not be obliterated, but it had to be reevaluated and reframed. The treatment of the two major events of Soviet history—the Great October Revolution and the Great Patriotic War—demonstrates two different ways of coping with the past in the 1990s. While the October Revolution became a bone of contention between the liberals and the Communists, the victory of 1945 turned out to be the only undisputed positive achievement of the Soviet era.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the October Revolution became an object of radical reassessment. Previously enshrined as the triumph of the Communist idea, a moment of political and social

emancipation, the October Revolution was now redefined as a catastrophe that interrupted Russia's gradual but steady development along the "normal" European path. As Boris Yeltsin put it, "the destructive radicalism" that stipulated "a disruption from February to October ... explains the loss of many achievements in the sphere of culture, economy, law, and public development as a result of the break with the old order" (Yeltsin 1996).

The reinterpretation of the October Revolution can be found not only in the rhetoric of the president, but also in the discourse of the left-patriotic opposition. The Russian Communists, reorganized after the failed August 1991 coup, started to see the "Great October Revolution" not so much as the victory of the working class, but rather as the triumph of the *national* spirit. In their new rhetoric, the Soviet system now began to appear as a realization of genuine *Russian* principles—collectivism in various forms, drawing on concepts from Eastern Orthodox theology and nineteenth-century Slavophile thought and the notion that Russia was destined to be a Great Power. In short, while the new Russian liberal leadership denied the October Revolution any positive meaning and considered it a tragic rather than glorious event, the Communist opposition declared it a substantive element of national identity. In defending the October Revolution and Soviet values as manifestations of national identity, the Communists drew on the legacy of Soviet commemorative culture, institutionalized in collective rituals, museums, texts, films, songs, and even jokes. The interpretation of this historical event became an object of fierce symbolic struggle that manifested itself every year in the lead-up to 7 November, the former Day of the October Revolution. This date remained a public holiday till 2004, albeit from 1996 under a new title, as the "Day of Reconciliation and Accord."

The Great Patriotic War stands in obvious contrast to the highly controversial October Revolution. No significant political force in Russia has ever expressed any doubts about either the fundamentally positive meaning of the victory in the war, or about its significance for the collective identity. This is not to say, of course, that the official Soviet narrative of the war has never been criticized and contested. The new awareness that perestroika had brought about the horrors of state terror and the scale of the people's tragedy posed a serious challenge to the Soviet narrative of World War II. Political actors had to take this challenge into consideration even if they were not going to address it explicitly.

In the first half of the 1990s the new Russian ruling elite sought to reframe the memory of the war according to the new vision of Russia as a democratic European nation. This politics was manifested in the revision of the official commemoration rituals, in the public rhetoric employed by President Yeltsin, and in the quest for new national symbols. The victory over Nazism was represented as a heroic achievement carried out by the people (*narod*) in contrast to the official Soviet narrative which had emphasized the role of the state and the Communist Party. The new narrative partly relied on the political frames of the Thaw era, when the name of Stalin had been banned from public use and the heroism of the ordinary people as well as their mass suffering has been brought to the fore (Koposov 2011: 98–100). But unlike the Thaw-era narratives, the post-Soviet interpretations linked the people's suffering not only to Nazi atrocities, but also to the inhumanity of the Soviet regime that strove for victory at any price. During the Thaw Stalinist repressions were considered regrettable “excesses” (*otdel'nye peregiby*) and the victory in the war served as the final vindication of the Soviet system. It is hardly surprising that soon after Khrushchev's Secret Speech in 1956 the theme of repressions vanished from the rhetoric of the Soviet leaders (Koposov 2011: 99–100). It was the critical reassessment of the “Soviet experiment” in the early 1990s that opened the way for foregrounding the theme of double victimhood—caused by both Hitler and Stalin—in the official narrative of the war. The recognition of the inhumane character of the Soviet regime gave a new inflection to the theme of heroism: the feat of the Soviet people was even greater in light of the fact that victory was achieved not *due* to the Communist leadership, but *in spite* of the Stalinist repressions.

This reframing of the Great Patriotic War can be traced out by examining the evolution of the official Victory Day celebrations during the Yeltsin era. There is a common misconception that annual military parades were held on Red Square on 9 May during the late Soviet period. Annual military parades were in fact held during this period on 7 November, marking the anniversary of the October Revolution. After the Victory parade held in June 1945 there were no Victory Day parades until 1965, and from 1965 these were only staged once every five years. The practice of staging an annual Victory Day parade is actually a post-Soviet tradition, invented in the mid-1990s. But prior to its invention, post-Soviet Russian ruling elites did experiment with various commemorative formats.



In 1992, when, for the first time, Victory Day was celebrated in the new Russia, there was no special official ceremony. Yeltsin simply laid flowers at the Grave of the Unknown Soldier near the Kremlin wall before joining war veterans for informal celebrations in Gorky Park. As early as the following year, however, on 9 May 1993, the Russian President took part in the opening ceremony of the new war memorial complex at Poklonnaia Hill. The official festivities were thus relocated from Red Square to a new place. The idea of constructing the new memorial actually goes back to the 1950s; Poklonnaia Hill, in the west of Moscow, was chosen for its vast space and beautiful view as well as for symbolic reasons (according to legend, it was on this hill that Napoleon waited in vain for the city delegation to bring him the key to the Russian capital in 1812). The construction of the memorial started in 1983–1984 and was only completed in 1995 due to the political turbulence and economic crisis. In 1993 (and then again in 1994) the official celebration of Victory Day was staged as an opening ceremony to unveil particular sections of the new memorial. Thus, for the first time since 1945, the Victory Day ceremony took place at a new memorial site that had no connotations with the Soviet tradition, but instead was associated with the glorious history of Russian arms.

This attempt to change the Soviet style of the Victory Day celebrations coincided with a growing conflict between the President and the Supreme Soviet that culminated in a violent confrontation in October 1993. The lack of a basic political consensus among the governing elite made consolidation of the new commemorative tradition impossible. In 1993 the leaders of the anti-Yeltsin Supreme Soviet were not even granted access to the official podium during the Victory Day celebrations on Poklonnaia Hill (Zaiavlenie 1993; see also Smith 2002: 87–89). Communist and patriotic organizations arranged their own alternative celebrations of Victory Day in the center of Moscow, posing a difficult dilemma for the war veterans, who were forced to take sides on this issue. Thus, the invention of a new tradition was impeded by an open political conflict. According to Kathleen Smith, the decision to transfer the official celebrations to Poklonnaia Hill was a mistake because it effectively meant surrendering the center of Moscow, with its strong established symbolic connotations of power and authority, to the Communist opposition (Smith 2002: 89). In 1995, when the 50th anniversary of the Victory was celebrated, the authorities partially reversed this decision, moving the historical part of the parade (including the veterans' march)

to Red Square, while leaving the “modern” part of it (the demonstration of military hardware) on Poklonnaia Hill.

The Yeltsin-era invention of new commemorative traditions also involved widening the geography of the official commemorative ceremonies beyond the two capitals, Moscow and St Petersburg. During his first presidential term Yeltsin participated in jubilee celebrations marking the end of the Leningrad Blockade (January 1994) and the liberation of Murmansk in the Soviet Arctic (October 1994). In the wake of the 1996 presidential elections, in what appears to have been a last-minute improvised gesture, Yeltsin flew to Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad) immediately after the parade on Red Square in order to welcome local Soviet war veterans on Mamaev Hill. This symbolic gesture was unprecedented—no Soviet leader had ever left the capital city on Victory Day. Another instance of reframing the memory of the war was the commemoration of Marshal Georgii Zhukov. A prominent Soviet military commander who had led the decisive operations of the war, including the defense of Moscow and Leningrad and the seizure of Berlin, Zhukov had fallen into disfavor after the war. The 1957 October plenum of the CPSU Central Committee accused him of “violating Leninist principles” and of the “exorbitant glorification” of his personal role in the war. Despite this, Zhukov continued to enjoy popularity among war veterans; his memoirs, published in 1969, were widely considered an important source of “the truth” about World War II. After coming to power Yeltsin ordered the construction of a monument to Zhukov in the center of Moscow and established an order and a medal in his honor. These symbolic acts were meant to “rehabilitate” the disgraced marshal who was now in a sense reconstituted as a “victim” of the late Stalinist regime and integrated into the glorious military history of Russia. Some observers, however, saw the glorification of Zhukov as a disturbing sign of nostalgia for an “iron hand” and a kind of surrogate for Stalin: “it was hard to get rid of the impression that ... Zhukov is just a substitute for somebody else; the Marshal acts for the Generalissimus” (Sokolov 1995). An adherent of the “victory at any cost” strategy and a commander responsible for the deaths of millions of soldiers, Zhukov was a poor fit for the new anti-Stalinist narrative (Polianovskii 1995; Sokolov 1995).

The 50th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in 1995, during which a number of previously rejected Soviet symbols were reincorporated into the official ceremonies, marked a new stage in the evolution of Russian symbolic policy. During the lavish celebrations on

Red Square, the high officials of the new Russian state returned to the top of the Lenin Mausoleum for the first time since 1990. Moreover, the Soviet red banner was “rehabilitated” as the “Banner of Victory” and used during the official ceremony alongside the official tricolor flag. This symbolic gesture was perceived by many as a return of “patriotism which had previously fallen victim to profanation and falsehood” (Yashmanov 1996). Yeltsin publicly rejected accusations that the Russian authorities were thereby supporting public nostalgia for the Soviet order. In his interview with ORT TV channel he objected:

I disagree. I categorically disagree! This is simply primitive reasoning, in my view. When Alexander Nevsky led the people to victory at Chudskoe Lake, what kind of regime were they living under? Or how about Dmitry Donskoi’s victory... Or the smashing of Napoleon? The regime at the time was based on serfdom. So does that mean that serfdom was the decisive factor in the victory of our people and our country? It’s exactly the same situation today. No, the decisive factor was not the regime, but the people, our people, its character, its patriotism, its love for the Motherland, its self-sacrifice.... The people was the decisive factor. And this victory belongs to the people. And so does the holiday. (Yeltsin 1995b)

Yeltsin had good reasons for instrumentalizing the 50th jubilee of the victory. This anniversary coincided with the escalation of conflicts between the government and the Communist opposition in the wake of the 1995 parliamentary elections and the height of the military campaign in Chechnya. Both factors hampered a demonstration of unity befitting the solemn occasion. On 9 May 1995 the alternative march from Belorusskii railway station to Lubianka Square organized by the opposition manifested mass support for the Soviet memory of the war and an appeal for the restoration of the USSR (Krasnikov 1995). It had become clear that any radical critique of the Soviet past would split Russian society and alienate a large portion of the electorate.

After regaining office in 1996, President Yeltsin did not follow the advice of those political allies who recommended that he “proclaim the misanthropic Bolshevik ideology illegal” (Yakovlev 1996). In 1996, a year before the 80th anniversary of the October Revolution, Yeltsin issued a decree announcing 7 November “The Day of Reconciliation and Accord.” This gesture, however, was half-hearted and did not bring any new official rituals of commemoration (Malinova 2015: 56–61). It failed

in its attempt to reconcile the conflicting political camps (Smith 2002: 83–85). The liberals, some of whom had now moved into opposition to the government, argued that the Communists should admit their responsibility for the crimes of the Soviet regime. This appeal for “repentance” was insistently rejected by the left-patriotic forces. They meanwhile condemned Yeltsin’s “anti-national” and “criminal” regime and considered his critique of the Soviet past a further “humiliation of the Russian people.” Characteristically, the term “fascism,” which had traditionally been exclusively associated with Nazi Germany, was actively used in the 1990s in the domestic political struggle. Democrats used it to label rising Russian nationalism and to cast a slur upon the Communists and their allies from the Popular-Patriotic bloc (the so-called “red-browns,” in democratic parlance). Thus, the memory of the war was used not only for strengthening national solidarity, but also to marginalize political opponents.

During his second term Yeltsin tried to play the role of political arbiter calling for a national consensus and the invention of a “new national idea.” He was particularly willing to use the shared memory of the war as a means of promoting “national accord and unity” (Yeltsin 1999). In practice this meant the partial re-adoption of Soviet symbols. In 1996 a presidential decree ordered the official usage of the “Victory Banner” alongside the state tricolor. Hence, this Soviet symbol, which had been selectively revived already in 1995, became one of the official symbols of the new Russian state. In the context of acute and ongoing political struggle and the absence of a consensus on the fundamental elements of the new collective identity among political elites, together with the weakness of the state, a radical reassessment of the Soviet past turned out to be too problematic.

This did not mean, however, that the governing elite renounced any attempts at further reframing of the most “usable” symbol of the collective past. In summer 1996 Yeltsin established the Day of Memory and Sorrow on 22 June, the day of Hitler’s attack on the USSR in 1941. This decision could be seen as an attempt to create yet another occasion for the political use of this important symbol, an occasion that would, moreover, be relatively independent of the Soviet ideological legacy. In contrast to Victory Day, the new date was less connected with triumph and military glory and more focused on suffering and victimhood. This day is also commemorated in Belarus and Ukraine, which makes

it yet another occasion for demonstrating the “unity” of the East Slavic world.

Analysis of Yeltsin’s formal speeches on the occasion of Victory Day in 1995–1998 also indicates an endeavor to reframe the former Soviet discourse about the war. The first president of Russia never interpreted this event in terms of the victory of the Soviet state and/or social system. Instead, he preferred to pay tribute to the people who had won the war. He insistently represented the Victory as “a symbol of the courage, patriotism, self-sacrifice of the soldier and the general, the sailor and the pilot, the worker on the home front and the partisan, the member of the underground and the nurse at the front hospital” (Yeltsin 1995a).

Nor did Yeltsin miss any occasion to appeal to the unity of the peoples of the CIS. Following the established pattern of speeches made by Soviet leaders, he also constantly recalled the cooperation with the Western members of the anti-Hitler coalition and called upon the former Allies to overcome the “political legacy of the Cold War” (Yeltsin 1995a). He was particularly willing to use the common memory of the War for propaganda on the theme of “national accord and unity” (Yeltsin 1999). As we shall see below, the same basic frames would also be used by his successors. It was Yeltsin and his speechwriters who laid the foundations of the new commemorative canon of the Great Patriotic War in post-Soviet Russia.

## THE PUTIN ERA: THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR AS A MYTH OF NATIONAL TRIUMPH

With Vladimir Putin’s arrival in the presidential office, the symbolic politics of the Russian state underwent another transformation. Unlike Yeltsin who was involved in the bitter political conflicts of the 1990s and usually sided with the liberals against the left-nationalist opposition, Putin, a relative newcomer to public political life, was able to position himself “beyond” both ideological camps. Seeking to consolidate the frustrated and divided Russian society, he borrowed some ideas from the repertoire of the left-patriotic opposition and reintroduced selected symbols of the Soviet past. Three federal constitutional laws from 25 December 2000 established the official state symbols of the Russian Federation (RF): the State Flag, the State Coat of Arms, and the National Anthem. Most controversial and widely debated

was the revival of an adapted form of the Soviet anthem, now furnished with new lyrics. (In 1990 the Soviet anthem had been replaced by Mikhail Glinka's "Patriotic Song," but the Glinka anthem had not proved very popular.) At the same time, the tricolor that invokes the legacy of the Romanov Empire and was used by the democratic opposition in the days of the August 1991 coup was confirmed as the National Flag of the RF. The Coat of Arms, the two-headed eagle, also derives from the earlier coat of arms of the Russian Empire. Combining heterogeneous historical symbols in a kind of post-Soviet bricolage, the laws on official state symbols sketched out the contours of a new approach to the national past.

The new historical narrative presented in Putin's official rhetoric emphasized the value of the "thousand-year-old" Russian statehood as the central element of the national identity. The idea of a "strong state" as the foundation of Russia's past and future greatness was saliently expressed in the Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly in 2003. Putin warned against the threat of the country's disintegration and spoke about the "truly historic feat" of "retaining the state in a vast geographic space" and of "preserving a unique community of peoples while strengthening the country's position in the world" (Putin 2003). This rhetoric demonstrated a fundamental change in the attitude to the Soviet legacy and to the collapse of the USSR; the latter now came to be seen not as the "foundational act" of the new Russian nation as in the Yeltsin era but as a betrayal of the Russian tradition of a strong state.

As a presidential candidate, in his programmatic article "Russia at the Turn of the Millennium" (1999) Putin had argued that "it would be a mistake to ignore and, moreover, to reject the undoubted achievements of that time [i.e. the Soviet period]." In the same publication, however, he also mentioned the "enormous price" that had been paid by the whole society for the failed communist experiment and argued that "for almost seven decades we traveled down a dead-end route which led us away from the main road of civilization." It seems that from the very beginning, Putin did not share Yeltsin's critical attitude towards the Soviet past in its entirety. At the same time, however, he subscribed to the liberal-democratic interpretation of the transition from communism as a return to the "main road of civilization."

A more apologetic attitude to the Soviet past was proposed in the Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly in 2005, when Putin called the collapse of the USSR “the biggest geopolitical catastrophe of the century” (Putin 2005a). This statement contrasted sharply with Yeltsin’s interpretation of this event as the unavoidable “natural” death of a system which was doomed to collapse: “the Soviet Union collapsed as a result of a total crisis, it was torn to pieces by economic, political and social contradictions” (Yeltsin 1996). Now that the ideas of the “great power” status and the “thousand-year-old” Russian state shaped the official narrative, the demise of the Soviet Union was redefined as a “catastrophe,” caused by the ill-considered actions of irresponsible politicians. It was Russia’s position as the heir to “the great Soviet country,” and not the country’s departure from the totalitarian system, that was emphasized in the official rhetoric during Putin’s second term.

This selective appropriation of Soviet symbols was, however, by no means wholesale or unequivocal and in no way meant a total apology for the Communist regime. Speeches by Putin and later Medvedev contained numerous negative judgments about the Soviet system, which was blamed for economic failures and social stagnation, especially in the system’s last decades. The positive aspects of the Soviet past mentioned in these speeches were associated mainly with the idea of a great state that had stood the test of World War II, succeeded in (albeit imperfect) modernization, and bestowed upon the country a leading position in the world. Totalitarian features such as state violence and political repressions were bracketed out of this picture.

In its ambivalent attitude to the Soviet past, Putin’s regime denounced as “wrong” the leftist traditions of disobedience, revolution, and revolt, and sought to marginalize contentious and divisive historical symbols. In 2004, the most controversial public holiday, the Day of the October Revolution (from 1996 to 2004 the Day of Reconciliation and Accord) (7 November) became a normal working day. As a sort of substitute, a new state holiday, the Day of National Unity, was introduced on 4 November, marking the anniversary of the popular uprising which expelled alien occupation forces from Moscow in November 1612. The new holiday, another attempt to restore the continuity of Russian history, did not become popular and was instead appropriated by nationalists and right-wing extremists. An annual “Russian March,” a

mass nationalist manifestation, now traditionally takes place in the major Russian cities on 4 November. Paradoxically, by trying to marginalize left-wing and communist symbols as destructive, the regime created new symbols which were used to legitimize right-wing extremism.

This turn in memory politics from “repentance” to “pride” and from the birth of a new democratic Russia to the “centuries-long” tradition of Russian statehood explains why the myth of the Great Patriotic War has remained the most usable element of Russia’s past. Comparable in its significance to certain other meta-events of Russian history (such as the victory over Napoleon), the war is still present in “communicative memory” (Assmann 2008). Politicians addressing it can still count on a strong emotional resonance in Russian society. And unlike many other Soviet symbols and narratives, the war memory did not become an object of zero-sum political games. Despite competing interpretations of this event, virtually all political actors—nationalists, liberals, and “state managers” alike—agree on the significance of the victory in World War II in Russian and world history. According to my calculation, speeches on the occasion of various war anniversaries and memorial dates make up around 33% of all commemorative addresses by Russian presidents between 2000 and 2014 (Malinova 2015: 156–175). This share has remained quite stable throughout this period. No other event of the “thousand-year-long” history is comparable with the war in terms of saliency in the official rhetoric.

To identify core meanings and interpretations of the Great Patriotic War in the presidential speeches, in the following section of this chapter I will use frame analysis, a method that has become increasingly important in studies on political communication in recent decades (e.g. Entman 1993, Simon and Xenos 2000). Notions of frames and framing go back to Erving Goffman (1974) who sought to explain how conceptual frames—ways of organizing experience—structure an individual’s perception of society. In media and political communication studies framing is seen as actively applied by speakers/communicators who address an audience in order to promote a particular interpretation of a given issue. According to Entman, “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (52). From the frame analysis perspective, a presidential “message is constructed in such



a way as to contain certain associations rather than others” (Simon and Xenos 2000: 367). This means that speakers (speechwriters) consciously choose to stress particular aspects, meanings, and interpretations of a historical event depending on their political agenda, the current situation in the country, and foreign policy priorities. The repertoire of frames can reflect continuity and succession, on the one hand, or political innovation and a break with predecessors, on the other. Table 2.1 presents a list of the main frames used by Russian presidents in the official discourse on the war. These frames are identified in the official speeches delivered by Putin and Medvedev between 2000 and 2016 on the occasion of Victory Day.<sup>3</sup>

As Table 2.1 shows, there are four main frames that were present in all speeches between 2000 and 2016, namely: commemoration of the war victims and their suffering (1); paying tribute to the war veterans (2); continuity of generations (3); and the political lessons of World War II (4). It is not coincidental that all four frames can be traced back to the Soviet period. The continuity with the Soviet rhetoric is especially obvious in the case of frame 4: in a similar way to the Soviet leaders in the 1970s–1980s, both Putin and Medvedev spoke on behalf of the country that had defeated Hitler’s Germany and liberated Europe from the Nazi yoke and in this way had gained a moral right to be a guardian of the international order. Depending on the political context the “lessons of World War II” are invoked in relation to such themes as international cooperation, avoiding confrontation, and respect for national sovereignty and international norms. This frame is often used in the foreign policy discourse (recall, for example, Putin’s speech in Gdansk in September 2009 marking the 70th anniversary of the beginning of World War II). It also contributes to the (re-)construction of the Russian identity around the idea of a “great state” as it allows “Us” to be presented as one of the main guardians of the international order.

A tendency towards the “nationalization” of the war memory is reflected in the frequent use of frames 6–9 (the victory as a uniting symbol, as a manifestation of the national character, and as a central element of the national history narrative; and the contribution of different nationalities of the RF to the victory). The nationalization of memory refers to the “re-narration of the Great Patriotic War and the re-interpretation of its key events, symbols and its historical lessons in the process of the construction of new post-Soviet national identities”

**Table 2.1** Framing the Great Patriotic War in official speeches by Putin and Medvedev on the occasion of Victory Day, 2000–2016

	<i>Years</i>	<i>Frames</i>	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
1	Remembering victims and their suffering	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	Tribute to war veterans	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	Continuity of generations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Political lessons of WWII	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5	War as a symbol of patriotism																		
6	Victory Day as uniting symbol	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Victory as manifestation of national character	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	War as central element of national history narrative	X		X							X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Frames</i>	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
9	Contribution of different nationalities of RF to victory				X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X		
10	Victory as common heritage of CIS countries	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Atrocities and crimes of Nazi Germany			X	X	X	X					X		X				
12	Reconciliation with former enemy						X						X			X		
13	Cooperation with Western Allies			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
14	Critique of Western partners										X	X		X				
15	Need to strengthen Russian Army	X	X	X					X	X	X		X			X	X	X
16	WWII as reminder of basic human values		X				X					X	X	X				

(Zhurzhenko 2013). As shown above, Victory Day has remained a symbol uniting all Russians beyond political and ideological cleavages (frame 6). Table 2.1 illustrates the continued use of this frame in the twenty-first century (with the exception of 2006 and 2009). As Medvedev stated on 9 May 2008, Victory Day is “a holiday that has forever become a symbol of our national unity” (Medvedev 2008). While this frame was in fact introduced by Yeltsin, the next frame (7)—the war as a manifestation of the national character—was brought in by Putin:

Dear veterans, we are accustomed to being winners. This habit has entered our blood stream, and it has helped us to secure other victories, not only on the battlefield. In the future, too, it will come to our aid in peacetime, it will help our generation to build a strong and flourishing country and to raise high the Russian banner of democracy and freedom. Our people has gone through many wars, and that is why we know the price of peace; we know that peace is first and foremost a stable economy and prosperity. (Putin 2000)

With some variations, the idea of the victory in the war as a manifestation of the Russian national character was included in several speeches by Putin and Medvedev. Victory Day came to be represented as a “festival of the glory and triumph of our people” (Putin 2012). “Nationalizing” the memory of the war, Putin and later Medvedev sought to integrate it into the “centuries-long” Russian state history and traditions of military glory. In this respect, the Great Patriotic War became a central element of the national historical narrative (frame 8).

Other Soviet-derived frames were used less consistently between 2000 and 2016. For example, the contribution of Russia’s numerous nationalities to the victory (frame 9) was invoked in order to stress the “multinational” composition of the Russian Federation. Its frequent use in recent years can be explained by the alarming tendency of growing ethnic tensions in today’s Russia, and is thus related to frame 6 (national unity).

In the speeches of Putin’s third presidential term a clear emphasis is placed on frame 5: the war as a symbol of patriotism. This is hardly surprising given that since 2012 “patriotism” has been a buzzword in Russian political discourse. Remarkably, in the 2000s there was no special talk about the patriotism of Soviet soldiers—but this silence rather reflects the fact that this was so obvious that it went without saying. In 2010 and 2011 Medvedev picked out this frame in the context of the

patriotic education of the younger generations. In more recent memorial speeches by Putin this theme has acquired the status of an identity marker and model of behavior. For example, Putin has interpreted Victory Day as “a sacred symbol of loyalty to the Motherland, [a symbol] which lives inside every one of us” (Putin 2013); “a holiday when the all-conquering power of patriotism reigns supreme, when we all feel with special intensity what it means to be loyal to the Motherland and how important it is to be capable of defending her interests” (Putin 2014).

The reframing of war memory also concerns international aspects of political discourse and reflects Russia’s foreign policy agenda. The official Victory Day speeches almost invariably contain references to the victory as a common political and historical legacy of the post-Soviet countries (frame 10). The notions of a “joint victory” and “shared war memory” serve to legitimize Eurasian integration projects in the post-Soviet space, now claimed as belonging to the Russian sphere of influence. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the victory in 2005, Putin spoke about the sacrifices made by “all the peoples and republics of the Soviet Union” and concluded that “9 May is a sacred date for all countries of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS)” (Putin 2005c). The Baltic countries, whose leaders declined Putin’s invitation to attend the official commemoration in Moscow, were thus symbolically excluded from the “community of common memory.”

Considerable attention in the presidential speeches has traditionally been devoted to relations with the Western countries (frames 11–14). The historical cooperation with the Allies (frame 13) has been invoked more consistently than the historical hostile relations with Nazi Germany. References to the cruelty of Nazi Germany (frame 11) have primarily been intended not to recall former hostilities but rather to stress the exceptional suffering and heroism of the Russian people and to highlight the “price” paid for the victory. The theme of the people’s double victimhood—at the hands of Hitler and Stalin alike—has virtually disappeared from the official discourse. Occasionally (in 2005 and 2011) Germany was also mentioned as a country that had successfully overcome its past and had now become a good partner for Russia (frame 12). One could argue that such rhetoric was supposed to signal Moscow’s interest in a “special relationship” with Germany, which is Russia’s most important partner in the EU.

Cooperation with the Western allies (USA, Great Britain and France) during World War II has been systematically invoked in connection with contemporary problems in Europe and in the world. In 2007 Putin argued for “common responsibility and equal partnership” in international relations as a strategy to meet the new threats caused by “the same disdain for human life, the same claims for absolute exclusiveness” as fascist ideas in the twentieth century (Putin 2007). These new threats justify the need to strengthen the Russian army (frame 15). The memory of World War II is used not only as an argument for further cooperation with the Western countries (frame 13), but also for criticism of today’s hegemonic Western politics (frame 14). Sometimes former partners in the anti-Hitler coalition appear as threatening the international order. In 2010, making a transparent allusion to contemporary US politics, Medvedev stressed that:

The war demonstrated the terrifying potential consequences to which claims to world domination can lead. [It showed] just how dangerous attempts to use coercion against free peoples and sovereign states really are. (Medvedev 2010b)

Finally, World War II has been interpreted in terms of basic human values that are shared by the West and Russia alike, including freedom, justice, dignity, and security (frame 16). This representation obviously resulted from the redefinition of Soviet values. It contrasted sharply with the official discourse of the 1990s. In 1995 Yeltsin argued that it was only the end of the Cold War that had made it possible to enjoy the real fruits of the victory of 1945 and to transform Europe into a “united community of democratic nations”; he spoke about the future which “humanity will enter, having rejected forever such dreadful notions as ‘totalitarianism,’ ‘nationalist hatred,’ and ‘world war’” (Yeltsin 1995a). Ten years later, Putin offered a very different basic narrative of the connection between Soviet Victory and human rights. He described the Victory of 1945 as having “raised high the value of life itself, and called for a genuine respect for the individual and for human rights” (Putin 2005b). In other words, the Soviet Union could claim credit for these positive developments. Those elements of Soviet actions which did not fit this picture, such as political repressions, ethnic deportations, and intolerance, were “forgotten” in this version of the war narrative.

## CONCLUSION

In post-Soviet Russia, the Great Patriotic War turned out to be the most “politically usable” element of the collective past due to its previous institutionalization and its uncontested positive meaning. Both the Yeltsin and Putin regimes sought to shore up their legitimacy by presenting themselves as the “heirs” of the glorious victory over Nazi Germany. The use of the war memory, however, differed remarkably during the 1990s and the 2000s. Yeltsin’s leadership tried to separate the memory of the people’s heroic feat from the failures of the Soviet regime and Stalinist crimes. Considerable efforts were made to change the established commemorative canon and to foreground previously downplayed aspects of the war, representing it as a story of heroism and double victimhood at the hands of the Nazi and Soviet regimes alike. This interpretation corresponded to the official concept of the new Russian identity that accentuated the historical rupture between the Soviet state and post-Soviet Russia.

The explicitly anti-communist, anti-Soviet approach to the recent past was abandoned by Putin’s leadership. A new emphasis was placed on the idea of the continuity of the “thousand-year-old” Russian state, and the critical attitude to the Soviet past gave way to its selective appropriation. The victory in World War II and the post-war success of the USSR as a world superpower were turned into important elements of the history of the great Russian state. The official triumphalist narrative of the war was cleansed of any negative aspects associated with the totalitarian regime (Stalinist repressions, the failures and incompetence of the Soviet military leadership, its indifference to the human costs of military success<sup>4</sup>). Instead of double victimhood at the hands of the Nazi and Soviet regimes alike, the theme of mass heroism and suffering as the “enormous price” paid for the victory took up central position in the official canon of commemoration.

In today’s Russia the myth of the Great Patriotic War is loaded with multiple meanings, some of them originating from the Soviet era, others reflecting Russia’s new status and the geopolitical situation. Drawing on my analysis of frames used by Putin and Medvedev in the official speeches they delivered between 2000 and 2016 on the occasion of Victory Day I argue that especially prominent in this period were attempts to tailor the discourse about the war for the purposes of constructing a new Russian identity, boosting intergenerational solidarity,

and promoting national unity over political, ideological, and ethnic cleavages. Some scholars have argued that the Great Patriotic War has become a foundational myth for post-Soviet Russia (Koposov 2011: 163). As I have shown here, this was at least in part a consequence of the failure of attempts to create alternative foundational myths based on the birth of the new Russian state from the ruins of the USSR.

Given the central function of the war myth in Russian nation building—and Russia’s self-understanding as a great power with geopolitical ambitions in Europe and in the world—one can easily explain Russia’s fierce resistance to the historical revisionism that developed in Eastern Europe, in particular concerning the role of the USSR in World War II (Onken 2007; Mälksoo 2009; Kangaspuro 2011; Torbakov 2012). The memory of the war serves as an important source of legitimization for Russia’s foreign policy and therefore, as Torbakov has argued, “Moscow perceives attempts of some new EU members to correct the ‘mnemonic map of Europe’ as a desire to question the self-perception, prestige and the international status of Russia” (Torbakov 2012: 103). This is where the domestic and the international dimensions of memory politics in Russia come together: the memory of the war has become a unique symbolic resource for constructing national identity, and as long as it has mass support, the prospects for acceptance of alternative revisionist narratives of World War II by the ruling elite will remain very slim. The most likely scenario is that Russian and European narratives of World War II, together with the political purposes they serve, will continue to diverge.

**Acknowledgements** The research on which this chapter is based was supported by the Russian Foundation for Humanities, grant no. 11-03-00202.

## NOTES

1. It is a matter of debate whether post-Soviet Russia can be considered a “nation” (Miller 2007; Zevelev 2009; Malinova 2010). For want of a better term, however, and taking into consideration the different meanings of the term “nation” in Russian and English, in this chapter I use the terms “national identity” and “national history.”
2. Presidential speeches are available starting from 2000, when the official website of the President was created. Speeches of President Yeltsin were not published in full; even the official newspapers such as *Izvestiia* and *Rossiiskaia gazeta* published only extracts or summaries. This may have



- represented a deliberate attempt to break with the methods of Soviet propaganda, which paid heightened attention to the rhetoric of the party leader, and to adopt the Western approach to media coverage.
3. Transcripts are available via the official websites <http://www.kremlin.ru> and <http://archive.kremlin.ru>. In my analysis, I first identified the main frames and then registered corresponding statements. My aim was to reveal the repertoire of frames and not to measure the frequency of their use.
  4. The only exception here was Dmitry Medvedev's interview for the newspaper *Izvestiia*, published on the eve of the 65th anniversary of the Victory. In this interview Medvedev gave "an official assessment of the figure of Stalin," arguing: "Stalin perpetrated a mass of crimes against his own people. And despite the fact that he worked very hard, despite that fact that under his leadership the country achieved successes, what he did to his own people is unforgivable" (Medvedev 2010a). (It is perhaps noteworthy that Medvedev switched to the passive form when it came to addressing the issues of Stalin's crimes; a literal translation of the Russian original would be "that which was done in relation to one's own people is unforgivable.")

## REFERENCES

- Assmann, J. 2008. "Communicative and Cultural Memory". In *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. A. Erll, and A. Nünning, 109–118. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter.
- Entman, R.M. 1993. "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm". *Journal of Communication* 43 (4): 51–58.
- Ferretti, M. 2004. "Obretennaia identichnost'. Novaia 'ofitsial'naia istoriia' putinskoi Rossii." *Neprikosnovennyi zapas* 4(36). Retrieved 14 November 2013 from <http://magazines.russ.ru/nz/2004/4/fe11.html>.
- Goffman, E. 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gill, G. 2012. *Symbolism and Regime Change: Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hosking, G. 2006. *Rulers and Victims. The Russians in the Soviet Union*. Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Kalinin, I. 2011. "Nostalgic Modernisation: The Soviet Past as 'Historical Horizon'". *Slavonica* 17 (3): 156–166.
- Kangaspuro, M. 2011. "The Victory Day in History Politics". In *Between Utopia and Apocalypse. Essays on Social Theory and Russia*, ed. E. Kahla, 292–304. Jyväskylä: Bookwell.
- Kaspe, S. 2012. *Politicheskaia teologiya i nation-building: obschie polozenia, rossiiskii sluchai*. Moscow: ROSSPEN.

- Koposov, N. 2011. *Pamiat' strogogo rezhima. Istoriia i politika Rossii*. Moscow: NLO.
- Krasnikov, E. 1995. "Oppozitsiia." *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, May 11.
- Malinova, O. 2009. "Russian Political Discourse in the 1990s: Crisis of Identity and Conflicting Pluralism of Ideas". In *Identities and Politics During the Putin Presidency: The Discursive Foundations of Russia's Stability*, ed. P. Casula, and J. Perovic, 94–111. Stuttgart: Ibidem.
- Malinova, O. 2010. "Defining and Redefining Russianness: The Concept of 'Empire' in Public Discourses in Post-Soviet Russia". In *The Challenges of Ethno-Nationalism: Case Studies in Identity Politics*, ed. A. Guelke, 60–77. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Malinova, O. 2011. "Tema proshlogo v ritorike prezidentov Rossii". *Pro et contra* 15 (3–4): 106–122.
- Malinova, O. 2015. *Aktual'noe proshloe: Simvolicheskaiia politika vlastvuiushchei elity i dilemmy rossiiskoi identichnosti*. Moscow: Politicheskaiia entsiklopediia.
- Mälksoo, M. 2009. "The Memory Politics of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns and the Collective Memory of Europe". *European Journal of International Relations* 15 (4): 653–680.
- Martin, T. 2001. *Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union*. London: Cornell University Press.
- Medvedev, D. 2008. "Vystuplenie na parade, posviashchennom 67-ei godovshchine Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from <http://www.kremlin.ru/transcripts/30>.
- Medvedev, D. 2010a. "Nam ne nado stesniat'sia rasskazyvat' pravdu o voine—tu pravdu, kotoruiu my vystradali." *Izvestiia*, 7 May. Retrieved 7 May 2010 from <http://www.izvestia.ru/pobeda/article3141617/>.
- Medvedev, D. 2010b. "Vystuplenie na prieme ot imeni Prezidenta Rossii po sluchaiu 65-letii Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from <http://news.kremlin.ru/transcripts/7688>.
- Merridale, C. 2003. "Redesigning History in Contemporary Russia". *Journal of Contemporary History* 38 (1): 13–28.
- Miller, A. 2007. "Natsiia kak ramka politicheskoi zhizni". *Pro et contra* 11 (3): 6–20.
- Miller, A. 2009. "Rossiia: vlast' i istoriia". *Pro et contra* 13 (3–4): 6–23.
- Miller, A. 2012a. "Istoricheskaiia politika v Vostochnoi Evrope nachala XXI veka". In *Istoricheskaiia politika v XXI veke*, ed. A. Miller, and M. Lipman, 7–32. Moscow: NLO.
- Miller, A. 2012b. "Istoricheskaiia politika v Rossii: novyi povorot". In *Istoricheskaiia politika v XXI veke*, ed. A. Miller, and M. Lipman, 328–367. Moscow: NLO.
- Morozov, V. 2009. *Rossiia i Drugie: identichnost' i granitsy politicheskogo soobshchestva*. Moscow: NLO.

- Olick, J.K. 2007. "From Usable Pasts to the Return of the Repressed." *The Hedgehog Review* 9 (2): 19–31.
- Onken, E.-C. 2007. "The Baltic States and Moscow's 9 May Commemoration: Analyzing Memory Politics in Europe". *Europe-Asia Studies* 59 (1): 23–46.
- Polianovskii, M. 1995. "My za tsenoi ne postoiali." *Izvestiia*, June 23.
- Putin, V. 1999. "Rossiia na rubezhe tysiacheletii." *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, 30 December. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://www.ng.ru/politics/1999-12-30/4\\_millennium.html](http://www.ng.ru/politics/1999-12-30/4_millennium.html).
- Putin, V. 2000. "Vystuplenie na parade, posviashchennom 55-ei godovshchine Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2000/05/09/0001\\_type82634type122346\\_28722.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2000/05/09/0001_type82634type122346_28722.shtml).
- Putin, V. 2003. "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniuu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," 16 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2003/05/16/1259\\_type63372type63374type82634\\_44623.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2003/05/16/1259_type63372type63374type82634_44623.shtml).
- Putin, V. 2005a. "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniuu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," 25 April. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/04/25/1223\\_type63372type63374type82634\\_87049.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/04/25/1223_type63372type63374type82634_87049.shtml).
- Putin, V. 2005b. "Vystuplenie na priome, posviashchennom 60-ei godovshchine Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/05/09/1444\\_type63374type82634type122346\\_87849.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/05/09/1444_type63374type82634type122346_87849.shtml).
- Putin, V. 2005c. "Vystuplenie na voennom parade, posviashchennom 60-ei godovshchine Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/05/09/1100\\_type63374type82634type122346\\_87819.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/05/09/1100_type63374type82634type122346_87819.shtml).
- Putin, V. 2007. "Vystuplenie na parade, posviashchennom 62-ei godovshchine Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2007/05/09/1127\\_type63374type82634type122346\\_127658.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2007/05/09/1127_type63374type82634type122346_127658.shtml).
- Putin, V. 2012. "Vystuplenie na parade, posviashchennom 67-ei godovshchine Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from <http://news.kremlin.ru/transcripts/15271>.
- Putin, V. 2013. "Vystuplenie na voennom parade v oznamenovanie 68-ei godovshchiny Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 14 November 2013 from <http://kremlin.ru/transcripts/18089>.
- Putin, V. 2014. "Vystuplenie na voennom parade v oznamenovanie 68-ei godovshchiny Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine," 9 May. Retrieved 15 May 2014 from <http://www.kremlin.ru/transcripts/20989>.
- Simon, A., and M. Xenos. 2000. "Media Framing and Effective Public Deliberation". *Political Communication* 17 (4): 363–376.
- Smith, K.E. 2002. *Mythmaking in the New Russia: Politics and Memory During the Yeltsin Era*. Ithaca, NY & London: Cornell University Press.

- Sokolov, M. 1995. "Bei, baraban, i voennaia fleita svisti na maner snegiria." *Kommersant-Daily*, November 30.
- Torbakov, I. 2012. "'Nepredskazuemoe' ili 'neopredelennoe' proshloe? Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia i rossiiskaia istoricheskaia politika". In *Simvolicheskaiia Politika: Konstruirovanie predstavlenii o proshlom kak vlastnyi resurs*, ed. O. Malinova, 91–125. Moscow: INION RAN.
- Wertsch, J.V. 2008. "Blank Spots in Collective Memory: A Case Study of Russia". *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 617: 58–71.
- Yakovlev, A. 1996. "Yesli bolshevizm ne sdaetsia." *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, October 10.
- Yashmanov, B. 1996. "U nas na vsekh odna pobeda." *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, May 8.
- Yeltsin, B. 1995a. "Fragment doklada Prezidenta Rossii B.N. Yel'tsina 8 maia na torzhestvennoi vstreche v Kremle 'Polveka velikoi pobedy.'" *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, May 11.
- Yeltsin, B. 1995b. "My dolzhny chtit' svoiu Konstitutsiiu. Interv'iu prezidenta Rossii Yel'tsina Obshchestvennomy Rossiiskomu Televideniiu." *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, May 26.
- Yeltsin, B. 1996. "Poslanie Prezidenta Rossii Borisa Yel'tsina Federal'nomu Sobraniuu Rossiiskoi Federatsii. Rossiia, za kotoruiu my v otvete." Retrieved 14 November 2013 from [http://www.intelros.ru/2007/02/05/poslanie\\_prezidenta\\_rossii\\_borisa\\_elcina\\_federalnomu\\_sobraniju\\_rf\\_rossija\\_za\\_kotoruju\\_my\\_v\\_otvete\\_1996\\_god.html](http://www.intelros.ru/2007/02/05/poslanie_prezidenta_rossii_borisa_elcina_federalnomu_sobraniju_rf_rossija_za_kotoruju_my_v_otvete_1996_god.html).
- Yeltsin, B. 1999. "Velikii den' pobedy nashei. Vystuplenie Prezidenta RF B.N. Yel'tsina na parade, posviashchennom 54-ei godovshchine Pobedy v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine." *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, May 12.
- Zaiavlenie parlamentskoi sluzhby RF. 1993. *Rossiiskaia gazeta*, May 12.
- Zevelev, I. 2009. Budushchee Rossii: natsiia ili tsivilizatsiia? Raspad SSSR i 'russkii vopros'. *Rossiia v global'noi politike* 5: 88–102.
- Zhurzhenko, T. 2013. "'Obschaia pobeda'? 'Chuzhaia voina'? Natsionalizatsiia pamiati o Vtoroi mirovoi voine v ukrainsko-rossiiskom pogranich'e." *Puti Rossii. Istorizatsiia sotsial'nogo opyta*, 93–125. Moscow: NLO.
- Zubkova, E., and A. Kupriianov. 1999. "Vozvrashchenie k 'Russkoi idee': Krizis identichnosti i natsional'naia istoriia". *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 5: 4–28.
- Zvereva, V. 2004. "Istoriia na TV: konstruirovanie proshlogo". *Otechestvennye zapiski* 5 (20): 160–169.

War and Memory in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus

Fedor, J.; Kangaspuro, M.; Lassila, J.; Zhurzhenko, T.

(Eds.)

2017, XXVII, 506 p. 21 illus., 19 illus. in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-66522-1