

Instytut Pamięci Narodowej - Archiwum

<https://archiwum.ipn.gov.pl/pl/publikacje/periodyki-ipn/institute-of-national-r/issues/107825,History-as-an-Apology-for-Totalitarianism.html>
02.03.2026, 10:52

History as an Apology for Totalitarianism

Institute of National Remembrance Review 1, 2019, pages 311-349.

Andrzej Nowak

[ORCID](#)

[DOI: 10.48261/INRR190110](https://doi.org/10.48261/INRR190110)

Abstract: This article discusses selected publications which reinterpret Russian history in a spirit of rehabilitating the Soviet past and highlighting the USSR's role as a vehicle for Russia's assumed historical role (including Utkin 1993, Utkin 1999a, Utkin 1999b, Solzhenitsyn 1995, Solzhenitsyn 2001–2002, Mel'tyukhov 2001, Narochnitskaya 2005c, Narochnitskaya 2005a, Mitrofanov 2005). In addition to this, it contextualises them with initiatives undertaken by the Russian Federation's government (including the standardisation of history textbooks' content and the activities of the Presidential Commission to counteract attempts to falsify history to the detriment of Russian interests). The points of view presented here, which are considered representative for a certain part of the historical discourse in contemporary Russia, integrate Russia's totalitarian period (the USSR from 1917 to 1991) into the course of its broader history, as the basis of an interpretation which accepts a priori statements regarding the sense of Russia's history and her role in world history. Among the observed trends, this text highlights the approval of certain features of the communist dictatorship as corresponding to Russian ideology; the adaptation of Soviet ideology to Russia's policy of memory; the emphasis on ideological, political and military confrontation with the Western world as a permanent feature of Russian history; and the reinterpretation of Russian history in such a way as to continuously justify all the actions of the Russian state over the centuries, both externally (interpreting Russian aggression and imperialism as a means of defence against her enemies, liberation, or the reintegration of the Russian community) and internally (presenting terror as a means of defence against an alleged 'fifth column', or as the modernisation of the country).

Keywords: Russia, USSR, Communism, Russian ideology, politics of history, Imperialism

References

Arzhakova, 2005: Arzhakova, Larissa. 2005. "Rozbiory Rzeczypospolitej" [Partitions of the

Republic]. *Arcana* 64–65 (4–5): 132–135.

Bielecki, 2005: Bielecki, Tomasz. 2005. "Narzekania Moskwy. Polacy psują wizerunek Rosji na świecie" [Moscow's complaining. The Poles spoil Russia's image in the world]. *Gazeta Wyborcza* July 2005.

Billington 2004: Billington, James Hadley. 2004. *Russia in Search of Itself*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center with John Hopkins University Press.

Billington and Parthé 2003: Billington, James Hadley, and Parthé, Kathleen. 2003. *The Search for a New Russian National Identity: Russian Perspectives*. Washington, DC: The Library of Congress.

Buldakov 2003: Buldakov, Vladimir. 2003. "Attempts at the »Nationalization« of Russian and Soviet History in the Newly Independent Slavic States". In *The Construction and Deconstruction of National Histories in Slavic Eurasia*. Ed. Hayashi, Tadayuki. Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University: 3–33.

Froyanov 1997: Froyanov, Igor'. 1997. *Октябрь семнадцатого. Глядя из настоящего*. Sankt-Peterburg: Издательство СПбГУ.

Froyanov, 1999: Froyanov, Igor'. 1999. *Погружение в бездну. Россия на исходе XX века*. Sankt-Peterburg: Издательство Санкт-Петербургского университета.

Gubin and Strokin 1991: Gubin, Aleksey, and Strokin, Viktor. 1991. *Очерки истории Кенигсберга* [Essays on the History of Königsberg]. Kaliningrad: Калининградское книжное издательство.

Intervyu 2005: Putin, Vladimir. 2005. Интервью германским телеканалам АРД и ЦДФ [President V. Putin's interview, given to German TV channels ARD and ZDF]. *Kremlin.ru* May 5, 2005. Accessed September 5, 2019. <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22948>.

Kolerov 2005: Kolerov, Modest. "Для сопредельных государств Россия – это свобода". *Izvestiya*. June 14, 2005. Accessed September 5, 2019. <https://iz.ru/news/304205>.

Lipman 2004: Lipman, Masha. 2004. "Rewriting History for Putin". *The Washington Post* March 21, 2004. Accessed September 5, 2019. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2004/03/21/rewriting-history-for-putin/99858a05-fd75-4a32-a22d-c22f016a0175/?noredirect=on>.

Mel'tyukhov 2001: Mel'tyukhov, Mikhail. 2001. *Советско-польские войны. Военно-политическое противостояние 1918–1939 гг.* Moscow: Издательство «Вече».

Mitrofanov 2005: Mitrofanov, Aleksey. 2005. *Россия перед распадом или вступлением в Евросоюз*. Moscow: Ad Marginem.

Narochnitskaya 2005a: Narochnitskaya, Nataliya A. 2005. *За что и с кем мы воевали*. Moscow: МИНУВШЕЕ.

Narochnitskaya 2005b: Narochnitskaya, Nataliya A. 2005. "Все оскорбления в адрес СССР должны быть пресечены". *Strana.ru* May 6, 2005. Accessed September 5, 2019. <http://narotchnitskaya.com/in-archive/nataliyanarochnitskaya-quot-vse-oskorbleniya-v-adre-s-sssr-dolznyi-byit-presechenyi-quot.html>.

Narochnitskaya 2005c: Narochnitskaya, Nataliya A. 2005. *Россия и русские в мировой истории*. Moscow: Издательство «Международные отношения».

Narochnitskaya 2005d: „Стратегия антипобеды” [interview with N.A. Narochnitskaya]. 2005. *Литературная газета* 19 (2005).

Narochnitsky 1951: Narochnitsky, Aleksey L. 1951. *Значение письма И. В. Сталина 'О статье Энгельса «Внешняя политика русского царизма»' для советской исторической науки*. Moscow.

Neumann 1996: Neumann, Iver B. 1996. *Russia and the Idea of Europe. A Study in Identity and International Relations*. London and New York: Routledge.

Nowak 2004: Nowak, Andrzej. 2004. *Od imperium do imperium. Spojrzenia na historię Europy Wschodniej* [From empire to empire. A look at the history of Eastern Europe]. Cracow: Arcana.

Nowak 2005: Nowak, Andrzej. 2005. "9 maja w Rosji. Narodziny »biało-czerwonej« syntezy rosyjskiej państwowości" [May 9 in Russia. The birth of the 'white-red' synthesis of Russian statehood]. *Europa. Tygodnik idei*, supplement to *Fakt* 20 (59). May 18, 2005.

Poslanie 2000: Putin, Vladimir. 2000. *Послание Президента Российской Федерации от 08.07.2000 г. б/н Государство Россия. Путь к эффективному государству (О положении в стране и основных направлениях внутренней и внешней политики государства)*. *Kremlin.ru* July 8, 2000. Accessed September 5, 2019. <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/22401>.

Reformirovanie 1994: *Реформирование России: мифы и реальность*. Ed. Osipov, Gennadiy V. et al. 1994. Moscow: Академия.

Reznik 2003: Reznik, Semen. 2003. *Вместе или врозь. Заметки на полях книги А.И. Солженицына*. Moscow: Захаров.

Savitskaya 2005: Savitskaya, Lyubov. *Деньги, выброшенные в канал, или о государственной пропаганде за рубежом*. *Pravda* June 7, 2005. Accessed September 5, 2019. <https://www.pravda.ru/economics/51221-russiatoday/>.

Solzhenitsyn 1995: Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. 1995. *The Russian question at the end of the*

twentieth century. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Solzhenitsyn 2001–2002: Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. 2001–2002. *Двести лет вместе (1795–1995)*. Vol. 1–2. Moscow: Русский путь.

Stalin 1941: Stalin, Iosif V. 1941. “О статье Ф. Энгельса »О внешней политике Царизма«”. *Большевик* 9.

Stegniy 2002: Stegniyy, Petr V. 2002. *Разделы Польши и дипломатия Екатерины II. 1772, 1793, 1795*. Moscow: Международные отношения.

Sukhodeev 2004: Sukhodeev, Vladimir. 2004. *Эпоха Сталина: события и люди. Энциклопедия*. Moscow: Эксмо, Алгоритм.

Tarasov 2000: Tarasov, A. 2000. “Обновление гуманитарного образования: молодым ‘промывают мозги’ и навязывают новую идеологию”. *Свободная Мысль-XXI* [formerly *Коммунист*] 1 (2000): 69–79.

Thompson 2000: Thompson, Ewa M. 2000. *Imperial Knowledge. Russian Literature and Colonialism*. Westport, Connecticut (USA), London (UK): Greenwood Press.

Tolz 2001: Tolz, Vera. 2001. *Inventing the Nation: Russia*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Utkin 1993: Utkin, Anatoliy I. 1993. “Россия и Запад”. *Свободная Мысль* 70.

Utkin 1999a: Utkin, Anatoliy I. 1999. “Почему исчез Советский Союз”. In *На перепутье (Новые вехи): сборник статей*. Moscow: Логос: 185–213.

Utkin 1999b: Utkin, Anatoliy I. 1999. “Встречи на высшем уровне”. In *На перепутье (Новые вехи): сборник статей*. Moscow: Логос: 228–239.

Varshavchik 2005: Varshavchik, Sergey. 2005. “Звезданутый рояль в кустах”. *Независимая газета – Новое Военное Обозрение* April 29, 2005. Accessed September 4, 2019. http://nvo.ng.ru/history/2005-04-29/4_tv.html.

PLIKI DO POBRANIA

[\(pdf, 921.82 KB\) 31.08.2020 11:00](#)