

Chapter 4

Patriotism, History Teaching, and History Textbooks in Russia: What Was Old Is New Again

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A Global Stage for the Russian Military and Power Structures

Recent military activities and political posturing in and around the Ukraine have escalated a growing trend of pervasive hyper-nationalism and jingoism throughout Russian Federation. The saber-rattling has taken place on a global stage and has thrust the Russian military and power structures into the worldwide news. As the details continue to unfold, these activities have also sent shockwaves throughout Russia. The “triumphant return of Crimea,” as it has been termed, is not entirely unfamiliar to seasoned scholars of Russian history and observers of Russian socio-political dynamics, who recall how the previous century was marked by several periods of disturbingly rapid and aggressive descent toward extreme patriotism.

As in many countries around the world over the past century, the Russian education system has, at times, been used and abused as a conduit for nation-building curriculum. Over the past 5 years, however, Russian history/social studies classrooms have become a particularly serious ideological battlefield for social, political, and academic debates over the purposes of history teaching, its content, and methods of instruction. Such debates have spilled out of the schoolhouse doors and into society at large, attracting the attention of everyone from general citizens to policy

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makers, politicians, and even President Putin himself. In the wake of the aforementioned highly controversial military action, it appears President and his high-ranking officials have seized an opportunity to repurpose history education by developing and promoting a unilateral narrative in Russian history textbooks (Gazeta.ru 2014). The aim of this paper was to explore the extent to which government-endorsed, compulsory patriotism-centered curriculum is being effectuated throughout Russia, particularly through the promotion of new, grand narrative-style high school history textbooks. Through this comparative content analysis, we sought to answer the following questions:

1. How have textbook presentations of various historical events changed over the past 30 years in Russia?
2. What can these changes tell us about trends in government-endorsed initiatives to promote ideologies such as patriotism, national identity, and responsible citizenship?

The purpose of this study was to investigate the degree to which a current paradigm shift that promotes a unilateral, patriotic, and hyper-nationalist view of Russian history is impacting history education in Russia, and in particular, how are textbooks being re-conceptualized and rewritten to advance this agenda (Aleksashkina and Zajda 2015).

Surge of Patriotism in the History Curriculum: Signs of the Times

To understand this surge of patriotism within the curriculum, it is necessary to reflect briefly on a recent history of education in the Russian Federation. The first post-perestroika Russian Federation Law “On Education” was issued in 1992, and introduced several democratic principles including protection and promotion of core human values, personal freedoms, and the pursuit of happiness (Ob Obrazovanii 1992). It provided a different structure to social studies education, particularly as a new, vibrant society endeavored to teach democratic citizenship to its young people. Like many post-perestroika programs and movements, however, this great ideological and societal leap forward would become watered down as the law fell prey to various political, economic, and social influences. Over the next two decades, “On Education” would undergo no less than 50 revisions or amendments (Zakon Rossiiskoi Federatsii 2010), until it was finally replaced with a new law “On Education in the Russian Federation” (2012) that still incorporated many of those democratic principles unveiled in 1992. Added to these principles, however, was language clearly intended to promote Russian patriotism and national identity (Article 3, item 3). This new law signified a clear shift away from an emphasis on global democratic citizenship in favor of a promotion of these principles through a lens of cultural and national superiority (National Educational Standard 2012).

In addition controversy abounded when, between 2009 and 2012, the Russian Ministry of Education and Science released new State Education Standards (SES) that unveiled a clear and provocative curriculum centered on ideals of patriotism throughout the secondary school experience. Students of elementary grades, for instance, were to develop the “basics of [their] citizenship identity,” to “accept moral norms, moral maxims, and national values” and to “love [their] people, region, and homeland” (Federal State Educational Standard 2010, p. 4). Expectations were similar for high school students who were to “love [their] region and homeland, culture, and spiritual traditions” and to “understand and accept traditional values of the family, Russian civic society, multinational Russian people, humankind, and be aware of belonging to the fate of [their] homeland” (Federal State Educational Standard 2012, p. 3).

The general consensus among many Russian citizens, particularly teachers and scholars, was that SES overemphasized patriotism and love of country while (seemingly purposefully) underemphasizing the conveyance of sophisticated understandings of politics and policy necessary to invite critical thinking and critique of governmental decisions. Despite this concerted opposition, however, SES were implemented in Russian schools and with only slight variation, have not only continued, but seem to have emerged as a political and policymaking priority for those who supported them in 2012. This politically motivated and influenced upward trend was lately observed by Russian philosopher Nikolai Rozov (2014), who described the dilemma before teachers of Russian history as:

a contradiction between the ugliness (to put it mildly) of many periods and events in Russian history and an actual necessity to educate a personality who loves his/her country, its history and culture, and who is a patriot and a responsible citizen of Russia (Rozov 2014, p. 19).

While this increase in patriotic and nationalistic themes can be linked directly to the influence of the ruling party in Russia, the early success of SES may indicate, at least in part, an emergent collective vote of confidence in the President’s new policies among the Russian masses. An August 2014 Levada-Center survey showed that an overwhelming 82 % of the Russian population support President Putin and would vote for his reelection if an election were held today (2014). Many political analysts attribute these numbers to the current political and military activities taking place in Crimea and point out that similar upswings in patriotism and nationalism were measured on several occasions throughout the twentieth century during or immediately following similar engagements that involved the Russian military. Recent surveys of Russian attitudes toward the current conflict revealed a disconcerting pattern of nationalism, and simultaneous discontent for political responses and position statements from the United States and the European Union (Podosenov 2014a, b). Scholars suggest this is the result of Putin’s robust propaganda campaign to convince the populace that the RF is under an international attack. Elena Philippova from the Russian Academy of Sciences observed that during the past few years Russians have been indoctrinated with the idea that “Russia is not Europe” (Podosenov 2014b). Inevitably, as in Soviet times, the people have rallied around the flag.

Until the late 1980s, patriotic education served as a focal point in Russian schools and professional institutions. During and shortly after perestroika, however, the country experienced a decade-long reprieve from this nationalistic approach. Throughout the 1990s, Russian students were introduced to ideas of citizenship and democratic principles and caused to view their place in and contributions to a global community. The SES, which some argue, was the product of a flurry of education-related Presidential orders, federal and local executive initiatives, governmental and other official websites, and public campaigns that promoted a want and need to instill Russian students with a collective patriotic and nationalistic identity. Interestingly, it has been observed that Russian TV has responded in kind by expanding their coverage and promotion of patriotism and its role in the stabilization of the country.

On October 11, 2014, TV Channel *Russia 24* showed a 15-min program *Russian patriotism is high beyond limits* interviewing young artists, designers, and businessmen who unanimously paid tributes to President Putin and portrayed his images (Alexey Sergienko) and phrases (Irina Volodchenko) on T-shirts while participating in a patriotic project *A T-shirt for a patriot*. More so, a manicure salon owner Gukasyan invented nail stickers with Putin's portrait, and the trend immediately became popular which she ascribes to Putin's ability to restore a strong feeling of patriotism in the young generation (President of Russia 2012a). It is fashionable now to be a patriot, concluded all the participants of the show (Rossiya 24 2014, October 11). The revival of patriotism in Russia and the level of support of the current President could be compared only with the attitude toward Stalin.

To further exemplify this, the State Duma has recently experienced a dramatic increase of interest in conducting a comprehensive patriotic campaign in Russian schools (Trifonova 2014). Vadim Soloviev, a deputy member from the Communist Party, declared students' lack of patriotism a significant problem and proposed that the old *Soviet Political Information* class should be reinstated into the curriculum. The United Russia Party supported this suggestion, and recommendations have even been made to arrange for local officials to monthly visit public schools and provide talks on approved patriotic topics together with organizing students' trips to famous historic places. More headstrong State Duma members suggested that schools engage in such patriotism-related activities as viewings of Soviet-era films and documentaries on a weekly basis and restore Initial Military Training classes wherein boys learn how to carry and use weapons and girls study the basics of first aid medical response (Trifonova 2014).

With these and similar initiatives being proposed, it was no surprise that by a spring 2014 investigation into how teachers of Russian history were discussing the crisis in Crimea exhibited sharp increases in attention to Russian policy and action in the region. These investigations revealed that many high school students were being presented with a relatively one-sided history of previous Crimea-related events. For instance, students learned of political "mistakes" made by Nikita Khrushchev who "gifted" Crimea to Ukraine, an act that Crimean Slavic Party leader Vadim Mordashov called "a national tragedy" (Mordashov 2014). The tone of many in-class discussions appears clearly biased, contextualizing the events of

the previous crisis with the current one, and defining the historic role of President Putin who returned Crimea to its original homeland in accordance with the federal ministry guidelines entitled *Crimea and Sevastopol: their historical meaning for Russia* that gives recommendations to teachers on how “to conduct classes and extracurricular activities about the reunion of Russia and Crimea” (Ministry of Education and Science 2014).

President Putin himself has also weighed in on this initiative. On September 12, 2012, while visiting Krasnodar, he met with the representatives of different public, state, religious, and military circles mostly on the topic of patriotic education. Putin proclaimed:

We should build our future on a solid foundation. And this foundation is patriotism... It is a respect towards our history and traditions, spiritual values of our peoples, our thousand years' long culture and a unique experience of the coexistence of hundreds of peoples and languages on the territory of Russia. ... A feeling of patriotism, a system of values, moral orientations have their foundation laid in one's childhood and youth. ... The role of the family and the state is enormous, as well as the educational and cultural policy of the state (President of Russia 2012b).

The President also added that patriotic education should be promoted at every level and cautioned against any standardization and use of templates. Putin specifically underlined the role of studying history and asserted that: “Schools and universities, in fact, create new citizens, and shape their consciousness...” (President of Russia 2012b). A month later, he signed a decree that launched the work of a new *Department on Public Projects* with the specific aim of developing and promoting patriotic education throughout Russia (Zajda and Smith 2013).

The initiative was immediately supported by a number of current political scientists. In summary response, Dmitry Badovsky from the Institute of Socioeconomic and Political Research added that: “... the primary essence of this kind of management is to maximize the use of the social power for the benefit of the national development, for the benefit of the country. And a patriotic ideology would unite the population in fulfilling this task” (RiaNovosti 2012). Shortly thereafter, a state program called “Patriotic Education of Russian citizens for 2011–2015” was given a second wind with the release of a website complete access to patriotic materials, documents, and teaching recommendations (Patrioticheskoe Vospitanie Grazhdan Rossiiskoi Federatsii 2014).

Putin's patriotism campaign continues. In July 2014, he addressed the topic in a public forum, when while speaking before the Ministry of Education and Science, he urged education policymakers to develop priorities for strengthening the quality of the state program of patriotic education. Later that month, a draft of a new patriotic education program for 2016–2020 was composed and published with the main goal to “further improve the system of patriotic education, bringing it into line with the new realities of ... patriotism in Russian society” (Statepatriotprogram.ru 2014). Perhaps not surprisingly, various government officials have increasingly observed the “disintegration” of Russian patriotism and have suggested that this dearth of studies in patriotism led to many of the nation's trouble.

The response from education policymakers has been swift. History education has been deemed by many to become the conduit through which the “re-patriotization” of Russia should occur, and millions of rubles are being spent to make this a reality. The federally funded program *Patriotic Education of the Citizens of Russian Federation for 2011–2015*, which has a clear emphasis on the role of government in establishing a high level of patriotic conscience among Russian citizens, and which promotes positive attitudes toward military service and activity, continues to grow in prominence and popularity (Statepatriotprogram.ru 2010).

The Concept

In October 2013, after 4 months of public debates and more than a decade of aggressive advocacy and clear political pressure, the extended meeting of the Council of the Russian Historical Society, with the public support of President Putin, unveiled *Kontsepsiia Novogo Uchebno-Metodicheskogo Kompleksa po Otechestvennoi Istarii* (The Concept of a New Instructional-Methodological Set for Teaching History). *The Concept* was developed by a committee of government officials, politicians, academics, one school principal and two high school history teachers, all under the “scientific leadership” of Professor Chubarian, Head of The Institute of Universal History of the Russian Academy of Sciences; and was an attempt to articulate a comprehensive approach to teaching history while providing effective patriotic education. One priority of *The Concept* has been to follow up on a debate over what is and should be represented in Russian history textbooks. Throughout that time, President Putin has advocated for not only a more patriotic tone in textbooks, but a more unilateral narrative as well (Bershidsky 2013). In February 2013, he suggested that history textbooks should be “built within a framework of a single concept, single logic of an uninterrupted Russian history, an interconnectedness of all its stages, respect to all the pages in its past” (President of Russia 2013).

Less than 8 months later, *The Concept* was being promoted as a series of “more appropriate” approaches to Russian history as offered in secondary schools with the main goal of developing: “... a civil identity of the younger generation, and providing a consolidation and unity of the Russian people” (Ministry of Education and Science 2013). Objectives of this new plan included demonstrating Russia’s indispensable impact on world history and introducing the essence of historic process as a sum of combined efforts of many Russian generations. Historical concepts relating to necessary knowledge and skills were presented as a succession of interconnected themes, intended to distinguish the teaching of Russian History from all other classes in the discipline. This conceptualization also advocated a *Russian-centric* approach to the teaching of history and provided general recommendations for the composition of history sets and interwoven historical and cultural standards. Finally, *The Concept* recommended a complex and multi-faceted set of assessments and evaluative measures to more appropriately gauge and measure the impact of this revised means of teaching Russian students about their nation’s history. Meanwhile, textbook writers were admonished to “avoid inner contradictions and self-exclusive

explanations of historic events including those which are most meaningful for certain Russian regions” (p. 3).

Not surprisingly, this initiative stirred up considerable controversy and backlash from many history scholars. Academics inside and outside Russia objected to the proposed unilateral history grand narrative as well as the reconceptualization of history textbook scope and design on the bases that this approach, in multiple ways, echoed the historically manipulative practices of the Soviet era; not the least of which was a glaring neglect for the teaching of bias recognition and perspective in historical study. According to ITAR-TASS, as late as 2013, there were 238 different history textbooks in circulation and available to Russian schools (2013). To these scholars and educators, many of whom had become quite accustomed to the luxury of freedom and choice, the abrupt return to such limited (not to mention one-sided) options proved to be a clear departure from the principles of democracy.

Comparative Study of Textbooks

These and related events have led to various investigations into the observable patriotic trends and tones in Russian history textbooks. Well-known history textbook researcher Joseph Zajda has been at the forefront of this discussion for decades and has performed numerous recent studies on reemerging themes of patriotism and related ideologies in Russian history textbooks (2007, 2008, 2009a, b, 2013, 2015a, b, c). In *The New History School Textbooks in the Russian Federation: 1992–2004*, Zajda concluded that history textbooks seem to be increasingly susceptible to a continuous process of redefinition, revision, reinterpretation, and rewriting of historical narratives, in order to reimagine national identity and nationalism. He also summarized the period between 1992 and 2004, saying: “the new history textbooks have returned to traditional symbols of nation-building and patriotism” (Zajda 2007, p. 295). In *Nation-building, Identity and Citizenship Education* (2009a), he expanded on these findings by exploring the intersection of these concepts and how history textbooks have undergone a recent shift in focus to promote love of country. Later that same year, in *Teachers and the Politics of History School Textbooks* (2009b), Zajda investigated the clear nexus between ideology, the state, and nation-building, and succinctly asserted that in Russia, as in many nations, the three most significant issues defining an ideological re-positioning of the politically correct historical narratives are preferred images of the past, patriotism, and national identity (pp. 384–385). Finally, in *Globalisation, Ideology and History School Textbooks* (2013), Zajda surveyed Russian history teachers on their perceptions of changes in curriculum and focus of content. Zajda found that teachers indicated a significant ideological shift in historical narrative toward enrichments of national identity and patriotism throughout Russia (p. 58).

Similarly, in their investigation of educational reforms that have swept Russia since the dawn of the new century, Kaplan, Shevyrev, and Ionov observed this pattern of adherence to unilateral grand narrative in the history classroom, and particularly recognized the manifestation of this mentality in a series of revised history

textbooks (Eklof et al. 2005). Manifestations of Russian patriotism revival and an increase of nationalistic tendencies in civic education were also discussed at length in papers by Anatoli Rapoport (2012).

During the last decade, a number of Russian researchers performed a comparative analysis of history textbooks. Klokovala (2004) contrasted Soviet textbooks with one ideologically correct “historic truth,” one-way argumentation, and absence of alternative positions, with Russian history textbooks from the 1990s that were more typical for a post-totalitarian and democratic society (Klokovala 2004). Volodina (2005) also confirmed that early post-Soviet history textbooks helped to “recognize that history must play a role in reshaping Russian national identity” (Volodina 2005). Konradova (2009) explored six different textbooks primarily looking at a dominant historic concept, structure, style, and content, within the larger project *Lessons of History: The 20th century*. The researcher revealed that all the textbooks were typically biased while describing the newest history, presenting the current government in an exceptionally positive way “capable of realizing every project (Konradova 2009). By far, the most profound comparative review of post-perestroika history textbooks was completed by Moscow history teacher and author Leonid Katsva who meticulously contrasted descriptions of the Soviet period by different authors and showed how partial truth and silencing the truth completely changed the comprehension of the whole period (Katsva 2013b).

In contrast, a recent volume edited by J. H. Williams (2014) exploring history textbooks in Russia, Cambodia, China, etc., attempted to prove that governments have a responsibility to teach their younger generations core civic values and “civic place,” and this is why “textbooks are likely to present the nation... in a good light..., and “less noble aspects of history are likely to be minimized” (pp. 1–2). Comparing Russian history textbooks in the same volume, Korostelina observed “an increased tendency to develop among young citizens a blind patriotism and loyalty to the regime” (p. 306).

In recent months, this movement has escalated even more, and accordingly, it appears President Putin has issued a clear mandate to the professional education community using every chance to express the importance of shaping Russian identity and performing successful patriotic education. On October 15, 2014, President participated in the Russian Popular Front, public movement’s forum “Quality Education for the Country’s Good.” In his welcome Putin said:

Problems in education affect every citizen in our nation. So it is essential to have public consensus on all issues pertaining to further developing education in general, and school education in particular. ... We have already adopted clear decisions that are shared by society, for example, on school uniforms and the graduation essay in all schools, and on developing the concept of a new Russian history curriculum (President of Russia 2014).

In seeking to contribute to this field of study, we determined that one area in need of further investigation was analysis of the actual language utilized in this new wave of history textbooks that is being used to promote Russian nationalist ideology and patriotism. In this study, we set out to answer our research questions by analyzing history textbook excerpts and means by which textbooks articulate and illustrate common political/military concepts through historical accounts.

Research Methods

We selected comparative content analysis as the methodological approach to conducting this study. Content analysis was deemed the most appropriate method for this study for two reasons. First, we have significant experience in comparative textual content analysis and recognize that applying this model to an analysis of multiple textbooks would likely reveal the numerous contextualized findings. Secondly, we recognized that we are building on recent dynamic and revealing studies that have been conducted on this topic (Alexashkina 2014; Katsva 2013a; Zajda 2013, 2015c), and thus determined that comparative content analysis would allow for collection and analysis of data in a manner that simultaneously aligned but distinguished this study from existing research.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is appropriate for textual comparison of this design because it allows researchers to effectively and efficiently identify recurrent threads and themes in the data (Clandinnin and Connelly 2000; Neuendorf 2002). Content analysis is particularly appropriate for narrative, contextual data that have been collected in a comparative format (Neuendorf 2002). The researchers determined the comparative textual analysis format would be the most revealing and least intrusive means by which data could be collected.

We sought to investigate themes of patriotism in the selected high school history textbooks. To accomplish this, we began by strategically selecting five popular (and obligatory, 1984) Russian history textbooks from different periods over the past 30 years. The textbooks selected for the comparative content analysis component of this study are identified in Fig. 4.1 (below).

Each of these textbooks was selected for this study because we deemed it an exemplar for the time in which it was published. This was important because history has well documented the deep degree to which socio-politics influenced (and continues to influence) various aspects of Russian society, particularly education,

Text #	Title	Author(s)	Publisher (Date)
1	<i>Istoriia SSSR (History of the USSR)</i> Grade 10	Esakov, Kukushkin & Nenarokov	Prosveschenie (1984)
2	<i>Istoriia Otechestva (History of Homeland)</i> Grade 11	Ostrovsky, Startsev, Starkov & Smirnov	Prosveschenie (1992)
3	<i>Istoriia Rossii. XX vek (History of Russia, 20th century)</i> Grade 9	Danilov & Kosulina	Prosveschenie (1996)
4	<i>Istoriia Rossii. XX – Nachalo XXI Veka (History of Russia 20th – Beginning of the 21st Century)</i> Grade 11	Chubarian, Danilov & Pivovarov	Prosveschenie (2011)
5	<i>Istoriia Rossii. XX – Nachalo XXI Veka (History of Russia 20th – Beginning of the 21st Century)</i> Grade 9	Danilov, Kosulina & Brandt	Prosveschenie (2014)

Fig. 4.1 Textbooks selected for comparative content analysis (full citations are available in References)

during the decades being studied here. Interestingly, each of these textbooks was produced by Prosvescheniie, Russia's ubiquitous state-affiliated publisher. Although there were alternatives to Prosvescheniie during each of these decades, we recognize that this company has provided far more textbooks to Russian classrooms than most of their competitors, and that their influence, particularly on the history classroom, cannot be overlooked.

Our goal was to critically and qualitatively analyze content and tone in each of these texts and to investigate patterns of continuity and change over a 30-year period (1984 to present). To accomplish this, we selected three historical accounts that were presented in each textbook. Those accounts were: (1) Russia's participation in World War II; (2) post-WWII Russia; and (3) the attempt to establish democracy in Czechoslovakia in 1968. We chose these three particular historical accounts because we observed that over the years, authors have taken considerable creative liberty in presenting them from various perspectives. We also recognized that each topic has been the subject of public debate at some point in recent history. For these reasons, we predicted each account would provide good examples of the evolution of text throughout the decades. By comparative analysis, we noted the language and tone used in each passage, and then made qualitative observations about each. We hypothesized that, based on existing research, each of these dynamics would reveal trends in text and context that were related to, and perhaps influenced by, political rhetoric, legislative activity, and policymaking in Russia. As a measure of convenience, we refer to each book here by listing only its authors and the date of publication. Afterward, we refer to them by the number we assessed (Text 1, Text 2, etc.).

Chapter and Section Titles: Accounts of Russia's participation in World War II

Each of our selected textbooks went to great lengths to address Russia's participation in the Second World War. It was clear that the "Great Patriotic War," as it was called during Soviet times, presented an opportunity for Russians to chronicle their Pyrrhic victory over the invading Nazis. In reviewing chapters related to this period, we observed that chapter and section titles provided particular insights into the language and tone of each account. For instance, Chapter 2 in *Text 1*: Esakov et al. (1984) was entitled: "The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union," and two of the section titles included: "The Great Unity of the Peoples of the USSR," and "The Full Exemption of our Motherland from German-Fascist Occupants."

By contrast, each of the post-perestroika texts: *Text 2*: Ostrovsky et al. (1992) and *Text 3*: Danilov and Kosulina (1996), included a similarly innocuous chapter title: "The Soviet Union during the WWII," and "A Delicate Balance: Military Actions in Winter-Summer of 1942." Section titles in these two texts were similarly informational and seemed to bear no intent to persuade the reader to orient herself to one perspective or another. Samples of these titles included "The Collapse of the

Blitzkrieg,” “A Difficult Way to Victory,” “The Tragic Days of 1942,” and simply “Victory.” Quite interestingly, a generation later, *Text 4*: Chubarian et al. (2011) and *Text 5*: Danilov et al. (2014) would seem to gravitate back to the partisan description of events seen during Cold War times. Much like the chapter title in Text 1, Texts 4 and 5 introduced the “Great Patriotic War,” and included section titles such as “USSR on the Eve of the Great Patriotic War.”

Textual Accounts of Post-WWII Russia

In addition to the clear evidence of a patriotic agenda in the titles of chapters and sections of Text 1, Text 4, and Text 5, we found deeper evidence of patriotic symbolism and language in the actual chapter text. In its coverage of the state of the Russian economy in 1945, Text 1 (1984) presented students with the following summary:

The war made millions of people invalids, orphans, widows, and brought grief to virtually every family... and the Soviet Union remained true to its commitments, while the English and American officials would create obstacles for the Soviet people to return to their motherland. Violating standard norms of the international law they would hide addresses of Soviet citizens, and especially of children... having overcome all the hardships of the war, after having defended the freedom and independence of their socialist Motherland the Soviet people started building their peaceful lives (pp. 113–116).

By 1992, this historical account had changed dramatically. Text 2 presented the post-war struggles accordingly:

The war was over... People returning to peaceful lives hoped that there would be changes in the country. The workers hoped that punitive prewar laws would be canceled. Collective farmers dreamed that they would receive more opportunities to work for themselves... Intelligentsia believed that there would be a time when they could create and feel free, and lead different discussions regardless of their ideological biases... The war treated people inhumanely; millions lost their relatives and remained singles... Millions of repatriates were returning home together with hundreds of thousands of the war prisoners. The fate of these people was in most cases very tragic. The majority of them was forcibly transported to Germany and went through humiliations of all sorts. But back at home they were facing the same. They went through the Stalinist repression’s machine full of suspicions, distrust, and misunderstanding, against any common sense (pp. 114–115).

Four years later, Text 3 (1996) added:

The victory in a tragic war opened a new page in the history of the country. It gave birth to hopes for a better life, for releasing the stress and the pressure of the totalitarian state over individuals, and for liquidation of its most odious costs... But “the democratic impulse” of the war was strongly resisted by the power of Stalin’s system (p. 253)... Differences in the quality of life in these countries and in the Soviet Union was so radical that they could not but create doubts among Soviet people, doubts in the accuracy of the propaganda, rightness of the way which the country was pursuing (pp. 259–260).

Interestingly, Text 5 (2014) reported post-WWII Russian economic challenges using many terms that had been used in the Text 3 (1996), however, overall coverage had clearly been polished and significantly shortened:

The war managed to change the political and social situation in the USSR resulted from the 1930s. Specific war conditions made people think creatively, act independently, and put on responsibilities on themselves... Differences were so radical that they could not but create doubts in the accuracy of the traditional assessments... In 1946–47, during the closed for the public discussion of the new USSR Constitution and party documents, there came suggestions for a relative regime democratization... It was decided to... halt external democratization, and strengthen the fight against ‘free thinking.’ (pp. 255–256).

Textual Accounts of Attempts to Establish a Democratic Czechoslovakia in 1968

Another event in Russian history that has been utilized to demonstrate the need and promotion of a patriotic sense is the Russian response to the 1968 push for democracy in Czechoslovakia. To describe this even just a decade and a half after it took place, Text 1 (1984) addressed the matter as a foreign policy issue and reported:

The congress resolution says, “Foreign policy of the Soviet state has as its main aim to provide, together with other socialist countries, best conditions for building socialism and communism; to strengthen the unity and cohesion of socialist countries, their friendship and brotherhood... (p. 222)... In 1968, as a result of anti-Socialist forces Czechoslovakia was facing a situation that posed a major threat to the socialist achievements of our fraternal people. That is why other countries – participants of the Warsaw Treaty provided it with the international help which allowed to destroy the plans of the aggressive circles of the imperialist states (p. 228).

Just after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Text 2 (1992) made an attempt to analyze tendencies and contradictions of social-economic development and to show their advantages and disadvantages. This text also described daily lives of Soviet people, showing the problems people faced. Regarding Czechoslovakia, it included:

In 1968, Czechoslovakia started a process of renovations and refused the model of deformed socialism, very much characteristic of the Stalinist model. A strong part of the national Communist party with A. Dubcek at the head proclaimed building “socialism with a humane face”... The official Soviet press declared that the events in Czechoslovakia presented a threat to the world peace. But in reality Brezhnev informed Dubcek that there was no war threat regarding Czechoslovakia. Brezhnev also said that on August 18 he spoke with US Pres. Johnson on the phone and the president of the United States confirmed that Yalta-Potsdam agreements are still active and Czechoslovakia remains the country under the influence of the USSR. On August 21, 1968 the Soviet Army troops crossed the border of the Czechoslovakia. Together with Russian troops there were also military from the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria. It was an aggressive act against a sovereign country (pp. 225–226).

Text 3 (1996) included a similar account and added:

This act of aggression strengthened the split of the countries within the socialist block. Especially China, Romania, and Yugoslavia distanced themselves even more from the USSR. In August 1968, Albania left the Warsaw Pact. After the Czech lesson Brezhnev had to reconsider the character of cooperation with the allies. Certain steps were undertaken to

enforce the economic and military integration within the countries of Eastern Europe (pp. 325–326).

Interestingly, just over a decade later, Text 4 (2011) would alter the way this event was presented once again by reporting:

In spring 1968, the local writers at their 4th Congress were first to start talking about the bureaucratic nature of socialism, the class nomenclature, about depriving the people of their right to solve their own social problems. At the beginning of March 1968, the country removed censorship, announced the movement towards openness, democracy, market relations, multi-structural economy, a federative nature of the state, etc. Brezhnev's leadership was afraid of ideological diversions and 'watering down' the Socialist foundation.... Until August 1968, Brezhnev avoided decisive measures that conservative forces of the Soviet government and Warsaw Pact leaders tried to push him into because the latter were afraid to have similar events at home. But when Brezhnev realized that it would be his political loss he decided to move the troops of the Warsaw Pact into Czechoslovakia. This was also the desire of the conservative part of leadership and the ruling elite in Czechoslovakia. In fact, they officially asked for troops to be moved into the country. This decision had huge negative consequences for Brezhnev himself in its direct and indirect sense of the word. During many hours of discussions of the events in Czechoslovakia, he had his first heart attack right in the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The defeat of the Czech reforms became the beginning of the end of reforms in the USSR — in both economic and home affairs (p. 174).

Evaluation of Selected Texts

Our evaluation of all selected textbooks revealed that each was written in what we deemed a typical history textbook style: a generally straightforward, grand-narrative language that promotes concrete facts rather than interpretive perspectives. Sentences in these texts are often short, and their structure is quite simplistic. The language is dry with a low usage of metaphors or epithets. All textbooks reviewed were written in a passive, third person narrative voice, and tautology was common. None of the textbooks incorporated significant activities to encourage critical thinking about people, places, or events, and there was only marginal attention in each to the enhancement of students' historical thinking skills.

It seemed the accounts of Russia's involvement in World War II in both of the textbooks from the 1990s were developed to encourage students' qualitative assessments of events and aftermath, and there were few if any observable implications for the promotion of an ideology of patriotism or national supremacy. This observation may be supported by noting the contrasting language and intent in the evaluative prompts at the end of each chapter. One of the Text 1 (1984) prompts was: "Using your knowledge in the newest history, prove the bankruptcy of the bourgeois falsifications of the Great Patriotic War history," while Text 2 and Text 3 included: "What was the price of the victory in Great Patriotic War for the Soviet people?" and "What is the historic significance of the victory of the Soviet people over the fascist Germany?" The contrast between these two approaches is signifi-

cant. We interpreted the Text 1 chapter attributes as a clear attempt to present the account in a manner to prioritize patriotism, while Text 2 and Text 3 seem to build students' background knowledge and skills for historical interpretation. Our findings revealed that in terms of chapter and section titles, Text 4 illustrated a return to the Cold War approach. Despite our findings, there is hope. We agree with Kathleen Smith, author of *Wither Anti-Stalinism?* (2008), who wrote:

Perhaps what really matters for the future is that debate about the past continues. As long as Russians are fighting about the history, there is a chance that critical approaches to the Stalinist past may come back into fashion. For the present, anti-Stalinists can console themselves with the knowledge that all historical revelations of the past two decades cannot be stuffed back into Pandora's box (p. 169).

Conclusion

Our review indicated that Russian history textbooks have undergone two sweeping metamorphoses over the past 30 years. Beginning in 1984, the general tone of textbooks was that of presenting Russians as wholesome people and noble government with a glorious military past. Following World War II, this government, in particular, proved nobler than its former "allies" and despite many attempts by external forces (the U.S., Britain, and others) to undermine their way of life, persevered in the face of extreme adversity for as long as they could. By the 1990s, once the Cold War had ended and a democratic government was set in place, textbooks reflected many of the failed or "less than noble" policies and actions of the Russian government during the period under review. During this study, however, we observed that a decade later much of the language used to describe these historical events had, in fact, reverted back to those same Cold War ideological themes of patriotism and national identity. This is, perhaps, not surprising considering the nature of political debate and agendas in the early twenty-first century.

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