

WAR DISCOURSE AS A MEANS OF CONSTRUCTING A NATIONAL MYTH (THE CRIMEAN WAR IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY SCHOOLBOOKS AND POPULAR LITERATURE)

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In regimes throughout history, war has been and remains one of the most powerful instruments for anyone attempting to shape the ideology of the popular consciousness, no matter what their beliefs about war. These patterns extend far beyond the bounds of the 19th century, although this paper will focus on that era.

The first step in the process of ideological preparation for a military campaign is the search for historical parallels and analogues which can serve as models and reference points in the building of a new ideological paradigm. Such searches have been conducted by power structures, literati, journalists, and publicists. In Russia in the time of the Napoleonic Wars, the Battle of Kulikovo, and particularly the year 1612, served as analogues. Then, the Patriotic War itself became a consistent source of myths¹. However, the Patriotic War was one of victory, placing Russia in an exclusive position among European powers. The final victory against Napoleon allowed Russians, if not to forget, then at least to smooth over the memories of Austerlitz, of the defeats in 1807, and of the Treaties of Tilsit. This national triumph, the remembrance of which was skillfully maintained under Nicholas I through anniversary celebrations, monuments, and other symbolic actions, neutralized awareness in the Russian social consciousness of the new political realities of Nicholas' rule: the lamentable consequences of the politics of the Holy Alliance and the rapid decline of Russia's status in Europe.

Beginning with declaration of war against Turkey in 1853, Nicholas consistently drew direct parallels between the Crimean War and the War of 1812,

¹ See the multifaceted analysis of this phenomenon: [Отечественная война].

and was far from the only one to do so. It might appear that this Eastern War, begun (officially) to defend Orthodox holy places in Palestine, followed much more closely the model of the Crusades; however, as Olga Maiorova has demonstrated, that parallel does not work [Maiorova: 30]. In symbolic parallels, an important role is played by the element of magic; therefore the military parallel must be “victorious”. The chronologically distant events of the Crusades, in which, furthermore, Rus’ did not participate, failed miserably — the Holy Land remained for centuries under Islamic rule. Instead, the formation of the ideology of the Crimean War followed the smoother path of the “new” Patriotic War [Maiorova; Майорова]. Later, the same model was used to a different degree of effectiveness in 1914, and again in 1941. However, the symbolic potential of the Napoleonic Wars were also used by Russia’s opponents in the Crimean War, especially France: the French Commander-in-Chief Pélissier began the assault on Sevastopol on June 18, 1855, the fortieth anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, hoping to please the French emperor Napoleon III, Bonaparte’s nephew, and achieve for him symbolic revenge for his uncle’s defeat (this symbolic action failed) [Тарле 1950: 2, 401–402].

Russia obtained a real basis for parallels between 1812 and the events at the beginning of the 1850s at the moment that Coalition troops landed on the Crimean peninsula and began the siege of Sevastopol. While Russia had been the aggressor at the beginning of hostilities, invading the territory belonging to the Ottoman Porte and destroying its fleet in Turkey’s Sinop Bay without a declaration of war, the landing in Crimea was an enemy invasion into Russian territory, and, consequently, provided a firm foundation for the use of the rhetoric of “homeland defense”. Military defeats only strengthened the analogies, which hid a hope that, like in 1812, initial failures would turn into final victory. But this did not come to pass, and then attention turned to another myth of the Patriotic War — the idea of a “people’s war” and the heroism of the defenders of Sevastopol, warriors repeating and even surpassing the feat of Borodino. This attitude is characterized in A. N. Арукhtin’s poem “Солдатская песня о Севастополе” (“A Soldier’s Song of Sevastopol”, 1869), a kind of inverse “Borodino”:

Не веселую, братцы, я песню спую,
 Не могучую песню победы,
 Что певали отцы в Бородинском бою,
 Что певали в Очакове деды².

² It is significant that this poem was chosen by N. F. Dubrovin as a kind of epigraph to his foundational monograph [Дубровин 1900: 1, III].

While Lermontov's "current tribe" is unworthy of their heroic grandfathers, Apukhtin's heroes of Sevastopol, standing on the brink of death for 11 months, are "Herculean men" ("богатырская рать") and "warriors of iron and steel" ("бойцы из железа и стали"). Although victory was on the side of the enemy, it brought them neither glory nor satisfaction:

А и так победили, что долго потом
Не совались к нам с дерзким вопросом,
А и так победили, что с кислым лицом
И с разбитым отчалили носом.

Apukhtin is far from original in his interpretation of events; he develops the compensatory model that proved the most popular in the discourse about the Crimean War. This model differed fundamentally from Tolstoy's. Tolstoy's *Sevastopol Sketches*, despite their popularity and significance for the literary process, and despite their distinct patriotism, do not fit into the model featuring fearless and irreproachable soldiers. They reveal different (and often ignoble) motives for human actions at war, speaking of the fear of death and the inhumanity of war. For the goals of propaganda and education, *The Sevastopol Sketches* were too complex and ambiguous, so they were not used, as far as we know, in educational or popular books, unlike *War and Peace*, for example, from which relevant excerpts were readily published in such texts. In the ideological discourse discussed here, the main emphasis is placed on *feats*, both personal and collective. It cannot be assumed that there was no talk of the victims and horrors of war, but heroism was the main focus. This was all the more necessary since contemporaries' real perceptions of the war were altogether unenthusiastic — society was dominated by apathy and discontent, and among the people there were uprisings and unrest against recruitment into the militia [Соловьев 2007: 33]. To meet the goals of education and propaganda, a depiction of war was needed that would glorify history and consolidate the nation³.

This paper will analyze how the Crimean War was interpreted by the target audience, which was highly significant to both governmental (educational) and non-governmental (popular) ideologues. It will also note how the gymnasium curriculum responded instantly to current events — history textbooks of pre-revolution schools always included events that had occurred up to the moment of publication.

One of the first surveys of the just-ended Crimean War was given in D. I. Ilovaisky's 1860 textbook, which was reprinted around 40 times before the

³ Regarding the efforts of the authorities and the press to establish such an image during the period of military action, see: [Соловьев 2007; Маиорова; Майорова].

revolution and was one of the most loyal gymnasium manuals [Иловайский]. One of the textbook's goals, undoubtedly, was to establish a positive image of Russia and to justify the country's actions under any circumstances. And so, in the course of presenting events, after triumphant reports on the wars of the 1810s and 1820s, the author had to deal in some way with the news of Russia's shameful defeat in the Eastern War. What follows is an attempt to concisely analyze the basic discursive methods Ilovaisky uses, to compare the way in which the exact same events are presented at the beginning of the 20th century by another, equally conservative author, К. А. Иванов [Иванов], and to draw parallels between Ilovaisky's book and the textbooks of S. Ye. Rozhdestvensky [Рождественский 1873] and S. P. Melgunov and V. A. Petrushevsky [Мельгунов-Петрушевский].

These textbooks, except for the latter, strive to maintain the neutral tone of an "objective" record of events, while also directing the narrative to a positive, optimistic conclusion. Moments "unfavorable" to Russia are left out when possible, or words are carefully chosen to create the illusion of the unavoidability of the unfortunate turn of events in a given situation. Above all, these authors avoid problematizing the narrative at all cost. The question "Why?" is simply never addressed, nor is a cause-and-effect relationship ever established between separate facts. The reasons for war are presented in such a way that there could be no doubt about the legitimacy of Russia's actions, and the war's victorious beginning is emphasized:

... the Russian tsar **stood up for the rights** of the peasants of the Greek Christians in Palestine. When the **Porte refused** the demands of Emperor Nicholas, the Russian army, under the command of Prince Gorchakov, in summer 1853 **crossed the border and occupied** the Duchies of Moldavia and Wallachia; that fall, the Russian Black Sea fleet, under the command of Admiral Nakhimov, **destroyed the Turkish squadron** at Sinop [Иловайский: 367]. Here and hereafter, emphasis mine. — L. K.

Both Rozhdestvensky and Иванов present essentially the same picture, but especially emphasize the enemy actions against Russia from western states, to whose incitements Turkey succumbed, and declare directly that "the Turks **began hostilities first** <what kind is not mentioned. — L. K.>, but suffered defeat on all sides" [Иванов: 454]. Rozhdestvensky and Иванов overall are less restrained in their characterizations and add colorful details that reinforce the effect of Russia's strength and triumph.

Later, these authors begin to prepare students for the bad turn of events in the successfully begun and just cause. Russia's isolation in the face of a united and consequently stronger enemy is emphasized:

Then the struggle between Russia and **four united powers** ignited. The Coalition, using an **enormous** fleet, appeared in nearly all Russian waters: in the Black Sea, the Baltic Sea, the White Sea, and on the shores of Kamchatka. The main military actions concentrated on our southern borders [Иловайский: 368].

The defeats at Inkerman and Alma, which were caused by the incompetent actions of the Russian command, are presented in a marvelous way:

The Commander-in-Chief of the Crimean army, Prince Menshikov, **gave battle** on the banks of the Alma, but **was forced to retreat**. Adversaries on land and sea besieged Sevastopol, in the harbor of which was locked our Black Sea Fleet [Ibid.].

The Commander-in-Chief of our forces in Crimea, Menshikov, **took it to mind to prevent** the movement of the enemy on Sevastopol, but **suffered defeat** on the banks of the Alma [Иванов: 465].

Rozhdestvensky emphasizes the numerical advantage (60,000 against 30,000) and superior weaponry of the enemy, as well as writing that Menshikov “**wanted to delay** the movement” of the enemy, “took a strong position on the River Alma” and “**had to retreat** to the north” [Рождественский: 432]. It is significant that Ivanov, who subsequently is mildly critical of Menshikov’s actions (unlike his predecessors), does not avoid the word “defeat”. Ilovaisky speaks only of “misfortune”.

In their interpretations of the defense of Sevastopol, these authors avoid the phrase “people’s war”. Ilovaisky doesn’t even speak of *heroic* defense: “A stubborn and extremely bloody battle for Sevastopol persisted over the course of 11 months” [Иловайский: 368]. From among the defenders Ilovaisky names only Totleben, Rozhdestvensky and Ivanov mention others, though in a characteristically compensatory context:

The last, difficult period of the defense of Sevastopol arrived. The harbinger of **unavoidable catastrophe** was the taking of Malakhov Redoubt by the enemy, which Admiral Istomin had made into a real fortress. But Istomin was no longer among the living, Nakhimov also soon perished, and before them Kornilov died a heroic death. With the taking of Malakhov Redoubt, with its great height and dominance over the city, the **defense of Sevastopol became impossible** [Иванов: 456].

In other words, these authors give the impression that catastrophe was unavoidable due to the deaths of the main defenders of Sevastopol.

Nonetheless, the defeat of Russia in the Crimean War required a somewhat more specific explanation. The authors could not discuss the ineptitude of the Russian commanders, of course, lest they cast a shadow on the emperor who

had appointed them. Ilovaisky very cautiously introduces the idea of Russia's technological inferiority:

The Russian army, having always been the **subject of special care** by Emperor Nicholas, fought with its usual valor and selflessness⁴, but the **allies had** on their side **superior military science, superior weapons and methods of communication**: whereas **they easily received** reinforcements and supplies from their fleet, messages between central Russia and Crimea had to travel across vast steppes along basic roads (Russia had **only one railroad**, between Petersburg and Moscow) [Иловайский: 368].

Ivanov decides to point out not only the bad roads, but also the prevalence of abuse in the army:

Meanwhile, our Crimean army was cut off from the motherland by bad communication routes, and suffered much both from this and from the unscrupulousness of the people whose business it was to supply the troops with all necessities [Иванов: 456].

Of course, neither of these authors analyzes the reasons for the poor state of the roads. Rozhdestvensky omits completely mention of any shortcomings, insisting only that the enemy derived no benefit from taking Sevastopol [Рождественский 1873: 433]⁵.

Curiously, after discussing the taking of Sevastopol, all three authors immediately transition from defeat to success: the victory of Muravyov at Kars, and then the Treaty of Paris⁶, but most importantly, the positive influence of the Crimean War on Russian history:

Due to its moral consequences, this war **was beneficent** for Russia, because it facilitated the clarification of societal deficiencies [Иловайский: 369].

⁴ The logical disconnect of this argument with the one following the contrasting conjunction "but" is characteristic.

⁵ Before the revolution Rozhdestvensky's textbook was reprinted 27 times. Notably, 40,000 copies of this specific textbook were reprinted by the publishing house "Просвещение" in 1997 as part of the "History Textbooks of Pre-revolutionary Russia" series. It is amazing that the extremely pro-government, patriotic pathos and anti-Western position of the gymnasium teacher of tsarist Russia (Rozhdestvensky was a history instructor in Petersburg at Gymnasium No. 6, at the Naval Academy, and at the Pavlovsky Institute) found itself in demand a century later in what would seem to be completely new historical conditions.

⁶ Once again, Ivanov is blunter, and in contrast to Ilovaisky, dwells on the terms of the agreement, which are humiliating for Russia: "... Russia forfeited the mouth of the Danube and part of Bessarabia. The loss was not great, but the point was not in the land, but in the **humiliation** of Russia, for which our enemies were so eager. The most severe and most insulting of all the conditions for Russia was its obligation to keep neither fleet nor fortifications on the Black Sea" [Иванов: 457].

The Crimean War, though unfortunate for us, was of **historic importance**. It revealed all our shortcomings and weaknesses, and thus completely naturally lead to the thought of the need for serious reforms [Иванов: 458].

An exception to this pattern is presented by the 1909 schoolbook edited by S. P. Melgunov and V. A. Petrushevsky. The paragraph about the Crimean War begins with a discussion of the Russian government's aggressive designs on the East, and the reasons for defeat are mentioned without equivocation:

As a result of the ignorance and embezzlement of officials, Russia's military forces were in the **most deplorable** condition. <...> The **incompetence of our commanders** played a huge role in the disasters of the Crimean War [Мельгунов-Петрушевский: 422],

although here also the "lion's courage" of the Russian soldiers is emphasized. However, this oppositional text was a contribution from a very different era and clearly breaks with imperial discourse.

And so, pre-revolutionary secondary school texts did not silence the sadder moments of contemporary history, although for the most part they did attempt to present them as gently as possible and without problematizing the presentation (the responsibility for an analytical approach was transferred to the teacher or to the pupil himself, if he was inquisitive and inclined to a critical reading of the text). However, the schools did not exist in a vacuum, and the Crimean War immediately received wide attention not only in the daily press⁷, but also in abundant memoirs and numerous studies. These texts shaped a **two-sided myth about the Crimean War**. On the one hand, the principal works of the official historians M. B. Bogdanovich, N. F. Dubrovin, and N. K. Schilder [Богданович; Дубровин; Шильдер] develop the *myth of the union of the tsar and the people* (monarchical consolidation myth). These works include such a quantity of documents and impartial evidence about the flagrant abuses of the quartermasters, the incompetence of the commanders, and the senseless loss of human life, that they contributed to the **destruction** of this myth, possibly

⁷ Note that the government fully recognized the role of the press in the formation of public opinion over the course of the unsuccessfully unfolding Eastern War, although the process of overcoming the inertia of former restrictions and censorship was slow and difficult (see: [Соловьев: 2007; Соловьев 2008]). However, even Nicholas I gave permission to reprint in individual pamphlets materials about the war that had appeared earlier in periodical publications [Сборник]. The future entrepreneur and founder of the famous factory N. Putilov published these materials in 12 issues totaling several thousand pages.

against the wills of the well-intentioned authors, and also undermined the reputation of the late Emperor Nicholas I and his entire reign⁸.

On the other hand, the texts mentioned above and numerous other publications were filled with apologetic evidence of the selfless heroism of the defenders of Sevastopol. As a result, the Crimean War in Russian public opinion took on a more and more *heroic and sacrificial aura* — to no less and possibly a greater degree than the Patriotic War of 1812. The main emphasis was placed on the fact that the Crimean War, although lost, demonstrated the great potential of the nation: specifically “Russian” soldiers (and it was unimportant that they were not always ethnically Great Russian) withstood a nearly year-long siege by a far superior opponent.

The government was completely successful in picking up this heroic discourse. They erected monuments to the defenders of Sevastopol, and in the 1870s a massive museum and archive of the defense of Sevastopol was established⁹. In 1905 in Sevastopol, on the 50th anniversary of the war, a grandiose panorama exhibit opened called “The Defense of Sevastopol”; at the time, this was a new way to perpetuate military glory. Heroic discourse also began to be used widely in popular patriotic literature, which, in turn, was introduced into the schools. “Shares of memory” became particularly active in anniversary years (especially since the 50th anniversary coincided with the unsuccessful Russo-Japanese War, and the 60th anniversary with World War I).

Popular patriotic literature was addressed, as a rule, to three audiences, thereby lumping into a single category, children, the people, and sometimes soldiers. As part of the “Дешевая библиотека” series, publisher I. Sytin printed popular pamphlets about the Crimean War in copious editions and frequent reprints, which poetically and stylistically reproduced many of the literary techniques of battle paperbacks (*лубок*).

“Crimean paperbacks” were quite popular both during and after the war. A. F. Nekrylova, an expert in popular culture, characterizes them thus:

Particular attention was paid to victories, events, and characters associated with Russian military glory and the triumph of Russian weapons. The grim, tragic, and frightening realities of day-to-day war were excluded from the pages of the paperbacks [Некрылова: 5].

⁸ This last is quite consistent with the perception of contemporaries. See the analysis of Slavophiles’ statements made synchronously with the Crimean War, which pinned responsibility for Russia’s defeat on the emperor [Maierova: 38].

⁹ While still in the planning stage, the future museum began to publish a series of materials on the history of the Crimean War which are still valuable resources today; see: [Материалы].

Crimean paperbacks strove to be “documentary”, reproducing the major stages of the war with detailed commentaries, yet completely bypassed the defeats at Alma, Inkerman, and others. The paperbacks do not record the fall of Sevastopol; instead, this popular literature perpetuates the meeting of “glorious guests, the defenders of Sevastopol and the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet, in Moscow”. Within these descriptive paperbacks one encounters portrayals not only of popular heroes (such as the sailor Petr Koshka, the gunner Timofey Chilikin, the soldier Ivan Rogozin, or the hieromonk Ioanniky Savinov), but also military leaders, both successful and unsuccessful. Nekrylova notes that depictions of the Sevastopol favorites Nakhimov and Kornilov appear less often than one might expect. As a curious parallel, it is of note that even in Tolstoy’s *Sevastopol Sketches* the names of Kornilov and Totleben flash by only twice, and Nakhimov and Istomin are absent altogether.

The battle paperbacks focus on personal feats, and the most common heading found on their pages is the “Feat” of one warrior or another. This is just what is lacking in the defamiliarized narrative of the gymnasium textbook. Rozhdestvensky attempted to correct this by creating a simplified version of his textbook “for public elementary schools and for the people in general” [Рождественский 1874]. The concepts of his two works coincide, but the authorial tone and accent differ in the shorter version. The pronoun “we” is preserved, which unites all Russians, including the author and the reader, as the group attacked by the enemy (“the sultan first began hostile actions against **us** in Asia” [Рождественский 1873: 431]; “the allies began military action against **us**” [Рождественский 1874: 199]). However, in the simplified version this construction is repeated much more often. Its most important feature is the new, more colorful (within the author’s capabilities) and emotional narrative. For example, regarding the construction of fortifications in Sevastopol, the original textbook says briefly: “The fortress was weakly strengthened on the land side <...> the Russians, under the command of the skilled engineer Totleben¹⁰, raised with unusual speed such fortifications that could only be

¹⁰ This name, like all the names of the defenders of Sevastopol, disappears from the book written for the masses. It also disappears from the book of the academician Yevgeny Tarle published by the Military Press of the Ministry of Defense, which was clearly intended to stir the patriotism of Soviet soldiers and officers [Тарле 1954], but for a different reason. In the era of anti-Cosmopolitanism, the Baltic German Totleben could not be glorified alongside the Russians Nakhimov, Istomin, and Kornilov, and so his achievements are credited by the author to the engineer Melnikov and his assistants Polzikov and Khlebnikov [Ibid.: 114–115], names which are not even mentioned in the scholar’s scientific monograph [Тарле 1950]. While in the monograph the historian writes that it is Totleben who was “destined to save” Sevastopol “from imminent capitulation” [Ibid.: 2, 109], in the “soldier’s” book the engineer merely follows Nakhimov’s instructions.

overtaken with tremendous effort” [Рождественский 1873: 432]. Here is how this is described “for the people”:

The enemy approached Sevastopol. The fortress was well strengthened only from the sea side; from the direction of solid land it was not even entrenched. But before the eyes of the adversary fortifications arose that drove him to astonishment. Work proceeded in full swing day and night. Not only the soldiers worked tirelessly, but also the city’s residents: men dug ditches and hollowed the rocky ground, women and children carried earth. A battery even appeared operated only by women; it existed until the end of the siege and was called The Maiden. Thanks to such spiritedness and diligence, Sevastopol was shielded with unbelievable speed by a series of fortifications that stretched seven versts [Рождественский 1874: 200].

The description of the Sevastopol defense is built on the juxtaposition of the danger and horrors of war with the calm courage of the city’s residents:

Every day thousands of shells from our side and from the adversary filled the air from early morning until late at night <...> cannonballs bounced along the city streets like rubber balls; concussions in the air, from their flights and from the explosion of bombs, made buildings quake; the window frames of every house shook; windowpanes shattered to pieces; inside the houses plaster crumbled. But the intrepid defenders of Sevastopol stood like a living wall; they burned with courage and valor, and each kept his place as long as a spark of life remained in his body [Ibid.: 200–201].

The author goes on in the same vein, and concludes thus: “Such a defense would have been possible for the Russian soldiers alone” [Ibid.: 201]. Note also that in choosing which details of the Sevastopol defense to portray, Rozhdestvensky favors those that relate to the everyday life of the reader: window frames shake, plaster crumbles, glass shatters, etc., all of which can strike a chord with even an inexperienced and unimaginative reader. All the same, this narrative lacks specific individuals. Only once is Nakhimov mentioned, in relation to Sinop; everywhere else the actors are a collective image of the heroic people and the Russian soldiers who are inspired by the emperors — first Nicholas I, and then Alexander II.

Nonetheless, personalities were undoubtedly indispensable to the so-called educational goals of the school curriculum and public training. The mythologem of the “national hero” — the savior of the homeland — is always concre-

It claims that the achievements of Russian military engineers were “incorrectly attributed to Totleben”. On the whole, Tarle’s “soldier’s” book is characterized by the same principles and examples as the essays of Lukashevich and Pogossky, about whom more is written below (of course, exchanging monarchical ideology for Soviet), with the addition only of references to sources.

te (see: [Киселева]). The heroes of Sevastopol could not save the city from capitulation, but there was a successful and widely circulated explanation for this — Alexander II’s aphoristic statement: “There are impossibilities even for heroes”.

The writer and pedagogue Klavdia Lukashevich (1859–1937), author of dozens of elementary and secondary schoolbooks, undertook to create patriotic school literature. Her pamphlets were printed in large editions and were reprinted multiple times in different combinations, which witnesses to the high (and unremitting¹¹) demand for such works.

Popular literature (including patriotic literature) has been little studied hitherto. Without attempting to cover as large a collection of sources as possible, this paper will consider the general trends that characterize this literary genre. Key examples will be taken from the works of K. V. Lukashevich; A. F. Pogossky’s “conversations about the war” [Погосский] and Friedrich Nikolai Russow’s proto-newspaper [Russow], the first Estonian publication devoted to the Crimean War and the originator of Estonian journalism, will also be studied.

Popular literature has distinct parallels with national gravure. The main features of the publications of interest here are: the unconditional glorification of events, a documentary orientation (real people, precise references to actual times and places), a focus on depicting participants of different social statuses, and, at the same time, a clear preservation of the social hierarchy. The tsar, members of the tsar’s family, and commanders are often depicted loftily and given alibis to explain away failures. Even so, Lukashevich writes about the true balance of power in the besieged city:

The commander of the land and maritime forces in Sevastopol at that time was Prince Menshikov. He was a man of knowledge, just, but distant and cold; he was not loved by the people of Sevastopol. No, not on him with high hopes were set the sights of the Sevastopolites <...> among the people were the seasoned and beloved admirals Nakhimov and Kornilov, who were bedecked with honor and great glory. They were known by every boy in the city, every sailor in the fleet. The besieged people devotedly believed in them, hoped in them, relied only on them as on a stone wall¹² [Лукашевич 1903: 9].

¹¹ Recently, the books of K. V. Lukashevich, including those about the heroes of the Sevastopol defense (“Даша Севастопольская”), have been actively reprinted and accessible even on the Internet.

¹² In the 1922 edition, the text is changed thus: “Louder than any military accolades, brighter than any star or cross, these best people of the time were adorned with great human souls and hearts full of love. They were known by every boy in the city. Officers and sailors adored them and were prepared to follow them into fire or water” [Лукашевич 1922: 17].

Lukashevich strives to show representatives of different social classes — soldiers of every rank, regular residents of the city, the clergy, doctors and nurses. Russia is a single nation-family, with the monarch-father at the head¹³. However, the majority of her narratives are dominated by folk heroes (the sailor Petr Koshka, nurse Dasha Mikhailova called Sevastopolskaya, and other unnamed soldiers and sailors) and other favorites of the people, like Admirals Istomin, Kornilov, and Nakhimov, General Khrulyov, and even Totleben. A detailed image of a people's war is established, but the war's subordination to the Christian laws of sacrifice "for ones' friends" and love of neighbor¹⁴ is emphasized. The word "Russian" denotes national and political affiliation, although sometimes ethnic characteristics are isolated: positive examples include the "Baltic native Totleben" [Лукашевич 1903: 38–39] and the "honest Little Russian" who didn't want to bribe the quartermasters [Ibid.: 62]; negative examples include the Tartars who "passed to the enemy's side and plunder and rob all around" [Ibid.: 64].

The key features of popular books that are also inherent in "Crimean paperbacks" are an absence of xenophobia, respect for the enemy¹⁵, and an emphasis on helping the enemy when wounded or in trouble. Moreover,

¹³ A. F. Pogosky writes directly that the tsar is the head of a large family, and his unity with even the lowest private is confirmed by the fact that Nicholas sent his own children into battle [Пороцкий: 1, III]. Lukashevich also brings up the visit by Grand Princes Mikhail and Nicholas to the field army [Лукашевич 1922: 50–54]. However, while Lukashevich did not need to prove her honest support of the monarchy (not for nothing did she refuse to cooperate with Soviet authorities after the revolution [Николаев: 404]), Pogosky's situation was much more complex. His biography is fairly confusing. A member of the Polish aristocracy, he began his career as one of Nicholas' soldiers. After retiring at an officer's rank he served in various departments and published numerous moralistic essays and magazines for soldiers and the people (with completely loyal content, of course). However, while abroad Pogosky came into contact with Bakunin, Herzen, and Ogaryov, in Petersburg with Chernyshevsky, and almost with the Land and Liberty organization [Шешунова: 10–11].

¹⁴ Pogosky also calls his readers to learn of the Sevastopolites' love for their enemy, speaking of how the wounded lay side by side in the hospitals with the enemy, sharing their bread with him and caring for him [Пороцкий: 1, 2]. It is interesting that at the same time Sevastopol (Chersonesus) is almost never mentioned as a cradle of Russian Christianity.

¹⁵ Here is one example from among many: even in the sorrowful narrative about the taking of Malakhov Redoubt, a single epithet is used to refer to both Russian and English generals — the "courageous General Semyakin" and the "courageous General MacMahon" [Лукашевич 1904: 9 и 13]. Cf. Pogosky: "The French General Bosquet, whose name, as an **unquestionably brave man**, soon became known even among our own soldiers, commanded the Zouaves and African riflemen; and this **dexterous and adaptable people** climb and scramble about the mountains and cliffs just the same as our old Caucasians. General Bosquet took measure of the slope with his eyes and sent in his Zouaves. The **daredevils** not only clambered up the cliffs, but did so with their mortars in their hands" [Погоский: 1, 30].

Lukashevich strives to give examples of the humanity of both sides. The “true story” of “Dasha Sevastopolskaya” (first printed in 1899 and then reissued many times) contains an account of a soldier¹⁶ who, having been wounded at Alma, tries to crawl back to his side, but twice falls in among the enemy by mistake, first among the French, then among the English. The first group gives him water, but at the sound of the alarm they themselves must enter battle. The English give him tea and rum and medical attention, and then carry him on a stretcher to the wounded exchange point [Лукашевич 1915: 175–177]. Russian nurses were also compassionate to the enemy, seeing in them “only suffering brothers. Wounded French and English later in their homelands spoke with particular gratitude of the Christian help of Russian women” [Ibid.: 167].

Lukashevich attempts to instill humanism in her readers, showing that even in the inhumane conditions of war, people can raise themselves above hatred for the enemy. Only in relating the final storm of Malakhov Redoubt does she demonstrate how war distorts the human soul and elevates a rejection of war to the level of pathos:

The adversaries mixed in with one another, losing consciousness, and struck one another with rocks and wood, choked one another’s throats, scratched and bit in a frenzy. <...> People stopped being people and became raging animals. Terrible murder sought its victims and found them in plenty [Лукашевич 1904: 21].

Most memoirists of the Crimean War tried to brighten the heavy details of war with stories of soldiers’ prowess (including such famous cases as when the sailor Koshka saved the corpse (!) of a Russian non-commissioned officer, or when another sailor contrived to throw an unexploded bomb into a pot of porridge, while a third doused the fuse with mud, etc.) and sense of humor. Lukashevich reproduces these stories with pleasure [Лукашевич 1922: 46–47, 60]¹⁷. Importantly, such examples in her work encompass both Russians and their adversaries. For example, there is the story about the cock Pelisei (nicknamed by the

¹⁶ In this composition the author references sources, which witnesses to her attentive and conscientious study of materials. For “Dasha Sevastopolskaya”, sources include the notes of Leslie, Chaplinky, Zhandr, and articles from “Одесский вестник” (from which the story of the wounded soldier was drawn) [Лукашевич 1915: 180]. Her sketch of Bishop Innocent and of Pirogov [Лукашевич 1904a] reproduces the sermon of the Archbishop Innocent (Borisov) of Kherson and Tauride, which he gave in besieged Sevastopol, and excerpts from the notes of N. I. Pirogov. The story of the storm of Malakhov Redoubt quotes excerpts from the memoirs of participants Alabin and Korzhensky [Лукашевич 1904]. There are many more such examples.

¹⁷ Tarle also uses these and similar examples in his “soldier’s” book, sometimes adding moralizing commentary. Referencing the memoirs of N. A. Gorbunov, he relates an episode of a sailor extinguishing a bomb fuse with his hand. Admiral Pereleshin, witnessing this, rewards the sailor for saving officers and at the same time reprimanding him for abuse of bravado [Тарле 1954: 47].

artillerymen after the French commander Pélissier), who from fright “with a loud cry flew over the rampart and rolled into the ditch. <...> The French, seeing this prank from their trenches, ceased fire and clapped their hands”. And the English applauded and shouted “Hooray” to Efim Kuznetsov, who pulled a dead rabbit out from under heavy fire [Лукашевич 1922: 61].

Lukashevich also does not pass over disorder in the Russian army. For example, at the end of her sketch about Pirogov, it is mentioned that “he fought fiercely, battled brutally against the abuses of the quartermasters, and energetically demanded improvements” [Лукашевич 1904а: 35]. The most critical note is heard in her most detailed account of the Sevastopol defense [Лукашевич 1903]. Here Menshikov always serves as an anti-hero, although in the Crimean War literature of the day there was no lack of apologetics for the high commander¹⁸. But Lukashevich writes that even in extreme situations he conferred with no one: “Prince Menshikov took all the troops and left the city, leaving the population to defend itself. No one knew what that secretive and distrustful man would undertake to do” [Ibid.: 64]. The author writes reproachfully of how at the Battle of Alma he did not spare the troops exhausted by their long passage: “The good soldiers had no time to rest or even load their weapons; hungry and thirsty, they were immediately sent into the heat of battle” [Ibid.: 15]. She also includes the episode of the spoiled rusks [Ibid.: 63], about which Menshikov himself wrote, but took no action to address the situation with supplies available in Sevastopol.

Thus, popular patriotic literature, aimed at stirring love for the homeland and national pride in its audience, developed heroic and consolidating myths about the Crimean War. Accordingly, the main emphasis was placed on the heroic spirit of the defenders of Sevastopol and those who fought at the Battles of Alma, Balaklava, and Inkerman, and on the readiness of Russians to die “for faith, the tsar, and the homeland”. “Courage and loyalty against all odds” — thus one might describe the pathos of these compositions. Their authors strive not to concentrate on the negative aspects of the war (the incompetence and indifference of the high command, the poor provisions, the looting, etc.), but all the same do not avoid them altogether. Of course, they write of “isolated”, rather than systematic “shortcomings”. No popular protests against the war or dissatisfied public opinion made their way into these popular stories or school books. It is difficult to judge the degree and kind of influence these types of publications may have had on the consciousness of the youth and simple people.

¹⁸ In Pogosky's text the top of the first page is adorned with portraits in vignettes: Menshikov in the center, Totleben to the left, and Nakhimov to the right [Погосский: 1, 1].

However, taking into consideration the large print runs and numerous reprints, as well as the sheer number of this type of product on the whole, at the very least one can conclude that people bought and read them.

These authors, though not possessing great literary talent, attempt to vary their narratives and take into consideration the tastes (of course, constructed by themselves) of different groups of readers within what was labeled as a single audience. A. F. Pogosky, although he suggests that his book should be read everywhere — “in cottages, in schools, in barracks, in tents” — primarily addresses his work to soldiers, and therefore provides a detailed chronicle of combat operations, the names of regiments, death statistics, and the names of distinguished participants (alternately listing generals, colonels, and common soldiers). K. V. Lukashevich addresses her work mainly to an adolescent audience, including young girls, and therefore appeals more to the emotions — hence her emphasis on touching stories and on humor.

To the extent that these texts deal with the lost war, it is necessary to neutralize the feeling of bitterness and avoid the possible appearance of skepticism — hence the stress on heroism as a categorical imperative of the national character. Heroism and sacrifice are inalienable “natural” Russian qualities, those gifts that no circumstances have the power to change. Of course, this attitude acquired particular significance at times of defeat in newer wars — the Russo-Japanese War and World War I — but this had more to do with the pragmatics of publishers rather than authors.

As has already been mentioned, humanism is an immutable feature of this literature. Despite the harsh military theme, these compositions strive to stir “kind feelings” in their readers; their patriotism is founded on love and sacrifice, not on hatred of the enemy.

Comparing these historical narratives to gymnasium textbooks, both their common bias and their informational and documentary focus are evident. Tendentiousness in the selection of facts and the manner of their presentation are related to pragmatics — to the educational (that is, unavoidably propagandistic) orientation of these texts. What is interesting is not what social demand all these texts serve (that is obvious), but how their authors overcome the difficulties of trying to instill positive values using an unfavorable historical example.

This analysis will conclude with a few words about a very special text that is little known outside Estonia: Freidrich Nikolai Russow’s 12-issue series of pamphlets entitled “Tallinna koddaniko ramat omma söbbradele male” [Russow], which were published in Estonian in Tallinn from 1854–1857. The title translates literally as *A Book by a Citizen of Tallinn (a Townsman) for His Rural*

Friends; the more literary and, probably, more authorized translation is *Letters from a Resident of Reval to his Village Friends* [Петри: 2].

F. N. Russow (1828–1906), known in Russian as Fyodor Karlovich, was of Estonian origin, a graduate of the German Provincial Gymnasium of Reval and then the University of Petersburg (1851), and, at the time of the publication of *Letters*, an official in the Estonian provincial government. By his own admission, Russow had a poor command of the Russian language; however, it appears this mostly applied to conversational speech. It is assumed that he relied on German newspapers as he penned his sketches of the Crimean War [Peegel: 129], although more research is needed to clarify his sources. Having finished university in Petersburg, Russow certainly knew enough Russian to read texts in that language.

Russow was an activist in the Estonian national revival, wrote poetry in Estonian and published folk songs, translated “The Peasant Code of Estland” into Estonian, and participated in a major national fundraising campaign to build the Estonian Charles’ Church in Tallinn. It is possible that he was involved in the publication of a landmark work on the condition of Estonian peasants, *The Estonian and his Lord*, printed anonymously in 1861. He was also co-publisher of the liberal newspaper *Revalsche Zeitung* (1860–1863). Beginning in 1863, Russow lived in Petersburg and was a member of an Estonian circle of “Petersburg Patriots”. At first he served in the Ministry of Finance, then from 1875–1888 he headed the etchings and drawings section of the Hermitage. From 1865 to the end of his life, Russow was a curator — from 1874 a scholar curator — of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. A man of many talents with remarkable erudition and memory, he is counted among the founders of this museum [Петри]. In addition, he was an artist and art critic.

Russow’s work on the Crimean War is of interest here as an example of the translation of imperial patriotic ideology (in the terminological and not evaluative sense of the word) to the Baltic provinces among a people just beginning to participate in society life. In his choice and interpretation of events, Russow follows the same models that were reproduced by Russian journalists and publications and is in complete solidarity with the “Russian” point of view. Such a position should not be surprising. Like the majority of activists in the first period of the Estonian national revival, Russow was oriented toward Russia and the central government, believing that only it was capable of defending Estonian peasants against the whips of the Baltic Germans. He inspires his rural brothers that Estonians are involved in the affairs of a common homeland — Russia. Although the main events of the Crimean War took place in the far

south, war affected the Estonian population directly. Estonians served in the Russian army and navy. Moreover, the English fleet operated also in the Baltic Sea, blockading Tallinn and landing on Saaremaa Island, where they accosted the locals [Russow: IV].

In explaining the causes of the war, Russow (like Russian authors thereafter, as discussed above) transfers blame onto European powers fearful of a strengthening Russia. He provides a fairly detailed account of events and focuses primarily on the heroism of the Russian soldiers, while also giving examples of their humanity toward the enemy. For example, in the fifth issue, Russow tells of two soldiers who take care of a wounded Turk, saying, “This is just such a wounded soldier as we; let him, poor fellow, rest a while and pray to God for us, according to his faith”. The selflessness of the Russian soldiers is demonstrated, for example, in the story of the saving of Totleben: at the explosion of a bomb, soldiers protect him with their own bodies and themselves perish [Ibid.: X, 6]. Another example is Kornilov’s speech to the defenders just before the bombardment of Sevastopol begins, as well as the story of his death. The leader here conducts himself not like a lord, but like a comrade of the soldiers and sailors. His last words are “I am happy to die for the Fatherland <...> how sweet to die with a clean heart” [Ibid.: VII, 5–6]. Later, this scene is included in every work about the siege of Sevastopol.

Russow writes not only of Russia’s feats, but also of the technological disadvantages (insufficient steamships, bad weaponry, bad roads, etc.) that lead to its defeat in the war. However, his stories contain no judgmental or accusatory notes; he speaks of this as a communal trouble.

Russow’s works are fairly voluminous (130 pages of fine print) and deserve special study; for this paper, the number of examples cannot be expanded (in many ways they repeat those discussed above from other works). To conclude, consider some features of the author’s position.

Russow does not fear overburdening his peasant readers with information — military, geographical, and topographical details, as well as historical excursus to the eras of Peter I and Alexander I. He gives the names of French, English, and Russian commanders, and writes about French Emperor Napoleon III and the Russian Tsars Nicholas I and Alexander II. Although the author is a city dweller (at that time, when “Estonian” was synonymous with “peasant”, “city dweller” usually meant “lord” — that is, a German), he speaks to his audience as to *equals*. The author and his readers are united by ethnicity and language, and his choice of language proves to be decisive, although the inclusion of the word “friends” in the title (*Letters... to Village Friends*) also helps to establish contact as among equals. An educational pathos is characteristic of Rus-

sow; he wants to expand the horizons of Estonians, not only intellectually, but politically. Additionally, he assumes that even if the peasants don't know something, they will be interested in learning and capable of understanding it.

Russow acquaints his rural friends with the unfamiliar to them Russian people (the percentage of Russians in Estonia in the middle of the 19th century was so small that not every rural inhabitant had encountered one). He reveals the Russian character primarily through examples of the behavior of soldiers — that is, of former peasants — as courageous, steadfast, selfless, and kind people who should be treated with sympathy and trust. In essence, Russow taps into Russian national mythmaking and transmits this myth to his readers. However, between him and the Russian authors discussed above there are at least two differences. First, while the Russian authors write *about Russians for Russians*¹⁹, that is, to stir national pride *for themselves*, the Estonian author writes *about others* in an attempt to make them *one of us* for his readers²⁰. Second, Russow does not treat Estonian peasants like children. This distinctly differentiates his authorial position from that of the Russian authors who write “for children and the people” and seem to equate the intellectual and emotional level of adult peasants and city dwellers with a child's consciousness. Instead, *Letters from a Resident of Reval to his Village Friends*, composed as the war unfolded, is characterized by a focus specifically on those events of the Crimean War that would later be included in retrospective compilations, comprising the canonical national narrative about this lost, but nonetheless heroic, popular war.

This paper has focused specifically on those compositions that propagated the popular — that is, somewhat simplistic, but more striking — version of the national canon of this historic event in schoolbooks and children's and popular literature: the Crimean War, despite military defeat, was a victory of the popular spirit and a point of national pride. Thus the canon turned out to be victorious after all, and any analysis of the reasons for defeat typically remained beyond the understanding of the popular consciousness. In fact, the defeat and the losses, the victims of the war became a long-lasting Russian national trauma. And in the national memory traumas are often cured by myths. That is why a narrative of a lost war has transformed into a narrative of heroic deeds, and therefore it can be argued that today this strong myth allowed manipulating with the mass consciousness of nowadays Russians.

Translated by Allison Rockwell

¹⁹ The language in which the composition is written is also fundamental here.

²⁰ This is emphasized by the pronoun “our”: Russian troops are “our troops”, against whom stands the “enemy” (the English, French, and Turks).

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