



Russian President Vladimir Putin holds a portrait of his father, war veteran Vladimir Spiridonovich Putin, during the Immortal Regiment march on 9 May 2022, Victory Day, in central Moscow. The annual Victory Day march commemorates the anniversary of Russia's victory over Nazi Germany in World War II. (Photo by Alexey Maishev, Sputnik via the Associated Press)

Russia's Latest Historical Revisionism and Reinventing the Future

Robert F. Baumann, PhD

Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine has triggered a transformation in Russia's domestic media-information environment, partly through new laws on censorship but even more so by means of a dramatic intensification of trends evident from the beginning of Vladimir Putin's second indefinite tenure as president. As this author noted in a 2019 article in *Military Review* on the mobilization of history to galvanize Russian nationalism, the Putin regime and its allies have been aggressively selling a new civilizational vision pitting Russia against the West.¹ Ukraine stands squarely in the center of this vision. Putin was signaling his intentions toward Ukraine long before the invasion launched on 24 February 2022. Even after the seizure of Crimea in 2014, the West remained skeptical that Putin would act on the increasingly aggressive (and risky) logic of his emerging worldview. After all, we thought, the consequences of doing so would be unpredictable and very possibly destabilizing for Russia. That Putin took this rash step reveals just how deeply invested he and his cronies have become in a contrived historical interpretation of Russia's true nature and destiny. This tends to happen in societies where the leadership is minimally accountable and increasingly insular.

Today the world is fixated on the war in Ukraine and rightfully so. However, it is important to figure out the logic that is driving Russian behavior not only now but into the future. If we look carefully at Russia's internal public affairs blitz to sell the war—oops, “special military operation”—it is evident that groundwork is being laid for a fundamental transformation of Russian society. This is in part accelerated by Western military support to Ukraine and economic sanctions imposed in reaction to the invasion of Ukraine. However, there is ample reason to speculate that this is where Putin was heading all along. In any case, for Putin it appears there is no turning back. The West and Russia may someday reconcile, but it is almost inconceivable that it will happen on Putin's watch. The decision to invade Ukraine is the most important and fateful decision of Putin's tenure and he has staked too much politically to change course.

This article posits that, in the wake blundering into its current predicament, the work of ideological justification has been turned over to historians. The regime believes that historical indoctrination provides

a key to shaping national identity, which in turn offers an organizing concept in the form of Putin's “Russian world.” Before our very eyes a new reality, or perhaps “unreality,” is gaining momentum in Russia via a concerted propaganda effort by the entire array of official and semiofficial media, not to mention state-supported social organizations, schools, and so on. The cultivation of a sense of anti-Western grievance throughout Putin's tenure prepared the public for this to some extent. Even so, the consequences of invading Ukraine require a much greater effort. Where the media are concerned, Russia is now under something like martial law in the information realm. The last independent media voices, such as *Ekho Moskvy* (Echo Moscow radio), *Dozhd'* (Rain TV, relocated to Latvia), or most recently *Novoe vremia* (New Times, print license pulled) have found it impossible to continue normal operations under the new legal regime that criminalizes even implicit criticism of the president, the army, or the war, and, for good measure, news considered “false” by the government. Still, Putin's regime faces a huge challenge in sustaining public support for what increasingly looks like a protracted war.

For the purpose of simplifying the analysis of Russia's information campaign, it pays to examine three broad categories of messaging. The first and most fundamental concerns the unprecedented role of history and historians as the bearers of a new worldview. The second embraces the myriad of efforts to discredit any alternative sources of information, particularly those emanating from the West but pointedly including also traitorous messaging from people (disproportionately from the most educated and worldly elements of Russian society) branded as enemies

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within. Third, and in some ways the most interesting, is the officially inspired effort to reimagine a future that aligns with Russia's current state of isolation from the West and justifies sacrifices to come. Aesopian reasoning concerning the "sour grapes" of Russia's broken relationship with the West will not alone be sufficient. In other words, it is necessary to construe the socioeconomic tempest created by the West's economic whirlwind withdrawal from Russia as inevitable. Moreover,

civilizations, in effect) tracing back to the ancient world.³ He postulated that the Russia-centered Slavic historical type was rising to challenge the West as characterized Romano-Germanic civilization. The two could never be reconciled and Slavic civilization could only prevail by unifying around shared values such as Orthodox Christianity, traditional culture, and the network of related Slavic languages.⁴ Danilevsky explicitly asserted that Europe was innately hostile to Russia.

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propagandists now hail isolation as a blessing in disguise, revealing the necessary path forward to displace all the Western economic and cultural entanglements that were never more than a betrayal of Russia's true self. Thus, the government is sparing no effort to convince the population that domestic social and economic reconstruction is not a spasmodic reaction to supplant all that has been carelessly lost due to a reckless decision to invade Ukraine. On the contrary, the official view maintains that the West always wished only harm to Russia. Consequently, now that conflict is out in the open, Russia has a unique opportunity to build a future that aligns with its own non-European civilizational values. Sadly, this lofty theorizing is but a euphemism for continued support for the Putin regime.

To begin with a review of the crucial historical component in Putin's Russian transformation, it is essential to remember that the current revisionism returns to a long-developing narrative that far predates the Russian Revolution of 1917.² One seminal milestone in nationalist thought is Nikolai Danilevsky's once again famous book, *Russia and Europe*, first published in 1869. Danilevsky stood out among Pan-Slavist intellectuals of his day in his attempt to put a scientific veneer on what resembled a manifesto for empire. Drawing heavily from a theory of civilizations written by the German idealist philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder, Danilevsky interpreted the march of progress through so-called cultural-historical types (different

Notably, in 1999, a Russian scholar of Danilevsky and Pan-Slavism, B. P. Valuev updated the argument to suggest that the geopolitical reality remains the same except that the West is now led by the United States.⁵ In any case, Danilevsky's arguments resonated among his contemporaries in the Russian officer corps as well as a few towering culture figures such as the writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky.⁶

As it entered World War I, Russia harbored ambitions of liberating Slavic peoples under Habsburg domination in the same manner in which it had helped Serbia and Bulgaria to break free of Ottoman domination early in the nineteenth century. Of course, military failure followed by revolution put Russia on a different trajectory as the Bolsheviks, at least for a time, pushed Russian nationalism aside. Ironically, ideas of a separate and distinct Russian civilization remained alive and well among many educated exiles who fled the revolution and formed the first wave of a cultural diaspora in Europe. Eurasianism, as the concept came to be known, reflected a deep emotional attachment to Russia along with skepticism toward Western values. Eurasianists longed for a future day when Russia would throw off communism and resume its true historical path.⁷

One important figure in emigration was historian George Vernadsky, who eventually made his way to Yale University where he taught for many years and helped shape the first generation of American historians of Russia. In brief, Vernadsky traced

Russian distinctiveness in part to over two centuries of Mongol domination following the catastrophic invasion of Kievan Rus' by Chinghiz Khan's forces in 1242. This experience supposedly diverted Russian ruling culture away from the slightly anarchic and decentralized governance by the princes of Kievan Rus' and more toward the example of the Golden Horde, which was essentially the local franchise of the slowly disintegrating Mongol Empire. The rise of

stagnation, political upheaval and rampant corruption, Russians lost patience.

Meanwhile, some nationalist ideologues resurrected ideas from Russia's imperial past. For example, Danilevsky's work quickly found a new publisher. Also, once prominent figures written out of the Soviet version of history suddenly reappeared. Among the more interesting is the charismatic Gen. Mikhail Skobelev, widely regarded as a hero of the Russo-Turkish War

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a second great steppe empire under Tamerlane the Great brought the defeat of the Golden Horde in the 1390s and in time opened the way for the rise of Muscovy. Vernadsky affirmed the view that Muscovy, on the road to becoming Russia, had a clear line of descent back to Kiev (Kyiv, today, in modern Ukraine).⁸ Today, this is a cardinal tenet of Russia's official history, which goes on to cite annexation of Crimea by Russia as fully justified by the claim that Ukraine still rightfully belongs to Russia. In this context, the separation of Ukraine from Russia by the Soviet Union was an unfortunate historical accident.

In his 2012 work, *A Concise History of Russia*, Professor Paul Bushkovitch of Yale University reminds us that the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 curiously resulted in greater disruption of existing interpretations of imperial Russia than of the USSR itself.⁹ The highly ideological Soviet state provided a dominant—if frequently shifting—official narrative about Russians' place on the world stage. In its absence, Russians suffered historical disorientation. For many, the embrace of Western values such as freedom of expression looked promising, beginning with Mikhail Gorbachev's *glasnost* (openness) campaign in the late 1980s even before the Soviet collapse. But the bloom came off that rose during the tumultuous years of Boris Yeltsin's presidency of the freshly minted Russian Federation when the country simply could not find its footing in a democratic, free market environment. Mired in economic

of 1876–77 as well as a seminal figure in the conquest of Central Asia. Notwithstanding several controversies associated with his career and persona, Russian historians welcomed him back into the pantheon of great Russian commanders.¹⁰ A museum opened on his former estate and an impressive statue popped up in Moscow near the Combined Arms Academy.

By the start of the new millenium, philosophical conservatives and Russian nationalists embraced the idea that Russia is a distinctive Eurasian civilization, entitled not only to its own values but its own broadly defined geographical space. This loose and eclectic group of advocates spanned from ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskii to communist party leader Genadii Ziuganov to Alexander Dugin, a former Moscow University political philosopher with fiercely anti-Western views. Meanwhile, the writings of Eurasian political geographer and historian, Lev Gumilev, whose work bridged the Soviet and post-Soviet eras, found an enthusiastic audience.¹¹

Putin's intellectual biography generally tracks with social currents following the breakup of the Soviet Union. His extraordinary path to the presidency as Boris Yeltsin's handpicked successor did not immediately reveal his beliefs, which were probably still in formation. Although he did not immediately adopt the rhetoric of Eurasianism, his preoccupation with Russia's place in the world, a profound sense that Russia had been unfairly diminished in stature by a disrespectful

West, and a natural predilection to muse about a return to past glory portended a budding affinity with nationalist views.

Putin biographer Karen Dawisha notes that on the eve of becoming acting president, Putin published a vision statement titled “Russia at the Turn of the Millenium.” In this message, he offered a preliminary description of what he believed were crucial tenets of Russia’s revival. Declining to propose an ideology, he cited the importance of Russia’s status as a great power (*derzhavnost’*), a powerful central state, and social solidarity. He professed to be a defender of human rights within a Russian cultural context. Not surprisingly, each of these factors justified greater concentration of power around the president.¹² The very next day, retired KGB general and future member of the Duma, Russia’s parliament, Nikolai Leonov employed the phrase “special operation” in calling for the restoration of Russia’s global influence.¹³

Out of these early trends a logical path appeared for ambitious individuals seeking positions of influence. Vladimir Medinsky, Russia’s minister of culture since 2012, read the tea leaves as well as anyone. In 2002 he affiliated with the United Russia political party, which staunchly backed Putin, and began a slightly idiosyncratic political ascent. In 2011, he completed his doctoral degree in history, not usually a ticket to high office in most countries. Despite a public controversy concerning allegations of plagiarism, Medinsky set himself up as an authoritative voice on Putin’s presidential commission to combat the “falsification of history.” Though generally soft-spoken, Medinsky is ever on the attack against those who would besmirch Russia’s historical reputation.

The idea of an officially approved narrative of history confirmed the resurrection of certain politically useful aspects of Soviet culture. Of course, the days when every dissertation had to quote Vladimir Lenin or any criticism of Soviet rule was professionally disqualifying may be gone, but those who dissent on matters like the war in Ukraine can expect withering criticism and possible criminal penalties. To be sure, historians enjoy significant interpretative latitude if they avoid (or reject) criticisms of Soviet conduct before and during in World War II, still remembered as the Great Patriotic War in Russia, or acclaim the accomplishments of empire-builders such as Peter the First or Catherine

the Second. Subjects too sensitive to objectively discuss now include Soviet-German collusion stemming from the Molotov-Ribbentrop nonaggression pact of August 1939, the massacre at Katyn forest perpetrated by the Soviets against thousands of Polish prisoners, the reputation of Joseph Stalin, and the conduct of the Red Army during the “liberation” campaign across eastern Europe to Berlin. Domestic historians have largely gotten the message, but Putin’s regime has regularly called out foreign scholars whose work runs afoul of the prescribed treatment. Denunciation of “falsifiers” (an old Soviet habit) has become a standard theme at annual Victory Day celebrations not only across Russia itself but also in some capitals of former Soviet republics.¹⁴ It is a regular theme as well at now frequent conferences on the Great Patriotic War.

The tip of the spear in Putin’s campaign to craft a patriotic narrative history is the Russian Military-Historical Society (RMHS), which was established in 2010 and is headed by none other than Medinsky. With regional affiliates spread across the country, the RMHS sponsors an amazing array of patriotic programs glorifying Russia’s military past. There is particular focus on generating interest among Russian youth. In fairness, most of the programs put the best possible face on Russian history and historical figures but usually do not stray too far from the facts other than to conveniently omit problematic details.

However, what is striking about the work of the RMHS in 2022 is its full-throated support of Russia’s war in Ukraine. Within twenty-four hours of the invasion, the RMHS website posted an official statement of unqualified support for the Special Operation signed by hundreds of members. According to the statement, “Russia never starts wars, it finishes them. The events in Ukraine did not begin yesterday, but at least eight years ago. Very soon the special operation to drive NATO and American training bases and the ideological successors of Bandera and Shukhevich out of Ukraine, will at last be complete.”¹⁵ It went on to denounce the ruling junta in Ukraine for the murder of women, children, and elderly in the Donbas region. In the same brief, utterly tone-deaf message, they proclaimed the cultural harmony and mutual affection between Russians and Ukrainians.

Since taking that public position, the RMHS has persistently put its version of history at the service of

the war effort. Two themes in particular stand out. The first is to draw comparisons between watershed moments in Russian history and the current struggle in Ukraine. The second is to characterize the war as vital to Russia's very existence. Victory Day (9 May) 2022 afforded a perfect opportunity to kick off a string of patriotically themed events.



People carry portraits of relatives who fought in World War II during the 9 May 2022 Immortal Regiment march at Nevsky Prospect, the main street of Saint Petersburg, Russia, commemorating the seventy-seventh anniversary of the end of World War II. (Photo by Dmitri Lovetsky, Associated Press)

One spreading element of political theater has been the organization of parades by so-called Immortal Regiments.¹⁶ These consist of people holding placards with photographs of soldiers who perished during the Great Patriotic War. Originally, this phenomenon involved individuals honoring ancestors or relatives, but has since become more generalized. Many cities included Immortal Regiments in their official parades this year. In previous years members of the Russian diaspora across the former Soviet Central Asian republics received Moscow's encouragement to march, but with war raging in Ukraine most governments in the region did not welcome such displays in 2022. Some, such as Kyrgyzstan, canceled normal Victory Day activities altogether and elsewhere commemoration was subdued.

Subsequently, on 25 May 2022, the Russian State Archive of Social-Political History staged a conference and documentary exhibition commemorating the 210th anniversary of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, better remembered as the Fatherland War. The implications were obvious. Only two weeks later, Medinsky addressed an international forum commemorating the 350th birthday of Peter the Great, whom he credited with transforming Russia into a great power. He made a particular point that Peter was a Westernizer only in a practical rather than a spiritual sense. By this interesting nuance, he meant that Peter sought to adopt what was useful from the West but was never a European

philosophically. His goal, as explained by Medinsky, was to prevent the West from turning Russia into a semicolony lacking real sovereignty and an independent destiny. Thus, Peter succeeded in creating the model for a multinational, multiconfessional state that Russia is today.¹⁷

Meanwhile, Russia brought the theme of Peter's reign to the public via a mobile museum in the famed Russian metro system. In a public statement, Aleksandra Konovchenko, executive director of the RMHS, quoted Peter, "Military art and the courage of commanders and the fearlessness of soldiers decide victory." She added that these words are extremely relevant today in the struggle against Nazism and world evil. QR codes inside each of the cars provide riders with instant commentary on many of the documents and pictures on display.¹⁸ Building on the concept, Moscow announced just a month later the unveiling of two historically themed tram cars, including one commemorating the birth of the Russian Empire.¹⁹

At the same time, the Russian Orthodox Church, a well-established friend of the Putin presidency, has also engaged. This year marked the publication of a new

work on the Russian hero and saint Prince Alexander Nevsky. Already the subject of two feature films and numerous memorials, Nevsky is the subject of a new book published by the church. The title is telling: *The Strategy of Alexander Nevsky and the Civilizational Transformation of the 13th Century*.²⁰ Available free in digital form online, B. E. Bagdasaryan's text manages to reinforce the now standard themes of opposition to the West, fighting to save a distinctive Russian Orthodox

has placed at risk the very existence of Russian civilization."²⁶ He argued that at this very moment Russians are living in the pages of a history textbook and unless they mobilize to meet the test it could be the last chapter. Others have joined the chorus. One, philosopher Vladimir Varvara, asserted that the Special Operation is so transcendently important that it cannot be grasped in mere military or political categories. Rather, it represents "a tectonic shift in world history."²⁷

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civilization, brilliant generalship, courage under duress, fierce patriotism, and so on.

At yet another public conference on 10 June concerning the establishment in Leningrad Oblast' (district) of a Memorial Complex to the Peaceful Residents of the Soviet Union who Perished during the Great Patriotic War, Medinsky reminded attendees that no less than 13.7 million Russian civilians died during the war.²¹ Conveniently, 12 June marked Russia Day, another opportunity to promote patriotic historical themes at festivities across the country. Putin stressed the vital importance of national solidarity in a public address.²² Of note was the announcement that thanks to the United Russia party official plaques honoring deceased heroes of the Special Operation in Ukraine were now on display in the Volgograd, Kirov, and Orenburg oblasts.²³ Many more are sure to follow. In Ufa, a large mural dedicated to a fallen Russian soldier adorns a wall of the local university.²⁴ The RMHS has also taken the monuments movement to the Donbas itself. In June, the Society announced that it would restore the Monument to the Undefeated in Krasnodar.²⁵

Still, even a history-based information campaign requires much more than pageantry and celebration of the past to galvanize the will of a population to send its children to war. Accordingly, Medinsky dramatically reiterated the stakes at a meeting of the Interagency Commission on Historical Enlightenment on 24 March 2022. Striking a note of urgency, he claimed, "Russia is today facing the greatest challenge in its history, which

Meanwhile, Medinsky claimed that a generation of young Ukrainians have been deceived by textbooks that instill hatred toward Russia. References to the patriotic struggle of Soviet partisans in Ukraine have given way to stories about the Ukrainian nationalist resistance movement under Stepan Bandera. Viewed through a Russian nationalist lens as a Nazi collaborator, Bandera remains a lightning rod. By trying to establish a link to current events, Russia's propagandists are attempting to solidify claims about denazification as a purpose for the war. That there has been a modest, ultranationalist, Nazi-friendly fringe in Ukraine is not in doubt. However, the idea that Ukraine itself is under a Nazi spell or that it was planning aggression against Russia grossly distorts reality. In any case, Medinsky used this example to return to the objective of indoctrinating Russian youth, immunizing them in effect against falsifications of the past. Given the importance of history in the overall struggle, he proudly noted that the RMHS has endorsed a new series of eleven textbooks that will allegedly provide a full and accurate picture.²⁸

In September 2020, the RMHS and the United Russia Party promoted the latest iteration of an event called "*Diktant Pobedy*" (Essay of Victory), a public competition aimed at youth but engaging all age groups in a contest to display the most knowledge about Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War. The event boasts an elaborate website, and hosts competitions in forty-five foreign countries as well as across Russia itself. A quiz constitutes an important part of the qualifying round.

Questions reflect both the Russian emphasis on rote memorization as well as the official nationalist spin.²⁹ This has led to some objections outside of Russia. A city in Kazakhstan termed the event “propaganda” and refused to participate.³⁰

Outside the circle of historians, the claims about the “special military operation” have been even more hyperbolic and apocalyptic. Oleg Matveichev, a political analyst and deputy chair of the State Duma Committee on Informational Politics, Technology and Communications, asserted in an interview, “War is ongoing with America, which seized Russia’s historical territory—Ukraine. Crudely stated, if we draw a comparison with 1941, contemporary America has marched not up to Moscow but to Donetsk and exploited the population of Ukraine ... whom they zombified.”³¹ So, let’s get this straight: A handful of American trainers captured Ukraine, duped the population, and weaponized them into a mortal threat against Russia.

The contention that the United States and NATO forced this war on Russia dates to the early weeks after the invasion. Condemning the “openly zoological Russophobia” of the West, political writer Konstantin Strigunov authored one of the more interesting articles depicting the broad implications of the “special operation” in the military periodical *Voenna-promyshlennyi Kur’er* on 28 March. He lashed out not only against Bandera terrorists in Ukraine but also against members

of Russia’s cultural elite who betrayed their country by withholding their support. He dismissed this “rabble” as “Russophobic, anti-Russian, immoral, unprincipled, cynical, selfish and degenerate.”³²

Crushing and discrediting all internal dissent over Ukraine is one vital aspect of the attempt to control the narrative of events. *The Moscow Times*, which is now based outside of Russia, reported in June that snitching now enjoys official encouragement.³³ A widespread practice during the Stalin era, informing on one’s neighbors intimidates dissenting voices. The authorities sanctimoniously assert that turning in a fellow citizen for such vaguely defined crimes as defaming the military, spreading false information, or insulting the president is a morally righteous and patriotic act. Putin, who has long publicly professed to be a champion of individual freedom, personally led the way with his 16 March declaration that the “self-cleansing of society” would serve the interests of the country by ridding it of “scum and traitors.”³⁴ In response, online sites, often identifiable by the letter “Z,” now exist where people can file reports on suspected violations. One publicized case occurred in the Buryat Republic in Siberia. There, a seventh grader reported a teacher’s expressed sadness about the casualties of war to her parents who in turn complained to the school and police. A court sentenced the accused to pay a fine of forty thousand rubles for “discrediting the armed forces.” As reported in *The Moscow Times*, every week the group Teachers’



Official homepage of “Diktant Pobedy” (Essay of Victory)



Alliance receives ten to fifteen letters from teachers who were fired, pressured to quit their jobs, or fined for their antiwar views.³⁵

Meanwhile, schools across Russia are rapidly integrating support for the “special operation” into informal activities, curriculum supplements, and so-called “important conversations.” *New Times* columnist Andrei Kolesnikov characterized this as Putinist indoctrination in the mode of *dvoemyслия* or “double-thought.” As Kolesnikov put it, “The indoctrination of children—this is the unconditional reflex of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.”³⁶ To date, most schools have required that pupils wear orange-and-black Saint George’s ribbons to school on Victory Day. Still, it is interesting that some teachers have declined to participate in some of the proposed programming and have received no punishments. Russian law, which does matter to some degree in these cases, only requires that teachers present officially approved curricula.³⁷ There is little reason to doubt that officially approved revisions are on the way for the fall. The Ministry of Enlightenment has already directed that pupils from the fifth to eleventh grades receive instruction on how Western economic sanctions will eventually benefit Russia by stimulating the replacement of foreign-made goods with domestic production.³⁸

At the same time, Russian media are widely denouncing Western news reports about Russian missile

Headed by lead singer Lyova Bortnik and guitarist Shura Uman, B-2 (or *Bi-2* in Russian—pronounced bee-dva) was formed in Belarus and has been a force on the Russian rock music scene for over twenty years. Hugely popular not only in Russia itself but also among Russia’s cultural diaspora from Israel to Australia to Europe, the band is not currently welcome to sing in Moscow due to its refusal to endorse the war in Ukraine. At a 27 September 2022 concert in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, they performed the live debut of their antiwar hit “Lullaby.” (Photo by author)

strikes against civilians or crimes committed by Russian soldiers as “fake.” Television stations such as Russia 1 have devoted considerable commentary to the alleged identification of doctored photographs, false reports, and so on.³⁹

Numerous online sites have gone so far as to publish lists of enemies and traitors. One such is Tsargrad TV, which has compiled a ranked list of over one hundred prominent traitors among Russia’s cultural elite. The top five include two bloggers (Ilya Varlamov and Rustem Adagamov), two singer/composers (Aleksei Potapenko and Nikikta Lomakin), and a film producer (Ilya Naishuller). All have disputed Russia’s pretext for war and in Potapenko’s case argued that the real Nazis and fascists in the current drama are Russians. The top-ranked woman on the list, at position number six, is actress Chulpan Khamatova, who blames Putin for igniting the conflict and asserts that she will not be able to return to Russia where she would have to

Lullaby

By B-2



The Belarusian band B-2 is not currently welcome to sing in Moscow due to its refusal to endorse the war in Ukraine. At a 27 September 2022 concert in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, they performed the live debut of their antiwar hit "Lullaby." To watch the full music video, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2-h_JUXw. (Graphic elements courtesy of [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com))

[Куплет 1]

Я устало закрываю глаза
Из глубокой темноты вызываю
Космос
Мой космос
Этот праздник обернулся бедой
Всё что было разделилось на до
И после
После

[Припев]

И как мне с этим жить
Я не смогу забыть
Спой мне колыбельную
И пусть кошмар уйдёт
Я должен точно знать
За что придётся отдать
Душу неразменную
Когда мой час пробьёт

[Куплет 2]

Я прошел сквозь отрицание зла
Только счастья от чужого добра
Не будет
Не будет
Мир животных изначально жесток
Но не звери нажимают курок
А люди
Люди

[Припев]

И как мне с этим жить
Я не смогу забыть
Спой мне колыбельную
И пусть кошмар уйдёт
Я должен точно знать
За что придется отдать
Душу неразменную
Когда мой час пробьёт

[Инструментал]

[Припев]

И как мне с этим жить
Я не смогу забыть
Спой мне колыбельную
И пусть кошмар уйдёт
Я должен точно знать
За что придется отдать
Душу неразменную
Когда мой час пробьёт

[Verse 1]

I wearily close my eyes
From deep darkness I call
Cosmos
My cosmos
This holiday turned into a disaster
All that was divided into
And after
After

[Chorus]

And how can I live with it
I won't be able to forget
Sing me a lullaby
And let the nightmare go
I must know for sure
What you have to give
Soul inexchangeable
When my time is up

[Verse 2]

I went through the denial of evil
Only happiness from someone else's good
Will not
Will not
The animal world is inherently cruel
But it's not the animals that pull the trigger
But people
People

[Chorus]

And how can I live with it
I won't be able to forget
Sing me a lullaby
And let the nightmare go
I must know for sure
What will you have to give
Soul inexchangeable
When my time is up

[Instrumental]

[Chorus]

And how can I live with it
I won't be able to forget
Sing me a lullaby
And let the nightmare go
I must know for sure
What will you have to give
Soul inexchangeable
When my time is up

call black white and live a lie. This she declines to do. Other well-known (in Russia, at least) figures on the list include rapper Oxymoron (thirteenth); singer Maria Zaitseva (twentieth), soloist and composer for the duo #2MASHI; and Boris Grebenshchikov (twenty-first), lead singer and guitarist for the well-known rock band Aquarium. Jailed political opposition leader Aleksei Navalny comes in fifteenth.⁴⁰ The fact that so many

the Russia's future. Journalist Strigunov's overarching view, shared by Medinsky, is that Russia faces an unprecedented historical crisis, one that divides modern Russian history into two periods: before and after 24 February. This is an astonishing claim that reflects the current siege mentality in Moscow. Medinsky argues that that Russia must stand up for the truth, and part of that truth is that the survival of Russian civilization

“Russia faces an unprecedented historical crisis, one that divides modern Russian history into two periods: before and after 24 February. This is an astonishing claim that reflects the current siege mentality in Moscow.”

celebrities dissented over the war drew a particularly vitriolic outburst (noted above) from Putin himself back in March.

In some instances, Russian bands have endured concert cancellations after statements or actions deemed to be critical of the war. The long popular rock group *Mashina Vremeni* (Time Machine) and its lead singer Andrei Makarevich enjoy the distinction of having concerts cancelled both by the former Soviet regime and the current one under Putin. Another venerable Russian band, B-2, endured the cancellation of a concert in Saint Petersburg on 17 June. The reason was that they had refused to perform in front of a prowar banner at in Omsk, Siberia, back in April. Yet another hugely popular group, DDT, and its lead singer Yuri Shevchuk spoke out against the invasion and suffered the loss of concert bookings in Moscow.⁴¹

The Tsargrad site has also leapt into the public discussion about charting Russia's future course. Even back in the 1990s President Boris Yeltsin acknowledged that Russia needed to discover a new identity and purpose. The Ukraine war and subsequent sanctions have infused enormous energy into the dialog since February. Tsargrad has taken the lead on promoting a return to tsarist rule. One article published on the 350th anniversary of Peter the Great's birth speculated about the lessons his career holds for the *next emperor*.⁴²

Sources a little closer to the government soft-pedal a return to monarchy but staunchly support Putin's authoritarianism and readily join the debate about

is on the line.⁴³ Strigunov takes this deluded view of reality as step further, claiming “the special operation is an act of preemptive Russian self-defense, since it was well known that the West was readying the Kyiv regime to strike at us.” Therefore, he argues, the only way forward is not only to support military action in Ukraine but to transform Russia itself. In this light, Western sanctions and the systemic shock to Russia present an opportunity for the country to reinvent itself in ways harmonious with traditional Russian values.⁴⁴

Strigunov invokes the wisdom of Stalin: “As Comrade Stalin said, ‘the supreme thing in life is an idea. When there is no idea, then there is no goal for activity, when there is no goal, there is no clear focal point on which to concentrate the will.’ The actual content of this idea remains in question, although we already know that the most important component is justice. We must endow this word with concrete meaning, which will permit us to establish the vector for the development of Russia and the entire realm of Russian civilization, unbounded by the borders of the Russian Federation.”⁴⁵ Of course, words like justice and freedom take on a paradoxical, Orwellian meaning in the search for a new national vision statement.

A nearly autocratic executive at the top is a central feature of this vision alongside intensely resurgent Russian nationalism and the Orthodox Church. In this context, the claim that the West has adopted a totalitarian “cancel culture” dominated by LGTBQ activists, race theorists, history falsifiers, and Russophobes is a

common talking point used to confirm the view that Russia is not part of Europe. In Medinsky's assessment, the role of historians is more important than ever. Russians must study their past in order to extract the lessons that will take it into the future. He speaks of the vital importance of archival research in this process. The consciousness of children must be carefully nurtured by crafting accurate historical memories for them to develop immunity against false and insidious assaults on Russia's past. Young Russians must learn to love their country based on unquestioned certitude about its glorious destiny. Drawing a comparison to World War II, Medinsky contends that if the present moment is 1943, then 1945 is still ten years away.⁴⁶ New youth programs, including the planned resurrection of something like the Young Pioneers of the Soviet era, are springing up across the country. Putin and his circle believe that they can direct the consciousness of the population. Perhaps they are right.

In February 2022, the RMHS hastily launched a new journal titled *Ideology of the Future*. In the fifth issue published in June, Aleksandr Prokhanov, a cofounder of the Isborsk Club (an influential political discussion group), addressed Russian values, including what he termed the "victory code." Boiled down, it implies that the DNA of victory, overcoming all manner of historical obstacles from conquering the steppe to defeating the Nazis, is the driving theme of Russia's past.⁴⁷ The most recent victory, so it is claimed, was the movement of Russian troops into Kazakhstan to rescue a neighboring government. Another commentator, historian Yuri Riubtsov of the Military University of the Ministry of Defense, writes that the "special military operation" in Ukraine is intended to put the finishing touches on Great Patriotic War and accomplish the final defeat of Nazism.⁴⁸

Ideology of the Future is deeply entangled with a new take on the past. For good measure, the acting chair of the Department of History at the new Donetsk

National University, Vladimir Agapov, draws an analogy with the struggle against genocide in the Donbass in 1941–1943.⁴⁹ The remainder of issue number five continues in a similar spirit, extolling Russian civilization, attacking "fake information" from the West, denouncing European media, conjuring purported lessons from history, urging a purge of alien liberal thought in Russia, and so on. Almost every piece is the work of an academically credentialed author from a governmental agency or public university.⁵⁰

Whereas Russia was just a few years ago inching slowly toward a semitotalitarian information landscape, a frenzied rush is now underway. Thus far, the Putin regime has had considerable success not only in bringing this transformation about but in convincing a large majority of the population to acclaim it as virtuous. Yet, it is not clear that this mood is sustainable in the face of hardships to come. There is reason to suspect that Putin needs to prolong the crisis atmosphere in order to attenuate public recognition of the full consequences of his war. Moreover, even in a closed society facts on the ground eventually matter. From this perspective, talk is growing that the struggle against the West will be of long duration. Of course, an extended Cold (or hot, as in Ukraine) War could be essential to Putin's hold on popular support but entails some political risk.⁵¹ Propaganda will not be enough to sustain the cause of conquering Ukraine. It is one thing to gain passive public support for official policy and quite another to induce Russians to put their lives on the line in the Ukrainian meatgrinder.⁵² At the same time, there are indications online and on Russian TV that the most strident supporters of the war in Ukraine are becoming restless and frustrated with the lack of progress.⁵³ ■

Author's note: Spellings and transliteration from Russian reflect the Library of Congress system except in instances when a different spelling is already widely established.

Notes

1. Robert Baumann, "Mobilizing History to Promote Russian Patriotism and a New Past," *Military Review* 99, no. 6 (November-December 2019): 69–88. Former U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul offers an excellent close-up look at the Russian information campaign to transform the United States into an enemy in *From*

Cold War to Hot Peace: An American Ambassador in Putin's Russia (New York: Mariner Books, 2019), 316–428. McFaul was President Barack Obama's ambassador to Russia from 2009 to 2012. See also Robert Baumann, "Culture under Construction: History and Identity as Instruments of Russian Policy," in *Great Power Competition:*

The Changing Landscape of Great Power Politics, ed. Mahir Ibrahimov (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Army University Press, 2020), 39–54, accessed 10 September 2022, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/combat-studies-institute/csi-books/great-power-competition-the-changing-landscape-of-global-geopolitics.pdf>.

2. For a deep dive into some of the intellectual roots of current thinking, see Marlene Laruelle, "Russia as an Anti-liberal Eurasian Civilization," in *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–2015*, ed. Pål Kolstø and Helge Blakkisrud (Edinburgh, GB: Edinburgh University, 2016), 275–97, accessed 26 August 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1bh2kk5.17>; see also Madhavan Palat, "Eurasianism as an Ideology for Russia's Future," *Economic Political Weekly* 28, no. 51 (18 December 1993): 2799–801, 2803–5, 2807–9, accessed 6 June 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4400555>.

3. Concerning his influence on Nikolai Danilevsky, see Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, ed. T. Churchill (London: J. Johnson/L. Hansard, 1803), accessed 19 October 2022, <https://archive.org/details/outlinesaphilos00churgoog>.

4. Nikolai Danilevsky, *Rossia i Evropa* [Russia and Europe] (Saint Petersburg: 1869). Danilevsky projected a unified Pan-Slav empire embracing the Slavic peoples of Europe, with the likely exception of Catholic Poland. His analysis anticipated a clash of civilizations with the West.

5. B. P. Valuev, *Spory o sudbakh Rossii: N. Ia. Danilevskii i ego kniga "Rossia i Evropa"* [Disputes over the fate of Russia: N. Ia. Danilevsky and his book "Russia and Europe"] (Moscow: 1999), 266–67.

6. See Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Diary of a Writer*, an anthology of essays and short works composed between 1873 and 1881 and published in two volumes.

7. For a thorough overview, see Marlene Laruelle and Mischa Gabowitsch, *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology for Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

8. George Vernadsky, *A History of Russia*, 4th ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1954); see also *Kievan Civilization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972). Indeed, Vernadsky speaks of "Kievan Russia" on p. 4, thereby eliminating any doubt as to the historical continuity with the modern Russian people.

9. Paul Bushkovitch, *A Concise History of Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), xvi. During the Soviet period, local historians regarded the creation of the USSR as the natural outcome of history. With Soviet disintegration, the USSR became a passing phase interrupting the natural historical progression of the Russian Empire. Bushkovitch's work, by the way, is an outstanding one-volume overview of Russian history.

10. Despite all the fanfare in Russia, Skobelev is not admired in all scholarly circles. In his recent book, *The Russian Conquest of Central Asia: A Study in Imperial Expansion, 1814–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), British scholar Alexander Morrison finds much to criticize in Skobelev's approach to warfare, above all his responsibility for the massacre at Geok Tepe in 1881. Still, even in the West, many historians have called attention to Skobelev's gifts as a commander. The late British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery in his book, *A History of Warfare* (London: William Morrow, 1982), 456–61, described Skobelev as one of the greatest commanders of his age. In any case, it is perhaps noteworthy that Skobelev was philosophically in tune with many aspects of Eurasianism, including his embrace of Pan-Slavist views.

11. David Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye, "Russia's Asian Temptation," *International Journal* 55, no. 4 (Autumn 2000):

603–23, <https://doi.org/10.2307/40203503>. Schimmelpenninck notes the contemporary appeal in Russia of supposedly "Asian values" such as autocracy, order, and paternalism within this ideological scheme. Perhaps the most influential of Lev Gumilev's works is *Ot Rusi k Rossii* [From Rus' to Russia] (Moscow: ACT, 2004). Indeed, it currently appears in a published series of "Russian classics" released by the publishing house ACT in Moscow.

12. Karen Dawisha, *Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014), 233.

13. Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy, *Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 37–38.

14. Victory Day has always been marked by parades and memorial gatherings dedicated to those who sacrificed their lives in expelling Nazi invaders. In the past, prior to 2022 in any case, representatives of the United States, Britain and France often attended the proceedings if relations were cordial. Since Russia's annexation of Crimea, however, Putin has emphasized remembering the war as a common endeavor among the former Soviet republics still on good terms with Russia. This group excludes the Baltic states that have joined NATO, Georgia, and now Ukraine. However, on 9 May 2021 in Central Asian capitals, Russian ambassadors not only played prominent roles in elaborate public ceremonies emphasizing the shared triumph but were also outspoken in public remarks denouncing foreign historians for their distortions.

15. "Zaiavlenie pochetykh chlenov RVIO I ego aktiva po situatsii na Ukraine" [The declaration of honored members of the RMHS and its activists on the situation in Ukraine], Russian Military-Historical Society (RMHS), 25 February 2022, accessed 15 March 2022, <https://rvio.histrf.ru/activities/news/zayavlenie-pochetykh-chlenov-rossijskogo-voenno-istoricheskogo-obshestva-i-ego-aktiva-po-situatsii-na-ukraine>. The swiftness in publishing this declaration suggests that it was already drafted and ready to go—a reasonable supposition given Medinsky's status as a governmental minister and his implicit role as national ideologist.

16. Denis Melnikov, "V ufimskoi merii rasskazali, kak proidet 'Bessmertnyi polk'" [In the Ufa mayor's office instructions for the march of the Immortal Regiment announced], Prufy, 5 May 2022, accessed 5 May 2022, <https://prufy.ru/news/society/124365-v-ufimskoy-merii-rasskazali-kak-proidet-bessmertnyy-polk/>. The Prufy news site, based in Ufa, the capital of Bashkortostan within the Russian Federation, has been more forthcoming with information about war casualties and other consequences than most. However, as it has been progressively muzzled, an image of a man with tape over his mouth not often appears on the site. It has been widely speculated that minority nationalities such as the Bashkirs are suffering a disproportionate share of the war's casualties.

17. "Международный форум «История для будущего. Образ Петра»" [International forum "History for the Future. The Image of Peter"], RMHS, 8 June 2022, accessed 10 June 2022, <https://rvio.histrf.ru/activities/news/mezhdunarodnyj-forum-istoriya-dlya-budushhego-obraz-petra>.

18. "Tematicheskii poezd v chest' 350-letiya Petra Velikogo zapushchen v moskovskom metro" [Thematic train in honor of the 350th anniversary of Peter the Great launched in Moscow metro], RMHS, 6 June 2022, accessed 10 June 2022, <https://rvio.histrf.ru/activities/news/tematicheskij-poezd-v-chest-350-letiya-petra-velikogo-zapushchen-v-moskovskom-metro>.

19. "Ko Dniu moskovskogo transporta zapustili novye tramvai" [New trams launched on Moscow Transportation Day], RMHS, 11 July 2022, accessed 12 July 2022, <https://rvio.histrf.ru/activities/news/ko-dnyu-moskovskogo-transporta-zapustili-novye-tramvai>.

20. B. E. Bagdasaryan and Silvestr Lukashenko, *Strategiia Aleksandra Nevskogo i tsivilizatsionnye transformatsii 13-go veka* [The strategy of Aleksandr Nevsky and the civilizational transformations of the 13th century] (Publishing Committee of the Russian Orthodox Church: 2022), accessed 15 March 2022, <https://strategiya-aleksandra-nevskogo.ru/>.

21. "Prodolzhaitsia raboty po sozdaniiu Memorial'nogo kompleksa 'Mirnym zhiteliyam Sovetskogo Soiuza'" [Work continues on the memorial complex to peaceful residents of the Soviet Union], RMHS, 10 June 2022, accessed 10 June 2022, <https://rvio.histfr.ru/activities/news/prodolzhaitsia-raboty-po-sozdaniyu-memorialnogo-kompleksa-mirnym-zhiteliyam-sovetskogo-soyuza-pogibshim-v-hode-velikoj-otechestvennoj-voyny>. Completion of the new complex is scheduled for 2023.

22. Marina Karimova, "Seichas' vazhno byt' splochennymi: Putin Rossiian pozdravil s dnem rossii" [Now we need to be united, Putin to Russians on Russia Day], Prufy, 12 June 2022, accessed 13 June 2022, https://prufy.ru/news/society/125711-seychas_vazhno_byt_splochennymi_putin_pozdravil_rossiyan_s_dnem_rossii/.

23. RMHS, "V trekh regionakh strany v Den' Rossii otkryty pamiatnye doski Geroiam Rossii—uchastniki spetsoperatsii na Ukraine" [In three regions of the country Hero of Russia memorial plaques unveiled honoring participants in the Special Operation in Ukraine], 12 June 2022, accessed 13 June 2022, <https://rvio.histfr.ru/activities/news/v-treh-regionah-strany-v-den-rossii-otkryty-pamyatnye-doski-geroyam-rossii-uchastnikam-specoperacii-na-ukraine>.

24. Elnara Khasanova, "V Ufe na stene universiteta izobrazili pogibshogo voennogo spetsoperatsii na Ukraine" [In Ufa the image of a soldier killed in the Special Operation in Ukraine painted on the university wall], Ufa TV, 6 May 2022, accessed 10 May 2022, <https://utv.ru/material/v-ufe-na-stene-universiteta-izobrazili-pogibshogo-voennogo-v-hode-specoperacii-na-ukraine/>.

25. Nikolai Ovsienko, "Rossiiskoe voenno-istoricheskoe obshchestvo vosstanovit pamiatnik 'Nepokorenyye' v Krasnodare" [Russian Military Historical Society restores the memorial "Undeafed" in Krasnodar], 1 June 2022, accessed 2 June 2022, <https://rvio.histfr.ru/activities/news/nikolaj-ovsienko-rossiiskoe-voenno-istoricheskoe-obshestvo-vosstanovit-pamyatnik-nepokorenye-v-krasnodare>.

26. Vladimir Medinsky, "Rossiia sevodnia stolknulas' velichajshim vyzovom v svoei istorii" [Russia today confronts the greatest challenge in its history], 24 March 2022, accessed 25 March 2022, <https://rvio.histfr.ru/activities/news/vladimir-medinskij-rossiya-segodnya-stolknulas-s-velichajshim-vyzovom-v-svoei-istorii>.

27. Vladimir Varvara, as interviewed by Sergei Riazonov, "Vremia filosofstvovat," *Argumenty nedeli*, no. 27 (13 July 2022): 3.

28. Medinsky, "Rossiia sevodnia stolknulas' s velichajshim vyzovom v svoei istorii."

29. "Aksiia 'Diktant Pobedy: startovala v Rossii I zarubezh'e," RMHS, 3 September 2022, accessed 5 September 2022, <https://rvio.histfr.ru/activities/news/aksiya-diktant-pobedy-startovala-v-rossii-i-zarubezhe>. For instructions about how to participate, go directly to the site: <https://xn--80achcepozjj4ac6j.xn--p1ai/>.

30. Farangiz Najibullah, "Kazakh City Rejects Russian Quiz Event as 'Propaganda' amid War in Ukraine," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 4 September 2022, accessed 5 September 2022, <https://www.rferl.org/a/kazakhstan-russian-quiz-wwii-proppaganda-ukraine-wwr/32017858.html>.

31. Oleg Matveichev, "Krakh Evropy i NATO: global'naia voina s SShA zakonchitsia pol'noi pobedoi Rossii" [The downfall of Europe and NATO: The global war with the United States will

end with the complete victory of Russia], RIA (Russian Information Agency), 3 March 2022, accessed 4 March 2022, <https://newday-news.ru/moscow/752285.html>.

32. Konstantin Strigunov, "Razvitie Rossii v novykh realiiakh" [The development of Russia in the new reality], *Voenno-promyshlennyi kur'er*, 28 March 2022, accessed 1 April 2022, <https://vpk-news.ru/articles/66369>.

33. Anastasia Tenisheva, "Russians Urged to Snitch on Ukraine War Critics in Return to Soviet-Style Denunciations," *Moscow Times* (website), 30 June 2022, accessed 5 July 2022, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/06/30/russians-urged-to-snitch-on-ukraine-war-critics-in-return-to-soviet-style-denunciations-a78024>.

34. Ibid.

35. Irina Scherbakova, "In Russian Schools Teachers and Parents Pressured to Back War," *Moscow Times* (website), 7 June 2022, accessed 8 June 2022, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/06/07/in-russian-schools-teachers-and-parents-pressured-to-back-war-a77689>.

36. Andrei Kolesnikov, "Detskie neozhidannosti," *Novoe vremia* [New times], 5 September 2022, accessed 5 September 2022, <https://newtimes.ru/articles/detail/221066>. A Russian court pulled *Novoe vremia's* license on 6 September.

37. Scherbakova, "In Russian Schools Teachers and Parents Pressured to Back War."

38. Adelia Kurmeeva, "Rossiiskim shkolnikam rasskazhut o sanktisakh I pol'ze importozemeshcheniia" [Russian school children are told about the sanctions and the benefits of import replacement], 5 April 2022, accessed 7 April 2022, <https://www.gosrf.ru/rossijskim-shkolnikam-rasskazhut-o-sanktsiyah-i-polze-importozemeshheniya/>; see also Ekaterina Morozova, "Budet bol'she patriotizma: chto izmenitsia v shkolakh s 1 sentiabria" [There will be more patriotism: What's changing in schools starting 1 September], Prufy, 29 August 2022, accessed 30 August 2022, <https://prufy.ru/news/society/128870-podnyatie-flaga-ispolnenie-gimna-istoricheskoe-prosveshchenie-s-pervogo-klasa-cto-izmenitsia-v-shk/>.

39. The author enjoys virtually unlimited access to Russian television stations while living in Uzbekistan.

40. "Russofoby 2022, polnyi spisok" [Russophobes 2022: The complete list], Tsargrad TV, accessed 28 May 2022, <https://tsargrad.tv/rusofob>. This is essentially an enemies or traitors list. Each figure cited is ranked on the list and their entry is accompanied by a photo and caption explaining the nature of their betrayal. Tsargrad TV is associated with the prominent ideologue Alexander Dugin, and his late daughter, Darya Dugin, a prowar journalist who was murdered in a car explosion in August. In any case, other such lists of traitors or blacklisted individuals abound. A casual Yandex search for "Russian traitors list 2022" on 5 September turned up 16 million citations. Many sites draw from a list compiled by the Committee for the Defense of National Interests at <https://vz.ru/news/2022/3/1/1146310.html>. For a list of traitors specifically among the Russian artistic class, see <https://rassvet-info.ru/events/rossiya/predateli-artisty.html>.

41. Todd Prince, "Cancel Culture: Russian Musicians See Concerts Scrapped at Home amid Crackdown on War Dissent," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Russian Service, 11 June 2022, accessed 4 July 2022, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-ukraine-war-dissent-musicians-cancel-culture/31893637.html>.

42. "Velikii genii, muzh krovavyi. Uroki Petra I budushchemu Vserossiiskomu Imperatoru" [Great genius, bloody husband. The lessons of Peter I for the future all-Russian emperor], Tsargrad TV, 9 June 2022, accessed 1 July 2022, <https://tsargrad.tv/articles/>

[velikij-genij-muzh-krovavij-uroki-petra-i-budushhemu-vserossijskomu-imperatoru_563027](#). Tsargrad TV advocates restoration of a Russian monarchy.

43. Medinsky, "Rossiia sevodnia stolknulas' s velichaishim vyzovom v svoei istorii."

44. Strigunov, "Razvitie Rossii v novykh realiiakh."

45. Ibid.

46. Medinsky, "Rossiia sevodnia stolknulas' s velichaishim vyzovom v svoei istorii."

47. Aleksandr Prokhanov, "Ideologiya Russkoi pobedy: nashi sviashchennye kody" [Ideology of Russian victory: Our sacred codes], *Ideologiya budushchego* [Ideology of the future] (June 2022): 6–12, accessed 1 July 2022, https://histrf.ru/files/ideology_of_future_part5.pdf.

48. Iurii Rubtsov, "Bitva s natsizmom prodolzhaetsia: operatsiia po denazifikatsii Ukrainy est; logicheskoe zavershenie Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voyny" [The battle with Naziism continues: The operation to denazify Ukraine is the logical conclusion of the Great Patriotic War], *Ideologiya budushchego* [Ideology of the future] (June 2022), 13–16, accessed 1 July 2022, https://histrf.ru/files/ideology_of_future_part5.pdf.

49. Vlkadimir Agapov, "Genotsid na Donbasse v xode nemetsko-fashistskoi okkupatsii 1941-1943 gg. kak ob'ekt istoricheskikh falsifikatsii" [Genocide in the Donbas in the course of German-fascist occupation 1941-1943 as an object of historical falsifications], *Ideologiya budushchego* [Ideology of the future] (June 2022), 17–26, accessed 1 July 2022, https://histrf.ru/files/ideology_of_future_part5.pdf.

50. For an examination about how scholars in the field of international relations have been drawn into the official "echo

chamber" concerning Ukraine, see Mariya, Omelicheva, "Influencers, Echo Chambers, and Epistemic Bubbles: Russia's Academic Discourse in the Wake of the War in Ukraine," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 777 (May 2022), accessed 15 June 2022, <https://www.ponarseurasia.org/influencers-echo-chambers-and-epistemic-bubbles-russias-academic-discourse-in-the-wake-of-the-war-in-ukraine/>.

51. For a good discussion of the stakes in Ukraine, see Timothy Snyder, "Ukraine Holds the Future: The War Between Democracy and Nihilism," *Foreign Affairs* (September-October 2022), accessed 8 September 2022, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/ukraine-war-democracy-nihilism-timothy-snyder>. Snyder, a professor of history at Yale University, dissects Russian propaganda about the war in Ukraine and provides a good explanation of the historical context of events there.

52. To date, Putin has declined to declare a military mobilization, which would probably be highly unpopular. Meanwhile, Russians are not signing up to fight in the numbers needed despite endless appeals to do one's patriotic duty. Enticements to enlist contract soldiers from among foreign populations from Syria to Uzbekistan reflect the seriousness of the problem. Moreover, some of the foreign governments do not appreciate the recruitment of their citizens. Uzbekistan, for example, has established criminal penalties for any citizen to serve in a foreign military.

53. Sergei Kuznetsov, "Putin's Problems Aren't Just on the Battlefield," *Politico*, 11 September 2022, accessed 19 October 2022, <https://www.politico.eu/article/putins-problems-arent-just-on-the-battlefield/>. Prowar bloggers and political allies such as Ramzan Kadyrov, president of Chechnya, have openly voiced concerns about the ineffective conduct of the war.