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# THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

TO COUNTER ATTEMPTS TO FALSIFY  
HISTORY TO THE DETRIMENT OF  
RUSSIA'S INTERESTS (2009–12)

## **Abstract**

The Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests (*Комиссия при президенте Российской Федерации по противодействию попыткам фальсификации истории в ущерб интересам России*), established in 2009, was intended to serve as Russia's response to similar attempts at institutionalisation in the Central and Eastern Europe region (such as the historical commissions in the Baltic states, and the Institutes of National Remembrance in Poland and Ukraine). At the same time, its activities showed a multidimensional approach, combining elements of security policy with education, culture and media, public and non-public memory policy, and formal and informal activities. Although the official emphasis was

mainly on the external (foreign) determinants of the Commission's genesis, it also became an important element of domestic policy. The Commission only operated for three years (2009–2012), but its importance as a tool of Kremlin policy cannot be overestimated. It turned difficult historical issues into "historical weapons"; introduced international public discourse to the Russian narrative, which was constructed in a spirit of confrontation with the memories of its neighbours; coordinated the activities of formal state organisations, as well as those which operated as nominally non-state bodies but were financed by the state; expanded the community of expert research which argued the Russian narrative while undermining others from abroad; and examined the options for transmitting the desired attitudes and opinions to wider audiences, creating systemic mechanisms of what has been called "counteracting the falsification of history." The aim of this article is to show the institutional and organisational aspect of this phenomenon.

**Keywords:** The Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests, politics of history policy, politics of memory, historical propaganda, active measures in the field of history, information warfare, Dmitri Medvedev, Sergei Naryshkin

### Context: the Defence of Memory as a Platform for Active Historical Work

The growing importance of historical issues in Russia first became apparent at the beginning of this century. This was related to the process whereby the new states established after the collapse of the USSR undertook to de-Sovietise and reconstruct their own historical identities. These trends were treated as a threat to state security, which was confirmed by pro-Kremlin historians with their authority and scientific titles. In 1999, two professors, members of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Grigori Sevostiyarov and Andrei Sakharov, appealed to the then director of the Federal Security Service, Vladimir Putin, to declassify archival documents of state security agencies concerning the economic and political situation in the USSR (*Eks-direktor* 2019). This was supposed to be a response to the so-called historical revisionism of the former republics who had begun

to raise the issues of the Soviet occupation and the victims of totalitarianism, whereas the axis of Russian memory remained the liberating role of the Red Army. It is therefore no coincidence that the first institutional actor of Russian historical policy was the “Victory’ Organising Committee, reactivated in 2000, whose tasks included planning and implementing projects to commemorate the most important events in the military history of Russia (Указ 2000).

The dynamics of the fight against the aforementioned “revisionism” (the *de facto* narrative of the former dependent nations that have de-Communisted their memory) clearly accelerated in the second half of the decade, when the celebrations of Victory Day, which had previously been much more modest, became Russia’s largest national holiday; they were accompanied by shows of military force, a new information policy and a new symbolism of memory (in 2005, for example, the TV channels Звезда (military-patriotic) and Russia Today (in the English language) were launched; and at the initiative of the Novosti Information Agency, a special symbol commemorating the Russian victories was promoted: the ribbon of St. George, in Russian *георгиевская ленточка*).

“The year 2005 was a breakthrough in the process of shaping Russia’s active historical policy towards its neighbouring countries. From that moment on, not only did the dissenting inhabitants of Russia become the target of Russian historical policy, but foreign countries as well. It was then that Russia organised huge celebrations to which the leaders of many countries of the world were invited. The May 9th celebration in Moscow was intended to show the whole world and its own society that Russia is a power of global renown. Vladimir Putin treated the refusal of the presidents of Estonia, Lithuania and Ukraine to participate in the celebrations as a personal insult and an insult to the Russian state. Two years later, when Estonia moved a bronze statue of a Soviet soldier, Russia took the decision to initiate active measures in the field of historical policy against foreign individuals and organisations as well” (Nikžentaitis 2018).

From the start of his presidency Putin has emphasised the importance of building a strong state. In 2005, after delivering





Former Russian President  
Dmitri Medvedev  
(Kyiv, Ukraine, May 17, 2010).  
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a speech from the rostrum in Red Square rehabilitating the USSR (a month earlier he had called its collapse “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century”), he finally broke with the unsuccessful attempts made by Boris Yeltsin in the first half of the 1990s to create an anti-Communist tradition which would have been non-antagonistic towards Russia’s surroundings. Soon thereafter (beginning with his speech at the Munich security conference in 2007), he started using the theme of the USSR’s victory in World War II as a motive for a confrontation with the West (Malinova 2015).

The new policy of memory was to be disseminated by organisational structures set up for this purpose, such as the Foundation of Historical Perspective under Natalia Narochnitskaya (2004) or “Historical Memory” under Aleksandr Dyukov (2008). They both presented themselves as active participants in the “memory wars”, while practicing historical disinformation in action: Narochnitskaya as an opinion leader, interpreting history in a way desirable for the Kremlin, and Dyukov as an organiser of acts of provocation. Dyukov’s well-publicised reaction to the Latvian documentary *The Soviet Story* was to assess the work as “a fake propaganda campaign financed by the European Parliament and the

Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs” (Dyukov 2008a). In June 2008, he organised a picket in front of the Latvian Embassy in Moscow, whose participants burnt an effigy of the film’s director Edvīns Šnore. A month later, he published the brochure “The Soviet Story: *Механизм лжи*”, in which he demonstrated that the film “was an example of mendacious propaganda”, and the tone of its narrative “was characteristic of the Cold War period”.

At the same time, work was underway on expanding the concept of “memory wars” as part of a broader theory of information warfare. In 2008, a permanent chapter “History as an object of information warfare” (*Информационные войны* 2008) appeared in the quarterly *Информационные войны*, published by the military community. At the end of the decade, memoranda on the need to defend historical memory were included in state documents; for example, in point 81 of the Russian National Security Strategy of May 12, 2009, attempts to revise the role and place of Russia in history were assessed as threats to national security, and the preamble noted certain positive trends in the cultural sphere: the revival of truly Russian ideals, spirituality, respect for historical memory and respect for the tradition of patriotism (*Strategiya* 2009).

These historical active measures had a dual purpose: 1) mobilising Russians to defend their historical memory, and 2) striving to recognise (and impose) Russia’s historical narrative on the international stage as a way to improve its image and rebuild its influence in the post-Soviet area. The resistance that accompanied these measures, mainly from the Baltic states, Ukraine and Poland, had a significant impact on the dynamics of this process, as it destroyed two pillars of the Russian policy of memory: the myth of the USSR’s victory over Nazism, and the myth of the Soviet Army as the liberator of Europe (Nikžentaitis 2018). It was to be combated by institutionalising the defence of historical memory. The appointment of the Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia’s Interests (hereafter the Commission) in May 2009, by the then head of state Dmitri Medvedev, was also a response to the historical debates taking place at the time, as well as the earlier decisions by the European Parliament

(Stryjek 2012) which upheld the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE's Vilnius resolution condemning Nazism and Stalinism (Malinova 2015).

Russia's activity in the field of history was noted by foreign experts, who predicted that there would be negative effects: "The politicisation of history and the growth of aggressive Great Russian nationalism may translate into a fundamental shift in Russia's foreign and security policy in the coming decades" (Smith 2008). From the very beginning, it also testified to the incompatibility with Russian reality of the conceptual apparatus which researchers were using. The term "politics of history" as used in the international scientific community is most often understood as a set of activities aimed at shaping historical awareness, strengthening public discourse about the past, and "creating a specific image of the past and its interpretation in society" (Moscow 2014); however, like the synonymously treated term "politics of memory", these expressions have different connotations in Russia. In the Russian public debate, both of these terms generally mean "interpretive wars of history", in other words: "memory wars": that is, the West's information struggle against Russia with the use of historical arguments. In this theoretical context, the Russian response is "to counteract the falsification of history" and "defend the memory of the Russian people", one part of which involves "historical active measures", that is offensive undertakings of a disinformative and deceptive nature that result from the assumptions and priorities of the Kremlin's policy and serve to support it (Darczewska 2019). The very essence of this phenomenon prompts us to consider it in terms of information warfare, rather than as an intellectual historical debate creating a specific image of the past. The use of these historical active measures escalated after the annexation of Crimea in 2014, which brought this question up to date and gave it an interdisciplinary character.

The issue of memory in contemporary Russia has been the subject of many publications in Polish; it is impossible to mention all of them here. The undisputed authority in this field is Prof. Wojciech Materski, author of an extensive monograph on this subject (Materski 2017). The subject of Russian manipulations of historical facts has long been studied

by Prof. Andrzej Nowak (Nowak 2014); and an interesting political approach to politics of history was presented by Prof. Rafał Chwedoruk (Chwedoruk 2018). The importance of this issue and its current trends are being systematically evaluated by the Marek Karp Centre for Eastern Studies [*Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich, OSW*] in Warsaw (Kaczmarowski & Rogoża 2010; Domańska 2015; Domańska 2019). The least-explored aspect is the institutionalisation of Russia's politics of memory; for this reason, the study by Prof. Tomasz Stryjek (Stryjek 2019) deserves particular attention.

## The Commission's Genesis in the Perception of its Originators



The then head of the Presidential Administration, Sergey Naryshkin, speaking on behalf of the Kremlin, initially highlighted the external factors motivating its establishment, which he described as “revisionism”:

“Particular emphasis in the revisionists’ new historical approach is being placed on the recent history of Russia and the events related to World War II. Behind the increasing scale of anti-Russian actions and statements, we can see ever more clearly a desire to revise the geopolitical results of the war. We cannot help but notice that provocative attempts are being made to assign moral responsibility for the events of those years to Russia, as the geopolitical successor of the USSR. In this way, an ideological basis is being created to demand compensation in various forms” (Naryshkin 2009).

Naryshkin situates “revisionism” thus understood in the context of the information war against Russia, building a narrative in the spirit of a historical conspiracy theory:

“[...] The stable development of our state is contrary to the plans of certain world powers, which would like to see a Russia with limited independence, unable to implement its strategic national interests enabling the development of the individual, society and the state. It was thanks to their tacit

consent and cynically concealed financial incentives that **the real information war against Russia began**. History has become a battlefield. More precisely—a distorted history [...] reduced to the role of a hostile tool of political pressure. This applies primarily to **Ukraine, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland**, although the falsification and politicisation of history have acquired the status of state policy in other countries as well” (Naryshkin 2009).

Over time, Naryshkin changed this interpretation, emphasising the Commission’s threefold internal mission. Firstly, this was to “modernise the approach to national history as a condition for the modernisation of Russia” (“modernisation” here is clearly a variant of the Soviet myth of progress). Secondly, to immunise the Russian people, who were supposedly susceptible to lies, by means of the “standardisation of national history”. Thirdly, to consolidate society in the face of the need to defend domestic history, which has become a national security problem for the Russian Federation (Naryshkin 2010).

On the one hand, the strategic goals of the Commission thus formulated indicated a return to historical propaganda from the Soviet period; on the other, they resulted from the fear of the consequences of destroying the official historical narrative (which took place during Khrushchev’s thaw and Gorbachev’s *perestroika*). The Kremlin’s decision-makers were aware that rebuilding the narrative would be more difficult after the flaws in the previously perfect picture of history were revealed; and that this must be a long-term process, both inside and outside the country.



## The Fundamentals of the Commission’s Operation, Composition and Tasks

The Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia’s Interests was appointed by Presidential Decree No. 549 of May 15, 2009 (*Ukaz* 2009). By the same decree, Dmitri Medvedev approved its statute and composition (see Annexes 1 and 2). The Commission’s special status is emphasised both



in its name and in its composition. It was headed by Sergey Naryshkin, the head of the Kremlin administration, a politician from the Leningrad branch of the former KGB (Chief of Staff of the Russian government (2004–8), deputy prime minister (2007–8), head of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation (2008–2011), chairman of the State Duma (2011–16), and from 2016 head of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation.

As an advisory and consultative body, the Commission did not receive a formal mandate to issue regulations and recommendations, but it did receive the right to coordinate the activities of federal executive authorities (this collective term describes *inter alia* the secret services and other state security structures), state authorities of entities of the Russian Federation (republics, *kray*, *oblasts*, autonomous districts, individual cities), as well as unspecified “organisations” tasked with counteracting the falsification of the history of Russia; and therefore, to request all organs of state authority to provide it with the materials it needed, and to create working groups.

Sergey Naryshkin (2010).  
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The original composition of the 28-person commission included only two historians (Prof. Aleksandr Sakharov, Dr. Natalia Narochnitskaya). It was dominated by representatives of the presidential and government administration (at the rank of deputy minister), of the presidential ministries (the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Security Service, the Foreign Intelligence Service) and the so-called sector of force (the Security Council of the Russian Federation, the Federal Technical Service for Export Control), as well as politicians, including well-known opinion leaders (the Duma deputies Konstantin Zatulin and Sergei Markov). So-called independent opinion was represented by Nikolay Svanidze, a journalist engaged in historical journalism and a member of the Public Chamber for the President of the Russian Federation. The official personnel structure of the Commission was not affected by the changes introduced in 2010 when, alongside Professor Aleksandr Chubaryan of the Russian Academy of Sciences, director of the Institute of Universal History, the directors of institutions implementing the state's information policy (the Agency for Media and Publishing, the All-Russian RTV Company) were co-opted. The personal ties between the members of the Commission and the structures of state authority ensured that it was able to use their administrative potential and logistical facilities. Formally, the President obliged the Ministry of Education and Science to handle the logistical activities of the Commission; in fact, however, its meetings and office services were organised by the President's office.

The Commission's statutory tasks included collecting and analysing information on the falsification of historical facts and events aimed at reducing the international prestige of the Russian Federation, as well as preparing reports for the President of the Russian Federation which developed strategies to counteract attempts to falsify historical facts and events, as well as recommendations for specific remedial measures, adequate responses to attempts at falsification, and the neutralisation of their possible negative consequences. In this way, these objectives of information warfare were revealed and presented on the international arena.

As part of the information campaigns accompanying the Commission's work, its members indicated its various goals.

The Commission's chairman emphasised its transparency, advisory character and its dual task: 1) to protect the citizens, especially young people, against the intoxicating influence of politicised and falsified history, 2) to disseminate historical truth on the basis of authentic archival sources. At the same time, he indicated its systemic nature:

“The attempts to counteract the falsification of history must be organised. [...] The effort will be directed primarily at organisational assistance in the development of this process —from research, to the sphere of education and popularisation of historical knowledge“ (Naryshkin 2011).

According to Prof. Andrei Sakharov, director of the Institute of Russian History, the forming of the Commission resulted from the need to develop an adequate response to the policies of memory devised by Russia's neighbours:

“In recent years, a great many different kinds of concepts have emerged, which actually cause harm to Russia's history, consciousness and statehood. They are typical of some post-Soviet states: the Baltic republics, the official Georgian leadership, Ukrainian officials, and some Polish activists.”

Prof. Chubaryan also highlighted the need to depoliticise history:

“Political and social activists are involved in the processes of its politicisation. They interpret the events of Russian history in an ideological spirit, create negative stereotypes on this basis, and poison political and social life in an atmosphere of hostility and intolerance” (*Eksperty* 2009).

Professor Narochnitskaya reported that

“the Commission has undertaken to make an inventory of the problems and mobilise various resources (research, information) which will disseminate historical truth and real knowledge [Russian *истинное знание*] [...]. The Commission itself will not act against anyone or anything [...]. It will stimulate in society, in the scientific and creative environment,

serious and well-argued responses to all manifestations of various types of falsification, and mobilise information resources for this purpose. In historiography, as well as in the official policies of a number of countries, history is being instrumentalised as a powerful ideological instrument for shaping the most disgusting image of Russia—as an enemy of all humanity and a demon of world history” (Narochnitskaya 2010).

Also, the politician Sergei Markov considered the main task of the Commission to be the monitoring of falsifications of historical facts at various levels (in books, films, media):

“The Commission is not some new ministry; it is rather a body to coordinate such ministries as *Roskul'tura* [the federal agency for culture and cinematography] or *Rosmolodezh'* [the federal youth affairs agency], which incidentally have been dealing with the fight against falsifying history for a long time by implementing their own projects.”

Markov mentioned the mechanisms and ways used to counteract such falsifications:

“False information duplicated in a thousand copies should be combated with a Russian version in not one thousand, but three hundred thousand copies. It is necessary to publish books, magazines, organise conferences, allocate grants to students and pupils, finance the production of historical films with a simple and correct [Russian: *правильной*] ideology of patriotism and devotion to the homeland” (Markov 2009).

Vasiliy Khristoforov, a general of the Federal Security Service and its archivist, made it a priority to introduce archival materials located in Russia into scientific circulation:

“The archives of the security organs contain documents from the period of the Great Patriotic War on the criminal activities of collaborators and nationalists, which documentally confirm numerous facts concerning the participation of members of the Lithuanian legions, as well as Latvian and Estonian SS units, in mass crimes against the civilian population and Soviet

prisoners of war in 1941–1944; [...] materials of the NKVD–NKGB of the USSR, and the SMERSH counterintelligence bodies concerning the crimes of Ukrainian nationalists. Additional effort will also be needed to disseminate the documents already published. **Thanks to a balanced approach to introducing archival materials into scientific circulation, and to the various ways in which they can be used, including via the media and the Internet, we will feel much more confident in the international information space**” (Khristoforov 2009).

Faced with such an openly propagandistic setting, the politically disengaged scientific community received the Commission’s work with an understandable distance. Its “authority” was mainly drawn upon by pro-Kremlin and Communist circles, as well as historiographers from the ministries of force. As a result, the Commission limited the influence of the scientific community of historians on the public intellectual debate, dividing them into politically correct and incorrect historians, while contributing to the formation of confrontational and antagonistic memories. For this reason, foreign academics and experts came to see the establishment of the Commission as primarily an attempt to interfere in research and to shape a state ideology. The name given to the Commission also met with criticism abroad (Dobrokhotov 2012).

## Politically Correct and Incorrect Historians



The first public debate among historians which was based on “inspiration from above” concerned the two-volume history of 20th-century Russia published by Andrey Zubov in Moscow in the first half of 2009 (*История России. XX век: 1894–1939; История России. XX век: 1939–2007*); this collective work was planned as an academic textbook of contemporary history. The book made a big public splash, and as a result, was not granted the status of a textbook. It was the most radical attempt to reject the Soviet historical narrative, and for this reason it met with an emotional, critical response from a large number of Russian reviewers.

As the book's academic editor, Prof. Zubov (a historian and religion scholar, and professor of philosophy at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations [МГИМО]) prepared the content of the text. He interwove his original, clearly distinguished comments into the main text; these appeared in the places where his opinion concerning specific events clearly differed from the text prepared by another author, or where the text was, in Zubov's opinion, too dry a description of the facts, lacking any clear evaluation. As a result, the work's most distinctive feature was its emphatic moral judgements, as its editor definitively rejected a large part of the historical interpretations developed during the Communist period (Zarycki 2014). As a result of the Commission's work, we should note, these old opinions returned to the school and academic textbooks currently published in Russia.

Earlier, the historian had fallen foul of the ruling elite by claiming, for example, that the NKVD-KGB was a terrorist organisation, and by openly criticising the Kremlin. Before the Russian incorporation of Crimea in 2014, Zubov warned in the daily *Vedomosti* that the Russian Federation was on the verge of destroying the system of international treaties and bringing about economic chaos and political dictatorship, and compared the annexation of Crimea to the *Anschluss* of Austria by Hitler (Zubov 2014). After this publication, he was dismissed from his work at МГИМО with immediate effect—by means of an administrative procedure, which was done contrary to the law. After two months, his employment contract was not renewed, and on the university website he was accused of disloyalty and “harmful activity” in the educational process.

The subsequent harassment of politically incorrect historians was more drastic. In 2020, for example, Yuri Dmitriev, a historian from the Karelian branch of the human rights group Memorial who investigated Stalinist crimes, was given a suspended sentence of three and a half years in a prison colony (after several years of a trial in which he was accused of paedophilia on the basis of an anonymous denunciation). Moreover, the military historian Andrei Zhukov was sentenced to 12 years in a penal colony in September 2020. The details of his case have not been made known; it is only known that Zhukov was an active participant in military-historical discussion forums.

## The Strategic Directions of the Commission's Interests



The agenda of the Commission's meetings reflected the strategic directions of its interests, as outlined by its members. From the beginning of its operation, the Commission initiated systemic "grassroots work" (archives; historical education, including *curriculum* issues; the professional development of history teachers, training specialists in difficult cases; the preparation of necessary aid, documentary materials and archival documents). This is confirmed by the transcript of the Committee's first meeting on August 28, 2009 (*Stenogramma* 2009), when the following priorities were set:

1. Evaluating history textbooks, with a view to optimising the federal list of textbooks, and the presence therein of texts that diminish the importance of Russia in general history.
2. Orienting extracurricular work with young people towards the shaping of patriotic attitudes and the skill of historical argumentation.
3. Improving international cooperation in the field of historical education.
4. The creation of a professional training system for history teachers, with the support of the Russian Academy of Sciences.
5. Organising an all-Russian conference on the role of history in the life of society.
6. Creating a state database of films documenting the testimonies of participants in the Great Patriotic War and World War II.
7. Improving the mechanism for academically situating cultural and historical information campaigns in the media; improving the system of editing, distribution and access in libraries to history books.

The meeting's participants also signalled the need to establish working groups (no data is known regarding the creation of such groups in the available sources), and appealed to the President to establish the "History of the Fatherland" foundation (*Фонд «История Отечества»*) to finance its tasks (this was only established in 2016 as part of the Russian Historical Society, see

its website). Moreover, they noted that many of the priorities discussed were still at the implementation stage (evaluation of textbooks, the extracurricular historical and patriotic education of young people, the professional development of history teachers). Over time, the Commission initiated the “modernisation” of history teaching: in early 2012, the Russian Federation’s Ministry of Education launched a competition for the preparation of a textbook for teachers entitled “Debatable Problems of Russian History” (*Дискуссионные проблемы русской истории*), as well as a methodological guide entitled “The Falsification of National History” (*Фальсификация отечественной истории*). According to the Ministry of Education’s representatives, this was related to “the reform of teaching history and the modernisation of historical views.” (*Minobrazovaniya RF* 2012).

From the analysis of the chronicle reports posted on the website of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation, it appears that a further three meetings of the Commission were held. During the meeting on January 20, 2010, an academic setting for their work was planned as part of the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II. Chairman Naryshkin called for the widest possible dissemination of war issues and their academic elucidation. The Commission’s contribution to the commemorations was to have included another special issue of *Вестник МГИМО* (*Komissiya* 2010) co published with the *МГИМО*.

On September 7, 2010, at a joint meeting of the Commission and the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Protection of State Secrets, the prospects for the development of Russian archival research were discussed in terms of introducing materials that would “enable the correct and objective reflection of events and facts from the history of Russia” to be introduced onto the academic market. The priorities in this area included: completing and determining the manner in which archival materials were to be used; reviewing the state of the archives’ preparation for the digitisation of their materials; and the technical modernisation of documentary film archives in order to expand the options for making them available to the creators of information and educational television programmes (*Sovmestnoe zasedanie* 2010). This priority was emphasised from the very beginning by Chairman Naryshkin, who liked to use the magic of numbers:

“Recently, the FSB has declassified over two million documents. The Ministry of Defence has recirculated approximately six million archival documents. The Commission intends to continue these efforts to move from responding to pseudo-historical attacks to actively explaining Russia’s role and contribution to world history and civilisation“ (Naryshkin 2009).

At the Committee’s final meeting on September 27, 2011, to which the heads of the state media were invited, Naryshkin emphasised the need for the wider use of information technologies in the historical and cultural education of the Russian people. As he argued, search engines enable the immediate acquisition of information, make it available to a wide range of users, and enable the juxtaposition of different views on history. The way in which historical issues were reflected in the media, film, literature and art was considered unsatisfactory; attention was also paid to the problem of reviewing and consulting historical issues. “Reviews should be made by recognised research centres and renowned historians. One should move away from the practice of involving people who distort history under the pretext of [giving] an original version of events” (*Rukovoditel’* 2011).

Most of the material on the Commission’s work remains classified. The terse official announcements about its meetings do not allow us to reconstruct all the issues they raised, as these announcements concern its public activities. However, they do make it possible to recreate the strategic directions of their activities aimed at preserving Russian historical memory and combating foreign memories, such as the following:

- making an inventory of difficult and controversial topics in bilateral relations;
- the development and use of information technologies to combat the historical narratives of “the adversary”;
- the standardisation of historical and cultural education,
- the preparation of methodological guides for history teachers in terms of counteracting the falsification of history;
- making the usage of archival documents more efficient;
- building systemic efforts and means to present the Russian historical narrative;



- creating an academic-research and expertise base for authorising Kremlin initiatives and “reviewing” the works of “politically incorrect” historians (who actually adopt a critical approach to the sources);
- academic and consultative support for state and non-state organisations in disseminating the Russian historical narrative as part of their publishing and information activities.

## The End of the Commission’s Work and its Successors

On February 14, 2012, after three years of operation, the Commission closed its activities, unnoticed by the public. President Medvedev liquidated it by annulling his earlier decrees (*Ukaz* 2009, *Ukaz* 2010a and *Ukaz* 2010b). These were included in the collective list of legal acts that had expired (*Ukaz* 2012a). The liquidation was accompanied by some problematic reports: Konstantin Zatulin linked it, for example, to staff changes in the Presidential Administration (Naryshkin had become the chairman of the State Duma), emphasising that the dissolution of the Commission had come as a surprise to its members (Dobrokhotov 2012).

The credibility of this report is undermined by the communiqué from the Commission’s meeting in September 2011. Naryshkin informed the audience that, in response to historians’ demands, President Medvedev had ordered the Ministry of Education and Science, together with the Russian Academy of Sciences, to prepare a proposal to reactivate the Russian Historical Society (RHS: *Русское историческое общество*) (*Rukovoditel’* 2011). Naryshkin headed the Society’s Founding Committee; he also became its chairman on June 20, 2012 (with Prof. A. Chubaryan as its vicechairman). The continuity of personnel and the institutional form prompts the hypothesis that the RHS is the principal successor to the Commission to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia’s Interests.

The Commission appears to have had even more successors: in the same year, by presidential decree, the Russian Military Historical Society was established, operating under the control of the Ministry of Defence (*Ukaz* 2012 b); in 2011 a standing

Commission for Historical Remembrance within the Human Rights Council for the President of the Russian Federation was established, under the leadership of the well-known political scientist Sergei Karaganov; in 2014, the Free Historical Society was registered, at the initiative of the Committee for Civic Initiatives of the former Minister of Finance Aleksei Kudrin (the latter two persons represent the so-called “system liberals”). In 2011, while the Commission was still operating, another seemingly independent organisation with the status of a non-governmental institution, INVISSIN, was established. In 2015, the Russian “Znaniye” [“Knowledge”] Society, active in the field of history, was reactivated as an extension to the Russian Federation’s Ministry of Education (*Ukaz* 2015). Since 2017 the “Two-Headed Eagle” Orthodox Russian Association of Historical Education has been in operation. Today, many state and non-state organisations operate in the field of “counteracting attempts at falsification”. The government arbitrarily grants them access to selected archives, and finances the work and conferences they publish and produce, giving politics of history the desired form. These organisations use various strategies to develop the historical memory of Russians and combat the remembrances of the “other”; they are also oriented towards working in various environments.

As the St. Petersburg historian Aleksei Miller claims, this also makes it possible to limit the influence of academic historians over the historical debate. The Russian authorities disclose documents in a similar way to how they leak to the media, and all decisions on financing these institutions remain in the hands of officials and politicians. Most importantly, however, these decisions are arbitrary and secret (Miller 2011).

## INVISSIN: Old Wine in a New Bottle

In 2011, the Institute for Foreign Research and Initiatives (Russian: *Институт внешнеполитических исследований и инициатив, ИИВИАИИ*) was established in Moscow. It is headed by Dr. Veronika Krashennnikova. As the Institute says on its website, it conducts research on the basis of unique archival information, taking into account political, economic,



military, social and cultural conditions. Its activity is oriented towards **“searching for hidden truth [...], restoring historical justice, and highlighting the deeper aspects of historical events and processes”**. This is achieved by the “Real Politics” (*Реальная политика*) book series, initiated by INVISSIN and financed mainly from presidential grants, which is dedicated to current issues of information warfare, including memory wars (15 books have been published so far). The Institute’s books (INVISSIN 2020) have a rich informational and promotional setting. One collective work *Польша в борьбе за Восточную Европу 1920–2020* [Poland in the fight for Eastern Europe 1920–2020] (*Pol’sha* 2020a), published on the occasion of the centenary of the Polish-Bolshevik war, was presented in the *Rossiya Segodnya* and at the Moscow Book Fair, and has already received several reviews (*Prometey* 2020; see also *Pol’sha* 2020b; *Pol’sha* 2020c; *Novosti* 2020); it has also been recommended on websites and in historical magazines (Rudakova 2020). (At the same time, the thesis that Poland was trying to draw Belarus into the sphere of NATO’s influence was disseminated. In general, however, the book presents traditional anti-Polish themes: Prometheism and the Intermarium as manifestations of the “imperial syndrome of the Republic of Poland”; its authors also attribute to Poland the ambition of representing the whole of “the new Eastern Europe”).

The non-state INVISSIN institute repeats the methods of Narochnitskaya’s “Historical Perspective” Foundation. By promoting the works of authors belonging to the trends referred to as conspiracy or folk-history, such organisations wield increasing influence on shaping the historical awareness of contemporary Russians. The representatives of these trends go the farthest in their reinterpretations of historical processes and events. Narochnitskaya and Krashennnikova also personify a “relay race” of generations of researchers available to the Kremlin, as do Yuriy Mukhin and Vladislav Shved, who ceaselessly report on “the groundlessness of the theses of Polish-Goebbelsian propaganda on Katyn” (Janicki 2011). In addition, new names and organisations appearing in place of the “vanishing waves” reawaken interest and emotions related to those historical events that are controversial in bilateral relations.

## How the Commission Has Influenced Domestic and Foreign Audiences



The historical narrative reduced to “defending Russia’s role in the past against attempts at revisionism” and defending the memory of the Russian people has become an important argument in the domestic and foreign policies of the Russian Federation. From the very beginning, this kind of historical “defence” has used a set of information warfare tools that has deformed the categories of “politics of history” or “memory politics”; these concepts have now become equated with manipulation and disinformation, as well as with historical propaganda. Most often taking the form of offensive information campaigns, it has become an element in shaping the foundations of the worldview, the so-called patriotic education of children and youth, as well as military-patriotic programmes. These activities are characterised by the extensive use of the state apparatus in culture, education and the media, with a special role for the security and defence apparatus. This can be observed particularly at the level of anniversaries and commemorations, which are convenient occasions for presenting the war of narrative and historical interpretation.

In this context, in the domestic perspective, two vectors of the Commission’s influence can be distinguished: the “positive” (striving to develop a common worldview; creating and building up a national identity) and the negative (limiting narratives which are extreme and critical of the Kremlin, so-called internal enemies, and foreign agents representing views which deviate from the imposed standard, as in the case of Prof. Andrei Zubov). The positive and negative vectors of the narrative can also be distinguished from an external perspective (supporting, inspiring and reproducing narratives consistent with the Russian official interpretation; and limiting the narratives of states whose remembrance damages Russia’s international image). In both cases, the emphasis is on the protection of security broadly understood (political, ideological), justified by *raison d’état*, and of cultural security (the defence of national identity against

globalisation, Americanisation, Europeanisation, and so on). Nor do the forms and methods of influence used differ significantly. From the beginning, the Commission's priority was to change the memory structure of both the Russian people and the external environment. Domestic activities focused on correcting the content of history textbooks, inspiring historians to publicly debate controversial (the so-called "difficult") issues, and exerting pressure on history teachers (training, conferences, competitions for places in a methodological textbook); meanwhile, external activities concentrated on introducing the Russian historical narrative to the international discourse (publishing projects with access to archival documents, thematic collections of documents, international conferences, and involving foreign historians in reviewing and interpreting facts and events from Russian history).

The beginning of the Commission's activity coincided with the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. As part of the "anniversary offensive", a great many publications appeared in the press and on the Internet, and documentaries such as "The Secrets of the Hidden Protocols" were broadcast on state television. The film's consultant was General Aleksandr Zdanovich, a longtime spokesman of the Federal Security Service and a leading representative of the service's historiography. It was intended that the veracity of the theses promoted in these articles and films be made more credible by the declassification of collections of documents from the archives of the Russian Federation's Foreign Intelligence Service concerning the situation on the eve of the war, which were mainly devoted to the politics of the Baltic countries during World War II, as well as "The Secrets of Poland's policy in 1935–1945" (Sotskov 2009 b).

The beginning of this propaganda offensive, its methods and campaigning character were aptly depicted in 2009 by experts from the Polish National Security Bureau at the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, who—realising that the Russian actions were inadequate to the terms "politics of history" or "remembrance policy" as used in the international circuit of experts—described them as historical propaganda:

“Disinformation plays a key role in historical propaganda, as in any kind of propaganda. Classic techniques are used here, such as intoxication (negation, the inversion of facts), manipulation (true theses are used in a way that leads to false conclusions being drawn), modification of a motive or circumstances (indicating the motive or cause of a specific action so that it is only beneficial for one of the parties) and interpretation (the appropriate selection of words to evoke positive or negative associations in the recipient). Russian historical propaganda is based on inspiring a topic, or reversing it when that topic has already been publicly raised. In this way, a media campaign with clearly defined assumptions and goals is launched. The choice of the subject of such campaigns is never accidental. It is very often associated with current problems in the relations between the Russian Federation and its neighbours” (Cichocki, Pietrzak 2009).

Due to the nature of the anniversary, the greatest attention was paid to Polish topics. This is confirmed by the list of publications from 2009 (see below).

### Selected Publications Issued in 2009 on the Eve of the 70th Anniversary of the Outbreak of World War II, Inspired by or in Cooperation with the Commission



The Commission for Counteracting the Falsification of History to the Detriment of Russia’s Interests under the President of the Russian Federation cooperated with or inspired the publication of numerous publications following its line. Here we list the following:

«Завтра может быть уже поздно...»: «Вестник МГИМО-Университета». Специальный выпуск к 70-летию начала Второй мировой войны» [“Tomorrow it could be too late”: “The MGIMO University messenger”. Special edition for 70th Anniversary of the Outbreak of the Second World War] (published by Комиссия при Президенте РФ по противодействию попыткам фальсификации истории в ущерб интересам России; МГИМО(У) МИД России,

Moscow 2009), a special edition of the *MGIMO* magazine. The publication includes speeches by President Medvedev, Sergey Mironov, Sergey Naryshkin and Sergey Lavrov, as well as studies by authors with various views, and a selection of documents illustrating the evolution of Stalin's policy on the eve of the war.

*Великая Победа [Great Victory]* (в 15 т. под общ. ред. С.Е. Нарышкина, А.В. Торкунова) (published by МГИМО–Университет, Moscow 2009), volume 7 “Испытание” [*Trial*] and volume 8 “Расплата” [*Payoff*]: two volumes in the “Great Victory” series containing a detailed chronicle of the actions of the Red Army during World War II. The series has 2 editions, one of 15 volumes and one of eight.

*К 70-летию начала Второй мировой войны. События и факты межвоенного периода. Совет Федерации Федерального Собрания Российской Федерации [For the 70th Anniversary of the Outbreak of the Second World War. Events and Facts of the Interwar Period. Council of the Federation of the Federal Gathering of the Russian Federation]*, Аналитический вестник 13 (380), August 2009: a collective work prepared by the Analyses Department of the Federation Council's Apparatus. The introduction stresses the need to “prevent the errors and distortions of the Soviet leadership from being transmitted to contemporary Russia.”

*К 70-летию начала Второй мировой войны. Исследования, документы, комментарии [For the 70th Anniversary of the Outbreak of the Second World War. Studies, Documents, Commentaries]*, published by Наука 2009: a collective study by the Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences. A detailed chronicle of the “Red Army's military march into West Belarus and Western Ukraine in September and October 1939” was published here.

Лев Соцков, *Советская разведка об интригах Варшавы накануне Второй мировой. Секреты польской политики. 1935–1945 гг. Сборник документов [Soviet Foreign Intelligence Service on the Warsaw's Intrigues in the Eve of the*

*Second World War. Secrets of the Polish policy. 1935–1945. Collection of Documents*], published by Типография СВР России, Moscow 2009 (Sotskov 2009).

Лев Соцков, *Секреты польской политики. 1935–1945* [*Secrets of the Polish Policy. 1935–1945*], published by Рипол классик, Moscow 2009 (Sotskov 2009). Both titles contain the same collection of documents, twice published in 2009, about Poland's secret plans on the eve of World War II. It has also been re-issued in subsequent years. It includes analyses of Poland's foreign and internal policy, cables from military attachés, telegrams from Polish diplomatic missions, and so on.

Лев Соцков, *Прибалтика и геополитика: 1935–1945 гг.: раскритиченные документы Службы внешней разведдоррой* [*Baltic States and Geopolitics: 1935–1945. Declassified Documents of the Foreign Intelligence Service*]. Рипол классик, 2009: a collection of documents on the Baltic countries' pro-Nazi foreign policies concerning World War II.

Н.А. Нарочницкая, В.М. Фалин и др., *Партитура Второй мировой. Кто и когда начал войну?* [*The Score of the Second World War. Who and When Started the War?*], published by Вече, Moscow 2009: a collection of documents and studies devoted to Polish issues, prepared by the “Historical Perspective” Foundation and “Historical Memory”. According to the collection's authors, Poland is jointly responsible for the outbreak of World War II. These accusations have been repeated in accompanying press and online publications, including an article posted on the Russian Ministry of Defence's website.

М. Мельтюхов, *17 сентября 1939. Советско-польские конфликты 1918–1939* [*September 17, 1939. Soviet-Polish Conflicts 1918–1939*], Вече, Moscow 2009: while recognising the partition of the Republic of Poland in 1939, the author also considers it to have been “an act of historical justice”, strengthening the position of the USSR as a great power. He treats the participation of the Red Army in this partition as a peacekeeping operation.

An equally impressive number of publications appeared in 2010, the year of the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II, “Russia’s great victory” in the language of historical propaganda. The publishing projects issued then, which also include the selective declassification of documents, represent a spectacular manifestation of the Commission’s public achievements, which its chairman summed up as follows:

“In cooperation with the Commission and with its organisational support, the country’s research centres have prepared and published over fifty books devoted to controversial issues in contemporary Russian history which have been subject to revision and anti-Russian assessments. A significant part of these books were written on the basis of declassified archival documents, and appeared on the 65th anniversary of the Great Victory. Their appearance was so unexpected for our opponents, and the argumentation contained therein was so convincing, so justified in academic and documental terms, that it extinguished the propagandistic fervour of many opponents. These books have received great academic and social appreciation. Particularly noteworthy is the eight-volume edition of “The Great Victory”, which has received the highest awards at all national and many foreign book competitions. However, their circulation was small. We have only managed to supply university libraries with them, although this was not enough for everyone. That is why we support the request from the Ministry of Culture to include them on the list of books that must be included in Russian libraries. [...] They will be a good gift for readers interested in contemporary history” (Naryshkin 2011).

Such publications are aimed at both internal and external audiences. On the **global** scale, Russia is trying to impose its version of history as the predominant one in international discourse. It has a multi-level impact through many different means of transmission: political, diplomatic, military, social; through cinema, literature and media, all of which speak with many voices, but generally duplicate the official narrative. It is fighting on many fronts simultaneously, conforming to the interests of various audiences. At the same time, the historical narrative is just one element of the activities aimed at shaping

a positive opinion about Russia in opinion-forming circles abroad. For example, the fact that the USSR participated in the anti-Nazi coalition serves to create an image of Russia as a country whose policy is purely defensive, but where at the same time any attempts to wield pressure or aggression against it are doomed to failure. Much effort is made to gain the cooperation of international historians as a platform of influence. According to Prof. Chubaryan, “contacts with foreign historians are of particular importance [...] in the face of strong attacks on Russia, a real information war, and the attempts to revise Russia’s role in the past” (*Akademik* 2016; Subbotina 2016).

On the **regional** scale, meanwhile, Russia uses its common history of participation with other post-Soviet states in a single state body as an argument to justify its continued exertion of a sphere of influence in the CEE region, and the integration of that space under its leadership. However, there has been little success in this field: nations that have de-Communisted their remembrances are not susceptible to Russian manipulation.

The national audience appears to be under the severest pressure. The State influences its citizens through its **educational policy** (history teaching programmes, the constant revision of textbooks in terms of falsifying the official historical narrative and shaping the Russian national identity), **information policy** (consolidating the imperial meganarration based on the concept of the so-called Russian world, inspiring committed historical journalism, wielding influence through historical blogs and websites), as well as a **symbolic policy** aimed at the consolidation and mobilisation of society (restoring and preserving symbolic instruments from the Soviet period). The defence of the Russian people’s memory, including the myths about the Great Victory of the USSR and the liberating mission of the Red Army during the last war —the myths which make up their identity—is constantly being reinforced by both legal sanctions and psychological pressure. In this context, it is also difficult to imagine the separation of the Russian identity from this legacy, built on the foundations of confrontational information warfare. Despite the dissolution of the Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History



to the Detriment of Russia's Interests, formal and informal organisations continue to operate which counter any attempts to critically evaluate the role of the USSR during World War II; and the country's history textbooks are still being published under the tutelage of such institutions.

## Conclusions

The Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests has become an important element in the construction of a systemic approach to the issue of Russian historical memory. First, it successfully introduced these issues into public discourse. Secondly, it developed a strategy, including strategic goals and priorities, for combating foreign remembrance (the use of information technologies to combat the opponent's historical narratives; the standardisation of historical and cultural education; the manipulative use of archival documents; building up systemic efforts and means to present the Russian historical narrative). Third, it has broadened the available research and expert base that authorises the Kremlin's initiatives and "reviews" the work of "politically incorrect" historians (who in fact present a critical approach to the sources).

The Commission cleared away existing mechanisms and created new ones, formal and informal, for influencing both Russian society and foreign public opinion. Its federal status and its location within the structures of the Presidential Administration guaranteed its freedom of action. The close ties between its members and state institutions ensured, on the one hand, that a broader administrative potential and logistic base could be used in its work; and on the other, they made the Russian historical debate more dependent on the authorities controlling it through state institutions (the ministries of education, culture, *Rosarkhiv*, *Rosmolodezh'* and others, with the presidential administration at the helm). The special role for the so-called sector of force—the uniformed services (the army and the special services)—results from the situation of the historical discussion taking place within the

context of the Russian Federation's national security, which was portrayed as being under threat from information warfare being conducted against Russia.

The Commission's dissolution did not slow down the dynamics of the information struggle for the predomination of the Russian historical narrative. The new opening of the "fight against the falsification of Russian history" came at the beginning of President Putin's third term in office (2012–18). In 2012, proclaimed as the Year of History, the Russian Historical Society and the Military Historical Society were reactivated. Both of these, as well as many other organisations (both those which were part of state structures and those which were formally non-state organisations, but financially and logistically supported by the state), are continuing the strategic goals and priorities of the Commission. This enables both mass action on "an united front", and the specific assignation of roles (to both conservatives and liberals, while also encompassing the specialisation of individual players). Moreover, the multiplicity of entities extends the possibilities for international influence.

## Postscript: The Role of the Russian Federation's Ministry of Defence in the "Fight for History"



The Russian Federation's Ministry of Defence is an increasingly important player on the frontline of the war of memory. In October 2016, at a meeting of experts of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, the General Staff of the Russian Federation presented a report on the falsification of the history of Russia and the associated threats to national security. On this basis, the Security Council experts updated their list of events "most often falsified and requiring advance defence". This short list includes the nationality policy of the Russian Empire and the USSR, the role of the USSR in the victory over fascism in World War II, the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, and the USSR's response to political crises in the GDR, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other former socialist countries.

During the meeting, there were proposals to restore the institution (closed in 2012) that could use the experiences of the presidential commission in counteracting attempts at falsifying history. The advocate of this proposal is Prof. Andrei Manoylo, a well-known specialist in the field of information warfare, a former lecturer at the FSB Academy, and now at the Lomonosov State University in Moscow. In his opinion, such a body should combine coordinating, planning, organisational and implementation functions in the field of strategic information operations, which would enable “the conveyance of Russian narratives and assessments of historical events to Western audiences”. The vice-chairman of the RHS, Prof. Aleksandr Chubaryan, was lukewarm about the idea, stating there was no need to appoint a commission of historians in Russia to counteract attempts to falsify history: the historical institutes and departments already extant, together with the Russian Historical Society, are already doing well in this matter. “The historical and cultural standard, and the list of 30 difficult historical problems such as the events of 1917 and the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, have proved to be helpful in this respect.” Moreover, “it is not historians, but professionals who wage information wars” (Nagornykh, Khamraev 2016).

It should be added that the group of “professionals” mentioned by Prof. Chubaryan is gradually expanding. In 2019, a course entitled “Psychological defence: current questions of information warfare” was introduced at the Ministry of Defence’s Military University (*BYMO* – *VUMO*). In May 2020, *VUMO* scientists organised an online conference entitled “Psychological defence. The fight for history—the fight for the future”. On August 25, 2020, the debate on the same topic was resumed at “Patriot” Park, the Congress Centre of the Ministry of Defence near Moscow, and civilian specialists were invited to join the debate group (*Psikhologicheskaya oborona* 2020). The agenda of the conference shows the multifaceted approach to this issue:

– The fight for history—the fight for the future (as a continuation and development of the issues raised in the article by the President of the Russian Federation entitled

“75 years of the Great Victory: responsibility to history and the future” (introduced by Nikita Mikhalkov, a film director and political activist);

– Historical memory as an important area of the state’s domestic and foreign policy (introduced by Yevgeni Primakov Jr., Head of the Agency for Cooperation with Compatriots Abroad (*Россотрудничество, Rossotrudnichestvo*);

– The role of education in defending the historical truth and educating young people in a patriotic spirit (presented by Olga Vasilyeva, a former minister of education, and currently president of the Council of the Russian Academy of Education);

– Hybrid-information threats and the technologies to counter them (presented by Mikhail Kovalchuk, director of the Kurchatov Institute – National Research Centre);

– The ideology of victory: knowledge about the past, understanding the present, shaping the future (presented by the deputy defence minister Nikolay Pankov);

– The sociology of historical issues (outlined by Valeriy Fedorov, director of the Russian Centre for Public Opinion Research).

The conference also had both theoretical dimensions (the use of top-down mega-narratives: in this case, Putin’s famous article for the American *National Interest*; history as a tool of domestic and foreign policy) and practical (information warfare technologies; sociological tools for measuring its effectiveness). This permanent updating of the problem of defending memory has a long tradition in Russia. The very title of the conference (as a current command to the “historians fighting for the future”) resembles the well-known saying of Aleksandr Benkendorf (1783–1844), an influential adviser to Tsar Nicholas I, chief of the gendarme corps and the notorious 3rd Division of His Imperial Majesty’s Chancellery. In his words: “Russia’s past is beautiful, the present is wonderful, and the future is beyond the wildest imagination.”

Red Square, Moscow, Russia.  
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## Appendix 1. The Statute of the Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests for the President of the Russian Federation

1. This Statute defines the mode of operation of the Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests for the President of the Russian Federation (hereinafter "the Commission").

2. In its activities, the Commission will be guided by the **Constitution of the Russian Federation**, federal laws, decrees and regulations of the President of the Russian Federation, and by this Statute.

3. The statutes of the Commission will be approved by the President of the Russian Federation.

4. The main tasks of the Commission are as follows:

a) the generalisation and analysis of information on the falsification of historical facts and events intended to reduce the international prestige of the Russian Federation, as well as preparing relevant reports for the President of the Russian Federation;

b) developing a strategy to counteract attempts to falsify historical facts and events undertaken with the aim of harming Russia's interests;

c) preparing recommendations for the President of the Russian Federation on measures to counteract attempts to falsify historical facts and events to the detriment of Russia's interests;

d) examining applications and coordinating the activities of federal executive authorities, state authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, and organisations working in the field of counteracting attempts to falsify historical facts and events to the detriment of Russia's interests;

e) preparing recommendations for an adequate response to attempts to falsify historical facts and events to the detriment of Russia's interests, and to neutralise their possible negative consequences.

5. In order to perform its tasks, the Commission has the right to:

a) request and obtain, in accordance with established procedures, the necessary materials from the federal government bodies, government bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and organisations;

b) create working groups on matters falling within the remit of the Commission from representatives of state authorities, organisations, academics and specialists;

c) invite representatives of federal bodies, bodies of the constitutional entities of the Russian Federation and organisations to its meetings.

6. Members of the Commission participate in its work on the nonprofit principle.

7. Meetings of the Committee shall be held at least twice a year.

8. The organisational, technical, information and documentary services concerning the activities of the Commission will be provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

**Source:** *Положение о Комиссии при Президенте Российской Федерации по противодействию попыткам фальсификации истории в ущерб интересам России* (Информационная сеть «Техэксперт», <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/902157137>).

## Appendix 2. Members of the Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests for the President of the Russian Federation in 2009–2012

**Naryshkin, S[erгей] Y[evgen'yevich]**, Head of the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation (chairman of the Commission)

**Kalina I[saak] I[osifovich]**, Deputy Minister of Education and Science (Vice-president of the Commission from 2010)

**Sirosh I[gor'] I[vanovich]**, adviser to the Head of the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation (Deputy Chairman of the Commission)

**Demidov I[van] I[vanovich]**, Head of the Internal Policy Department at the Chancellery of the President of the Russian Federation (secretary responsible for the Commission since 2010)

**Alkhanov A[li] D[adashevich]**, Deputy Minister of Justice

**Artizov A[ndrey] N[ikolayevich]**, Director of the State Agency for Archives (from 2010)

**Busygin A[ndrey] Y[evgen'yevich]**, Deputy Minister of Culture (expelled in 2010)

**Butko Y.Y.**, Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for Education (this body was liquidated in 2010)

**Chubaryan A[leksandr] O[ganovich]**, Director of the Institute of Universal History of the Russian Academy of Sciences (from 2010)

**Dergachev V[italiy] V[asil'yevich]**, Deputy Director of the Federal Service for Technical Export Control (*ФСТЭК*), Secretary of the Interdepartmental Commission for the Protection of State Secrets

**Dobrodeyev O[leg] B[orisovich]**, General Director of the All-Russian State Television and Radio Company (co-opted in 2010)

**Grigoryev V[ladimir] V[iktorovich]**, Deputy Director of the Federal Agency for Press and Publishing (from 2010)

**Kambolov M**[arat] **A**[rkad'yevich], Deputy Director of the Federal Agency for Science and Innovation

**Khristoforov V**[asiliy] **S**[tepanovich], Chairman of the Board of the Federal Security Service of Russia

**Kozlov V**[ladimir] **P**[etrovich], Director of the State Agency for Archives (until 2010)

**Makarov N**[ikolay] **Y**[egorovich], Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, First Deputy Defence Minister of the Russian Federation.

**Markov S**[ergey] **A**[leksandrovich], Vice-chairman of the State Duma Committee on Social and Religious Associations

**Medinskiy V**[ladimir] **R**[ostislavovich], member of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation (co-opted in 2010)

**Molchanov D**[enis] **V**[ladimirovich], Director of the Department of Culture and Education at the Government Administration of the Russian Federation (co-opted in 2010)

**Nazarenko V**[aleriy] **P**[etrovich], Deputy Director of the Foreign Policy Board of the Chancellery of the President of the Russian Federation

**Narochnitskaya N**[ataliya] **A**[lekseevna], President of the Historical Perspective Foundation

**Pivovarov Y**[uriy] **S**[ergeyevich], Director of the Institute of Scientific Information in the Social Sciences (*ИИИОИ*) of the Russian Academy of Sciences (co-opted in 2010)

**Povalko A**[leksandr] **B**[orisovich], Deputy Director of the Federal Youth Affairs Agency (until 2010)

**Romanenko A.Y.**, Deputy Director of the Federal Agency for Press and Publishing (*Rospechat*) (expelled in 2010)

**Sakharov A**[ndrey] **N**[ikolayevich], Director of the Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences

**Shabanov Y**[aroslav] **V**[asil'yevich], senior clerk at the Chancellery of the President (until 2010)

**Shipov S**[avva] **V**[ital'yevich], Director of department at the Ministry of Regional Development (until 2010)

**Svanidze N**[ikolay] **K**[arlovich], Chairman of the Committee on Interethnic Relations and Freedom of Conscience at the Social Chamber of the Russian Federation

**Sobolev V**[alentin] **A**[lekseyevich], Deputy Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation

**Titov V**[ladimir] **G**[ennadiyevich], Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Torkunov A**[natoliy] **V**[asil'yevich], Rector of the Moscow State Institute of International Affairs (*МГИМО – MGIMO*) (co-opted in 2010)

**Torshin A**[leksandr] **P**[orfir'yevich], First Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

**Vinokurov S**[ergey] **Y**[ur'yevich], Head of the Department for Interregional and International Relations in the Field of Culture of the Chancellery of the President of the Russian Federation

**Zatulin K**[onstantin] **F**[yodorovich], First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on CIS Affairs and Liaison with Compatriots Abroad

**Zimakov V**[ladimir] **A**[leksandrovich], Deputy Head of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia (until 2010)

**Source:** Состав Комиссии при Президенте Российской Федерации по противодействию попыткам фальсификации истории в ущерб интересам России, (Информационная сеть «Техэксперт», <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/902157137>), including the changes of January 22, 2010 (*Ukaz* 2010, No. 97) and the changes of September 8, 2010 (*Ukaz* 2010, No. 1103).

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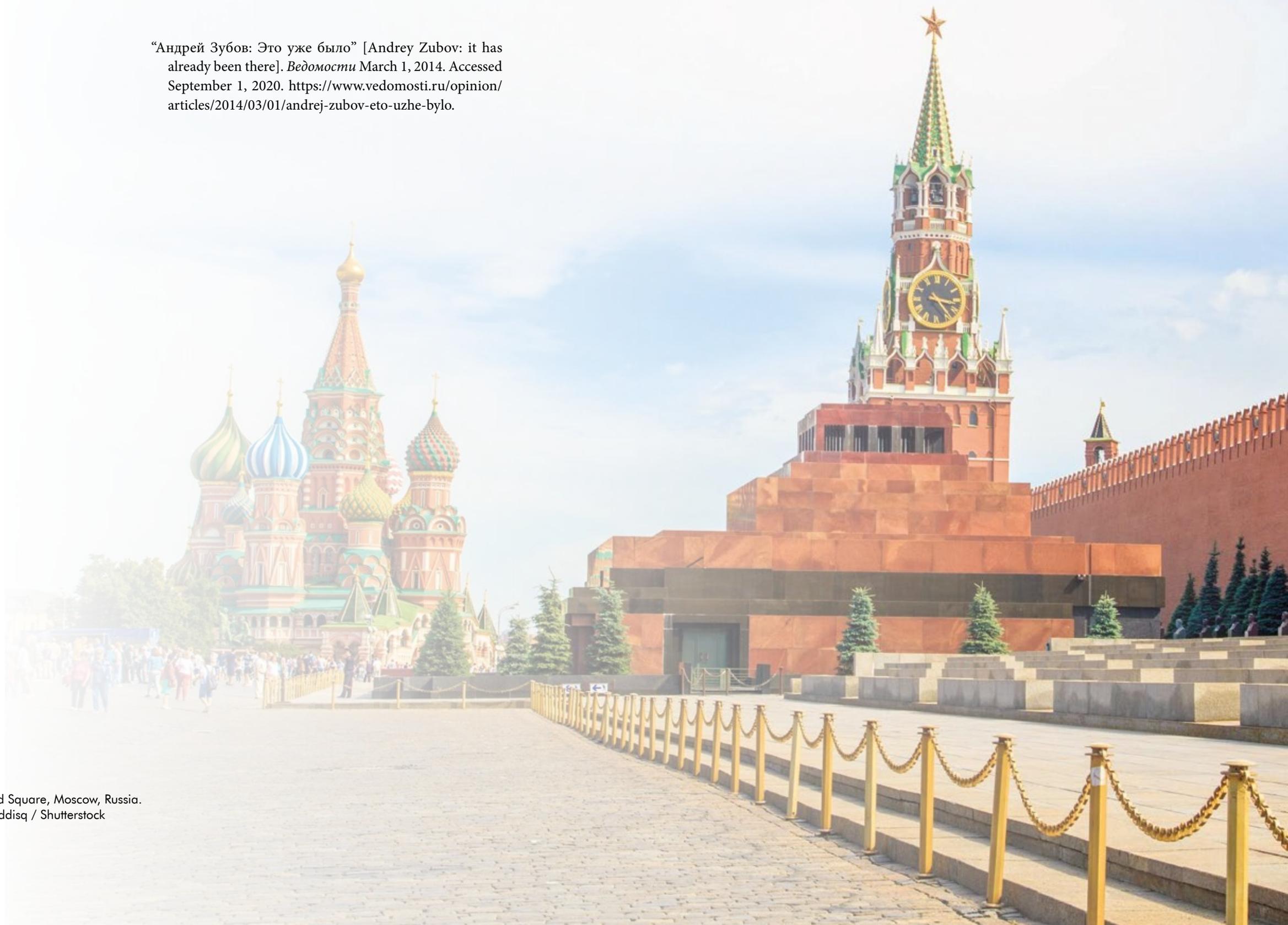
Президенте Российской Федерации по формированию и подготовке резерва управленческих кадров, изменении и признании утратившими силу некоторых актов Президента Российской Федерации” [Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of February 14, 2012 no. 183 on the approval of the members of the Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation for the formation and preparation of the reserve of the leadership cadres, and for change and announcement of invalidity of some decrees of the President of Russian Federation]. *Kremlin.ru*. Accessed September 1, 2020. <http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/34810>.

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