

**The Myth of Malaia zemlia:
Remembering World War II in Brezhnev's Hero-City,
1943-2013**

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Declaration

I, Anne Victoria Davis, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

The 1943 battle to free the Black Sea port of Novorossiisk from German occupation during World War II was fought from the beach-head of Malaia zemlia, held for seven months by Soviet landing troops, including the young Leonid Brezhnev. The heroes of this campaign are commemorated through an amalgam of memoir, monuments and ritual, rendered particularly paradoxical by the discrepancy between the insignificance of the campaign at the time and the importance attributed to it retrospectively. Novorossiisk appears to have been honoured as a Hero-City due to myth alone, largely dependent upon Brezhnev's political influence when leader of the Soviet Union.

Using an interdisciplinary historical, cultural and sociological approach, this thesis establishes the mechanism and dynamics of the construction of the war myth in Novorossiisk under the Brezhnev government and its propagation today under the Putin régime. This research on the sociology of myth-making in an authoritarian political environment adds significantly to scholarship of the war cults prevalent in the late Soviet Union and contemporary post-Soviet Russia. Based on an analysis of agency, I demonstrate that, despite pervading state influence on remembrance of the war, there is still scope for the local community and even the individual in memory construction.

This is a case study with wider political and social connotations, linking the individual citizens of Novorossiisk with evolving state policy since the war. Through the prism of this minor Hero-City, the complexity of myth and memory is revealed, as new evidence is brought to bear on a myth that most Russians consider dead, along with Brezhnev and the Soviet Union. This work demonstrates that the myth of Malaia zemlia is still relevant as much more than just local history for citizens of Novorossiisk today, remaining an integral part of its identity seventy years after the end of the war.

Notes on Translation and Transliteration

All translations from the Russian have been done by the author, unless quoted from other sources in English. Transliteration is according to the Slavonic and East European Review system, based on a modified Library of Congress convention.

Preface

On my very first morning in Novorossiisk in 1999 I was taken to the huge Malaia zemlia memorial complex on the shore of the Black Sea, where I heard the story of the 1943 landings. Over the years I gradually became familiar with other monuments around the town as my visits evolved from purely professional to social. My desire to understand the language and culture of the country prompted me to enrol for an undergraduate degree in Russian Studies at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London. Developing a growing interest in Russian monumental remembrance, I started to explore the sociological aspects of commemorative rituals with the help of my Russian colleagues who had, over the years, become close friends.

My epiphany moment came after a few glasses together at a vineyard in Myskhako, a small village just outside Novorossiisk known for its robust red wine. We were touring the wine-making premises when I found myself in an old wine-cellar that had, apparently, been used by Colonel Leonid Brezhnev during the war. Until that moment I had been confident that I understood the Malaia zemlia campaign enough to appreciate the significance of the many monuments in the town, but this discovery nine years after my first visit was totally unexpected. After all, Brezhnev was one of the few Soviet politicians known to people in the West, so why did I not know about Brezhnev's involvement with the war here, despite my known interest in the town's past? And if I had not been told, perhaps there was a deeper reason why he remained a hidden secret in the history of the Hero-City. Here, tucked away under the former Soviet collective vineyard on the outskirts of Novorossiisk, I discovered a ready-made research project for the Master's programme I was following, which stimulated my academic interest so much that it has been impossible to put aside.

Over the last seven years my journey of intellectual curiosity has evolved from how society remembers the war to the political history of why war memory is so prevalent in Novorossiisk, resulting in a quest to explore the impact of their local history on the population today. Throughout this academic journey I have been aided by a wonderful, ever-expanding network of friends who have housed and fed me, guided me to outlying places, rescued me from libraries, introduced me to key people and provided premises for meetings and interviews. They even brought valuable resource materials to England, crammed into suitcases already full of Russian chocolates (for stamina) and caviar (for inspiration). I am delighted to acknowledge the generous friendship of Anna Danilova, Irina Nikitina, El'vina Settarova, Sergei Krasnolobov and Irina Rashkovetskaia (and her family), without whose unstinting help this work would not have come to fruition. I would like to thank my supervisors over the years for their support and advice: Kristin Roth-Ey, Polly Jones and Sarah Young; and all those who have kindly read and commented constructively on my work. Finally I am deeply grateful to my family for living this project with me for longer than we all care to remember.

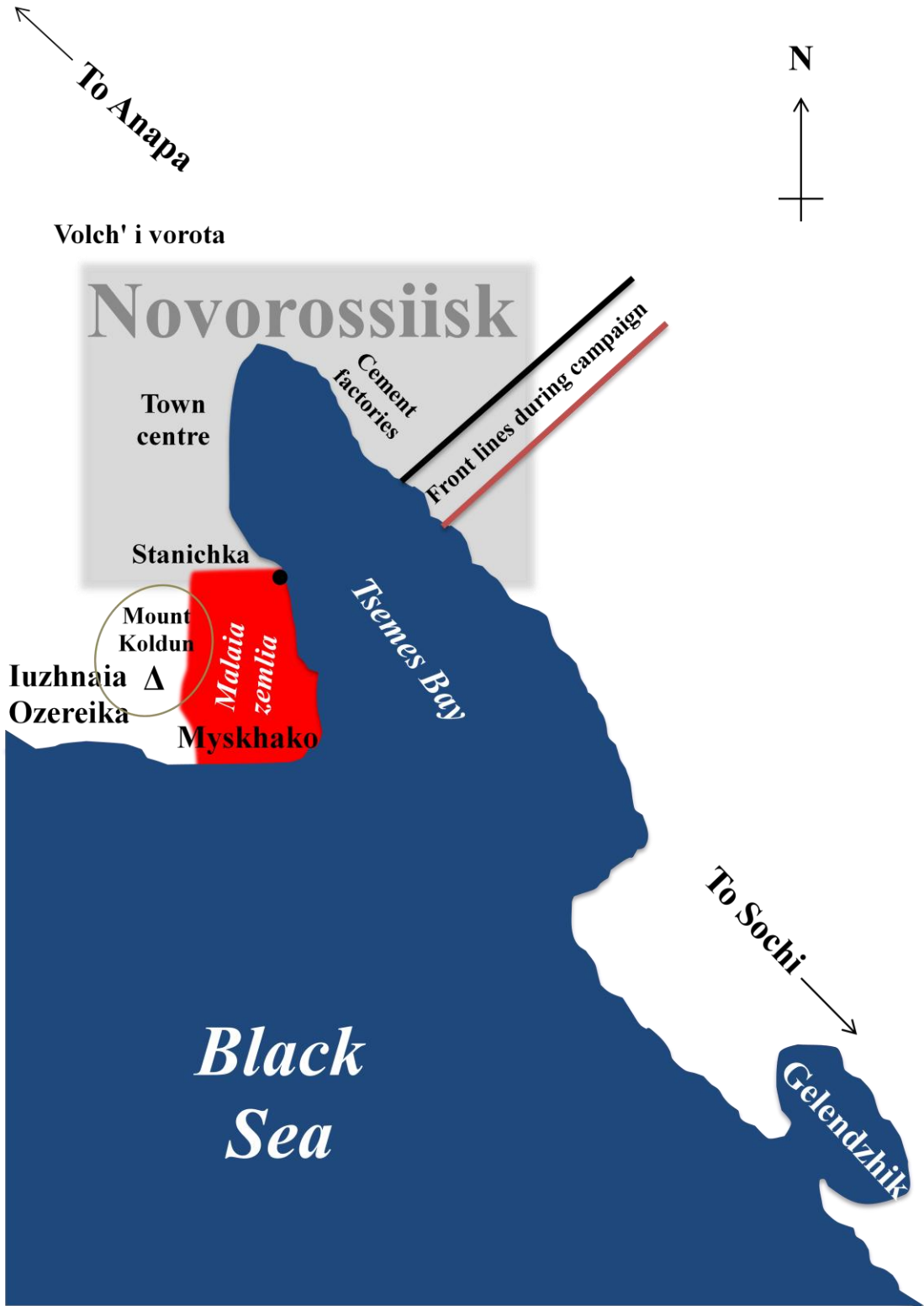
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Map of the Novorossiisk Area of the Krasnodar Region



Chapter 1

Introduction: What is a war myth and who owns it?

Вот трубы медные гремят,
Кружится праздничный парад,
За рядом ряд, за рядом ряд
Идут в строю солдаты.
Не в силах радость превозмочь,
Поет жена, смеется дочь,
И только мать уходит прочь...
"Куда же ты, куда ты?.."

Ведь боль и смерть и пушек
гром -
Все это будет лишь потом.
Чего ж печалиться о том,
А, может, обойдется?
Ведь нынче музыка тебе,
Трубач играет на трубе,
Мундштук трясется на губе,
Трясется он, трясется.¹

1.1 Scope of the thesis

In the wintry early hours of 4th February 1943 a modest fleet of small craft escorted by two motor torpedo boats approached the shore of Tsemes Bay under cover of darkness and a thick smoke-screen. Before daybreak 630 Red Army marine infantry troops led by Major Tsezar' Kunikov had landed on the beach at Stanichka just outside the occupied Soviet Black Sea port of Novorossiisk.²

The Soviet Union had entered the Second World War, which it called the Great Patriotic War, in June 1941, suffering a series of humiliating losses for much of the first year as German forces pushed eastwards into Ukraine and then Russia. The strategic port of Novorossiisk (pre-war population 109,000) was occupied by German and

¹ Bulat Okudzhava, 'Voennyi parad', in *Proza i poeziia*, Frankfurt: Posev, 1984, p. 149. 'Brass trumpets are ringing out, /The ceremonial parade is wheeling round, /Rank upon rank, rank upon rank /Soldiers march in formation. /No pleasure is permitted in the forces, /A woman is singing, a daughter laughing / And only a mother walks away... /"But where are you, where have you gone?.." //Pain and death and the thunder of guns - /All this will come later. /What have we to grieve about, /Maybe we'll just make do? / But now the music is for you, /The trumpeter is playing his trumpet, /The mouthpiece is trembling at his lips, /He is trembling, trembling.'

² See T. I. Iurina, *Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie: 1942-1943 gg.*, Krasnodar: Kniga, 2008, p. 230.

Romanian troops striking towards the oil-fields of the northern Caucasus in September 1942. However, it was not until the invaders had been defeated at Stalingrad early in 1943 that a turning point was reached and the battle to re-take Novorossiisk could begin in earnest. The main Soviet attack was directed at a spot further along the coast, at Iuzhnaia Ozereika. However, this operation failed under heavy enemy fire and, ironically, it was the minor, diversionary landings at Stanichka which were successful. For seven months a defensive Soviet campaign by the 18th Army was fought against superior enemy forces from the small beach-head in the area behind Stanichka and the village of Myskhako that became known as *Malaia zemlia* (The Little Land). Novorossiisk was finally liberated on 16th September 1943 following a brief concerted attack by Soviet land, sea and air forces.



Map of the Novorossiisk landings, 4th February 1943³

³ Reproduced with the permission of Novorossiiskii istoricheskii muzei-zapovednik.

The heroes of this localized campaign included Colonel Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev (who went on to become leader of the Soviet Union in 1964) and are still remembered today through an amalgam of memoir, monuments and ritual. This longstanding commemoration, the subject of my research, is rendered particularly paradoxical by the strategic insignificance of the campaign in comparison with other major and prolonged actions within the Soviet Union such as the Battles of Stalingrad and Moscow, or the Sieges of Leningrad and Sevastopol'.

Collective memory of Malaia zemlia, the publicly shared remembrance linked to communal identity, has developed both in Novorossiisk and countrywide against a complex historical backdrop in which distinct shifts in the state attitude to war memory are evident. A tomb for the heroes of Malaia zemlia was erected in the centre of Novorossiisk in 1946, although state-sponsored remembrance of the war in the Soviet Union was scant and strictly managed in the immediate post-war years. The authoritarian Stalin régime disapproved of public memory, fearing criticism of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact of 1939, the Soviet Union's poor preparation for invasion and its weak handling of the early months of the war. Thus although victory was celebrated nationally in 1945, with the naming of the first tranche of state-designated and decorated 'Hero-Cities of the Soviet Union' (Leningrad, Stalingrad, Sevastopol' and Odessa), the anniversary of Victory Day became a normal working day from 1947.⁴

After Stalin's death in 1953 the relative thaw of the Khrushchev period saw some easing of the restrictions on remembrance. Eternal flames were lit in Leningrad (1957)

⁴ Nina Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The rise and fall of the cult of World War II in Russia*, New York: BasicBooks, 1994, p. 104; Thomas C. Wolfe, 'Past as Present, Myth, or History? Discourses of time and the Great Fatherland War', in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, ed. Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner and Claudio Fogu, Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2006, pp. 249-283, p. 262; and Mikhail Ivanovich Gorbyev and Anatolii Ivanovich Dokuchaev, *Goroda-geroi i goroda voinskoi slavy Rossii*, Moscow: Armpress, 2010.

and Sevastopol' (1958), the latter acting as the source of the eternal flame lit in Novorossiisk in 1958, thereby linking the two maritime towns. Kiev became the fifth Hero-City in 1961. However, it was not until the twentieth anniversary of the end of the war in 1965 that the official attitude to memory started to undergo more substantial change following the accession of Brezhnev, whose cult of personality was strongly linked to a burgeoning war cult centred on his own military career. During the Brezhnev era the régime created a country-wide mnemonic environment through which remembrance of the war was encouraged, with substantial media coverage of war memory, the building of monuments, the increased scale of memorial rituals, the publication of war memoirs and the military-patriotic education of children and students. Victory Day became a public holiday again in a political climate which actively promoted commemoration of the past, alongside some re-Stalinization of politics in general. Eternal flames were lit in Moscow and Stalingrad in 1967, considerably later than in Novorossiisk. Under Brezhnev Moscow (1965), Brest Fortress (1965), Minsk (1974) and Tula (1976) were added to the ranks of Hero-Cities in addition to two more surprising selections: Novorossiisk and Kerch' (both in 1973). These two southern towns, although considerably smaller in both prestige and population than earlier nominations, were however strongly linked with Brezhnev's war career. The publication in 1978 of Brezhnev's war memoirs entitled Malaia zemlia followed a secret public relations campaign by Brezhnev's inner circle, resulting in their official dissemination in educational institutions across the Soviet Union.⁵ As Malaia zemlia became a household name, the war cult reached a climax: more war memorials sprang up across the country, including the enormous Malaia zemlia monument erected on the beach at Stanichka in the dying embers of the Brezhnev era in 1982.

⁵ L. I. Brezhnev, Malaia zemlia, Moscow, Politizdat, 1978.

This state deployment of war memory as a political tool changed markedly after Brezhnev's death in an apparent backlash against an overemphasis on the state-sponsored war myth, which had obscured what some saw as factual history and verged on the absurd in his final years.⁶ With Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* (openness) in the late 1980s came a period of increasing official transparency and questioning about the past, leading to some painful revelations about the war. The aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 saw a debate about the importance attached to war memory: the military parade on Moscow's Red Square was ended under El'tsin in 1992, but reinstated in 1995, if on a lesser scale than previously.⁷ The collapse of the Russian economy in the 1990s meant also that there was little money or indeed appetite for memory matters, which seemed to lose their political priority, leading to some lean years of casual public forgetting as the country battled to forge a new ideological future. However, a new century and president brought in another change of policy. Under Vladimir Putin, Russia has experienced a second war cult which has returned remembrance of the war to the heart of domestic politics just as living witnesses are disappearing.

Over the years since the war, the myth of Malaia zemlia has developed within a changing political and ideological environment. In the twenty-first century memory politics has emerged as a potent unifying tool with its slogans and symbolism, not least in relation to recent military action in Ukraine. War memory in the states of the former Soviet Union is increasingly relevant for today's political agenda and is therefore becoming an important area for scholarly study.⁸ My research on the evolution of the

⁶ However a further two Hero-Cities (Murmansk and Smolensk) were named in 1985 to mark the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war.

⁷ Kathleen E. Smith, Mythmaking in the New Russia: Politics and memory during the Yeltsin era, Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp. 86-90.

⁸ See notably Catherine Merridale, Night of Stone: Death and memory in Russia, London: Granta Books, 2000; Amir Weiner, Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik

myth of Malaia zemlia and its associated memorial practices is particularly timely, coming just as the Great Patriotic War in Russia is on the cusp of transition from living memory to history.

This work examines how a local Soviet war myth was constructed and propagated in an authoritarian national context, largely thanks to the overriding influence of Brezhnev and his régime. Under Brezhnev's leadership, Malaia zemlia became an overpowering mythical construct to the extent that it was politically impossible to establish the historical facts behind the popular narrative. Previous Western and Soviet dissident scholars, such as Nina Tumarkin, Roi Medvedev and Zhores Medvedev, have dismissed Brezhnev's promotion of Malaia zemlia with more than a hint of ridicule, regarding the myth as an exaggerated part of the Brezhnev war cult as do many older citizens of other parts of Russia.⁹ In contrast, my original research focuses on how Malaia zemlia is regarded today by residents of Novorossiisk of all ages, for whom the myth is based on living memory and represents their local history. The more positive attitude of the local community to the myth is just as valid as, although different from, the dismissive top-down perspective espoused by previous scholars, adding much-needed texture to the oversimplified existing scholarship.

Compared with most major Hero-Cities, Novorossiisk remains a small provincial town with a current population of around 240,000 citizens. It lies within the Krasnodar Region, nearly a thousand miles south of Moscow. From the Soviet era it has possessed its own unique modes of remembrance, whilst also adopting the national norms of ceremonial rituals. This thesis is not just a case study of a minor Hero-City to add to the

Revolution, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001; and Stephen Lovell, The Shadow of War: Russia and the USSR, 1941 to the present, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

⁹ See Zhores Medvedev, Andropov, Oxford: Blackwell, 1983, pp. 101-3; Tumarkin, The Living and the Dead, 1994, pp. 155-156; and Roi Medvedev, Politicheskie portrety, Moscow: Moskva, 2008, p. 219.

valuable bank of scholarship on major Hero-Cities, however.¹⁰ It is also an analysis of the personal influence of Brezhnev, the ultimate representative of the Communist ideology of the collective, on the town where he saw war service. I have found that, just as there is a tension between the understanding of Western and dissident historians and local collective memory as to the significance of Malaia zemlia, so there is a substantial difference in the judgment of Brezhnev himself. Similarly I demonstrate a difference between the understanding of Malaia zemlia nationally and locally and a continuing inconsistency between the self-projected image of the Hero-City and the perception of Novorossiisk held by Russians elsewhere in the country. In this thesis I bring completely new evidence to bear on a myth that most Russians consider dead, along with Brezhnev and the Soviet Union. Rather than consigning it to the past, I trace its mnemonic trajectory into the present and beyond, as I explore the meaning of the myth of Malaia zemlia for citizens of Novorossiisk today.

Brezhnev is not the only leader to have used war memory as a political tool. Through an examination of the influence on the local myth of the war cults of two different eras, my research makes an original contribution to the wider political science of both the Brezhnev and the Putin régimes. I have, however, found that it is not only the state and its élite leaders who are responsible for the propagation of collective memory. Despite the pervading top-down atmosphere of the two war cults, I argue that there is still a place for the proactive agency of the local community and even some

¹⁰ See notably on Kiev, Michael Ignatieff, 'Soviet War Memorials', History Workshop Journal, 17, 1984, pp. 157-163; on Leningrad, Lisa A. Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 1941-1995: Myth, Memories and Monuments, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006 and Alexis Peri, 'Revisiting the Past: History and Historical Memory during the Leningrad Blockade', Soviet and Post-Soviet Review, 38, 2011, pp. 105-129; on Stalingrad, Scott Palmer, 'How Memory was Made: The construction of the memorial to the heroes of the Battle of Stalingrad', The Russian Review, 68, 2009, pp. 373-407; on Sevastopol', Karl Qualls, 'Who Makes Local Memories?: The Case of Sevastopol after World War II', Soviet and Post-Soviet Review, 38, 2011, pp. 130-148; on Minsk and Brest, Bernhard Chiari and Robert Maier, 'Volkskrieg und Heldenstätte: Zum Mythos des Großen Vaterländischen Krieges in Weißrußland', in Mythen der Nationen, volume 2. 1945: Arena der Erinnerung, Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 2004, pp. 737-751; and on Moscow, Nina Tumarkin, 'Story of a War Memorial', in World War 2 and the Soviet People, ed. John Garrard and Carol Garrard, New York: St Martin's, 1993, pp. 125-146.

individuals in remembrance of the local war myth within the national war narrative. This is a case study with wider political and social connotations, linking the individual citizens of Novorossiisk with evolving state policy since the war. This thesis thus makes an original contribution to the sociology of myth-making in an authoritarian environment. My research reveals the identity of today's Novorossiisk to be a mnemonic social construct as I demonstrate that the myth of Malaia zemlia is still relevant as much more than just local history for citizens of Novorossiisk today, remaining an integral part of its identity seventy years after the end of the war.

The relationship between mnemonic time and historical time is key to an understanding of the mechanism of the propagation of memory. Events which took place in real time over seventy years ago were subjected in the decades after the war to the cultural constraints of Socialist Realism, the Soviet Union's didactic approach to literature, which tended to merge past and present with future time. I have found that, even today, citizens of Novorossiisk experience the phenomenon of mythical time during ceremonies of remembrance and reconstructions around the main Malaia zemlia monument at Stanichka. Time appears to contract, as the historical temporal distance of seventy years is considerably reduced, promoting an increase in empathy with the original troops on the part of today's citizens. However, military personnel were not the only people killed in the war, and my research reveals a polarity between the centralized celebration of the Soviet troops and the apparent collective amnesia on the periphery relating to civilians, especially Jewish residents. Furthermore, I demonstrate that society is divided over its respect for fallen German soldiers and also displays an ambivalent attitude to the role of Cossacks in the war.

Subsequent chapters analyse the evolution of the myth of Malaia zemlia broadly chronologically, with each chapter also exploring a specific aspect of remembrance. Chapter 2 examines the assimilation of the war myth into collective memory through

literature from 1943 to 1985, identifying the mechanism of the construction of the myth by war correspondence and memoir literature. Following a consideration of Brezhnev's memoirs in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 analyses the political place of Brezhnev in the myth and the difference between national and local attitudes to the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and his links with the Malaia zemlia campaign. Moving to the current war cult, an analysis of recent visits by Presidents Putin and Medvedev to Novorossiisk demonstrates how the local myth is currently positioned politically.

Chapter 4 analyses the cultural dynamics of the propagation of the myth through ritual, notably the traditional 'Beskozyrka' (sailor's hat) ceremony, unique to Novorossiisk. It also embarks on a study of the place of the individual within collective memory - both the person commemorated and the one remembering. In analysing the organization of monumental memory, the tensions between mainstream and fringe memory are highlighted. Chapter 5 brings the study up to date by addressing the mechanism and agency of the inter-generational propagation of the myth today through an analysis of the overlapping roles played by the family, the school and local society in Novorossiisk.

1.2 What is a war myth?

However intently you study a map of our Motherland, you will not find this name on the Black Sea coast. It was marked on wartime maps and remains only on the granite stone of monuments, in the yellowed triangular letters from the field, and in the memories of heroes.¹¹

Classical war myths are often found in the cultures of ancient civilizations, for example tales of the Trojan War, which, according to archaeologists, could have taken place as early as the twelfth century BC.¹² Awash with powerful gods and fearless heroes, myths and legends grew up around the protracted siege of Troy by the Greeks, enduring to the present day. Modern war myths may superficially have something in common with the legends of antiquity: just like the Greeks, the Malaia zemlia campaign had its own small fleet and tenacious heroes. The classical legends were traditional narratives often simplifying the subject and representing a people's shared system of morality and common heritage. Oral propagation was the norm until Homer's epic poem, the *Iliad*, brought together various existing versions of the siege of Troy and other exploits, many hundreds of years after the events. In Russian culture the tradition of epic poetry is much more modern, but the process of oral myth-making is described by Mikhail Lermontov in his poem about the legendary Battle of Borodino against Napoleon in 1812.¹³

Myths about ancient Greece or the Napoleonic wars took centuries to mature. From the point of view of the speed and scope of propagation, it is impossible to compare classical myths and legends with their modern counterparts. Malaia zemlia

¹¹ Iu. Ponomarenko, 'Bol'shaia slava Maloi zemli: Reportazh iz goroda-geroia Novorossiiska', *Izvestia*, 06/09/1974, p. 1.

¹² Maria Mavromataki, *Greek Mythology and Religion*, Athens: Haitalis, 1997, p. 231.

¹³ Mikhail Lermontov, 'Borodino' (1837) in *M. Iu. Lermontov: Stikhotvoreniia* (volume 1), Moscow: Russkaia kniga, 1996, pp. 9-12.

became a myth almost before its time, featuring in written accounts even as the campaign was being waged. Nevertheless, all myths present a narrative about a significant event in the past, often at a turning point in history, a coherent message disseminated down the generations, which tells the audience about the characteristics of the participants and helps to forge the identity of their descendants. This narrative represents collective memory of the event, distilled and simplified from possibly disparate original accounts for ease of remembering and effective transmission. The current understanding of the term 'myth' by scholars is clearly expressed by John Ramsden:

Historians [...] use 'myth' to denote the way in which memories of the past have been selectively organised, an agreed version of the past that explains how a people came to be what they believe themselves to be in the present.¹⁴

Furthermore, writing of the myth of the siege of Leningrad, Lisa Kirschenbaum uses the term 'myth' to imply social memory: 'the shared narratives that give form and meaning to the recall of past experience'.¹⁵ Similarly, Malcolm Smith uses the word in the context of the myth of 1940 in Britain to mean 'a widely held view of the past which has helped to shape and to explain the present'.¹⁶ These three definitions show that, in order to survive, a myth must have utility in the present. The narrative is usually the property of victors, proud of their courageous ancestors, with the implication that their heroic characteristics are transmitted across the generations to their descendants today. A story that portrayed a people in a negative light would have no future: it is the positivity inherent in war myths that ensures their continuing popularity.

¹⁴ John Ramsden, 'Myths and Realities of the "People's War" in Britain', in Experience and Memory: The Second World War in Europe, ed. Jorg Echternkamp and Stefan Martens, New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2010, pp. 40-52, p. 40.

¹⁵ Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, p. 7.

¹⁶ Malcolm Smith, Britain and 1940: History, myth, and popular memory, New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 2.

My definition of a war myth is therefore 'a shared and simplified narrative of the past with utility in the present thanks to its enduring emotional and moral appeal'. This says nothing about the agency of propagation of a myth, but acknowledges that it helps to support memory and keep it alive for future generations, as both the product and the process of remembrance. In essence, a myth is a narrative developed to portray a people in its best light, often depicting characters overcoming huge odds to win in the end. As such, a war myth may be exploited by a ruling élite to boost the morale of the population, often giving meaning and order to a difficult and chaotic period. For example, the martyrdom in wartime evident in the ancient legend of the siege of Masada was revived in the 1920s by Zionist intellectuals and is still invoked today in modern Israel.¹⁷

The local myth of Malaia zemlia offered an ideal political tool to the Soviet élite of the Brezhnev era, thanks to its simple ingredients of a town occupied by the enemy, the daring night-time landings by a handful of men and its defence against all odds until the positive climax of the liberation. Added to this was the presence of the charismatic future General Secretary. With details of thousands of Soviet deaths, alleged collaboration and betrayal strategically omitted, here was a narrative ripe for exploitation by the state within the meta-narrative of the war. Like the overriding national war myth, it focused on the simple facts of the invasion by the deceitful enemy and the struggle of the people against all odds under the guidance of the Communist leadership, until victory was finally won.

The past offers a potent ideological tool which can be used to reinforce social cohesion and stability by reminding a people of their national or local identity. A myth may help a nation or community to make sense of the past, and leaders to justify present

¹⁷ Barry Schwartz, Y. Zerubavel, and B. Bartlett, 'The Recovery of Masada', *Sociological Quarterly*, 27, 1986, pp. 147-164.

actions, by deploying a simple code which taps into the patriotic pride of the population. A modern war myth is much richer than just agreed collective memory due to the inclusion of its own special tropes, rituals and symbols. The coded language in which it is often expressed, full of emotional imagery and local significance, is commonly appropriated by individuals. Where those more familiar with the Western front may still speak of the 'Dunkirk spirit' in reference to the solidarity of troops in mortal danger and those who went to save them, the people of Novorossiisk have their own set phrases which continue today, for example 'the sacred land soaked in blood'. Rather like Dunkirk, the very name of *Malaia zemlia* can convey the motivating emotional message of small numbers stranded on the beach in the face of a strong enemy holding the upper ground. The word *zemlia* (land) has connotations of dry land as seen from the sea, a land inhabited by compatriots, *zemliaki*, rather than the foreign invader. The expression *Malaia zemlia* hence gives the impression of an island, a small homeland, while the rest of Soviet territory was referred to as *Bol'shaia zemlia* (the Large Land). The implication was that ordinary people lived on the mainland, while *Malaia zemlia* was set apart for occupation by an heroic species, the *Malozemel'tsy*, the troops fighting on *Malaia zemlia*. The heroic troops and the ground on and for which they fought are clearly more important features of the myth than the intricacies of the battle itself. It also helps a myth to have one specific and common enemy, in this case the 'fascist occupiers', who may be targeted by leaders past and present to deflect criticism from themselves in a process of unification of the people.¹⁸ Once cleansed of the enemy, the new town of Novorossiisk rose from the ashes of the old and the war narrative of *Malaia zemlia* took on the properties of a foundation myth.

Although nobody would expect a modern war myth to refer to fictitious gods or a snake-haired gorgon, myths may be confused with legends and deemed by some to be

¹⁸ The term 'fascist' is still commonly employed by Russians in relation to any perceived enemy.

false representations of the past. By virtue of their collective compilation, myths may inevitably lose some of the historical detail in the simplification process; moreover, myths compiled gradually will contain only those elements deemed to have current or future utility. Any small historical inaccuracy is not too important for the self-perception of a community, as long as the overall narrative is unambiguous and broadly based on fact.¹⁹ In the hands of Soviet propaganda experts myths were often barely related to the original event: many inaccuracies may certainly be found in Brezhnev's memoirs, which were well crafted stylistically but not entirely truthful. Urban legends, the contemporary counterpart of traditional myths, are also present in today's Novorossiisk. A myth is therefore better perceived as a corpus of tradition, a community's cultural heritage, rather than historical fact or fiction.

The academic subject of war myth may be examined within a range of paradigms and with a variety of aims. There is much to be gained from a consideration of scholarship on the myth of 1940 in Britain, demonstrating different possible approaches to studies of collective memory of the Dunkirk evacuation, the Battle of Britain and the London Blitz. On the one hand, Clive Ponting acknowledges his aim of exposing the historical facts obscured by what he claims is a deceptive myth, untruthfully propagated from above.²⁰ This approach assumes a myth to be a false representation, thus privileging 'real' history as an objective discipline over the perceived fabrications existing as collective memory and cultural tradition. Angus Calder, on the other hand, contests Ponting's assertion that the myth of the Blitz was the product of a deliberately misleading top-down propaganda campaign. Calder may challenge the finer points of the myth, but accepts the need for its promotion, arguing that its dissemination motivated people to behave as the myth suggested, bringing into question not only the

¹⁹ See George Schöpflin, 'The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths', in Myths and Nationhood, ed. Geoffrey Hosking and George Schöpflin, London: Hurst, 1997, p. 19.

²⁰ C. Ponting, 1940: Myth and Reality, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1990.

genesis but also the subsequent appropriation and ownership of the myth.²¹ This approach emphasizes the traditional behavioural values promoted by the myth of an heroic people, also evident in the Soviet and post-Soviet stress on *vospitanie*, the moral education that ensures the continuation of such desirable national characteristics.

A different paradigm, less confrontational than Ponting's, is adopted by Malcolm Smith, who sees little value in a debunking exercise and seeks to study the myth as a social construction in its own right, a conception of the past that stands in need of scholarly explanation in order that its effect on the present may be understood.²² Smith's exploration of the historical evolution and cultural influence of the myth as it was incorporated into everyday life is usefully developed by Mark Connelly, who sees the study of myths as vital in revealing how people relate to the past.²³ It is this final approach which I shall adopt in my analysis of the culturally specific myth of Malaia zemlia - not attempting to undermine or expose its falsity, but rather seeking to understand and explain the myth as the contemporary heritage of cultural politics from the Brezhnev to the Putin era.

Soviet citizens lived in a myth-making culture where information was often difficult to come by and media reports were sometimes taken with a pinch of salt. My research focuses on the complex relationship between historical facts and myth-making, whereby a narrative is constructed sometimes after agreed negotiation and sometimes by imposition from above. Any positivist preoccupations with the detailed facts of the events on Malaia zemlia must therefore fade into the background when evaluating the social constructions around the myth. The types of evidence that I have selected reflect my chosen paradigm. This interdisciplinary project, with its historical, cultural and sociological dimensions, has involved the literary analysis of war memoirs and other

²¹ Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1991.

²² Smith, *Britain and 1940*, 2000.

²³ Mark Connelly, *We can take it! Britain and the memory of the Second World War*, Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2004.

published Soviet sources; a sustained overview of the press in Novorossiisk from 1943 to the present; attendance at rituals of commemoration; observation of monuments and historical sites; the detailed examination of current educational practices; and extended personal interviews with 124 residents of the Hero-City.²⁴

Any quest for scientific objectivity in the area of memory is hazardous, as the perceptions and emotions of the target population are virtually impossible to quantify. Soviet war memoirs are subjective documents both politically and personally, while monuments, newspapers and school curricula reflect the political agenda of their times. Furthermore, memories of the past, if not already biased or simply faded, may well be distorted in the process of expression to an interviewer from a foreign background. In the face of potential interpretive insecurity, a pragmatic but questioning stance must be maintained when gauging the validity of some sources. As one participant amongst thousands, I am not too worried that my presence at rituals of remembrance may have warped my results, but I have interrogated the closer relationship of interviewer with respondents. Although my evidence suggests that the events relating to the myth of Malaia zemlia are based largely on what I deem to be historical fact, it does not really matter if all aspects of the myth are entirely true. The important thing is that the people of Novorossiisk widely accept this myth as part of their social and cultural background; it helps them to make sense of their local history with an emotional and moral appeal lacking in the dry detail of the history text-books.²⁵

²⁴ Full details of sources and methodology are documented at Appendix B, followed by a list of subjects interviewed at Appendix C.

²⁵ For a discussion of historiographical paradigms, see Georg G. Iggers, Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From scientific objectivity to the postmodern challenge, Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2012.

1.3 Who owns a war myth?

To have common glories in the past and to have a common will in the present; to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more - these are the essential conditions for being a people.²⁶

The scope of this thesis ranges from the local to the national and back again as the myth of Malaia zemlia is traced and placed within the meta-narrative of the state's war myth. From the domestic kitchen table to the town centre, from outlying communal graves to the Malaia zemlia memorial complex, from Heroes' Square in Novorossiisk to Moscow's Red Square, my research follows a complex route, linking individuals, families, civic society and the state. All these have a claim to ownership of the war myth and all, to an extent, have a role in its propagation.

Since Maurice Halbwachs first coined the term 'collective memory' for the socially constructed memory held within the collective framework of group consciousness, scholarship has tended to be polarized in its approach to memory studies, adopting either the extreme of state-centric control or the place of the individual in remembrance.²⁷ My research, however, calls for a more integrated and nuanced paradigm which recognizes the agency of different sectors of society at all hierarchical levels. While these different stake-holders often reinforce the memory message, conflicting narratives sometimes arise, permitting a more three-dimensional, multi-vocal analysis. In view of the various political, sociological and cultural influences on collective memory, I stress throughout an examination of agency in the construction and propagation of the myth of Malaia zemlia.

²⁶ Ernst Renan, 'What is a Nation?', in Nation and Narration, ed. H. K. Bhabha, London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 8-22, p. 19.

²⁷ Maurice Halbwachs, On Collective Memory, trans. Lewis A. Coser, Chicago IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992 (originally published 1925).

1.3.1 The nation-state

If the tsar once held the whole Russian empire together by virtue of tradition and dynastic right, what could bond its successor, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics? This huge area spanning several time and geographical zones, with regional variations in race and ethnicity, language and religion, was not a strong candidate for nationhood. A national war myth can help to unify a country, but would not last long unless it had some utility in the present for a nation or people. This mutual dependence of myth and nation was first expressed by Ernst Renan in 1882 in his classic lecture on the concept of nationhood. Renan saw a bonding of a people into a coherent nation through a shared heritage which underpins a common ideology in the present.²⁸

In the early stages of the new USSR, a strong ideology disseminated from above served to cement the population through the myths of the October Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent Civil War (1917-1922). The political culture was one which turned readily to myth-making, where the form and content of this culturally specific type of narrative was determined by state leaders, eventually evolving into a Leninist foundation myth of the Soviet Union with its own carefully selected stories of heroes and villains. In much the same way as Brezhnev's service on *Malaia zemlia* was warped and exaggerated in his memoirs, the trajectories of individual revolutionary leaders were sometimes artificially created, such that, through them, the state acquired its own heroic identity as a nation prepared to fight for its new ideology. The myth was further promoted by the introduction of official public ceremonies and films mediated by the state to convince the population of the ubiquity of the Bolshevik cause and to include them in its values. Frederick Corney identifies aspects of the narrative of the Revolution which are common to most examples of mythology, including *Malaia zemlia*: its own symbolism (the hammer and sickle) and a language with its own loaded terminology

²⁸ Renan, 'What is a Nation?', 1990.

and specialized vocabulary (for example, bourgeois or proletariat). Gradually much of the population came to identify with the myth, in some cases re-inventing their own back-stories as incipient revolutionaries, either consciously due to coercion or unconsciously thanks to the ubiquity of the myth, to fit in with the official meta-narrative as it became assimilated into collective memory.²⁹

During the 1920s the myth of the Revolution evolved quickly and pervasively. Portrayed as the natural conclusion to the popular struggle, the Revolution became the legitimate starting point for further struggles, including the Great Patriotic War, in what appeared to be a coherent narrative of an organized and meaningful series of events.³⁰ During the war the Soviet propaganda machine harvested examples of the self-sacrifice of heroes such as the young 'martyr' Zoia Kosmodem'ianskaia, who were immediately mythologized in order to boost the morale of the people.³¹

Twenty years after the Second World War the founding myth of the Soviet Union was supplemented by a cogent and unifying war myth which effectively glued the population together as it re-invoked heroic values to which virtually everybody could subscribe. Thus people could make sense of the war as a further step in the ongoing revolutionary process, with the added advantage that most people had at least some experience of the war, while not all had seen the Revolution at first hand. Furthermore, the war myth uncontroversially identified one common enemy, whereas the myth of October split the population along the lines of the Civil War. During the Brezhnev era the war myth finally became embedded in schools and other institutions as official history in a mechanism similar to that by which the myth of October had taken root. As it developed, the myth of the Bolshevik Revolution gradually became less prominent,

²⁹ Frederick C. Corney, Telling October: Memory and the making of the Bolshevik Revolution, Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 2004, pp. 8-9; 201-221.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-5.

³¹ Karel C. Berkhoff, Motherland in Danger: Soviet propaganda during World War II, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012, pp. 59-67.

especially after its fiftieth anniversary in 1967.³² Today's élite in the new Russia, in search of usable aspects of the Soviet past in the construction of a politically useful national identity, have revived the myth of the Great Patriotic War, which has now effectively displaced that of the Bolshevik Revolution. War memory is stated by President Putin to be 'an excellent cement, uniting people of different nationalities, different ethnicities and different religions into one indivisible Russian nation'.³³ The war myth is so culturally ingrained that remembrance even unites people of different political persuasions.

Renan realised that a nation's shared past could also include shared suffering: 'Where national memories are concerned, griefs are of more value than triumphs, for they impose duties, and require a common effort.'³⁴ Nationhood breeds martyrdom: sacrifice made in the common interest underlines the value of the nation today as something (still) worth fighting for, while also legitimizing the continuation of ceremonies of remembrance sponsored by the state, notably Victory Day. This argument justifies collateral damage in the war for the sake of a positive outcome. Thus frequent reference is made in Russia to the nation's gratitude to the millions who gave their lives in the war for the sake of their descendants and the country's future. In this way a cult of ancestors has been built up, linking the past with a shared vision of a brighter future, where a blurring of time lines promotes historical continuity over the decades.

National identity is never more important than in wartime, but is also evident in any period when a society needs cohesion and a common goal. Thus it is often in

³² See Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik Revolution*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001, p. 8; and Amir Weiner, 'The Making of a Dominant Myth: The Second World War and the construction of political identities within the Soviet polity', *Russian Review*, 55, 1996, pp. 638-660, p. 658.

³³ Vitaliia Kuz'mina, 'V Novorossiiske prem'er-ministr vozglavil kolonnu baikerov', *Vesti*, 30/08/2011, <<http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=553582>> [accessed 31/08/2011].

³⁴ Renan, 'What is a Nation?', 1990, p. 19.

peacetime that a war myth is invoked in countries experiencing internal or external challenges. The use of the national war myth as a metaphor for nationhood by the ruling elite in order to promote social and political cohesion may be expected particularly in an authoritarian society such as the Soviet Union. Created during the Cold War in a period of perceived external threat and re-created in twenty-first century Russia to rally a nation facing possible disintegration from within, the national war myth fills the state's need for a simple and positive message of a victorious nation. Within the national meta-narrative cultivated by the two war cults of the Brezhnev and Putin eras, the local war myth of *Malaia zemlia* has flourished.

Memory studies which concentrate on the manipulation of history by a dominant sector for current utility employ a 'presentist' paradigm, which is superficially applicable to studies of the Soviet and post-Soviet cults of war memory. Stressing both agency and reason, it emphasizes a top-down, politically motivated approach which aims to unify the people and legitimize the prevailing institutions. Those in power are credited with re-interpreting a malleable past, picking and choosing its more useful aspects in order to render the whole more effective for current use. In this reconstruction there may be a degree of state manipulation in what is selected and what is omitted from the current narrative. This process is intended to render the message more acceptable to the population at large, to whom any manipulation may not be noticeable.

Renan also suggests an agreed forgetting of past events that may once have threatened national unity, deeming collective amnesia crucial to nationhood: 'The essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common; and also that they have forgotten many things'.³⁵ In Renan's view, the forgetting process is passive and encompasses the whole population, whereas presentist George Herbert Mead credits selective manipulation of what is omitted from the hegemonic meta-narrative to the

³⁵ Renan, 'What is a Nation?', 1990, p. 10.

dominant sector of society alone.³⁶ In my analysis of the agency involved in the forgetting process, I have found, as may be expected, a substantial role in collective forgetting on the part of the state in the Soviet Union, followed by an increased quest for historical truth from below in the new Russia.

None of the early proponents of the presentist paradigm proposes a mechanism for the élite control of the use of history; they ignore the processes involved in the forging of collective memory from above, concentrating solely on the political and social outcome. This omission is addressed by Eric Hobsbawm's politics of memory approach, which recognizes the construction and customization of memory from above through ceremonial rituals, monuments, symbolism, the media and the education of the younger generation.³⁷

Although Hobsbawm's conceptual framework represents a particularly one-sided approach, it does have some broad validity in view of the state-centric mnemonic environment of the late Soviet Union and twenty-first century Russia. It lacks, however, much-needed texture in both agency and local detail. I agree with Hobsbawm's presentist approach in viewing the growth of the war cults of the Brezhnev and Putin eras as largely top-down phenomena, as his proposed mechanism surrounding the construction and propagation of memory from above matches the manipulation of collective memory by the state. The construction of monuments is a significant feature of the Brezhnev era war cult, which also saw the manipulation of history, notably with the publication of Brezhnev's war memoir, Malaia zemlia. Both Brezhnev and Putin boosted the scale and importance of the ceremonial rituals of commemoration around

³⁶ George Herbert Mead, 'The Nature of the Past', in Essays in Honor of John Dewey, New York: Henry Holt, 1929.

³⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in The Invention of Tradition, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 1-14. Hobsbawm's work builds on the scholarship of Emile Durkheim and Maurice Halbwachs: Emile Durkheim, Moral Education, trans. E.K. Wilson, New York: Free Press, 1961 (first published 1925); Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, trans. Karen E. Fields, New York: Free Press, 1995 (first published 1912); Halbwachs, On Collective Memory, 1992.

Victory Day, while central control of the media and the inculcation of patriotism through history in the school syllabus in the context of Putin's 'managed democracy' are examples that may be expected of a leader attempting social and political engineering according to the presentist paradigm. Furthermore, the concept of *vospitanie*, the moral education of the young, is central to the inculcation in the younger generation of a belief system propagated by the state as both patriotic and traditional. My research shows that these state-endorsed moral values are widely accepted by the people, thus ensuring continuity with selected social norms from the past.

The functional approach of Hobsbawm may allow for some small agreed revision of memory as the political climate changes, for example during the 1990s, but emphasizes rather the ideological status quo and the solidarity of society in its collective memory, which could potentially lead to the stagnation of memory and commemorative practices. War memory in contemporary Russia is also an integral part of the wave of nostalgia for the past that is gripping the country.³⁸ It is not only some members of the older generation who would welcome a return to the conditions of Brezhnevism, but also the President, who has publicly lamented the collapse of the Soviet Union and reintroduced the Soviet national anthem with new words.³⁹ Moreover, Putin's current policy of expansionism in Ukraine may be interpreted as a neo-imperialistic attempt to turn back the clock. It appears that the war cult is not merely used to validate the present, but also marks a campaign to return to some of the social and political values of the past. Thus the recent boom in collective nostalgia potentially offers even more continuity between past and present, reinforcing the promotion of collective memory.

³⁸ On nostalgia in Russia, see Svetlana Boym, 'From the Russian Soul to Post-Communist Nostalgia', *Representations*, 49, 1995, pp. 133-166; Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York: BasicBooks, 2001; Maya Nadkarni and Olga Shevchenko, 'The Politics of Nostalgia: A Case for comparative analysis of post-Socialist practices', *Ab Imperio*, 2, 2004, pp. 487-519; Svetlana Boym, 'Nostalgia and its Discontents', *Hedgehog Review*, 9, 2007, pp. 7-18; Serguei A. Oushakine, 'We're nostalgic but we're not crazy: Retrofitting the Past in Russia', *The Russian Review*, 66, 2007, pp. 451-482.

³⁹ Putin's annual address to parliament (25/04/2005) referred to the fall of the Soviet Union as the 'greatest geopolitical catastrophe' of the twentieth century.

The presentist premise, which assumes that there is a dominant sector of society, implies that lower ranks of society are ideologically or psychologically coerced into remembrance. This type of tradition is the result of an authoritarian state propagating a positive and ubiquitous war myth which appeared to resonate with the masses in the Soviet Union. Nina Tumarkin views the Soviet people as universally passive in their acceptance of state doctrine vis-à-vis the war, at least in society's public relations with the régime. Furthermore, Catherine Merridale acknowledges the monolithic attitude of the Soviet state to the ideology of memory, as it channelled the public's gaze largely on young, strong, brave, handsome soldiers who were innocent victims of the enemy, while excluding the experience of other categories of citizens from official memory.⁴⁰ Both these scholars argue for a pervasive late-Soviet mnemonic ideology which promoted a singular reading of the past, with little consideration of the scope for public proactivity in remembrance.

Central to Hobsbawm's theoretical position is his emphasis on the invention of tradition, a key aspect of my research (see Chapter 4). In many cultures commemorative rituals are at the centre of collective memory and provide a regular focus for public participation, often around a central monument. These traditions may involve the demonstration of patriotism and the celebration of a triumphant nation, whilst also enabling participants to show respect for the dead, whose sacrifice made victory possible. Scholars of memory have approached the study of tradition from two different perspectives: that of the dominant sector wishing to promote the official state ideology as a means of social control and that of the individual mourner or participant with more personal concern for those remembered. From the presentist point of view Hobsbawm dismisses the possibility of centuries of public ownership of tradition, claiming naïvely

⁴⁰ Catherine Merridale, 'War, death and remembrance in Soviet Russia', in War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century, ed. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 61-83, p. 62.

that performative rituals are usually invented by states seeking to maintain the political status quo by inculcating through repetition those behavioural norms and moral values deemed to be desirable in society. Continuing his emphasis on who is in control and why, Hobsbawm supports his politics of memory theory with a hegemonic mechanism for commemorative tradition, which provides little scope for public debate or individual input. Hobsbawm defines an 'invented tradition' as:

a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.⁴¹

Hobsbawm's theory of top-down invented tradition does not stand sustained scrutiny in the case of many centuries-old Russian customs or rituals, but he correctly recognizes many apparently longstanding traditions as relatively recent, as is the case with Victory Day in the Soviet Union, intended to boost morale and celebrate victory after the war.

An invented mnemonic tradition both needs and constructs a powerful state, which confirms the place of the élite at the top of the hierarchical social pyramid through military-style ceremonies such as the parade of military hardware on Red Square. Any potentially problematic issues, such as continuing this tradition from the Soviet Union to modern Russia, are overcome by an increasing simplification of the memory message to one of popular patriotism and the dismissal of side-issues that may threaten to disrupt its coherence. For example, the overpowering commemorative narrative constructed by the Soviet state nipped in the bud any potential questioning surrounding the huge losses incurred in the war, by presenting the dead as heroes and martyrs, who sacrificed their lives for their country and its Communist ideology.

⁴¹ Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', 2008, p. 1.

This state campaign of remembrance is largely promoted by the media to effect a sense of national social unison on a grand scale, what Benedict Anderson would term an 'imagined community', emphasizing its shared political, social and cultural background.⁴² A community is usefully reinforced by badges of membership. Symbols such as the St George ribbon, the wearing of which in Russia is a supplementary tradition grafted on to an earlier invented tradition, not only promote continuity with the past, but also serve to prevent any stagnation caused by the imposed repetition of Victory Day ceremonies. This recent addition to collective memory increases the political utility of the celebrations through a public proclamation of social cohesion. Although the commercial aspects of the ribbon are questioned by some, its ubiquity marks the general lack of dissent surrounding war memory by the public, who would probably mount a public outcry if this traditional holiday were ended. The high degree of popular support for Victory Day signifies the substantial convergence today of a manipulative state and a society relatively happy to be manipulated. However, a theoretical model based solely on a top-down approach to agency in remembrance of the past is too black and white. My research has demonstrated that some, but not all, apparently bottom-up movements in Novorossiisk reinforce top-down collective memory. This indicates that in both the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia the dynamics of memory are much more complex than the simple imposition of remembrance on the population for the sake of political utility.

Despite its superficial validity, an approach based on the politics of memory leaves no room for the possibility of alternative mechanisms. It similarly glosses over the individual doing the actual remembering of another individual in what may be a non-political, purely personal act of remembrance. Furthermore, a state-centric approach focuses on the memory message from Moscow, which may not always concur

⁴² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London: Verso, 1983.

with that in provincial Novorossiisk, where traditional Russian burial and mourning ceremonies and customs dating back centuries rather than mere decades live on in churches and cemeteries alongside the triumphalist façade of Victory Day.

The close relationship of the present with the past is key to continued societal cohesion. The presentist mnemonic position, espoused by Hobsbawm, whereby the present reshapes the past as governments and society's élite employ a preferred version of history for current utility, is the political side of the mnemonic coin. The opposite, anthropological, side, sees rather the past forging present identity, whereby society interprets positive current social qualities as due to historical events, which so moulded the characteristics of previous generations that they were then transmitted across the generations. This essentialist position is what I term the 'genetic' approach to desirable social attributes, founded on longstanding traditional familial values, which my research indicates is noticeable in Novorossiisk. There is an evident causal contradiction between the two positions, which are not, however, incompatible in this context, but indicative of the complexity of memory formation in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia, particularly when a genetic stance is reinforced by the president. This genetic position acknowledges forces already present for centuries within traditional Russian society, which act within the overpowering presentist environment of the state war cult to reinforce a potent local war myth.

War cults leave little scope for independence. However, even under these prevailing conditions, my research has revealed opportunities for individual proactivity and spontaneity in remembrance, calling for the adoption of a more integrated approach to the memorial processes linking state, civic society and the individual.

1.3.2 The local community

Scholars of memory have traditionally contended that war commemoration is more likely to be invoked by the state than by local groups, since the state sees it as a means of political legitimization on the national scale. More recently, however, the importance of local groups of memory, at least in the West, has been demonstrated.⁴³ These studies argue that remembrance on a local scale offers a social framework of united experience, which is more meaningful for individual and community identity than a dogmatic nationalistic approach to memory. A shift in emphasis down the hierarchical pyramid has been evident since the 1990s in scholarship adopting the popular memory approach, which acknowledges that remembrance may be shaped by the local cultural system instead of or in addition to the state. This bottom-up approach recognizes, unlike Hobsbawm's paradigm, that ordinary people in their local social groups have some degree of agency, and that they are not simply subjected to social engineering by a dominant élite. This type of collective memory is potentially more meaningful to groups and individuals as it is designed by the local community and implemented through monument and ritual close to home. In my case study in Novorossiisk it is not sufficient to accept state domination without analysing the local 'community of memory',⁴⁴ which is perhaps more conscious of its own past than of national history. Although they are not always in opposition, it is useful to clarify the two different scholarly perspectives: vernacular as opposed to official state-sponsored commemoration, and local as opposed to national remembrance. Interestingly, many case studies stem from popular response

⁴³ John E. Bodnar, Remaking America: Public memory, commemoration, and patriotism in the twentieth century, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992; J. Fentress and C. Wickham, Social Memory, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992; J. M. Winter, Sites of memory, sites of mourning: The Great War in European cultural history, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995; T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, structures and dynamics', in The Politics of War, Memory and Commemoration, ed. T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 3-85.

⁴⁴ 'Community of memory' is the term adopted in Robert Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler and Steven M. Tipton, Habits of the Heart: Individualism and commitment in American life, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985.

to the Vietnam War in the United States and World War I in Western Europe, while academic studies in Eastern Europe remain under-represented.⁴⁵

John Bodnar's examination of the design and interpretation of the Vietnam Veterans' War Memorial in the United States demonstrates substantial tension yet some degree of compromise between vernacular and official memory.⁴⁶ Bodnar examines the historical consciousness around political issues in the present, considering how the values of ordinary people relate to the political goals of government. He finds a significant difference between the wishes of the veterans initiating the project, wanting to memorialize service personnel who had sacrificed themselves for the nation, and those of congressional leaders who stressed the need to promote patriotism and national solidarity after a controversial conflict. Alongside these vested interests are those of the individuals travelling from far-flung regions, seeking a focus for their own mourning and loss. During the project different interest groups emerged as the proposed monument mutated from one selected by the people to a grander complex which would also satisfy the requirements of the state in a compromise which combined the needs of most parties.

Through this case study Bodnar emphasizes the different degrees of power and the different focus of various groups, including those who had never supported the war but who had nonetheless lost a family member. Their grief seemed to be in total contrast to the requirement of the state for a monument to the nation as a whole, even though the war was by no means supported by all citizens. The memorial thus needed to tread a fine balance between the sadness of groups of individuals and the national symbols demanded by the state, whilst avoiding the extremes of a mass grave or a monument to an heroic victory. The resulting memorial, erected in 1982, succeeded in separating the

⁴⁵ See however the work of the University of Cambridge valuable 'Memory at War' project (<http://www.memoryatwar.org>).

⁴⁶ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 1992.

politics of the war from remembrance of those who had died by an expression of loyalty to both the community of veterans and to the state. The initial overt opposition to the state by the expression of counter-memory from below is deemed by Bodnar to be the epitome of vernacular memory, which criticized official interpretations in its demands for its own special collective memory to be met. Bodnar concludes that the eventual creation of genuine public memory emerges from a dialogue between interested parties, where an equilibrium is reached between the real, first-hand experience of groups of individuals and the dogmatic, if abstract, political interests of the state.

Bodnar's scholarly interest lies beyond that of the mere design of a memorial, however: he recognizes any debate about collective memory as one involving issues fundamental to society and its culture. What was possible in Washington, though, was inconceivable in Moscow. This type of open and meaningful discussion has been shown by Nina Tumarkin not to have taken place in the Soviet Union of the 1980s and Russia in the 1990s, when the capital carried out a similar exercise to construct a national war memorial. Spanning different decades and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the design process staggered from competition to adjudication on several occasions, sometimes involving public input but all too often simply relying on a closed, all-powerful jury. Marred by corruption and vested interests, the initial popular empowerment which permitted the submission of designs by veterans led to damning condescension by those with the power to make decisions. Furthermore, many ordinary people condemned some designers for their ethnicity or lack of patriotism, placing the common emphasis on a state-centred approach. The final selection incorporated the nationalistic symbolism typical of the monumentalism of the Brezhnev era in a conservative move which privileged the state over the people, triumphalist glory over individual mourning.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Nina Tumarkin, 'Story of a War Memorial', 1993.

Tumarkin's case study may be of a national debate, but it still prompts doubts about the possibility of achieving consensus around the creation of memory within a community, even in modern Russia, thanks to the continuing conditions of state and local authority hegemony. However, far from the capital in Novorossiisk a small group of Soviet young people *did* manage to invent the successful 'Beskozyrka' tradition, customizing remembrance to meet local needs and commemorating specifically local history. This tradition was not invented, as Hobsbawm may suggest, by a dominant élite, but by members of an ordinary youth club, albeit moulded by the pervading influence of the Brezhnev era war cult. This independent expression of collective memory was not evidence of counter-memory as encountered around the Vietnam memorial, however, which would certainly not have been tenable in the Soviet Union, but a purely local means of expressing similar sentiments to those surrounding national rituals, if in a more muted and less triumphal manner. In this way the local Beskozyrka ritual complements the national Victory Day, putting the emphasis on the group of landing troops embarking on a dangerous mission, rather than on the simplistic fact of victory. Being closer to home and focused on the beach at Stanichka, the emotional pull of local collective identity may be experienced at Beskozyrka, alongside the generalized national identity and patriotism imbued on Victory Day. The Beskozyrka tradition does not seek to contest the national narrative, but represents a special sub-set of mnemonic behaviour which commemorates the myth of Malaia zemlia within the national war myth. It is evident, then, that there does not have to be a binary opposition or power struggle between state and vernacular expressions of collective memory, as Bodnar would suggest: collective memory, even in the Soviet Union, can on occasions accommodate both top-down and bottom-up mechanisms. The Beskozyrka tradition is not at all conflictual, being accepted throughout the country as specific to Novorossiisk, with its significance remaining constant nationwide.

In search of shared ground between people's 'intimate, immediate, and real local place and the distant, abstract, and not-less-real national world', Alon Confino has approached the relationship between the local and the national in a more consensual way than Bodnar. Through the idealistic concept of *Heimat* (home) in German society, he has successfully linked the local with the national, arguing for an overlapping of symbolism such that local memory may sometimes appropriate the national, while the national may acquire and revive different local meanings. Confino thus inverts traditional scholarship which sees national interests always moulding local ones, as in the invention of the Beskozyrka tradition, to examine how local issues may shape nationhood in a convergence of interests.⁴⁸

The *Heimat* approach is particularly useful in the case of Germany, embracing both local and national connotations and identities. To date scholarship has barely addressed this degree of complexity in the construction of local identity within the often overpowering national narrative of the Great Patriotic War.⁴⁹ On the local level it is not too dissimilar to the concept of *Malaia zemlia*, a small place that one can call home. However, the troops on *Malaia zemlia* saw the rest of the country as different, *Bol'shaia zemlia*, accepting that their beach-head was only one small part of a larger whole and hoping for a reunification of the two as the enemy was expelled.⁵⁰ There is no opposition between the two concepts, however, which are largely complementary. The myth of *Malaia zemlia* is simply a strong expression of local identity which would, however, later be subsumed within the national war myth. The approaches of both

⁴⁸ Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918*, London and Chapel Hill, NC: University of Carolina Press, 1997; and Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and limits of writing history*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

⁴⁹ See, however, Lovell, *The Shadow of War*, 2010, Chapter 6; Qualls, 'Who Makes Local Memories?' 2011; and Judy Brown's ongoing PhD research, *Memory at War in the Crimea* (University of Cambridge); also Kirschenbaum's excellent case study of Leningrad, which substantially transcends the local in its scope (Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2006).

⁵⁰ 'Those serving on *Malaia zemlia* fostered a cherished dream to unite the Small with the Large.' (Georgii Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia: Rasskazy i ocherki*, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1967, p. 10).

Bodnar and Confino continue to emphasize the role of politics in the creation and dissemination of collective memory, while the incorporation of national symbols on the local level recognizes the influence of the dominant political sector in the shaping of local memory and identity. These paradigms also continue to stress a collective mentality, which may be at best selective and at worst inaccurate. They assume a herd-like mentality amongst members of a community who are credited with little independence of thought, offering no scope for the place of the individual in memory.

1.3.3 The individual

In order to obtain the full picture of war memory in Novorossiisk it is necessary to turn to the most personal and private aspects at the heart of remembrance, widening the scope from a narrow top-down and/or bottom-up paradigm to a less political but multi-vocal approach. There is a huge complexity to social remembering which is not easily explained by presentist or popular memory theories alone, but which must invoke the place of individual at the centre of the remembrance process - the person attending a traditional ritual or the fallen sailor whose hat lies at the centre of the Beskozyrka ritual.

Some scholars of memory recognize that society itself does not possess its own real memory, but that memory resides in the minds of the individuals who make up the social fabric of a community.⁵¹ A war myth is a social phenomenon with a collective

⁵¹ Whereas Durkheim had held that all individual memory was shaped by society, Halbwachs recognized that collective memory is not real memory, which can only reside in the mind of individuals, while barely acknowledging the position of the individual within collective memory. He saw the social dimension as vital in shaping the individual consciousness, but did not propose a mechanism for this influence. (Durkheim, *Moral Education*, 1961; Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 1995; and Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 1992.) James Young argues that individual memories must remain personal, as people are not able to share others' discrete memories, despite their potentially collective experience of past events (James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust memorials and meaning*, New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1993). In contrast, Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone see decentred, social memory as an inheritable property, transmitted by institutions rather than individuals, which then reinforce the relation between the individual and the social. This genetic mechanism reflects a more Durkheimian perspective, attributing to society a will of its own which is independent of the individual within it. (Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, eds., *Contested Pasts: The politics of memory*, London: Routledge, 2003, p. 135.)

perspective, but it is formed by individuals and also affects individuals. Therefore an examination of the interacting processes, by which individual people shape collective memory and are in turn shaped by it, offers a more integrated approach to establishing the mechanism for the construction and propagation of memory in the provincial town of Novorossiisk. Such a mutually reinforcing mechanism could lead to a mnemonic vicious circle, were it not for the fact that accepted collective memory is agreed on the basis of numerous individual memories and in turn has the potential to impact differently on the consciousness of every individual in the community, depending on their discrete experiences. This type of approach is difficult to achieve in studies of large-scale commemorative rituals such as Victory Day in Moscow, but is increasingly applicable the smaller the scale of the memorial community. My analysis ranges from Red Square to the village community centre of Myskhako; it is in the latter case, at the intersection of private memories and the collective, where the position of the individual may be examined most effectively.

The individual, as the primary agent of construction of social memory, may help shape the collective consciousness in three ways: by the production of memoir literature; by the private transmission of memory within the family, often through the medium of artefacts such as photographs; and by membership of a 'fictive kinship group', where the private is given a social framework by virtue of similar interest and experience.⁵² A bottom-up approach emphasizing the individual at the centre of remembrance, where personal memory is considered alongside official, public commemoration, is stressed in the scholarship of Jay Winter, who, with Emmanuel Sivan, positions himself at the mid-point between private and totally social memory.⁵³

⁵² The expression 'fictive kinship group' is from Jay Winter, Remembering War: The Great War between memory and history in the twentieth century, New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2006, p. 136.

⁵³ Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, 'Setting the framework', in War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century, ed. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 6-39.

Winter's individualist approach, considering the psychological needs of a person coping with loss while building up a new post-war identity, is largely based on memory of war in the West. Even though no account is made of the state-framing of memoirs and the role of official censorship of literature prevalent in the Soviet Union, Winter's insight with regard to issues of bereavement is of universal humanistic value. Viewing graves as an initial focus of mourning and personal consolation, Winter sees the monuments erected some time after the war as sites of symbolic exchange, where the dead are figuratively brought home and where the living express a debt to the fallen.⁵⁴ It is clear that the subtle interpretations and functions of memorial sites may change with time in any country, as Winter finds, but the case in the Soviet Union is further complicated by the intervention of the state in the construction of monuments, privileging their official function of glorifying national victory over mourning the dead. Moreover, the role of the individual or small group of people searching for individual bodies still left unburied decades after the war, or the sculptor wishing to replace an older monument with a new version, adds a further dimension to this perspective.

The place of women within this paradigm is uncertain in Winter's work. Certainly most of the dead were male, as were the kinship groups formed after the war, while the mourners were typically female. James Fentress and Chris Wickham suggest that public memory is in the control of men, with women often taking a more private perspective. They argue that older women may have less nostalgia than men for public memory of the war, which predominantly recalls male activities. Women are found to speak less about public space and more about domestic and family affairs, especially births, marriages and, most importantly in the context of war, deaths.⁵⁵ This generalization may be questioned with respect to female memory of the Soviet Union at war by virtue of

⁵⁴ J. M. Winter, *Sites of memory, sites of mourning*, 1995, pp. 94 and 98.

⁵⁵ Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 1992, pp. 140-142.

women's substantial participation in the conflict and their experience of life in an occupied country, as well as their wartime responsibility for industrial and agricultural production. However, it is notable that public expressions of female memory through memoir are rare in the Soviet Union.⁵⁶

Despite their focus on the individual and the local, Winter and Sivan recognize the state as the dominant agency in the organization of rituals of remembrance, relegating the role of the individual to a relatively passive one, as seems to be the case in Novorossiisk, where many of the ceremonies take place around the original monuments, which were state-subsidized with no scope for unofficial or individualized design.⁵⁷ Merridale adopts a similarly binary approach to the relationship between the individual citizen and the state, acknowledging that the individual was subject to substantial state dominance in the Soviet Union. She finds that, even though private conversations could not be controlled, any attempt by the individual to shape collective memory was hampered, often by self-censorship, under oppressive political conditions. Merridale explores from the point of view of various bereaved groups how individuals accommodated their own memories within Soviet ideology; she acknowledges that individual memories may not always coincide with the politically correct version, leading to a complex process of myth-building between sometimes competing images in cases when counter-memory is retained despite an overriding state narrative.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Marianne Hirsch and Valerie Smith argue that cultural memory is most usefully examined at the juncture where the individual and the social, private and public, come together, where gender is a determining factor and the female voice the most compelling in providing counter-memory from below (Marianne Hirsch and Valerie Smith, 'Gender and Cultural Memory', *Signs*, 28, 2002, pp. 1-19). Women are placed at the heart of family remembrance after, if not during, a war, according to Winter, *Remembering War*, 2006, p. 6. The ambiguous position of potentially marginalized Soviet women in remembrance celebrations is addressed in Catherine Merridale, 'War, death and remembrance in Soviet Russia', 2000. For a study of memories of women Red Army soldiers, see Svetlana Alexiyevich, *War's unwomanly face*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1988.

⁵⁷ Winter and Sivan, 'Setting the framework', 2000, p. 32.

⁵⁸ Catherine Merridale, *Night of Stone*, 2000. Nina Tumarkin also draws attention to minorities omitted from the official state narrative (Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994). Kirschenbaum finds that shared narratives giving 'form and meaning to the recall of past experience' are central to the construction of individual memories: Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2006, p. 5.

However, any mechanism for the construction and adoption of the official myth or of memory from below by the individual citizen is lacking from this model.⁵⁹ A more nuanced view of social interrelationships is necessary to explain how individuals could negotiate their own path and create their own interpretations of war alongside the official state version.⁶⁰

Winter proposes a valid mechanism for the decentralization of memory over time from the individual to the immediate social circle, as groups of the bereaved create memorial ceremonies to express and assuage their joint loss. As memory is displaced from the immediate family to the wider community, 'individuals can express and compare their memories with the experience of contemporaries, can begin to formulate a shared language and identify common themes'. This is deemed to be the point at which 'common' memories emerge within fictive kinship groups, forging bonds through mourning. Years after the war, these groups may include former comrades-in-arms meeting at reunions, each small circle having its own shared identity and playing a key role in promoting remembrance activities. The final stage of the progression of memory from private to collective memory comes, according to Winter, as individual loss becomes public remembering which is assimilated into the national narrative as patriotism. The practice of collective remembrance, he argues, acts as a therapeutic process, permitting the individual to forget the personal pain of loss amidst the communal gathering, evidence of a new type of sharing mechanism and the building of a collective identity through bereavement.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Wolfe, 'Past as Present, Myth, or History?', 2006.

⁶⁰ See Amir Weiner: 'By stressing an absolute divide between a ritualistic state and an anomic society, between an oppressive public sphere and an individualistic private sphere, what is lost is the fact that operating beneath the cult was a process by which Soviet citizens created their own meanings out of the war, ones that existed in parallel to official meanings.' (Amir Weiner, Making Sense of War, 2001, pp.17-18.)

⁶¹ Winter, Sites of memory, sites of mourning, 1995, pp. 30 and 98.

It is hard to see how private family memory of the war could endure in the oppressive political circumstances of the Soviet Union, when it was often impossible to reconcile public and private memory. However, the powerful influence of social remembering outlives any individual memory which had contributed to its formation in the first place. The vital role of social groups in the propagation of collective memory is recognized by scholars adopting a multi-voiced approach, which places the individual at the centre of a potentially overlapping framework of different social groups.⁶² These groups may be formal or informal, but are largely local, permitting discussions and conversations between members which may differ from group to group. Typical groups of memory in Novorossiisk may include the family, the school, youth clubs, veterans' councils and clubs of people searching for wartime artefacts and even bodies. This approach focuses attention on the individual's place at the centre of an interconnecting network of social groups, rendered pivotal by virtue of the conversations, both formal and informal, which reinforce memory, possibly even enabling individuals to reject or ignore the dominant narrative by injecting their own subversive meanings in an attempt to make sense of their own past. It has long been recognized that the individual may not realise the full influence of these groups on the shaping of communal identity or even individual memory.⁶³

Adopting a more nuanced approach, Iwona Irwin-Zarecka proposes that no one of the various social groups surrounding one individual may offer a totally correct reading of memory, but that, when put together, they establish an elastic range of meanings

⁶² See Jeffrey Olick, 'Collective Memory. The Two Cultures', *Sociological Theory*, 17, 1999, pp. 333-348.

⁶³ For example Halbachs, 'Often we deem ourselves the originators of thoughts and ideas, feelings and passions, actually inspired by some group.' (Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 1992, cited in Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, eds., *The Collective Memory Reader*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 140.) Halbwachs recognizes that collective memory resides in individuals, while representing a whole that is greater than the sum of individuals.

which shift over time, with different versions of the past having equal validity.⁶⁴ This sweeping statement may be questioned, as it allows for some extreme or false views, not simply mainstream versions with slight degrees of variation. This dynamics of memory approach holds each group of which an individual is a member to have an influence on the person, who still has to work out which version of memory sits most comfortably in their own case.⁶⁵ For my research it is important to acknowledge the potential for various interpretations of a common past, for example in the light of the different wartime experiences of individual military personnel, deportees and child internees, while recognizing the dominant top-down influence on both collective and individual memory. Irwin-Zarecka argues that collective memory is not located in the *minds* of individuals, as claimed by Halbwachs, but in the common resources they share, public or private, which may themselves facilitate or impede memory.⁶⁶ If memory *does* demand such a tangible stimulus, however, the response may not always be similar, even within one social group.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ I. Irwin-Zarecka, Frames of Remembrance: The dynamics of collective memory, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1994.

⁶⁵ The advantages for the construction of permanent collective memory from different social groups with potentially contending narratives are argued in Richard Sennett, 'Disturbing Memories', in Memory, ed. P. Fara and K. Patterson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 10-26. The complexity of commemoration as a negotiation between competing narratives is recognized in Barbara A. Misztal, Theories of Social Remembering, Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2003, p. 128. For a discussion pointing to the need for a more complex account of the various interacting processes, while questioning whether a pluralistic debate is ever possible, or if a singular reading of the past is always promoted, see T. G. Ashplant, et al., 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration', 2000. Marita Sturken stresses the destabilizing effect of individual memory on the national narrative of the Vietnam War, questioning any historical objectivity in favour of the meaning attributed to it by individual memories. This insistence on the predominance of unofficial memory is distinctly one-sided and underestimates the state's ability to shape memory. (Marita Sturken, Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS epidemic and the politics of remembering, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997.)

⁶⁶ In her emphasis on artefacts, Irwin-Zarecka is similar to Pierre Nora, Les Lieux de Mémoire, Paris: Gallimard, 1984.

⁶⁷ See Barbie Zelizer, 'Reading the Past against the Grain', Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 12, 1995, pp. 214-239; and Maria Bucur, Heroes and victims: Remembering war in twentieth-century Romania, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009. Convincing theories about multi-vocal commemoration involving groups with different interpretations of a common past are developed by Barry Schwartz, 'Social Change and Collective Memory', American Sociological Review, 56, 1991, pp. 221-236; and Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, 'Commemorating a Difficult Past: Yitzhak Rabin's Memorials', American Sociological Review, 67, 2002, pp. 30-51.

Irwin-Zarecka, in common with Winter, stresses the emotional and moral drivers stimulating war memory. This perspective is foregrounded in Paul Connerton's scholarship on socially framed memory, in this case placing the individual at the centre of performative ritual. Connerton's arguments complement Merridale's observations on the situation in the Soviet Union, where she finds that state repression of potential alternative, personal memory was particularly noticeable during the grand military parades, which 'were designed to overwhelm, to drown individual memory in the clamour of patriotic ceremonial', and where 'observers became participants despite themselves'.⁶⁸ Connerton proposes that constant repetition of ceremonies may inculcate performative memory and imbue a sense of social stability through their shared symbolism and the reinforcement of common values, tending to counteract any potential for dissent. Propagation of memory is guaranteed by an unchanging ritual with a constant role for the individual. According to Connerton, the resultant collective identity produces automatic recall of the war myth in the community as a purely passive reaction.⁶⁹ However, a passive reaction to a social ceremony could be a recipe for collective forgetting. Scholarship perceives a potential conflict between the need to remember of survivors of war, and of their descendants, as the event remembered becomes increasingly removed in time and space from those remembering.⁷⁰ Thus the responsibility of the children of those who saw wartime service is perhaps even greater than that of their parents in ensuring that the emotional legacy of the survivors is faithfully transmitted.⁷¹ Forgetting may simply be a matter of natural decay or it may be

⁶⁸ Catherine Merridale, 'War, death and remembrance in Soviet Russia', 2000, pp. 62 and 77.

⁶⁹ P. Connerton, How Societies Remember, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 49-50.

⁷⁰ For a study of the fragmentation and collapse of the intergenerational chain of memory, see Danièle Hervieu-Leger, Religion as a Chain of Memory, Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000. The necessity for the active role of key generations in the transmission of the past is discussed in Elizabeth Jelin and Susana G. Kaufman, 'Layers of Memories: Twenty years after in Argentina', in The Politics of War, Memory and Commemoration, ed. T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 89-110.

⁷¹ With her focus firmly on the individual, Susan Crane barely recognizes the fact that collective memory of an event could live on after the death of the individual(s) who may have remembered it. Although she

deliberately encouraged by a dominant sector highlighting some aspects of the official war myth over others. Complementary scholarship views the absence of memory as a purely social construct, whereas individual memory and memories may be simply lost due to the ravages of time on a frail human brain or even psychologically distorted in the face of an all-encompassing war cult.⁷²

In modern ceremonies of remembrance it is legitimate, however, to question the more proactive thoughts of the individual participant during the minute's silence. Nor can the spontaneous eruption of celebration from below in Myskhako on the periphery of official Victory Day commemorations be explained by the merely passive compliance of a group of people acting out of habit alone, even though they are still influenced by the prevailing culture of remembrance orchestrated by the élite. It is at the intersection of the official and the non-official that I have found a finely balanced equilibrium in the mnemonic relationship between the state, the local community and the individual.

My theoretical framework started with a Hobsbawmian approach to remembrance, which explains both Victory Day ceremonies and the study of patriotism newly reintroduced into the school curriculum. However, in-depth probing of war memory in

refers to indirect transmission and reception of memory, Crane does not delve into a mechanism that could prolong individual memory beyond those directly involved. (Susan A. Crane, 'Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory', The American Historical Review, 102, 1997, pp. 1372-1385.) In contrast, Marianne Hirsch engages empathetically with the phenomenon of 'postmemory', where the descendant carries the memory, albeit imperfectly, on behalf of the survivor. (Marianne Hirsch, Family Frames: Photography, narrative and postmemory, Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1997; and Marianne Hirsch, 'The Generation of Postmemory', Poetics Today, 29, 2008, pp. 103-128.) Similarly, Maria Bucur analyses how identity may be inculcated through the emotional memory of an event not personally experienced, which inform the mechanism and motives of transmission of memory in post-Communist Novorossiisk, where, for the most part, familial memory has already passed from the direct to the indirect, and is increasingly owned by the collective. (Bucur, Heroes and Victims, 2009.)

⁷² Irwin-Zarecka, Frames of Remembrance, 1994, pp. 116-118. The neuro-science of memory is beyond the scope of this thesis. On individual memory loss and distortion, see Michael Schudson, 'Dynamics of Distortion in Collective Memory', in Memory Distortion: How minds, brains, and societies reconstruct the past, ed. Daniel D. Schacter, Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1995, pp. 346-364; D. L. Schacter, The Seven Sins of Memory: How the mind forgets and remembers, Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2001; and Daniel L. Schacter, How the Mind Forgets and Remembers: The seven sins of memory, London: Souvenir, 2003.

the family and on the periphery of Novorossiisk has revealed some proactivity and spontaneity of remembrance activities which confirm the significance of the sideways and even bottom-up agency of small groups of searchers and young people, groups which actively supplement and complement the war myth disseminated from above thanks to their purely local perspective. Furthermore, I have found that notable individual citizens of Novorossiisk have made and continue to make their mark on remembrance in the Hero-City, sometimes complementing mainstream top-down remembrance, but occasionally in conflict with the authorities. Any divergence from the official myth or mode of remembrance is to be found on the edge of the town, on the periphery of accepted memory, where the authorities may be challenged and the emphasis is on the individuals remembering and remembered rather than on passive acceptance of a myth propagated from above.

In this thesis I add a new perspective to the understanding of the mechanism of the construction and propagation of memory in an authoritarian environment through the prism of a local war myth. My examination of the dynamics between state and society challenges latent ideas on the part of Western scholarship about a monolithic Soviet society, revealing real complexity in the background. My research indicates some genuine reinforcement between top-down and bottom-up mnemonic initiatives, while finding that the war cult of the Brezhnev era left some scope for individual remembrance and the local dimension. This case study of one community of memory in the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia exposes the human perspective of remembrance rather than the much-flaunted ideology of a mega-power. In addition, my analysis of the evolution of memorial practices and constructions in Novorossiisk reveals the complicated twists and turns in the development of the mnemonic identity of the Hero-City today in relation to the myth of Malaia zemlia and to Brezhnev himself.

Chapter 2

War correspondence and memoirs: The construction of the war myth through literature

J'ai plus de souvenirs que si j'avais mille ans.
Un gros meuble à tiroirs encombré de bilans,
De vers, de billets doux, de procès, de romances,
Avec de lourds cheveux roulés dans des quittances,
Cache moins de secrets que mon triste cerveau.
C'est une pyramide, un immense caveau,
Qui contient plus de morts que la fosse commune.
Je suis un cimetière abhorré de la lune.⁷³

2.1 Introduction

In the construction of a modern war myth all actors in and observers of the event in question have a potential role to play and hence a possible claim to ownership of collective memory. In the case of *Malaia zemlia*, written personal accounts of war correspondents during the campaign and memoirs of veterans after the event were central to the construction of the war myth. Undoubtedly the most influential of these narratives was the memoir *Malaia zemlia* by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, published in 1978. Although Brezhnev won the Lenin Prize for literature in 1979, I examine recent evidence that the work was ghost-authored, the subject of political machinations by Brezhnev's inner circle. However, Brezhnev's work was only one of a series of written accounts which together were instrumental in the formation of the textually mediated myth of *Malaia zemlia*.

Scholars of collective memory construction agree that the gradual homogenization of different individual accounts over time can produce an unambiguous war myth from a single perspective and with a consistent message of unquestionable heroism. Samuel

⁷³ 'I have more memories than if I were a thousand years old./A heavy chest of drawers stuffed with bank statements./Poems, love-letters, lawsuits, love-songs,/With heavy locks of hair wrapped in receipts,/Hides fewer secrets than my sad brain./It is a pyramid, a vast vault,/Which contains more corpses than the communal grave./I am a cemetery abhorred by the moon.' Charles Baudelaire, LXXVI, 'Spleen', in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Paris: Pocket, 2006, p. 91.

Hynes' study of European memoirs of World War I indicates that individual memories undergo a process of selection, gradually converging to determine an agreed and sanitized narrative that informs social remembrance, such that, over time, 'a complete, coherent story emerges'.⁷⁴ This may be regarded as a process of natural selection, whereby dominant narratives with a strong common element and persuasive rhetorical style prevail. The process of myth-making also depends on the weighting attached to different accounts, with eventual common agreement on what material is selected and what is omitted from the myth. This mechanism for the construction of collective memory provides a plausible framework for the development of the myth of Malaia zemlia, albeit largely dependent on forces from below in the form of the individual narratives which are aggregated and homogenized.

However, this war myth was constructed in the post-war Soviet Union, an authoritarian state with a restricted and inward-looking culture. Like all literature, war memoirs were subject to the scrutiny of the official censor charged with the protection of state secrets, Glavlit,⁷⁵ and the interest of the KGB (the state security service).⁷⁶ Furthermore, writers had to be authorized members of the national Writers' Union,⁷⁷ while the Communist Party of the Soviet Union kept a watchful eye on the political content of publications. Any deviation from the party line in the strict environment of a one-party state resulted in penalties ranging from the 'arrest' of manuscripts or their author, to expulsion from the Writers' Union or even the country.

Furthermore, writers were expected to work within the parameters of the prevalent literary system of Socialist Realism, employed as a tool to educate the masses in Communist ideology. The relationship between literature and official 'truth' as

⁷⁴ Samuel Hynes, 'Personal narratives and commemoration', in War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century, ed. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 205-220, p. 207.

⁷⁵ Glavnoe upravlenie po okhrane gosudarstvennykh tain v pechati pri SM SSSR.

⁷⁶ Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti.

⁷⁷ Soiuz pisatelei SSSR.

demanding by the Party was at the crux of this formulaic literary system imposed by stringent state censorship on writers, if sometimes with their own pre-emptive collaboration. Following a meeting with writers in 1932, Stalin dictated that: 'The artist ought to show life truthfully. And if he shows our life truthfully, he cannot fail to show it moving to socialism.'⁷⁸ After the First Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934, Andrei Zhdanov, the chief Party spokesman on cultural affairs, further stated that 'Truthfulness and historical concreteness of artistic representation must be combined with the task of ideological renewal and education of the workers in the spirit of socialism.'⁷⁹ Using this cultural tool to educate the masses in Communist ideology, the writer's duty was to signpost with optimism the bright ideological future, 'portraying Soviet life, not as it was in reality, but as it should become'.⁸⁰

Life was thus seen as a constant fight, moving towards victory of the workers both politically and in the war, in order to guarantee socialism in the utopian post-war future. An integral part of this process was the moral and political education of the younger generation in Communist ideology, with literature providing role models of young people coming to full political consciousness under the guidance of older mentors. The 'master plot' of Socialist Realist works, as analysed by Katerina Clark,⁸¹ emphasizes the heroic actions and self-sacrifice of Communists, often young men or women, whose death renders them both timeless and immortal.⁸² Furthermore, any female companion included in a Socialist Realist narrative was usually an assistant in furthering the ideological cause, rather than a mere love interest.⁸³

⁷⁸ Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!: Soviet public culture from Revolution to Cold War*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001, p. 108.

⁷⁹ Katharine Hodgson, *Written with the Bayonet: Soviet Russian poetry of World War Two*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996, p. 134.

⁸⁰ Orlando Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A cultural history of Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2002, p. 474.

⁸¹ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as ritual*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000, p. 253.

⁸² Individual war heroes were also celebrated in poetry, especially when their self-sacrifice pointed to an eventual victory. (Hodgson, *Written with the Bayonet*, 1996, pp. 129, 135 and 142.)

⁸³ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, p. 183.

The problem to be overcome in the practical deployment of the theory of Socialist Realism was that the present struggles did not adequately represent the glorious future to come. It was therefore necessary to indicate the implied reality of the future in the present and the past, leading to a blurring of the time-line in the service of the promised future.⁸⁴ As the protagonist develops into an ideal Communist, 'past, present and future are crammed together in the process of a person becoming someone better', according to Thomas Wolfe.⁸⁵ Furthermore, Clark observes that the October Revolution, the Civil War and Napoleon's defeat in 1812 represented a 'canonized Great Time that conferred exalted status on all who played a major part in them'.⁸⁶ To these examples may be added the thirteenth-century character of Aleksandr Nevskii, mythologized in Eizenshtein's film and Prokof'ev's music of 1938, which effected an implied comparison between the courageous forces of mediaeval Rus' and its Soviet counterpart. In a recycling of historical precedents, an heroic age from the past was repeated in the present as a foretaste of the 'messianic age to come'. With the passage of time virtually irrelevant, war victory, a staging post in the building of socialism, became totally predictable.

Re-invoking in the present epic moments in the past, historical 'Great Time', Socialist Realism was ideally suited to the creation of war myths for use in both the present and the future. With its mythological treatment of time, its adulation of (politically conscious) heroes and the formulaic process of its production, Socialist Realism was a perfect framework for enforcing the uniformity of narration and

⁸⁴ Brooks cites Louis Fischer on this subject: 'The Soviets knew the hypnotic effect of the great dream, and as the promised future faded into the past they strove to keep alive the trust in delayed benefits. Among other things they ordered all writers, in the middle of the 1930s, to treat the present as though it did not exist and the future as if it had already arrived.' (Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!*, 2001, p. 109, citing Louis Fischer in Richard Crossman, ed., *The God that Failed*, New York: Harper, 1949, p. 205.)

⁸⁵ Wolfe, 'Past as Present, Myth, or History?', 2006, p. 258.

⁸⁶ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, p. 40.

interpretation demanded by myth.⁸⁷ As historical time was compressed, myth became fiction and fiction fact, such that there were no barriers to performing mythical feats in the present to be celebrated in the future. Emphasis was also placed on the location of an event,⁸⁸ so that not only the Motherland (*Rodina*) became sacred, but also the individual battle-fields soaked in the blood of heroes.

Western scholars might assume that under such didactic circumstances there would be a monolithic attitude to the process of memory production, even if some Western material permeated the borders of the Soviet Union. In fact, my analysis shows some variation within this top-down environment, as the official attitude to war memory oscillated over the years depending on the internal and external political climate, such that approval from above for individual and group forays into memory was affected by periods of frost and thaw, often negotiated thanks to some degree of compromise between the state and writers. Any heterogeneity in literature was, however, more marked in the sphere of fiction, while the climate with regard to war memoir depended largely upon the subjective view of the régime, being particularly noticeable under the personality cults of Stalin and Brezhnev. In a country grappling with Stalin's war-time legacy, enduring a hot and cold attitude to the process of de-Stalinization under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, there was no guarantee that the war myth would remain constant or coherent indefinitely, or that its tone would remain static.

Under normative sociological and literary circumstances in democratic societies, the agreed form and content of a myth provide reinforcement and confirmation to all agents involved, namely the individual, state and society in general. However, mutual ownership of collective memory by multiple actors in the Soviet Union was potentially

⁸⁷ 'Aspects of traditional myth relating to time, place and ritual actions [...] are echoed in the conventions used in Soviet wartime poetry and in Socialist Realist literature in general.' (Hodgson, Written with the Bayonet, 1996, p. 141, citing Mircea Eliade, Le mythe de l'éternel retour: archétypes et répétition, Paris: Gallimard, 1949, p. 139.)

⁸⁸ Hodgson, Written with the Bayonet, 1996, p. 143.

compromised within a dynamic memorial environment. Thus the war myth as propagated by the dominating agency of the state sometimes differed from the memory of the individuals formulating the bottom-up accounts, who were often discouraged from publishing their already heavily censored war memoirs. Moreover, once Brezhnev's connection with Malaia zemlia became an integral part of the war cult, it became so dominant that it even influenced the official interpretation of history, while dictating the form and content of published memoirs. Shaped by the myth according to Brezhnev, individual veterans and the groups to which they belonged thereby lost ownership of collective memory, the culmination of a complex process that is not adequately described within the normative Western model of memory formation.

If the overwhelming influence of the state may cause some distortion of memory, particularly with respect to the role of Stalin's leadership during the war, the natural processes of distortion and forgetting common to all retrospective demands on memory must also be borne in mind. Furthermore, whether for ideological or social reasons, the character of memoirs may change depending upon how long after the event they were written; the individual memoirist may find it easier to remember specific events shortly after the war, but, for the statesman, more historical perspective is available at a greater distance from the actual event. Similarly, later memoirs tend to be more reflective, as the benefit of hindsight better enables the location of the personal story within the collective.⁸⁹

This analysis of the mechanism of the construction of the myth concentrates on war correspondence from the front and memoirs by veterans, all culturally specific literary devices to be interpreted as products of their era within the Soviet literature of the period. In the establishment of the mechanism of construction of the myth of Malaia zemlia, I demonstrate that the myth was born during the actual campaign in 1943. The

⁸⁹ Hynes, 'Personal narratives and commemoration', 2000, p. 208.

first tranche of individual memories was then collected together prior to the emergence of cohesive collective memory with the publication of Brezhnev's memoirs. Later memoirs were more uniform, modelled on the dominant state template, thereby locating individual memories within the overarching myth 'owned' by the state.

If a distinction is made between 'collected' and 'collective' memory, it is possible to propose a more sophisticated mechanism for the construction of social memory in Novorossiisk than that proposed by Hynes. I demonstrate that the simple collation and aggregation of individual memories to produce collected memory was followed by a state-sponsored collective representation still residing in the national consciousness.⁹⁰ Rather than just a vague homogenization of accounts, I prove that in fact four discrete stages of the construction of the myth of Malaia zemlia may be identified, based on the interacting influences of bottom-up popular memory and top-down state ideology:

- a) the birth of the myth through the attribution of the name and its dissemination by war correspondents;
- b) the collection of individual memories into one coherent form by Georgii Sokolov;
- c) the construction of official state-owned collective memory by Brezhnev; and
- d) the complete convergence and homogenization of the myth according to Brezhnev.

Collective memory of Malaia zemlia represents one specific example of a local Soviet war myth. In order to establish whether or not this was a typical case of Soviet myth-making, a comparison will be made with the development of the myth of the siege of Leningrad, one of the first Hero-Cities of the Soviet Union, as explored by Lisa

⁹⁰ The two perspectives are outlined in Jeffrey Olick, 'Collective Memory', 1999; and summarized in Jeffrey Olick, ed., States of Memory: Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations in National Retrospection, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003, p. 6.

Kirschenbaum.⁹¹ If Hynes notes a growing disillusionment in the face of war in letters and memoirs describing the Western Front in the First World War,⁹² and Kirschenbaum observes the wish of Leningraders to reveal fully the stories of heroism and human weakness in their war myth,⁹³ what, then, is the tone of the myth of Malaia zemlia and the motives of the memoirists recalling the campaign?

In my examination of the ownership of the war myth, I demonstrate how the massaging and manipulation of war memory served the presentist political aims of the Soviet state. Furthermore, I show that the original bottom-up mechanism for the construction of collective memory was overtaken by the overarching influence of the state war cult of the Brezhnev era, within which memories were mutated and relocated, proving that the influence of the state on war memory was eventually more powerful in the construction of the war myth than that of groups of veterans, even locally in Novorossiisk. Finally, I show that the production of memory is not necessarily the same as its reception, proving that the myth of Malaia zemlia disseminated nationwide was dominated so much by the persona of the General Secretary himself, that, with Brezhnev's death in 1982, the memorial climate changed entirely.

⁹¹ Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006.

⁹² Hynes, 'Personal narratives and commemoration', 2000, p. 218.

⁹³ Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, p. 232.

2.2 A myth is born: War correspondence from Malaia zemlia

Море всегда беспокойно,
И берег тревожен крутой,
Сверкает во мгле освещенный
Кусочек земли дорогой,
Волна набегают и брызжет,
Ночной караван – под огнем.
Но берег к нам ближе и ближе,
К нему мы упорно плывем.

Плывем мы, - хоть падает в море
Близ нас не последний снаряд, -
Туда, где на склонах предгорья
Товарищи наши не спят.
Вот берег причальный и тропка,
Родные деревья в пыли,
Высокие гордые сопки –
Хранители 'Малой земли'.⁹⁴

Paul Carell, the German historian of World War II on the Eastern Front, claims that it was Leonid Brezhnev who gave the beach-head of Malaia zemlia its popular name.⁹⁵

Although this may be understandable in view of Brezhnev's strong link with the campaign, there is no other evidence to confirm Carell's statement, nor does Brezhnev's name feature in contemporaneous communiqués from war correspondents. In contrast, N. V. Kolesov contends that the name of 'Malaia zemlia' became widely known only after the liberation of Novorossiisk in September 1943, implying that it was familiar to a smaller circle of people even before then.⁹⁶ So who named this small area of

⁹⁴ 'The sea is always rough/And the shore alarmingly steep,/The dear little patch of land/ Gleams like a star in the darkness./The waves splash and smash,/The nightly convoy is under fire./But the shore comes ever closer,/We are sailing doggedly towards it.//We are sailing, but that's not the last shell/To fall into the sea close to us,/To where, on the slopes of the foothills,/Our comrades do not sleep./Here is the shore, with moorings and path./Our native trees in the dust./The high proud hills are/ The guardians of "Malaia zemlia".' (Lt. A. Petrov, 'My "Maluiu zemliu" rasshirim ...', *Znamia Rodiny*, 07/09/1943.)

⁹⁵ Paul Carell, *Scorched Earth: Hitler's War on Russia*, trans. Ewald Osers, Vol. 2, London: Harrap, 1970, p. 170.

⁹⁶ 'At that time, in the war years, the names of 'Myskhako' and 'Malaia zemlia' were known only to those who fought in the Caucasus. The first reports about the landings at Myskhako were published only after the liberation of Novorossiisk in September 1943.' (N. V. Kolesov, *V pamiati i v serdtse - navsegda*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1975, pp. 37-38.)

recaptured Soviet territory and when did the name 'Malaia zemlia' first appear in popular Soviet consciousness?

As war myths are rarely, if ever, negative in the consciousness of those constructing or propagating them, it would seem probable that a myth is more likely to be built in the aftermath of victory, with the benefit of hindsight and reflection enabling its positive positioning within the agreed national narrative of the war.⁹⁷ However, Smith suggests that a myth started during the actual event may help the participants make sense of a difficult situation, motivating them to fight on, when the only alternative would be to admit defeat.⁹⁸ Evidence shows that the myth of Malaia zemlia was articulated by the armed forces and formulated, if only locally, by journalists present on the beach-head, even as the campaign was unfolding, only to be reinforced and relocated years later within the national master-narrative of the war.

According to Jeffrey Brooks, the role of the war correspondent as part of the state propaganda mechanism was to promulgate the sole objective of 'victory over the invaders' by means of a holy, patriotic war.⁹⁹ Widely considered to be a branch of politics, journalism was intended both to inspire the troops and maintain discipline.¹⁰⁰ However, all information disseminated by the media was controlled by the Soviet Information Bureau which disseminated reports through TASS (the official state news agency).¹⁰¹ In the interests of public motivation and cohesion, reports were often far

⁹⁷ On the master commemorative narrative, see Yael Zerubavel, 'Recovered Roots: Collective memory and the making of Israeli national tradition', in The Collective Memory Reader, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 237-241, p. 237.

⁹⁸ Smith, Britain and 1940, 2000, p. 29.

⁹⁹ Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin!, 2001, pp. 159-160.

¹⁰⁰ Louise McReynolds, 'Dateline Stalingrad: Newspaper correspondents at the front', in Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia, ed. Richard Stites, Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995, pp. 28-43, pp. 29-30.

¹⁰¹ Berkhoff, Motherland in Danger, 2012, p. 13.

from truthful and barely credible in the case of Soviet losses, especially in the difficult early days of the war, when bad news was rarely reported in the press or on the radio.¹⁰²

Some scholarly debate about the degree of journalistic licence under the climate of stringent censorship has ensued: while Brooks concentrates on the end result of censorship in print, Louise McReynolds points to the skill of the war correspondent in navigating 'the treacherous waters of communication between the state and a largely mistrustful readership'.¹⁰³ This indicates that the public was probably aware of the official deception, if not of the details of any omissions, while the journalists themselves were at risk of losing more than their jobs if deviating from the official line. Karel Berkhoff, more recently, focuses on the grey area of backstage negotiations between journalists anxious to publish the truth about Soviet losses and warn the public about the advancing enemy, and editors wishing to avoid too much criticism from the censors. In some rare cases the editors, as middlemen, sided with the journalists, publishing very occasionally without approval from the censor.¹⁰⁴ Although the regulation of writers was slightly relaxed during the war years, offering more independence for journalists than previously,¹⁰⁵ Socialist Realism continued to influence war correspondents, dictating the tone of newspaper articles.¹⁰⁶

At the onset of war, civilian writers and poets were drafted in to work on military newspapers, with most holding army ranks, while others were enlisted from the armed forces.¹⁰⁷ The most enduringly famous of the war correspondents on Malaia zemlia was Major (later Colonel) Sergei Borzenko, whose dispatches regularly appeared in the pages of the 18th Army's weekly newspaper, Znamia Rodiny. Although not of the same

¹⁰² See Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin!, 2001, pp. 161-162; James von Geldern, 'Radio Moscow: The voice from the center', in Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia, ed. Richard Stites, Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995, pp. 44-61, pp. 48-49; and Rodric Braithwaite, Moscow 1941: A city and its people at war, New York: Knopf, 2006, p. 93.

¹⁰³ McReynolds, 'Dateline Stalingrad', 1995, p. 28.

¹⁰⁴ Berkhoff, Motherland in Danger, 2012, pp. 38, 42, 43, 46 and 55.

¹⁰⁵ Clark, The Soviet Novel, 2000, p. 178.

¹⁰⁶ McReynolds, 'Dateline Stalingrad', 1995, p. 31.

¹⁰⁷ Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin!, 2001, pp. 160 and 167.

national stature as Il'ia Erenburg, Vasilii Grossman or Konstantin Simonov,¹⁰⁸ Borzenko took part in military action, going on to work for the national newspaper Pravda and to write his memoirs in the post-war period.¹⁰⁹ When Novorossiisk was finally liberated in September 1943, an influx of reporters sent telegraphic dispatches back to Pravda and Izvestiia in Moscow, including Anatolii Sofronov, who would later write a fictional play about the Malaia zemlia campaign.¹¹⁰ Other correspondence from the front includes articles by army officers, notably Izvestiia's Captain N. Petrov and Znamia Rodiny 'special correspondents', usually Captain A. Svetov and Senior Lieutenant (later Captain) Boris Milianskii.

Although Georgii Sokolov claims that the name 'Malaia zemlia' was used from the earliest days of the campaign,¹¹¹ the first correspondence from the front mentioning 'Malaia zemlia' appeared in newsprint, as Kolesov suggests, in the local pages of Znamia Rodiny in June 1943,¹¹² well into the seven-month campaign, which had started with the tentative February landings. However, one letter written home from the front by a certain E. D. Goncharov in the weeks before his death on 4th May 1943 already refers to Malaia zemlia.¹¹³ Although the name may have been used amongst the troops as early as April 1943, it may be argued that it only became public once there was good

¹⁰⁸ Well-known war correspondents for the national military journal Krasnaia zvezda. Brooks also mentions Alexei Tolstoi and Nikolai Tikhonov, see Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin!, 2001, pp. 160 and 167-168.

¹⁰⁹ Borzenko was made a Hero of the Soviet Union after the Malaia zemlia campaign. His post-war works include: S. Borzenko, Zhizn' na voine: Zapiski voennogo korrespondenta, Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo Ministerstva oborony Soiuza SSR, 1958; S. Borzenko, Na avanpostakh, Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo Ministerstva oborony SSSR, 1964; S. Borzenko, Ogni Novorossiiska: Podvig, rassказы, ocherki, Elitsa: Kalmytskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1975; and Sergei Borzenko, Piat'desiat ognennykh strok, Moscow: DOSAAF SSSR, 1982.

¹¹⁰ A. Sofronov, 'V Novorossiiske, posle boiia...', Izvestiia, 18/09/1943, p. 3. For Sofronov's dramatized version of events, see: A. V. Sofronov, 'Deviati val: Geroicheskaia drama v dvukh chastiakh', in Uragan: P'esy poslednykh let, Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1975, pp. 5-62.

¹¹¹ Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, p. 57.

¹¹² A. Svetov and B. Milianskii, 'Segodnia na "Maloi zemle"', Znamia Rodiny, 30/06/1943.

¹¹³ L. V. Puseva, 'Frontovye pis'ma kak istoricheskii istochnik', in Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine. K istoricheskoi istine cherez istochnik, ed. L.A. Kolbasina, S. G. Novikov, L. A. Stepko, B. A. Trekhbratov, V. S. Shikin and T. I. Iurina, Novorossiisk: Departament kul'tury Krasnodarskogo kraia, 2005, pp. 99-102, p. 102. Puseva notes that hundreds of letters written on Malaia zemlia are held in the archives of the Novorossiisk museum, awaiting scholarly study. They would prove exactly when the troops started referring to the beach-head as 'Malaia zemlia'.

news to tell and victory was in sight, at least for the Soviet North-Caucasian 18th Army, after the favourable conclusion of the critical April battles around Novorossiisk. National wartime communiqués still referred only to the 'Novorossiisk front' and did not generally use the name 'Malaia zemlia' until immediately after the liberation of the town in September 1943, when it appeared in only one article in Pravda concentrating on the specific location of the troops in and around the village of Myskhako just outside Novorossiisk.¹¹⁴ Thus the myth of Malaia zemlia appears to have been born amongst the armed forces serving on the beach-head at least four months before knowledge of the full nature of the campaign and its popular name had become widespread.¹¹⁵

Such rapid myth creation was not exceptional during World War II.¹¹⁶ In her study of the siege of Leningrad (1941-1944), Kirschenbaum documents the birth of the war myth through local media during the actual event.¹¹⁷ However superficially similar the circumstances of the besieged coastal city of Leningrad and the small Black Sea beach-head, both surrounded by German forces and with escape possible only across the water, there are many significant differences. The siege of Leningrad, the important second city of the Soviet Union, lasted four times longer than the 225-day campaign on the provincial beach-head of Malaia zemlia. During that time, Leningrad was still occupied by a large number of its pre-war population of civilians, whereas Malaia zemlia involved only troops, mainly soldiers from the 18th Army and the marine infantry,¹¹⁸ as all the citizens in and around Novorossiisk had been either evacuated, interned or executed in 1942 as the enemy advanced on the town.¹¹⁹ In Leningrad, the

¹¹⁴ Mark Kolosov, 'Myskhako', Pravda, 18/09/1943, p. 3.

¹¹⁵ Contemporaneous songs and poetry appear to confirm this conclusion; see, for example, Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 322-335. Subsequently, war memoirs were written by serving officers employing the name 'Malaia zemlia'.

¹¹⁶ See Connelly, We Can Take It!, 2004, p. 1. Calder points out that the London Blitz in 1940 was named even before it began and, once started in earnest, was immediately 'mythologised': Calder, The Myth of the Blitz, 1992, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, pp. 42-76.

¹¹⁸ *Morskaia pekhota*; I am grateful to Antony Beevor for this terminology.

¹¹⁹ Kolosov, 'Myskhako', 18/09/1943, p. 3.

radio was a large factor in the dissemination of information and in boosting morale in addition to the newspapers,¹²⁰ whereas its use on Malaia zemlia was restricted to military purposes only. Troops on Malaia zemlia had not only the army newspaper to hand, but also the morale-boosting sheet of articles and sketches, Polundra (Watch out!), produced by the Communist Party team in the caves and bunkers housing the military headquarters and field hospital.¹²¹ An occasional publication, Novorossiiskii partisan, was also passed from hand to hand by the partisans on the hills around the town.¹²²

In comparison, the myth of the siege of Leningrad became widespread nationally even in its early days. By July 1943, at the time the name 'Malaia zemlia' was appearing regularly in the military press, the city newspaper Leningradskaia pravda spoke about the '*boevaia sem'ia*' (military family), indicative of the community spirit of Leningraders, all in it together, rather like Londoners in the Blitz.¹²³ However, the same article also makes it clear that all the nation was aware of the struggle: 'The whole Soviet people are carefully following our fight and work'. Hence the siege of Leningrad, started in September 1941, had already become a national myth before Malaia zemlia was present in the popular consciousness.

However, evidence suggests that Malaia zemlia was even further along the road to epic mythical status than Leningrad, as, even while the campaign was still being waged, future memory of it was being invoked. A myth normally involves memory of the past in the present. Here, however, future memory of the present was invoked not merely as a hopeful dream, but as a quite detailed prediction along the Socialist Realist lines

¹²⁰ Von Geldern, 'Radio Moscow', 1995, pp. 44-45; and Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, pp. 42-76.

¹²¹ Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', in Malaia zemlia. Vozrozhdenie, Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1979, pp. 1-45, p. 28; and G. Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1979, p. 289.

¹²² This newssheet appeared in print runs of up to one thousand over 43 editions from November 1942 to September 1943. (T. N. Shubnikova, 'Partizanskaia gazeta', in Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine, 2005, pp. 117-119.)

¹²³ 'Vse sily – na razgrom vruga', Leningradskaia pravda, 02/07/1943, p. 1.

analysed by Clark, where there is 'no collision [...] between "is" (or "present") and "ought to be" (or "epic past" – or future)'.¹²⁴ Thus Konstantin Simonov wrote in his memoirs:

Our job as war correspondents, as patriots, and as writers was to find, in the mass of wartime actions, not that which spoke about the difficulties of today, but that which spoke about the promises of a better future, about the triumphant end.¹²⁵

As an example of this blurring of time boundaries, and in an extreme statement unusual even for the Soviet Union, war dispatches firmly place Malaia zemlia within an historical continuum linking the difficult wartime present with a bright future in the aftermath of predicted victory. In an article of June 1943 referring already to '*pamiat' o Maloi zemle*' (memory of Malaia zemlia), the war correspondents claim that the fruits of Malaia zemlia would inspire the memory of both civilians and veterans:

There will come the day when once again people here will drink wonderful juice from the fruit of the vineyards. And from the 'Malaia zemlia' glass people will become as drunk as former soldiers on their memories. This is not just a lovely dream. [...] Flowers will bloom in the gardens here. [...] That is for tomorrow. But today war is being waged on 'Malaia zemlia'.¹²⁶

Unlike the normal situation in wartime papers, this article stresses by implication the hardship of the battle at the time of writing, in contrast with the promised victory ahead. At virtually the same time the focus of Leningraders was fixed on the present and the more immediate future. Articles on the awarding to civilians of medals for the defence of Leningrad, which could easily have been written in a similarly epic vein, made no

¹²⁴ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, p. 40.

¹²⁵ L. I. Lazarev, *Konstantin Simonov: Ocherk zhizni i tvorchestva*, Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1985, p. 82.

¹²⁶ Svetov and Miliavskii, 'Segodnia na Maloi zemle', 30/06/1943.

mention of future memory or an historical continuum.¹²⁷ Indeed, in June and July 1943, Leningradskaia pravda took a different, less triumphant tone, pointing to struggles still to come and the serious lessons to be learned in the future from history:

It is not in the character of the defenders of Leningrad to give in to self-deception, reassure themselves about the achievement, to boast about their services in the past. No! We analyse the past seriously, absorb its experience and at the same time look ahead vigilantly. But ahead of us lie new trials, new difficulties, decisive battles with the enemy.¹²⁸

Both these articles reveal the immediate problems of conflict rather more truthfully than would have been expected at the beginning of the war. Furthermore, in an article about children finishing the academic year in June 1943, the same Leningrad paper gives only pragmatic details of everyday life, rather than taking the opportunity to elaborate on the memories of these children as adults in a utopian socialist future.¹²⁹ This omission possibly reflects the overwhelming emphasis on survival in the present to the detriment of enforced ideology embracing the future.

The only 1943 article in Leningradskaia pravda to mention memory of the heroic past in the future attributes any success to Stalin's 'titanic will' rather than to military prowess:

When future historians come to study this time, they will above all be amazed at the unity, the strength, the endurance of the citizens of Leningrad, whose thoughts and actions are

¹²⁷ 'Byt' dostoinymi vysokoi nagrady!', LP, 04/06/1943, p. 1.

¹²⁸ 'Vse sily – na razgrom vruga', 02/07/1943. See also L. Govorov, 'V boiakh za gorod Lenina: Predstoiat tiazhelye, napriazhennye boi', LP, 01/05/1943, p. 2.

¹²⁹ 'Shkolniki nashego goroda', LP, 01/06/1943, p. 3.

permanently directed by the titanic will of that great genius –
Stalin.¹³⁰

In contrast, one of the more popular songs about Malaia zemlia cited in Znamia Rodiny compared the troops to the giants more often found in classical legends:

Споем же о тех великанах,
Что ходят по 'Малой земле',
О людях, в борьбе неустанных,
По крепости равных скале.¹³¹

There is a marked difference between these verses in the attribution of success: to Stalin in the case of Leningrad, and to the military heroes on Malaia zemlia. Brooks' research indicates that mention of Stalin in the press had decreased significantly during the months of defeat and retreat from November 1941 to the end of 1942, while Berkhoff points rather to the continuing presence of Stalin as censor-in-chief and supervisor of the press in the wings.¹³² While Soviet forces were being pushed back, more press-columns were devoted to the generals, especially Georgii Zhukov, the troops and even the correspondents themselves, in an overlapping of interests of the military and the journalists.¹³³ Although censorship had increased with the onset of war, literary critics became gradually less demanding, such that there was more freedom and authority for journalists from the end of 1941 to 1943, as reflected in the song about Malaia zemlia, where the 'giants' of Malaia zemlia boast an exaggerated stature similar to that of Stalin himself. However, once the tide of the war had changed after the victory at Stalingrad, previous conditions were re-asserted as mentions and photographs

¹³⁰ 'Kollektivnyi podvig goroda-geroia', LP, 02/07/1943, p. 3.

¹³¹ 'Let us sing of those giants/Who walk on "Malaia zemlia"/Of people, not exhausted by battle/As strong as a rock.' (A. Svetov and B. Miliavskii, 'i pesnia i stikh – eto bomba', ZR, 12/07/1943.) For further popular songs sung by the troops, see Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 322-335.

¹³² For example, Berkhoff, Motherland in Danger, 2012, pp. 34 and 66.

¹³³ McReynolds, 'Dateline Stalingrad', 1995, p. 32; and Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin!, 2001, pp. 160-183.

of Stalin reappeared in the press with the re-establishment of his cult of personality towards the end of the war.¹³⁴ This is reflected in the Leningradskaia pravda article of July 1943,¹³⁵ demonstrating the closeness of the second capital to the political influence of the centre, in comparison with the relative freedom of expression in the same month of Znamia Rodiny on the periphery, still to be reined back into the Stalin-centric fold.¹³⁶

Journalists also privileged the role of the individual over the state in the development of morale-boosting mythology in the first two years of the war. While not mentioning Stalin by name, Znamia Rodiny refers rather to the many individual Communist heroes on Malaia zemlia, with the dedicated troops dubbed '*dvazhdy kommunisty*' (doubly Communists) and '*trizhdy partiinye*' (thrice Party-minded), linking their heroism with their political ideals as in Socialist Realism, though without reference to their political leader.¹³⁷ All the same, Znamia Rodiny correspondents Svetov and Miliavskii make use of Soviet clichés in describing Malaia zemlia as: 'one of the most unforgettable pages in the history of the war'.¹³⁸ Articles and photographs of individual Malaia zemlia heroes in July and August 1943 appear to confirm the statement that 'stories of its heroic defenders will pass down from generation to generation.'¹³⁹ The oath taken by the troops before departure for Malaia zemlia was similarly invoked to place the heroes of the campaign in a genealogical continuum of strong Soviet men.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁴ See Orlando Figes, The Whisperers: Private life in Stalin's Russia, London: Allen Lane, 2007, p. 383; Berkhoff, Motherland in Danger, 2012, pp. 30-34; Hodgson, Written with the Bayonet, 1996, p. 130; and Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin!, 2001, pp. 167, 169, 175, and 185-7.

¹³⁵ 'Kollektivnyi podvig goroda-geroia', 02/07/1943.

¹³⁶ Svetov and Miliavskii, 'i pesnia i stikh – eto bomba', 12/07/1943.

¹³⁷ Ibid.; and Kolosov, 'Myskhako', 18/09/1943.

¹³⁸ Svetov and Miliavskii, 'i pesnia i stikh – eto bomba', 12/07/1943.

¹³⁹ For example: S. Borzenko, 'Rytsar' "Maloi zemli"', ZR, 14/07/1943.; and B. Galanov, 'Geroi "Maloi zemli": Doch' Kubani', ZR, 05/08/1943. Quotation from Svetov and Miliavskii, 'i pesnia i stikh – eto bomba', 12/07/1943.

¹⁴⁰ B. Borisov, 'Voiny sevastopol'skoi zakalki', ZR, 27/08/1943.

According to the military press, the great desire of the troops was to reunite their small beach-head with the rest of the country.¹⁴¹ The trope of liberation and reunification was also incorporated into predictions for the not too distant future:

There will come the day when 'the Small' will merge with the large Soviet land. But it will always remain Small in the memory of the men who recaptured it from the Hun. Nor will it die in the memory of those who will benefit from its fruits, breathe its air, live freely and happily beneath its sky.¹⁴²

Therefore, when Novorossiisk was finally liberated on 16th September 1943, Borzenko was able to write about the accomplishment of what had already been predicted by the developing myth, while diplomatically uniting Stalin's image with that of Communism by affirming that the victory had been achieved thanks to Stalin's leadership and Lenin's Communist ideology:

The epic Malaia zemlia campaign is over. Everyone who stepped onto its shores was a hero. [...] The burning Small Land was thirsting for reunion with the Large Soviet land, and this time has come to pass. [...] Malaia zemlia has been united with the mainland. Soldiers and sailors took off their caps and marched victoriously past the monument to V. I. Lenin, the name of Stalin on their lips.¹⁴³

Furthermore, in the same article, Borzenko lauded the decisive role of the landing troops: 'The Malaia zemlia landing troops played a large role'. Although this judgment cannot be doubted, Borzenko was one of the commentators who, in the Brezhnev era,

¹⁴¹ For example, E. D. Goncharov wrote in a letter home: 'I have already been here for a month on "Malaia zemlia", which is in fact small, but will become large.' (Puseva, 'Frontovye pis'ma kak istoricheskii istochnik', 2005, p. 102.)

¹⁴² Svetov and Miliavskii, 'Segodnia na Maloi zemle', 30/06/1943.

¹⁴³ S. Borzenko and I. Semiokhin, 'Zavershenie geroicheskoi epopei', *ZR*, 17/09/1943. Note that the statue of Lenin in the centre of Novorossiisk was remarkably still standing at the end of the battle.

built up the myth of Malaia zemlia by exaggerating this role and thereby the strategic significance of the military campaign in Novorossiisk.

A folkloric mechanism for the future construction of collective memory of the past was identified in romantic vein by Svetov and Miliavskii as early as July 1943 in the culmination of an article about a concert of poetry and songs on Malaia zemlia. These home-grown concerts were mainly staged outdoors on quieter evenings,¹⁴⁴ unlike their more famous counterparts in Leningrad, which occasionally boasted the music of Shostakovich in its concert halls. Concluding the article, Svetov and Miliavskii employ Socialist Realism theory to extrapolate from the present situation to the future, drawing a parallel between the construction of the war myth and that of a memorial to the recent, but already legendary events on Malaia zemlia:

'Malaia zemlia' is one of the most glorious pages of the Great Patriotic War. Generations will remain grateful to stories of the steadfastness and selfless courage of its heroic defenders for the sake of the motherland. That is why the folk-tale, song and proverb transmitted from mouth to mouth are already carving a monument not made by hands to those unparalleled events taking place in our own age.¹⁴⁵

Recalling the troops' songs and poems about Malaia zemlia, this memorial is not a monument physically created by human hands, but constructed by the more traditional, oral means of evolution of classical myths. In using the phrase '*nerukotvornyi pamiat*' (a memorial not built by hands), Svetov and Miliavskii invoke the more classical literary source of Pushkin's famous poem 'Ia pamiatnik sebe vozdvig nerukotvornyi'

¹⁴⁴ See Borzenko, *Zhizn' na voine*, 1958, p. 166; and Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', 1979, p. 18. For an extended discussion of frontline entertainment, see Richard Stites, 'Frontline Entertainment', in *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia*, ed. Richard Stites, Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995, pp. 126-140.

¹⁴⁵ Svetov and Miliavskii, 'i pesnia i stikh – eto bomba', 12/07/1943.

(I created a monument to myself not built by hands), 1836, in which Pushkin predicts his own immortality thanks to the enduring legacy of his poetry. Pushkin's poem recalls Derzhavin's 'Pamiatnik' (The monument), 1796, while Derzhavin in turn refers back to Horace's 'Exegi monumentum' (I have made a monument), 23BC.¹⁴⁶ Thus allusions to enduring remembrance of Malaia zemlia were made two months before the liberation of Novorossiisk in the context of the canon of traditional Russian poetry and the classical legends of ancient Rome, in a fashion typical of Socialist Realism both with its reference to 'Great Time' and the compression of time.

All three poems claim that the poet's oeuvre builds an everlasting monument to himself, a creation that will outlast any physically constructed monument.¹⁴⁷ In using the expression '*nerukotvornyi pamiat*' during the Malaia zemlia campaign, the war correspondents are already looking ahead to the future, according to the norms of Soviet culture, when its memory will have attained mythical status on a par with the classical legends, while postulating a traditional mechanism rather than textual mediation. Just as an historical continuum is an integral part of Socialist Realism, so a continuum of literary excellence connects Pushkin to Derzhavin and to Horace before them, effecting an implicit comparison between the mythical greatness of the exploits on Malaia zemlia with the feats of the classical heroes.¹⁴⁸ In an interesting juxtaposition of folkloric and high culture and, despite its appearance in the printed press, the article concludes that the oral tradition of propagation, by 'folk-tale, song and proverb', is more enduring than any physical monument that may be erected in the future in memory of the dead. This

¹⁴⁶ A. S. Pushkin, *A. S. Pushkin: Sobranie sochinenii v shesti tomakh*, Vol. 1, Moscow: Pravda, 1969, p. 425; G. R. Derzhavin, *G. R. Derzhavin: Stikhotvoreniia*, Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1957, p. 233; and Jeffrey H. Kaimowitz (trans.), *The Odes of Horace*, Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2008, p. 142.

¹⁴⁷ Horace's 'Exegi monumentum' is the conclusion of a cycle of odes (Book 3, ode XXX), see John Kevin Newman, 'Pushkin and Horace: Remarks on "Exegi monumentum" and "Pamiatnik"', *Neohelicon*, 3, 1975, pp. 331-342, p. 333. Pushkin's and Derzhavin's poems were also written in their maturity.

¹⁴⁸ It is also possible to read into the allusion a claim by the authors that their work is of a similarly high literary standard.

claim can only be supported by a detailed study of the relative efficacy of the main methods for the propagation of memory considered in the rest of this thesis.

It has been shown that war correspondence broadly followed the national guidelines on Socialist Realism, if marginally behind the trend with respect to the lauding of Stalin. By Victory Day the local Communist Party newspaper, Novorossiiskii rabochii, reflected the re-integration of Malaia zemlia with the Bol'shaia zemlia: it was completely at one with the national press with its large photograph of Stalin on the front page and full of official national and international news by courtesy of the Soviet Information Bureau.¹⁴⁹ However, this was at the expense of the new-born mythical identity of Malaia zemlia, which was mentioned only briefly on an inside page two days later. It would have to wait until Brezhnev came to power to become a fully-fledged war myth.

¹⁴⁹ 'Likuet ves' narod', Novorossiiskii rabochii, 11/05/1945, p.3.

2.3 The construction of collected memory by Georgii Sokolov

Да, были люди в наше время,
Могучее, лихое племя.¹⁵⁰

Many of the North-Caucasian 18th Army were either born locally or chose to remain in the Krasnodar region after the war, with some veterans even choosing to settle in Novorossiisk.¹⁵¹ For this reason, the incipient myth of Malaia zemlia remained for several years far more localized than the myth of the siege of Leningrad or the London Blitz which were known nationally. Despite the far-reaching claims of war correspondents Svetov and Miliavskii, it is difficult to gauge the effectiveness of the oral propagation of memory in the aftermath of war. Although Elena Zubkova notes considerable nostalgia for the front and its camaraderie, observing that veterans remained in touch through informal meetings in cafés, snack bars, and beer halls, it is questionable whether this so-called 'Blue Danube' network was operational in Novorossiisk in the three post-war years before it was closed down by the state, as veterans in Novorossiisk rarely managed to see each other in the difficult post-war period.¹⁵² All but annihilated by German and Soviet artillery during the action of 1942 to 1943, the town had to be both rebuilt and repopulated after the war, doubtless exacerbating any post-war fatigue and compromising physical and emotional recovery.¹⁵³ As in Leningrad, the trials of everyday life in the post-war Soviet Union were pressing to the exclusion of virtually every other activity.¹⁵⁴ It is probable, therefore, that discussions about the war remained within the family and immediate

¹⁵⁰ 'Yes, there were people in our time,/A mighty, spirited tribe.' From the final stanza of Lermontov's poem 'Borodino' (1837) in *M. Iu. Lermontov: Stikhotvoreniia*, 1996; this quotation is cited in Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, p. 351.

¹⁵¹ V. N. Kaida, *Atakuet morskaiia pekhota*, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1980, p. 59.

¹⁵² Elena Zubkova, *Russia after the War: Hopes, illusions, and disappointments, 1945-1957*, trans. Hugh Ragsdale, Armonk, NY and London: Sharpe, 1998, pp. 27-28; and Beate Fizeler, "'Nishchie pobediteli': Invalidy Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny v Sovetskom Soiuze', *Neprikosovennyi zapas*, 40-41 (2-3), 2005, para. 24; Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, p. 383.

¹⁵³ The town was 96.5% destroyed during the war: M. V. Erokhin, ed., *Novorossiisk*, Krasnodar: RIO, 2012, p. 70.

¹⁵⁴ Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2006, pp. 115-6.

social circle during the difficult post-war years, particularly as the recounting of war stories was discouraged by Stalin.¹⁵⁵ Nor did the official climate welcome war memoirs, only a few of which were published by veterans during Stalin's rule.¹⁵⁶ Observing that Stalin did not want to risk personal humiliation by criticism of his wartime leadership or the questioning of officially established war myths, Lazar Lazarev notes that Stalin 'said that it was too early to be writing memoirs so soon after these great events, at a time when passions were still too much aroused, and thus the memoirs would not have the required objectivity'.¹⁵⁷

After the death of Stalin in 1953 and following Khrushchev's attack on Stalin's war record in 1956, a temporary thaw permitting remembrance led to the publication of Konstantin Simonov's popular war novel, *Zhivye i mertvye* (The Living and the Dead) (1959), and the production of iconic films which saw huge box-office success.¹⁵⁸ The 1956 radio programme in search of the heroes of Brest' Fortress mutated into the successful Saturday evening television series 'Rasskazy o geroizme' (Stories of Heroism), which started in 1962 and ran for a decade.¹⁵⁹ Hosted by war veteran Sergei Smirnov, this programme broke through previous barriers to public discussion by opening up debate on hitherto closed subjects; thus ordinary Soviet citizens learned, for

¹⁵⁵ 'After the war [...] Stalin wanted his country to curtail talk about the war, to move past the ordeal and on to the tasks of economic reconstruction and the waging of the Cold War against the capitalist nations.' (Nina Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, p. 103.) See also Lazar Lazarev, 'Russian Literature on the War and Historical Truth', in *World War 2 and the Soviet People*, ed. John Garrard and Carol Garrard, New York: St Martin's, 1993, pp. 28-37, p. 31.

¹⁵⁶ Sergei Kudryashov, 'Remembering and Researching the War: The Soviet and Russian Experience', in *Experience and Memory: The Second World War in Europe*, ed. Jorg Echternkamp and Stefan Martens, New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2010, pp. 86-115, p. 98; and Geoffrey Hosking, 'The Second World War and Russian National Consciousness', *Past and Present*, 175, 2002, pp. 162-187, pp. 179 and 180-186.

¹⁵⁷ Lazarev, 'Russian Literature on the War and Historical Truth', 1993, p. 31, citing Marshal Vasilevskii.

¹⁵⁸ Notably Mikhail Kalatozov, 'Letiat zhuravli', USSR: 1957; and Grigorii Chukhrai, 'Ballada o soldate', USSR: 1959. *The Living and The Dead* was made into a similarly successful film in 1964: see Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union built the media empire that lost the cultural Cold War*, Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2011, p. 52.

¹⁵⁹ For 'V poiskakh geroev Brestskoi kreposti', see: [TVmuseum.ru](http://www.tvmuseum.ru), <http://www.tvmuseum.ru/search.asp?cat_ob_no=17&ob_no=17&a=1&pg=12> [accessed 01/05/2013]; and for 'Rasskazy o geroizme', see: [TVmuseum.ru](http://www.tvmuseum.ru), <http://www.tvmuseum.ru/search.asp?cat_ob_no=17&ob_no=17&a=1&pg=14> [accessed 01/05/2013].

example, of the harsh treatment by Stalin of Soviet soldiers taken as prisoners of war in 1941 through no fault of their own. At times it was, however, deemed to be rather too open in its discussions, falling foul of both the KGB and the Communist Party in the mid-1960s.¹⁶⁰

Taking advantage of the thaw, several war memoirs by high-ranking military commanders appeared towards the end of the 1950s, although simple soldiers were usually not able to publish.¹⁶¹ In Leningrad, too, memoirs of individual citizens were published from 1957, serving to increase local identity,¹⁶² although few memoirs specifically about Malaia zemlia were published in this period.¹⁶³ With continuing swings in the Party's attitude to memoirs, the national memory climate again became more welcoming from the early 1960s, although the prevalent Communist ideology dictated a highly standardized approach, with some distortion in the rendering of the historical past to conform to present policies.¹⁶⁴ Memoirs were also reliant on a good memory in most cases, as military personnel had not been allowed to keep a diary or notes about their war service, in contrast with civilians, journalists and writers who later benefited from their wartime documents.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ See Roth-Ey, Moscow Prime Time, 2011, pp. 266, 271-272; and 'Smirnov povedal tainu neizvestnoi voiny', Newsland, 21/02/2012, <<http://newsland.com/news/detail/id/894387/>> [accessed 30/4/2013].

¹⁶¹ Some of the first published memoirs by top military commanders were by General Chuikov (1959) and Marshal Eremenko (1961), both highlighting Khrushchev's role in the Battle of Stalingrad (see Kudryashov, 'Remembering and Researching the War', 2010, pp. 98, 105 and 113).

¹⁶² Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, pp. 160-1. For example, A. V. Karasev, Leningradtsy v gody blokady 1941-1943, Moscow, 1959.

¹⁶³ The more general war in the Black Sea and the Caucasus was covered, however, for example, I. D. Kirin, Chernomorskii flot v bitve za Kavkaz, Moscow: 1958.

¹⁶⁴ The height of the thaw was from 1961 to 1962, before the accession of Brezhnev. Seweryn Bialer speaks of 'a flood of over 150 full-length books' by 1967 (Seweryn Bialer, ed., Stalin and his Generals: Soviet military memoirs of World War II, London: Souvenir Press, 1970, pp. 16; and 21-24). An example from this period is Marshal S. S. Biriuzov, Kogda vremeni pushki, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1961. See also John Erickson, 'The Soviet Union at War (1941-1945): An essay on sources and studies', Soviet Studies, 14, 1963, pp. 249-274, p. 259.

¹⁶⁵ Kudryashov, 'Remembering and Researching the War', 2010, pp. 98-99.

While in Leningrad in the 1960s most of the memoirs were published by civilians,¹⁶⁶ only military personnel had been present during the Malaia zemlia campaign.¹⁶⁷ Georgii Sokolov, a twice-wounded captain commanding the 165th Marine Infantry Reconnaissance Brigade had spent virtually the whole 225 days of the campaign on Malaia zemlia, latterly working as editor of a front-line newspaper.¹⁶⁸ Although Sokolov, as a privileged military veteran, had written his first short book of war memoirs in 1949,¹⁶⁹ it is his later, longer works that remain on the library shelves in Novorossiisk. The first of these was produced only after Sokolov had collected together the addresses of many of his former comrades-in-arms such that he was able to organize the first reunion of just over sixty Malozemel'tsy in September 1963, on the twentieth anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk.¹⁷⁰

Like the television programme 'Stories of Heroism', this first reunion provided a valuable forum for the assembly and exchange of war memories, enabling Sokolov to expand his personal perspective. After a period of enforced latency, this meeting proved to be the catalyst for other Malozemel'tsy to contribute their own stories, while

¹⁶⁶ With the exceptions of tank division commissar A. L. Bankvitser, Liudi nashei divizii, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1962; and sniper I. I. Pliushin, U sten Leningrada, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1965.

¹⁶⁷ Prior to 1962 a few individual memoirs on Malaia zemlia were published: A. V. Fadeev, Geroi Maloi zemlia, Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1959; G. N. Gaidovskii and A. A. Uzlian, S 'leikoi' i bloknotom: Vospominaniia voennykh let, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1961; Fedor Vasil'evich Monastyrskii, Zemlia, omytaia krov'iu, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1961. (See I. V. Efebovskii, et al., eds., Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina Sovetskogo Soiuzu 1941 - 1945: Rekomendatel'nyi ukazatel' literatury, Moscow: Kniga, 1965, pp. 52-53).

¹⁶⁸ Introduction by Vice-Admiral G. N. Kholostiakov to Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979, p. 8; and Evgenii Lapin, 'Malaia zemlia Georgiia Sokolova', NR, 03/11/2011, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/4249/1>> [accessed 12/11/2011]; and N. F. Zavorotniak, 'Proizvedeniia literatov vo frontovoi pechati', in Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine, 2005, pp. 95-98, p. 96.

¹⁶⁹ Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979, p. 370. There was a further book in 1954, see Aleksandr Maisurian, Drugoi Brezhnev, Moscow: Vagrius, 2004, p. 540.

¹⁷⁰ Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, p. 383. This key date was also celebrated by the local newspaper Novorossiiskii rabochii with an editorial on the front page ('Pis'mo drugu', NR, 15/09/1963, p. 1); and an article with photographs in the military newspaper Krasnaia zvezda (Vice-Admiral V. Iakovlev, 'Boevaia družba venchalas' pobedoi: K 20-letniu osvobozhdeniia Novorossiiska', Krasnaia zvezda, 15/09/1963, p. 3).

correcting inaccuracies and expanding on Sokolov's original to enable him to publish a collaborative work of collected short stories in 1967.¹⁷¹

Eighteen years after his first publication, the time was indeed ripe for a completely new version of Sokolov's memoirs. As soon as Brezhnev came to power at the end of 1964, following his ousting of Khrushchev, the flourishing of the memory climate was apparent. A book of Brezhnev's first important speech about the war was published for export and Victory Day was reinstated in 1965, with its new *minuta molchaniia* (minute's silence) ritual introduced to all Soviet radio and television channels, which would later include a specific tribute to the Malaia zemlia campaign.¹⁷² Television increasingly brought war memory to the masses, with the series 'Vyzyvaem ogon' na sebia' (We draw fire on ourselves) and 'Podvig' (The Exploit) both starting in 1965, the latter, in particular, focusing on the stories of individuals and their regiments.¹⁷³

Although under Khrushchev's leadership the publication of memoirs had coincided with periods of thaw with respect to de-Stalinization, Brezhnev introduced a degree of re-Stalinization with increased censorship and repression of writers.¹⁷⁴ Paradoxically, at the same time the publication of memoirs by top military commanders was encouraged after 1965.¹⁷⁵ However, Lazar Lazarev also observes that 'those few memoirs which journals or other publishing houses made bold attempts enough to

¹⁷¹ Georgii Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia: Rasskazy i ocherki*, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1967.

¹⁷² Leonid I. Brezhnev, *The Great Victory of the Soviet People*, Moscow: Novosti Press Agency, 1965. On the minute's silence, see Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, p. 41; and 'Minuta molchaniia', *TVmuseum.ru*, <http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=12899> [accessed 24/10/2014].

¹⁷³ S. Kolosovii, 'Vyzyvaem ogon' na sebia', USSR: Mossfil'm, 1964-1965; 'Podvig', USSR: Tsentral'nyi televidenie SSSR, 1965.

¹⁷⁴ See, for example, Polly Jones, ed., *The Dilemmas of De-Stalinization: Negotiating Cultural and Social Change in the Khrushchev Era*, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005; and Polly Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma: Rethinking the Stalinist Past in the Soviet Union, 1953-70*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013.

¹⁷⁵ During this period local newspaper articles in Novorossiisk were often submitted by high-ranking officers, veterans of the campaign, for example Vice-Admiral Kholostiakov, N. Shcherva and Z. Gurevich.

accept for publication, required approval by a special commission'.¹⁷⁶ All memoirs were referred to Voenizdat (the military publishing house), having to conform strictly with the official master narrative which attributed victory to a united people which saved not only Eastern Europe, but the whole of Europe, from the fascist enemy.¹⁷⁷

In the context of a growing war cult, Sokolov's work, Malaia zemlia: Rasskazy i ocherki, (Malaia zemlia: Stories and essays) of 1967 was one of many memoirs to appear across the country. Published in the regional capital of Krasnodar, the book measures twenty-one by thirteen centimetres, comprising 408 pages. While the red and cream hard-backed cover proclaims its Soviet provenance, the frontispiece reflects the military theme through the black and white image of a sailor in the act of throwing a grenade, machine-gun in hand and dagger in belt. The publishers obviously envisaged substantial local interest, in view of the relatively high quality and price of the book (eighty-five kopecks), with an initial print-run of 50,000. Their confidence was rewarded: Sokolov was made a member of the Writers' Union as a result of the first edition of his memoirs, and the book ran to a further nine editions, with key updates in 1971, 1979 and 1985, some of the subsequent editions being published centrally in Moscow and with print-runs as large as 200,000.¹⁷⁸

The book's thirty-one chapters include an introduction by the author and a supportive, validating epilogue, 'Pamiat' serdtsa' (Remembrance from the Heart), by Colonel A. Ryzhov, Hero of the Soviet Union and former commandant of the political section on Malaia zemlia. Ryzhov praises Sokolov for his wartime service, while also mentioning the author's efforts over several years to trace the veterans of Malaia

¹⁷⁶ Lazarev, 'Russian Literature on the War and Historical Truth', 1993, p. 35.

¹⁷⁷ Tumarkin, The Living and the Dead, 1994, pp. 134-135. For details of the mechanism of publication in the light of censorship, see: Kudryashov, 'Remembering and Researching the War', 2010, p.105.

¹⁷⁸ Lapin, 'Malaia zemlia Georgiia Sokolova', 03/11/2011. Sokolov's works include: G. Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1971; Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979; and G. Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli: Dokumental'nye rasskazy, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1985.

zemlia.¹⁷⁹ The bulk of the book, twenty-three chapters in all, is devoted to a series of broadly chronological discrete stories about individual people and events. It is noteworthy that, in line with national trends, Stalin appears rarely in the work, with merit being given rather to individuals even over military units.¹⁸⁰ Collating the memories of his former comrades, Sokolov's work narrates in the third person the exploits of both officers and other ranks, living and dead, many of whom had been made Heroes of the Soviet Union. Not only decorated Heroes, but also heroes conforming to Socialist Realism, they are often writers and sometimes musicians. Although serious in tone, the work is lightened by conversations, some of them reminiscences of the home life left behind and many of them between the protagonist of the particular episode and his senior officer, a mentor in the Socialist Realist mould. Women also feature in the work, usually medical orderlies, with one chapter devoted to Klavochka, the morale-boosting 'postman' who risks her life carrying the mail in her leather bag to and from Malaia zemlia in the nightly boat convoy over the bay from Gelendzhik, the nearby port remaining in unoccupied Soviet territory.¹⁸¹

One unusually young hero's exploits are described in the chapter 'U iungi tozhe serdtse moriaka' (A Sea-cadet also had the Heart of a Sailor), about fifteen-year-old Viktor Chalenko.¹⁸² Son of a fisherman and a natural seaman, Viktor joined the navy straight from school in 1942, following the marine infantry to Malaia zemlia in February 1943. One week into the campaign, during the battle for the village of Myskhako, the agile Viktor managed to approach and destroy an enemy machine-gun post by hand-grenade attack, losing his life in the consequent explosions. This spontaneous heroic action is an example of the reality of the times, when the rigid Soviet pre-war rules ceased to apply and 'both troops and officers learned the necessity

¹⁷⁹ A. Ryzhov, 'Pamiat' serdtse', in Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 404-406, p. 406.

¹⁸⁰ This is true for every edition of Sokolov's memoirs.

¹⁸¹ 'Klavochka', in Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 218-225.

¹⁸² Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 98-112.

of making independent decisions and acting on them without specific, detailed orders from above.¹⁸³

The young 'Vitia' was not forgotten amidst the chaos of war, as he left behind in his notebook a letter to his mother, written in pencil:

If I should die on active service, I ask the leader of the political section, Vershinin, and Senior Lt. Kunytsin to go to my home in Eisk and tell my mother that her son died fighting for the liberation of the Motherland. Please give her my Komsomol card, my medal, this notebook and my sailor's cap, that she may keep them in memory of her son, the sailor.

Fifteen-year-old sailor, Viktor Chalenko.¹⁸⁴

Although Vitia's two mentors, Vershinin and Kunitsyn, both died in the fierce April engagements on Malaia zemlia, his request was eventually fulfilled and a school named after him in his home-town.¹⁸⁵ With death an inevitable part of war and self-sacrifice an integral aspect of the prevalent Socialist Realism, Sokolov does not flinch from examining the tragedy of the fall of young combatants. He avoids, however, any consequent ethical or moral dilemmas such as those that arose in similar circumstances in the trenches of World War I and gave rise to a degree of cynicism in subsequent Western memoir literature about the waste of young lives, often attributed to poor military leadership.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ Deming Brown, Soviet Russian Literature since Stalin, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, pp. 171-172.

¹⁸⁴ Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, p. 111. Vitia was already part of the national mythology of Malaia zemlia, thanks to his letter's appearing in the official state history of the war: P. N. Pospelov, et al., eds, Istoriia Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny Sovetskogo Soiuza, 1941-1945, Moscow, Voennoe izdatel'stvo Ministerstva oborony Soiuz SSR, Vol. 3, 1961, pp. 94-95.

¹⁸⁵ Sokolov does not mention, however, that a street in Novorossiisk was named in honour of this Hero of the Soviet Union in 1968 ('Vitia Chalenko. V pamiat' o geroiakh: ob ul. V. Chalenko', NR, 15/10/1968).

¹⁸⁶ See, for example, C. E. Montague's Disenchantment (1922); Herbert Read's In Retreat (1925); E. Blunden's Undertones of War (1929); and Robert Graves' Goodbye to All That (1929).

While the main body of the work is narrated in the third person, the final six chapters of the book cover Sokolov's post-war encounters with former comrades, which are narrated in the first person by the author. Written during the Cold War, the chapter 'Tsvetok Korei' (The Flower of Korea) is both unusual in providing some retrospective analysis and revealing as a political statement in comparing the troops of Malaia zemlia fighting the 'fascist occupiers' with the North Koreans waging their own war of independence against the 'American imperialist' invaders.¹⁸⁷ This chapter is the only one in the book in which Sokolov considers the Malaia zemlia campaign from a presentist political perspective, emphasizing the ravages of capitalism in what appears to be a concocted tale. Furthermore, in a convoluted comparison of capitalism and Communism, the still devastated Chemin des Dames, a First World War battlefield in France, is contrasted with the green and regenerated area of Malaia zemlia during the period of the Korean War (1950-1953). This comparison renews the Socialist Realist symbolism found in the wartime articles of Svetov and Miliavskii of the perfect future built as a result of the Malaia zemlia campaign.¹⁸⁸ The latter thereby takes its place in an historical continuum of wars against the invader over the previous half-century, in a specific instance of a general national pattern of artificial associations between the present and great moments in Soviet history.¹⁸⁹

Sokolov's democratic bottom-up venture both determines the form of the memoir and its content, while ignoring the weighting attached to any one individual's memory by virtue of their social position or military rank. Sokolov, with the official censor, had the opportunity to remove any stories not conforming to his own and the state's ideal of the heroic myth they wished to construct on behalf of others. Through his unifying pen, these collected memoirs offer a varied yet coherent account of the Malaia zemlia

¹⁸⁷ 'Tsvetok Korei', in Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, pp. 355- 364.

¹⁸⁸ Svetov and Miliavskii, 'Segodnia na Maloi zemle', 30/06/1943.

¹⁸⁹ See Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, pp. 40 and 175.

campaign, conveying the single ideological message necessary for a myth. With one dominant voice pervading a work written from several different perspectives, Sokolov's memoir may be considered collected rather than collective memory.¹⁹⁰ Just as the former comrades-in-arms reinforced their group identity at the first official reunion in 1963, so that identity was maintained through Sokolov's work, with his epilogue 'Twenty Years Later' describing their interaction on the twentieth anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk as a synthesis of the preceding individual stories.¹⁹¹

While Sokolov's book of collected memories of Malaia zemlia was not published until 1967, in Leningrad a book of stories written during the siege, 900 Days, had been published ten years previously, in 1957. This was, however, not a work under a single authorship, rather a multi-voiced anthology of civilians' experiences of the blockade. This anthology was not to be followed until the thaw and the war cult permitted a wider collection, Blokadnaia kniga (Book of the Siege), published in 1979. Although the latter was under the sole authorship of Ales Adamovich and Daniil Granin, it differs from Sokolov's book in that it represents the authors' hundreds of (heavily censored) interviews with citizens of Leningrad, including some diary extracts in its substantial forty-four chapters (496 pages).¹⁹² Thus the work simply records a collection of sometimes brief interviews, using the words of those interviewed, unlike Sokolov's memoirs, which relate episodes from the war in the words of the author, including the literary device of conversations which render the work more immediate and personal.

¹⁹⁰ Later editions of Sokolov's memoirs contain the names of over 200 individuals. See Lapin, 'Malaia zemlia Georgiia Sokolova', 03/11/2011.

¹⁹¹ 'Davdsat' let spustia', in Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 382-403.

¹⁹² See Ol'ga Berggol'ts, V. N. Druzhinin, A. L. Dymshits, A. G. Rosen and N. S. Tikhonov, eds., 900 dnei, Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1957; Ales Adamovich and Daniil Granin, Blokadnaia kniga, Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1982 (first published in 1979); Cynthia Simmons and Nina Perlina, Writing the Siege of Leningrad: Women's diaries, memoirs, and documentary prose, Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002, p. xxx; and Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, pp. 152, 163 and 166-167.

Furthermore, these two Leningrad works were devoted entirely to civilians during the siege, whereas Sokolov's work was exclusively based on the memories of military personnel, albeit occasionally mentioning civilians. Treading a fine balance between the Party and the individual, Sokolov recognizes the initiative and heroism of individuals, in common with the earlier works on Leningrad which, from the civilian perspective, focus on family life in the city.¹⁹³ With the family one of the key tropes of Soviet wartime propaganda, Sokolov's more intimate conversations between the troops often relate to those left behind, or plans for a happy family future together, sometimes, however, thwarted by events. Moreover, in common with Blokadnaia kniga, it is to the family that Sokolov attributes his motivation for writing his work, stating that his book is intended for the young reader.¹⁹⁴ This was in line with the tenets of Socialist Realism, re-iterated by Zhdanov in 1946, shortly after the relative liberalism of the war years, whereby its didactic function was to offer Communist role-models of physical and moral heroism in the Socialist Realist mould to the younger generation.¹⁹⁵ This idea of social moral education (*vospitanie*), particularly applied to young people by means of the war narrative, exists to this day, if latterly without its overt political connotations.¹⁹⁶

At the end of the book, Ryzhov applauds Sokolov for fulfilling his military and literary duty in writing these memoirs of comrades. Dedicating his work as a '*pamiatnik*' (a monument) to those who gave their lives, Sokolov appears to have considered his work to be a creative tribute, a monument in the Pushkinian literary tradition. In this case, however, it was not intended as a monument to himself as its creator, but rather as a memorial to his fallen comrades.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, p. 166.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182; and Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 405-406.

¹⁹⁵ Clark, The Soviet Novel, 2000, p. 198.

¹⁹⁶ See Chapter 5.

¹⁹⁷ Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, pp. 5, 9, 403 and 405.

However well Sokolov crafted a coherent narrative from collected individual memories, the position of the individual within the construction of collective memory remains complex. James Young argues that individual memories must remain personal, as people are not able to share others' discrete memories, despite their potentially collective experience of past events. However, in the case of veterans of the same campaign, it is possible that individuals may retain similar, if not perfectly uniform, memories of a past event, which, however subjectively they may affect the individual, can nevertheless result in a collective representation of individual memories. All shared a similar type of experience, such that their individual memories offer the complementary perspectives collected by Sokolov, reinforced by their mutual interaction over reunions, where any differences could be discussed and mutual agreement reached. Jerome Bruner and Carol Fleischer Feldman propose that groups develop shared stories to define their identity and in order that members may find a common significance in their own memorial narratives which make use of a shared culture, an argument which would certainly apply to former comrades-in-arms attending reunions. It is probable, therefore, that contestation by any individual of the final version was limited by the overriding strength of group identity.¹⁹⁸

Sokolov's first published collected version of the myth achieved a convergence of story and tone, by bringing the private memories of witnesses into the public domain as socially constructed memory with a consistent and self-confirming heroic tone and no element of defeatism or disillusionment present.¹⁹⁹ Concentrating mainly on the

¹⁹⁸ James V. Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 6-7, 21-25; Jerome Bruner and Carol Fleischer Feldman, 'Group Narrative as a Cultural Context of Autobiography', in Remembering Our Past: Studies in autobiographical memory, ed. David C. Rubin, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 291-317; and Crane, 'Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory', 1997, p. 1383. See also Edwin Hutchins, Cognition in the Wild, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995; and Donald Campbell, Methodology and Epistemology for Social Sciences: Selected papers of Donald T. Campbell, ed. E. Samuel Overman, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988, both arguing for the building of collective memory from complementary personal perspectives.

¹⁹⁹ Brown observes that anything defeatist would automatically be censored: Brown, Soviet Russian Literature since Stalin, 1978, p. 170.

nationally recognized Heroes of the Soviet Union emerging from the campaign, and some, but by no means all those characters singled out by the original war correspondents, the collaborative work speaks more authoritatively than the voice of any one individual. These discrete memories, freely given to Sokolov and formulated collectively, became subsumed into the overall myth under construction, as ownership of war memory passed into the public domain in the Krasnodar region.

2.4 The construction of official state-owned collective memory by Brezhnev

Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day.²⁰⁰

Individual memories continued to become collective property during the 1970s, when popular memory of the war was very much influenced by the television programme 'Ot vsei dushi' (From the Bottom of my Heart). Travelling around the country to highlight the previously unknown ordinary heroes of the recent past, the programme emotionally evoked memory of the war and immediate post-war years, serving to reunite veterans separated for decades. This family show was presented from 1972 to 1978 by the well-known actress Valentina Leont'eva, a survivor of the siege of Leningrad, reaching not only individual families in their homes, but also provincial audiences assembled in local palaces of culture.²⁰¹

Denis Kozlov attributes a nationwide manifestation of an interest in history to the fact that it was a more 'culturally acceptable' subject of discussion in Soviet society than internal or external politics, which invariably strayed into the realm of uncertainty. This may have been true for the politically conscious intelligentsia, but 'From the Bottom of my Heart' was riveting viewing for the masses, as everybody in the country could identify with the courage and death toll of the war. The preoccupation with history did not only concern the recent war, however, but still encompassed a general concentration on and even idealization of the past. Although Socialist Realism was by then less stringently applied, the identification of historical continuities remained a developed

²⁰⁰ William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, Act IV, scene iii.

²⁰¹ See [TVmuseum.ru](http://www.tvmuseum.ru), <http://www.tvmuseum.ru/search.asp?cat_ob_no=17&ob_no=17&a=1&pg=18> [accessed 03/05/2013]. Moreover, the radio programme 'V etot den' 30 let nazad' (1974-1975) focused on memory of the final stages of the war, see [TVmuseum.ru](http://www.tvmuseum.ru), <<http://www.tvmuseum.ru>> [accessed 01/05/2013]. See also Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*, 2011, pp. 275-277.

literary form, recalling both the wartime article by Svetov and Miliavskii and Sokolov's convoluted comparison of the Korean and both world wars of the twentieth century.²⁰²

The propagation of war memory through a burgeoning war cult during the late 1960s and early 1970s reinforced Brezhnev's own political position as a high-ranking veteran. By the end of the 1970s, according to Hedrick Smith, a Western journalist based in Moscow, Soviet cultural life had become 'saturated with the war theme'.²⁰³ While Merridale condemns the whole Brezhnev era as 'a golden age of concrete and hot air, an era of state-sponsored multivolume histories of the war, of solemn speeches of commemoration, handouts, new medals, and the mass design and construction of memorials', there was substantial popular support in the early years for a policy which aimed to unify the country. Merridale refers to the gratitude of successive generations for a 'hero-myth' giving them a sense of purpose in the face of foreign antagonism, whilst at home Kirschenbaum has argued that the cult may have diverted the intelligentsia's attention from state clamp-downs on freedom of speech following the arrest and trial of dissident writers Iulii Daniel' and Andrei Siniavskii in 1965-1966 and the persecution of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn from 1969 to 1974. Tumarkin similarly attributes the growing war cult to the state's wish to 'mobilize loyalty [and] maintain order', in what could have become an explosive situation amongst people questioning the whole ideology of Communism. The cult helped also in the identification of an unambiguous Western enemy. In view of Brezhnev's appropriation of the 'great victory' for the Soviet people alone, with the denigration of the other wartime Allies, it is

²⁰² See Svetov and Miliavskii, 'Segodnia na Maloi zemle', 30/06/1943; and 'Tsvetok Korei' in Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967. See also Denis Kozlov, 'The Historical Turn in Late Soviet Culture: Retrospectivism, Factography, Doubt, 1953-91', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 2, 2001, pp. 577-600, pp. 578, 585 and 599; and William Tompson, *The Soviet Union under Brezhnev*, Harlow: Pearson Education, 2003, p. 102. The successful series of biographies of historical figures 'Plamennye revoliutsionery' was published from 1964 to 1990; see Polly Jones, 'The Fire Burns On? The "Fiery Revolutionaries" Biographical Series and the Rethinking of Propaganda in the Brezhnev Era', *Slavic Review*, 2015, pp. 32-56.

²⁰³ Hedrick Smith, *The Russians*, New York: Quadrangle and The New York Times Book Company, 1976, p. 316.

probable that any conscious political target of the cult was the capitalist West as a whole, particularly at the height of the Cold War, with distraction from internal politics a useful by-product.²⁰⁴

It is difficult to establish the main instigating agent for the growth of the war cult: Brezhnev himself or the ruling élite or the people.²⁰⁵ If the cult had been established as suggested by Tumarkin, by the early Brezhnev régime, many aspects of it resonated with the ordinary people in the early years.²⁰⁶ It was widely disseminated not only by literature, but also through the Communist Party's Komsomol organization for young people and the programme of monumental commemoration which expanded during the 1970s. Certainly the overall dogmatic environment regulated the production of culture, encouraging on the one hand while restricting content on the other. Television programmes about the war were genuinely popular in the country, although it is indisputable that the General Secretary took advantage of the memory environment to establish further his own military and leadership credentials, evidence for which is examined in Chapter 3. It may be deduced that Brezhnev encouraged the originally largely popular development of the war cult for his own personal ends, while also aiming to unify the country politically through the inter-generational propagation of war memory. With Brezhnev's physical and mental decline towards the end of the 1970s, however, it seems that the cult was employed as a tool for self-protection amongst the ruling élite: playing to Brezhnev's vanity and cult of personality within the war cult, his political comrades awarded him a series of medals in what appears to have been a concerted campaign to keep him in power whilst protecting the governmental status quo. My analysis of the plotting around the production and dissemination of Brezhnev's

²⁰⁴ See Brezhnev, *The Great Victory of the Soviet People*, 1965; Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, pp. 132-134; Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2006, p. 180; and Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's War: Life and death in the Red Army, 1939-1945*, New York: Picador, 2006, pp. 374-375.

²⁰⁵ Examination of minutes of Politbiuro meetings may shed some light on this question.

²⁰⁶ Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, pp. 155-156.

war memoirs sheds considerable light on the machinations of the Soviet inner-circle in the late 1970s.

With memory of an heroic victory cementing the population and the leadership together, more and more veterans were encouraged to produce their war memoirs in the 1970s, in marked contrast to the general restrictive literary environment. Memoirists' freedom to publish in principle did not, however, imply a total freedom of content. Authors were supposed to reinforce the Party line on the war, adhering to the material in the official history books and situating their works within the state's master-narrative, which by then attributed victory to the Party and the people working together against fascism, rather than to Stalin or even the military commanders.²⁰⁷ However, official history was, in turn, mutually reliant on memoir literature, such that an edifice of incontestable mythology of the war was generated. The post-war memoirs of Sergei Borzenko provide a relevant example in the case of Malaia zemlia; they also emphasize the growing position of Brezhnev within the myth, whilst serving to promote Borzenko's own reputation through his (indirect) association with Brezhnev thanks to his work on Malaia zemlia as a war correspondent. As early as 1958, Borzenko lionized Brezhnev as Colonel in charge of the political section of the 18th Army, a senior representative of the Party, in a chapter dated 1943:

Brezhnev was the soldiers' favourite. He knew their moods and thoughts, knew how to make a joke at the right time and inflamed their thirst for heroic deeds. The landing troops knew him by sight, and in the noise and din of battle they were able to distinguish his authoritative, calm voice.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, pp. 153 and 163.

²⁰⁸ Borzenko, Zhizn' na voine, 1958, p. 167.

Borzenko also reveals that Brezhnev had his own validating encounter with danger at the front when knocked unconscious as the boat he was taking from Gelendzhik to Malaia zemlia hit a mine, the tone of the section suggesting that Brezhnev was never far from the sound of battle.²⁰⁹ In a case of what Roger Markwick terms 'institutionalized mendacity', Borzenko's at best exaggerated and at worst inaccurate 'memory' is cited as historical fact in the official history of the war, published in 1961, even before Brezhnev had ousted Khrushchev and started the war cult.²¹⁰ This is perhaps an indication of Brezhnev's growing influence or simply the desire of an ambitious writer to flatter the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Nonetheless, Malaia zemlia and Novorossiisk featured only briefly in Soviet histories of the war: the official six-volume publication (1960-1965) contained only four pages about Malaia zemlia, a mere 0.1% of the whole. Reading in places more like a myth than an historical record in the fact-dominated Western sense, more space is allocated to the young hero Viktor Chalenko than to Brezhnev.²¹¹ Whether benign mythology or institutionalized mendacity, Soviet historiography since the October Revolution certainly played a political function which must be acknowledged when situating Soviet-era works on Malaia zemlia in their historical context. This degree of mythology in the official history paved the way for further aggrandizement, as a vicious circle

²⁰⁹ The same information is repeated word for word in the following works by Borzenko: Borzenko, Na avanpostakh, 1964, pp. 40-41; and Sergei Borzenko, '225 dnei muzhestva i otvagi', in Podvig Novorossiiska, ed. A. I. Makarenko, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1978, pp. 76-84, p. 82. However, no local newspaper articles before 1966 mention Brezhnev's role on Malaia zemlia.

²¹⁰ Roger D. Markwick, Rewriting History in Soviet Russia: The politics of revisionist historiography 1956-1974, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001, p. 5; and Pospelov, et al., Istoriia Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny Sovetskogo Soiuz. 1941-1945, Vol. 3, 1961, p. 95.

²¹¹ See Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 2002, p. 44, for a comparison of history with collective memory. The campaign was similarly ignored in Western histories, except for the German work by Paul Carell, which, treating the campaign as a personal battle of wits between Hitler and Stalin, concentrates rather on the defeat of the main landing force at Iuzhnaia Ozereika, attributing the successful landings at Stanichka to both Stalin's excellent leadership and the weakness of the Romanians fighting alongside the Nazi occupiers. See Carell, Scorched Earth, 1970, pp. 170-173 (first published in 1966).

developed whereby only 'facts' already in print were allowed to be deployed or cited in future history texts.²¹²

With memoirs officially sanctioned, the censor remained busy, 'neutralizing', for example, any potentially embarrassing comments on the defeats of the early weeks of the war.²¹³ Authors, forewarned, therefore avoided sensitive topics, producing sometimes less than honest, formulaic works, full of sentimental clichés about the 'sacred' battle with no comments of an anti-war nature.²¹⁴ Few, if any, of these memoirs went as far as Sokolov in synthesis, being content with description rather than analysis.²¹⁵

During the decade from 1967 to 1977 Voenizdat published memoirs by the nationally famous Marshals Rokossovskii, Konev and Zhukov.²¹⁶ Zhukov, highly respected during the war and the veritable symbol of military victory, paid tribute to Brezhnev by inserting a few lines in his memoirs about seeking Brezhnev's military

²¹² R. W. Davies, Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution, London: Macmillan, 1989, p. 101; cited in Merridale, Ivan's War, 2006, p. 375.

²¹³ Lazarev, 'Russian Literature on the War and Historical Truth', 1993, p. 34.

²¹⁴ In contrast, in the West the anti-war character of literature was prevalent towards the end of the Vietnam War. Commenting on the nature of the war cult in the Soviet Union, Hedrick Smith observed that 'official propaganda treatment of war [...] is vastly greater than in the West. Because of Vietnam, war is an extremely divisive issue in America, but in the Soviet Union, it is an unchallenged unifying element that serves to justify many of today's policies.' (Smith, The Russians, 1976, p. 314.)

²¹⁵ Kozlov, 'The Historical Turn in Late Soviet Culture', 2001, p. 158; and Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, p. 153.

²¹⁶ K. K. Rokossovskii, Soldatskii dolg, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968; G. K. Zhukov, Vospominaniia i razmyshleniia, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1969; and I. S. Konev, Sorok piatyi, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1970 and Zapiski komanduiushchego frontom, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1972. Khrushchev personally overruled a KGB move to prevent publication of Zhukov's memoirs (William Taubman, Khrushchev: The man, his era, London: Simon and Schuster, 2005, p. 631). Memoirs were also published by the Armenian commanders Bagramian (1971 and 1977) and Babadzhanian (1975). The siege of Leningrad received more coverage from the military point of view (for example, A. A. Novikov, V nebe Leningrada, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1970; and B. V. Buchevskii, Gorod-front, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1967), while, on the war in the Krasnodar and eastern Black Sea region, A. A. Grechko, the commander of the North-Caucasian 18th Army, Admiral N. E. Basisty and Vice-Admiral Kholostiakov published their memoirs (A. A. Grechko, Bitva za Kavkaz, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1967; N. E. Basisty, More i bereg, Moscow: Voenizdat, 1970; and G. N. Kholostiakov, Vechnyi ogon', Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976). Aleksandr Khinshtein considers that Brezhnev facilitated publication by marshals fighting in his sphere of the war, notably Grechko, see A. Khinshtein, Skazka o poteriannom vremeni: Pochemu Brezhnev ne smog stat' Putinym, Moscow: OLMA, 2011, pp. 94-95. The main memoirs of Malaia zemlia in this period were by Lt. Gen. I. S. Shiiian, following the national trend and in contrast to Sokolov's work, published centrally by Voenizdat: I. S. Shiiian, Na Maloi zemle, Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo Ministerstva oborony SSSR, 1971 (with a fuller and more expensive edition in 1974); and I. S. Shiiian, Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska, Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo Ministerstva oborony SSSR, 1977, all with an introduction by Borzenko.

advice in April 1943, around which an historical debate has since ensued.²¹⁷ According to Zhukov's daughter, Mariia, her father had never heard of Brezhnev during the war, a claim supported by Roi Medvedev, an unflinching Brezhnev critic, who held this passage to have been fabricated when Zhukov's editor was 'advised from above' (*po sovetu svyshe*) to insert a paragraph about seeking Brezhnev's advice.²¹⁸ In contrast, however, Aleksandr Khinshtein unconvincingly pushes all possibilities to their limits in order to give Brezhnev the benefit of the doubt, whilst accepting that Brezhnev probably asked Zhukov not to forget his role in his memoirs.²¹⁹ This is the likely scenario, as, in a similar vein, Orlando Figes cites the case of the documentary war film 'A Soldier Went' (*Shel soldat*) (1975), based on Konstantin Simonov's interviews with veterans, which was not passed by the censors until a sequence paying homage to Brezhnev as a war leader had been inserted.²²⁰

Brezhnev's own war service on Malaia zemlia became increasingly highlighted and exaggerated in representations of the war. While Brezhnev was held responsible for the liberation of Novorossiisk in an Ogonek article of 1973, Borzenko had written in Pravda as early as 1968 that Brezhnev was on a par with the main hero of the Malaia zemlia landings, Major Tsezar' Kunikov. It is probable that Borzenko, always closely

²¹⁷ 'We wanted to ask the advice of the head of the political section of the 18th Army, L. I. Brezhnev[...]; Brezhnev had been here numerous times and was familiar with the situation, but at that moment he was on the Little Land where extremely fierce fighting was going on.' (G. Zhukov, Reminiscences and Reflections, Vol. 2, Moscow: Progress, 1985, p. 162.)

²¹⁸ M. G. Zhukova, 'G. K. Zhukov: Korotko o Staline', Pravda, 20/01/1989, p. 3; Roi Medvedev, Lichnost' i epokha: Politicheskii portret L. I. Brezhneva (kniga 1), Moscow: Novosti, 1991, p. 43; and Roi Medvedev, Politicheskie portrety, 2008, p. 219.

²¹⁹ According to Khinshtein it was possible that Zhukov just wanted advice about the troops' morale, rather than advanced military strategy, in which case Brezhnev would have been the right person to consult. Zhukov may well have *wanted* to meet Brezhnev, but could not, as he was at the time actually on Malaia zemlia. Furthermore, Zhukov had signed the recommendation for Brezhnev's promotion to general in 1944. See Khinshtein, Skazka o poteriannom vremeni, 2011, pp. 83-96.

²²⁰ Orlando Figes, The Whisperers, 2007, pp. 620-621. Further excessive claims at this time about Brezhnev's military prowess are found in at least two documentary films crediting Brezhnev as 'one of the people who planned and executed the landings in Novorossiisk' prior to its liberation: 'Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev: Zhiznennyi put', USSR: Televidenie SSSR, 1973, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNLcid4sho>> [accessed 29/04/2013]; and 'General'nyi sekretar': Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev', USSR: Televidenie SSSR, 1976, <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fect9ejZhig>> [accessed 29/04/2013].

linked with reporting and commentary about Malaiz zemlia, was able to promote his own career by his association with and flattery of Brezhnev. Moreover, according to Thomas Wolfe, such not absolutely truthful works were accepted by the public as if they were authentic documents.²²¹

Anatolii Sofronov, another former war correspondent familiar with the Novorossiisk front, also promulgated Brezhnev's role fictionally.²²² While his play, Deviatyi val (Storm Force 9) (1968-1973) includes some real historical characters, the chief protagonist is not a military leader, but a certain Colonel Berezhnov, a Party official on Malaia zemlia clearly intended as a fictional representation of Brezhnev, whose main function is to check that all the troops carry their Party cards, at the same time boosting their morale.²²³ Reminding his audience of the importance of the transmission of war memory, Berezhnov concludes the play with the words: 'Memory [...] is propagated from generation to generation. We shall never forget the heroes. Eternal glory to them.' Reinforcing the by then mythical qualities of Brezhnev as a wartime political leader, the name 'Berezhnov', barely changed from that of Brezhnev, signifies by implication the attributes expected of a great statesman: caring and solicitous of others, careful and thrifty economically. A photograph in a review of the play's première in Uzbekistan on the thirtieth anniversary of the end of the war further underlines the identification of Berezhnov with Brezhnev, as the actor playing Berezhnov looks remarkably similar to Brezhnev himself. Emphasizing not only the importance attached to the brotherhood of different nationalities in the war, particularly relevant outside Russia, the review also reiterates the nationally required theme of the

²²¹ Sergei Borzenko, 'Prazdnichnyi saljut nad Novorossiiskom', Pravda, 16/09/1968. See also Paul J. Murphy, Brezhnev: Soviet Politician, Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1981, p. 76; and Wolfe, 'Past as Present, Myth, or History?', 2006, p. 254. By 1976, Brezhnev's volume of speeches and articles was referred to as 'an item of documentary material' in a history book, see Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 2002, p. 80.

²²² Sofronov, 'Deviatyi val', 1975, (written 1968-72, produced 1975).

²²³ Leselidze and Sipiagin, but with the notable absence of Major Kunikov.

importance of the Party during the campaign through the role of the political commissar. Furthermore, the role of Malaia zemlia is inflated, with Novorossiisk dubbed 'the Stalingrad of the Caucasus' by virtue of its deemed strategic significance for the outcome of the war.²²⁴

Brezhnev's connection with Malaia zemlia was disseminated even further than Uzbekistan: Brezhnev gave a gift to Fidel Castro on his visit to Cuba in January 1974 of a book of pictures of Malaia zemlia produced by former 18th Army war artist, P. Ia. Kirpichev.²²⁵ Thus, during the 1970s, the status and significance of Malaia zemlia in the national and even international consciousness increased considerably, thanks to Brezhnev's association with the campaign. Whereas Stalin had opposed any propagation of the myth of the siege of Leningrad in order to retain his own reputation, Brezhnev actively promoted his connection with Novorossiisk and Malaia zemlia,²²⁶ finally resulting in the publication of his own war memoirs.

By 1977, with his physical and mental health deteriorating, Brezhnev's growing cult of personality depended increasingly upon his popularity with veterans and his reputation as a modest, wise and organized wartime leader, the desirable qualities typical of a mature mentor in the Socialist Realist mould. Although Clark concludes that Brezhnev's dominant cult of personality was reminiscent of Stalin's, in that he gave the impression that he was controlling every aspect of government,²²⁷ Brezhnev's democratic leadership style and collective decision-making, still allowing for substantial delegation of responsibility, won him more supporters than enemies amongst the ruling élite, the Politbiuro. Brezhnev had, however, been astute enough early in his leadership to defuse any potential threats to his leadership: Iurii Andropov (who would eventually succeed him), for example, was demoted early in Brezhnev's leadership from the

²²⁴ B. Privalov, 'Deviatyi val', *Pravda vostoka*, 15/09/1975, p. 3.

²²⁵ *Al'bom o Maloi zemle*, see D. Rezaev, 'Rasskazyvaiut veterany', *NR*, 13/09/1974, p. 3.

²²⁶ For a wider discussion on Brezhnev's visits to Novorossiisk, see Chapter 3.

²²⁷ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, pp. 237-238.

Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to become Chairman of the KGB. Known increasingly for his legendary vanity and love of military awards, Brezhnev was honoured on his seventieth birthday in December 1976 with yet another war medal and more flattering films.²²⁸ It was the following month, January 1977, on the journey to Tula, the latest in the growing list of Hero-Cities of the Soviet Union, that the plot to write Brezhnev's war memoirs was hatched by his closest allies.²²⁹

Popular debate about the authorship of Brezhnev's memoirs has flourished over the last few years, with Russians anxious to elucidate the 'truth' about their provenance.²³⁰ The man apparently behind their inception was Konstantin Chernenko,²³¹ leader of the Soviet Union after Andropov, then a member of the inner-circle of the Politbiuro and Brezhnev's 'political shadow'.²³² Anxious to please the General Secretary, who, it seems, had the habit of boring colleagues with his wartime stories while freely admitting that he had no writing skills, Chernenko enlisted the support of Leonid Zamiatin, head of the state news agency, TASS. A team of ghost-writers was signed up, notably Anatolii Agranovskii of Izvestiia, Arkadii Sakhnin of Novyi mir, Aleksandr Murzin of Pravda and Vladimir Gubarev, science correspondent for Pravda. Each had responsibility for a part of the memoirs, for example, Gubarev wrote about Brezhnev and Soviet space developments in

²²⁸ 'General'nyi sekretar', 1976; and Igor' V. Bessarabov, 'Povest' o kommuniste', Russia: 1976.

²²⁹ Tula was made a Hero-City on 7th December 1976 and Brezhnev gave a major speech there on 18th January 1977. (Tompson, The Soviet Union under Brezhnev, 2003, p. xv.)

²³⁰ See, for example, Valerii Drannikov, 'Zemlia byla malaia, no gonorary ochen' bol'shie', Kommersant' Vlast', 12 (363), 28/03/2000, <<http://kommersant.ru/doc/16688>> [accessed 21/03/2013]; "'Memuary" za Brezhneva pisali literaturnye raby', AIF, 31/03/2010, <<http://www.aif.ru/politics/article/33698>> [accessed 21/03/2013]; Semen Uzin, 'Kto vy, gensek Brezhnev?', Evreiskaia gazeta, 7 (95), July 2010, <http://www.evreyskaya.de/archive/artikel_1288.html> [accessed 21/03/2013]; Roi Medvedev, "'Malaia zemlia": istoriia literaturnogo podloga', RIA "Novosti", 08/10/2010, <<http://ria.ru/online/282083202.html>> [accessed 12/11/2011]; the documentary film "'Malaia zemlia" Leonida Brezhneva', Russia: Galakon Studio, 2010; and Nikolaus Katzer, 'Dans la matrice discursive du socialisme tardif: Les "Mémoires" de Leonid Il'ič Brežnev', Cahiers du Monde russe, 54, 2013, pp. 73-101.

²³¹ "'Malaia zemlia" Leonida Brezhneva', 2010; and Leonid Mlechin, Brezhnev, Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2011, pp. 592-593.

²³² Tompson, The Soviet Union under Brezhnev, 2003, p. 115.

Kosmicheskii oktiabr'. Russian scholars agree that Sakhnin started and Agranovskii completed Malaia zemlia.²³³

With Brezhnev refusing to take part in the project, according to Brezhnev detractor Leonid Mlechin, the writers had to use archival material and trace his former comrades-in-arms, such as Sergei Pakhomov, Brezhnev's wartime deputy. Once the text was approved by Zamiatin and Chernenko, only four or five copies were typed up in what amounted to a top-secret military strategy, being kept deliberately from Andropov at the KGB. No explanation for this is given, but no doubt the commissioners of the work remembered the relatively recent controversy leading up to the publication in the West of Khrushchev's war memoirs in 1970, in which Andropov was also implicated.²³⁴

As soon as the work was finished, Brezhnev asked for it to be published immediately in the literary journal Novyi mir, entailing a last-minute cut-and-paste exercise in 500,000 copies to replace the intended middle section of the next edition with 'Malaia zemlia'.²³⁵ Brezhnev's work finally appeared in February 1978, on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Malaia zemlia landings,²³⁶ to be followed later the same year by the two other sections of the original trilogy, Vozrozhdenie (Regeneration) and Tselina (The Virgin Lands). After the appearance of Brezhnev's 'Malaia zemlia' in the press, several books followed.²³⁷ The main publication of two sections of Brezhnev's memoirs, Malaia zemlia. Vozrozhdenie, was a paperback clearly produced for mass consumption, priced cheaply at twenty-four kopecks and measuring twenty-two by

²³³ Notably T. I. Iurina, 'Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie 1942-1943 gg.: Istoriofafiia problemy', in Istoricheskie zapiski: Issledovaniia i materialy (Volume 4), ed. S. G. Novikov and T. V. Raskatova, Novorossiisk: Kubanskoe knizhnoe izdalel'stvo, 2003, pp. 214-235, p. 220; Sergei Semanov, Dorogoi Leonid Il'ich, Moscow: Algoritm, 2007, pp. 69-70; "'Memuary" za Brezhneva pisali literaturnyie raby', 31/03/2010; Uzin, 'Kto vy, gensek Brezhnev?', July 2010; Roi Medvedev, "'Malaia zemlia'", 08/10/2010; and Aleksandr V. Filippov, 'Zhivopistsy "Maloi zemli": Kak sozdavalis' vospominaniia L. I. Brezhneva', lenta.ru, 07/02/2015, <<http://m.lenta.ru/articles/2015/02/07/brezhnev>> [accessed 10/02/2015].

²³⁴ See Mlechin, Brezhnev, 2011, p. 593; and Taubman, Khrushchev, 2005, pp. 633-639.

²³⁵ Drannikov, 'Zemlia byla malaia, no gonorary ochen' bol'shie', 28/03/2000.

²³⁶ Brezhnev's 'Malaia zemlia' first appeared in Novyi mir, 2, February 1978. It was reproduced in Literaturnaia gazeta, 08/02/1978, pp. 2-4; and locally in Novorossiiskii rabochii over two days on 07 and 08/02/1978.

²³⁷ The first was a volume of 48 pages: L. I. Brezhnev, Malaia zemlia, Moscow, Politizdat, 1978.

fourteen centimetres.²³⁸ With a wartime picture of the troops on the cover and a current image of Brezhnev as the frontispiece, the scene was set by a photograph of Brezhnev in uniform with the troops during the war. Just less than half of the book's ninety-four pages (thirty-nine in all) relate to Malaia zemlia, with the second half, 'Vozrozhdenie', covering immediate post-war events. The popularity of Brezhnev's work was guaranteed, extending to several editions. With an overall print-run of fifteen million over twenty editions, it appeared in over one hundred countries in sixty-five languages.²³⁹

In contrast to Sokolov's substantial memoirs published eleven years previously, Brezhnev's work was concise, short enough to fill only four pages of Novorossiiskii rabochii. The print run for the first book published locally was similarly modest, at 3,000 rather than the 50,000 copies of Sokolov's 1967 edition. This edition of Malaia zemlia was a correspondingly small hard-back volume measuring only fifteen by ten centimetres, with 136 pages, produced in time for the thirty-fifth anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk in September 1978.²⁴⁰ Its quality was proclaimed by the glossy, maroon cover, boasting a photograph of landing troops, with a picture of Brezhnev opposite his signature in maroon as the frontispiece, and further photographs of the campaign inside the front and back covers. At thirty-five kopecks, it was cheaper to access than Sokolov's eighty-five-kopeck edition.

As Brezhnev's personal memoirs depended on a team of ghost-writers, their credibility as an historical document or even a witness account may rightly be questioned. Despite the standardization of war memoirs by the constraints of Socialist Realism and the indirect source of much of the information they contain, Brezhnev's

²³⁸ Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev, Malaia zemlia. Vozrozhdenie, Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1979. Tamara Iurina dismisses it as a 'brochure': Iurina, Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie, 2008, p. 220.

²³⁹ "'Memuary" za Brezhneva pisali literaturnyie raby', 31/03/2010; and Katzer, 'Dans la matrice discursive du socialisme tardif', 2013, p. 84.

²⁴⁰ Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev, Malaia zemlia, Moscow and Krasnodar: Politizdat and Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1978.

work agrees with Sokolov's to reinforce the myth of Malaia zemlia by agreeing on several key tropes. The name of the beach-head is introduced by Brezhnev, quoting from a letter claimed to have been written by himself to the troops and copied to Stalin: 'The small piece of land outside Novorossiisk retaken by us from the enemy [...] we named "Malaia zemlia".'²⁴¹ The small area of the re-conquered territory is emphasized by both authors; Sokolov writes without elaboration of the troops 'on a small area of land',²⁴² while Brezhnev plays on the significance of the name in an elevated literary style indicative of the authorship of his memoirs, elaborating:

In a geographical sense, Malaia zemlia does not exist. If you want to understand it further, you should clearly imagine this rocky area of dry land right up against the water. It measured six kilometres along the front-line with a depth of four and a half kilometres in all.²⁴³

Playing on the emotions of his readers, the Brezhnev memoir invokes the meaning of defending this small piece of Soviet land:

It may be small, but it is ours, Soviet land, soaked with our sweat and our blood, and we shall never under any circumstances return it to the enemy.²⁴⁴

Both Sokolov and Brezhnev endow the small plot of land with a significance greater than its mere size. For Brezhnev, Malaia zemlia is portrayed as a small section of the Motherland and thus a smaller representation of the Soviet Union. His memoir starts with a claim to the greatness of Malaia zemlia:

²⁴¹ Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', 1979, pp. 20-21.

²⁴² Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, p. 10.

²⁴³ Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', 1979, p. 12.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

It is certainly small – less than thirty square kilometres. And it is great, as only a scrap of land can become great when it is soaked with the blood of selfless heroes.²⁴⁵

There is a distinct difference, however, in the perspective of the respective memoirs, Brezhnev emphasizing negatively the sense of isolation and separation from the mainland, while Sokolov stresses the positive wish to rejoin Malaia zemlia with the mainland: 'The Malozemel'tsy cherished a dream to unite the Small with the Large'.²⁴⁶ While the overall tone of Sokolov's work is optimistic, Brezhnev writes rather of the constant hardship and mortal danger. As his memoirs are written in the first person, in contrast to Sokolov's, this may be interpreted as a testament to Brezhnev's own implied courage.²⁴⁷ Sokolov's more positive approach is demonstrated by the inclusion in his memoirs of several songs sung by the troops, some of which look forward to victory.²⁴⁸ Brezhnev, however, despite the literary provenance of his memoirs, only resorts to verse when speaking of the death of a comrade in the political section, when the man standing next to him in a dug-out was blown up, again serving to promote Brezhnev's reputation as a brave soldier.²⁴⁹ Individual, rather than mass death is mentioned by both Brezhnev and Sokolov, albeit usually with an heroic aspect and without any ethically problematic examination of its value.²⁵⁰

Although Brezhnev's memoirs were produced by committee, they do not demonstrate the variety of perspectives inherent in a collaborative venture such as Sokolov's. Both have a performative style, with substantial amounts of fictionalized dialogue between characters. However, with only one main protagonist in Brezhnev's

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

²⁴⁶ Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, p. 10.

²⁴⁷ This was reinforced by Borzenko: Borzenko, *Zhizn' na voine*, 1958, p. 228.

²⁴⁸ 'We shall broaden Malaia zemlia/From province to province of the country'; and 'I shall meet you,/When the Small becomes Large' (Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, pp. 327 and 335 respectively).

²⁴⁹ Brezhnev cites Konstantin Simonov's poem, 'Smert' druga' (1942): Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', 1979, p. 34.

²⁵⁰ Hedrick Smith observes the ubiquitous heroic angle to war memory, which is 'almost always painted in heroic rather than gory colours.' (Smith, *The Russians*, 1976, p. 316.)

memoir, it has even more cohesion than Sokolov's collected work; where Sokolov concentrates on individual acts of heroism, Brezhnev recounts mainly his own role in boosting the morale of the troops. Promoting his own bravery, Brezhnev starts his memoirs on the night of his arrival by boat on the beach-head, repeating the story of the mine explosion which left him unconscious.²⁵¹

With Brezhnev's influential position as leader of the Soviet Union, his memoirs were more significant than Sokolov's collected work in shaping the myth of Malaia zemlia as national collective memory, which thus attained a higher status than its brief mention in the history books warranted. Reactions to Brezhnev's memoirs were mixed. Andropov's response to a political *fait accompli* was to telephone the 'author' in hospital to express his rapture;²⁵² the national press immediately provided extensive coverage, praising Brezhnev as a military and literary hero,²⁵³ and commenting on the high level of interest within the Soviet Union.²⁵⁴ As early as 29th March 1978 a conference with over a thousand delegates, mainly Party officials, was held in Rostov-on-Don in order to scrutinize and approve Brezhnev's conclusions.²⁵⁵ In the introduction to the published proceedings, the work's political importance is highlighted:

Workers of the Don region rate highly the memoirs of Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia'. [...] They agreed unanimously and wholeheartedly that the publication of the book 'Malaia

²⁵¹ Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', 1979, p. 9.

²⁵² Mlechin, Brezhnev, 2011, p. 593.

²⁵³ 'Geroi velikikh stroek nashego vremeni i sovetskaia literatura', LG, 07/02/1978, p. 5.

²⁵⁴ 'With great interest the Soviet people read "Malaia zemlia", the war records of Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev.' (Anatolii Anan'ev, 'Zemlia malaia i bol'shaia', Pravda, no. 47, 16/02/1978, p. 2). Reports of literary conferences from Tbilisi and Tashkent are found in 'Knigi-boitsy, knigi-sozidateli', LG, no. 30, 17/05/1978, p. 3.

²⁵⁵ M. E. Teslia, N. I. Semeniuta and E. V. Malnach, eds., Ne pomerknet nikogda, Rostov-on-Don: Rostovskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1978. Mlechin also mentions a conference held at the Institute for World Literature in the Academy of Sciences, where scholars favourably compared Brezhnev's patriotic words with those of Aleksandr Pushkin. (Mlechin, Brezhnev, 2011, p. 595.)

zemlia' was the most important socio-political event in the life of our country.²⁵⁶

The work was not only acclaimed for its political content,²⁵⁷ however: Brezhnev was also awarded the Lenin Prize for Literature in 1979,²⁵⁸ despite the fact that he had used the services of a team of ghost-writers for the project.

In contrast, however, the memoirs did receive some subdued criticism. Following the controversy over Khrushchev's memoirs and the fact that Stalin, the leader of the country during the war, had not published memoirs himself, it may have been viewed an extreme move for Brezhnev, albeit already leader of the country for over thirteen years, to promote himself so boldly in what was clearly a bid for political one-upmanship. Furthermore, although ghost-writing and group-authorship was widely practised amongst the country's highest ranking politicians, in this case newspaper editors disapproved of the rumoured non-payment of the anonymous writers who had earned him 'hundreds of thousands of roubles', while allegedly embellishing Brezhnev's military career.²⁵⁹ Popular opinion judged the issue with yet another Brezhnev *anekdot*, one of a wealth of relatively good-natured popular jokes told at the expense of the General Secretary and his war cult:

Brezhnev found an extremely positive review of his 'Malaia zemlia' in the national press. He hurriedly summoned an aide

²⁵⁶ Teslia, et al., *Ne pomerknet nikogda*, 1978, p. 3.

²⁵⁷ Praise was also attributed to Brezhnev by scholars in Ukraine for both the literary style and historical veracity of his memoirs, for example, A. S. Kliunenko, 'Skarbnitsia lenins'kogo stiliu roboti (Do vikhodu knig L. I. Brezhneva "Mala zemlia" i "Vidrodzhennia")', *Ukrainskii istorichnii zhurnal*, 8, 1978, pp. 5-13; and O. M. Verbilo, 'Itogi Vtoroi mirovoi voiny i ee uroki v proizvedeniikh L. I. Brezhneva', *Ukrainskii istorichnii zhurnal*, 10, 1979, pp. 7-16.

²⁵⁸ Tompson, *The Soviet Union under Brezhnev*, 2003, p. xvi; Khinshtein, *Skazka o poteriannom vremeni*, 2011, p. 630; and Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, p. 237. The Lenin Prize for Brezhnev's memoirs was awarded for 'their popularity and their educative influence on the mass of readers', see: Iain D. Thatcher, 'Brezhnev as Leader', in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, ed. Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002, pp. 22-37, p. 29.

²⁵⁹ See Mlechin, *Brezhnev*, 2011, p. 595. Fedor Burlatskii is credited with writing many speeches, see: Mark Sandle, 'A Triumph of Ideological Hairdressing? Intellectual life in the Brezhnev era reconsidered', in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, ed. Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002, pp. 135-164, p. 146. Even Brezhnev's wife, Viktoriia Petrovna, is alleged by Zamiatin to have said that he should not have accepted the prize: "'Malaia zemlia" Leonida Brezhneva', Russia: Galakon Studio, 2010.

and asked if he had read the book. "Yes", replied the aide. "And what did you think about it?", asked Brezhnev. "Amazing!" replied the aide. Seeking confirmation, Brezhnev went through the same daunting interrogation with two further, increasingly frightened officials. In the face of unanimous positive response, Brezhnev declared: "Well, in that case, I really must read it myself!"²⁶⁰

It is likely that Sokolov's memoirs are more accurate than Brezhnev's, as a first edition was recorded in 1949, relatively soon after the war.²⁶¹ Although arguably historically more useful,²⁶² Sokolov does make occasional mistakes, notably the exact date of the February landings, whilst claiming that Malozemel'tsy never forget.²⁶³ If Brezhnev's work was inaccurate, it may possibly be attributed to the fact that it, like Sokolov's, was a collaborative venture, although not in the same sense. Brezhnev had already suffered a stroke by the time it was written, so that the drafts were read to him while he was ill and probably not alert in hospital.²⁶⁴ Being written by a third party, it was reliant on other memoirs and contemporaneous news reports, which were often themselves inaccurate. Certainly, Brezhnev includes in the book accounts of much of the action which accord with Sokolov's memoirs, including the February landings, although he was only there on occasions from April onwards. Other sections were

²⁶⁰ This is the joke most frequently heard in the context of Brezhnev's memoirs. Versions of this joke were related by interviewees M3A, M5H, and others outside Novorossiisk; see also Maisurian, Drugoi Brezhnev, 2004, p. 499; and David Priestland, The Red Flag: A History of Communism, New York: Grove Press, 2009, p. 430.

²⁶¹ Although Sokolov states that he lost his diaries during the liberation of Novorossiisk: Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, p. 10.

²⁶² Roi Medvedev agrees (Roi Medvedev, "'Malaia zemlia'", 08/10/2010).

²⁶³ Sokolov, Malaia zemlia, 1967, p. 384; and My s Maloi zemli, 1979, p. 366. This misleading claim is reiterated by G. P. Bondar' (G. P. Bondar', Uroki muzhestva, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1982, p. 55); and Kaida, albeit stating that he had difficulty remembering names of former comrades (Kaida, Atakuet morskaiia pekhota, 1980, p. 60).

²⁶⁴ Mlechin, Brezhnev, 2011, p. 596.

obviously politically motivated, for example the continued propagation of the myth that Brezhnev's military advice was sought by Marshal Zhukov.²⁶⁵

However, despite criticism of factual errors and claims of exaggeration of the role of Brezhnev, his memoirs went on to influence the nation as a whole.²⁶⁶ By 1978, the story of Malaia zemlia was firmly established in the national consciousness, showing more characteristics of myth than of an historical account. Under the domination of Brezhnev's memoirs, collective memory attained one authoritative voice, rather than just the coherent collection authored by Sokolov, or the multiplicity of perspectives normally encountered in historical publications in the West, if not in the Soviet Union. Encouraged by the pervading war cult, one ideological meaning was attached by Brezhnev to the campaign, with motivation for its success attributed solely and subjectively to the heroism of Communist troops. No doubt, disillusionment or cynicism features, and there is no objectivity or room for differences in its interpretation.

It seems that Malaia zemlia is remembered nationally mainly thanks to Brezhnev's overpowering top-down intervention, rather than Sokolov's bottom-up project which remained largely local. Especially in the Krasnodar region around Novorossiisk, Brezhnev's memoir was praised as a literary monument not only to the defenders of Malaia zemlia, but to the whole Soviet people:

A monument, created by a man who has lived through all that the heroes of his work lived through, comprehending entirely the greatness of the feat not only of his comrades-in-arms, but of the whole Soviet people.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Brezhnev cites Zhukov's memoirs: Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', 1979, p. 21.

²⁶⁶ Clark even accuses Brezhnev of 'autohagiography': Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, pp. 237-238.

²⁶⁷ E. Ia. Savitskii, *V nebe nad Maloi zemlei*, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1980, p. 154.

However, if Brezhnev's memoir is considered to be a monument, it is, like Pushkin's poem, a creative monument to himself, the central character in the work created in his dotage, rather than to his fallen comrades, as in the case of Sokolov. If Brezhnev propagated the myth of Malaia zemlia through his memoirs, he also used them to construct a mythological version of himself for posterity. Just before his death, quotations from Brezhnev's work were engraved on the giant Malaia zemlia memorial erected in Novorossiisk by the state in 1982, guaranteeing Brezhnev and his memoirs a certain degree of physical, if geographically limited, immortality.

2.5 Beyond Brezhnev's memoir and Brezhnevism

Memory is never shaped in a vacuum; the motives of memory are never pure.²⁶⁸

After its publication, Brezhnev's memoir Malaia zemlia went on to dominate remembrance of the war in Novorossiisk, canonizing collective memory according to Brezhnev. The myth gained its own momentum nationally, affecting individual Soviet citizens of all ages, particularly those subjected to political lessons in schools and universities, and veterans wishing to contribute their own memoirs to the war myth. Thus, as a consequence of the domination of Brezhnev's memoirs came a period of homogenization of memory of Malaia zemlia through further memoirs, from 1978 until shortly after Brezhnev's death in November 1982.

Despite the minor nature of the Malaia zemlia campaign, its significance and Brezhnev's role were systematically exaggerated, becoming a major part of the official story of the war. Brezhnev's master-narrative became the authoritative work on the Malaia zemlia campaign, studied by academics and the subject of numerous scholarly works.²⁶⁹ Immediately after its publication, school teachers were involved in its propagation, being encouraged by the Ministry of Education to include mandatory courses on its content for children in Pioneer and Komsomol summer camps. In the light of the work's 'most important significance for the Communist education of the Soviet people', the young generation was targeted for the 'moral' and 'spiritual' education it offered. Furthermore, following a series of training conferences for teachers over the summer period, the memoirs were to feature prominently in the academic curriculum from September 1978. The exact nature of the approach to Brezhnev's work

²⁶⁸ Young, The Texture of Memory, 1993, p. 2.

²⁶⁹ 'It was necessary to consider him an intellectual, a talented man able to write books, interesting books. These books had to be studied in school. This was a characteristic of the régime.' (Roi Medvedev, "Malaia zemlia", 08/10/2010).

was detailed for every school year, being included in the schemes of work from even the youngest classes. With the tension between history and myth removed, its 'importance as an historical document' was lauded. With 'examples of mass heroism', 'analysis of historical facts' and the demonstration of the 'leading role of the Communist Party' in the war, its 'truthful, factual' account provided exemplar material for history and politics lessons for younger pupils, while its artistic merit guaranteed it a place in the study of twentieth-century literature for older students, alongside such luminaries as Fadeev, Sholokhov, Tvardovskii and Simonov. In the case of university students, Malaia zemlia appeared in the ubiquitous courses on the history of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, guaranteeing its influence on lecturers and students alike.²⁷⁰ Furthermore, even outside school, children were taken on educational tours of Malaia zemlia and its memorials,²⁷¹ while the recommendation of the book for reading at home with subsequent homework ensured the engagement of parents.²⁷² The military campaign, which in 1961 merited four pages in the official history book of the war, had become by 1978 an integral part of the school and university curriculum, leading to sales of Brezhnev's memoirs of about one million copies annually.²⁷³

Michael Shudson observes that, once canonized in the curriculum, a 'work accumulates a self-perpetuating rhetorical power', gathering an expanding circle of validating proponents and followers: 'It gathers partisans, partisans beget schools,

²⁷⁰ The scheme of work of courses on the history of the war had always been dictated by the state, for example, the 1949 pamphlet 'The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union' was published as a guide for teachers, emphasizing Stalin's central role. (See Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 2002, p. 78.) See also 'Ob izuchenii v obshcheobrazovatel'nykh shkolakh knig general'nogo sekretaria TsK KPSS, predsedatelia prezidiuma verkhovnogo soveta SSSR tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva "Malaia zemlia" i "Vozrozhdenie"', Prepodavanie istorii v shkole, 5, 1978, pp. 17-23; and A. F. Vovchik and M. O. Nemchenko, 'Vikorisannia prats' tovarisha L. I. Brezhneva "Mala zemlia", "Vidrodzhennia" i "Tselina" u vuzivs'komy kursy istorii KPRS', Ukrainskii istorichnii zhurnal, 7, 1979, pp. 113-125.

²⁷¹ See, for example, a photograph of visitors to Novorossiisk in Teslia, et al., Ne pomerknet nikogda, 1978. This spawned a series of post-cards: "'Malaia zemlia"; "Vozrozhdenie": Komplekt otkrytok po knige Leonida Il'icha Brezhneva'.

²⁷² Interviewee F5Q.

²⁷³ Medvedev, "'Malaia zemlia'", 08/10/2010.

schools beget cultural authority, cultural authority begets an established tradition'.²⁷⁴ In the case of Brezhnev's memoirs, however, although the outcome was the same, it was achieved through a different mechanism from that observed by Schudson in the dissemination of Western literature. In Brezhnev's case, the cultural authority and canonization were established from above *before* the work became widely known to the masses. Once actively promoted in schools and universities, the authority of Brezhnev's Malaia zemlia was set in the concrete of Socialist Realist iconography.

'Malaia zemlia' was produced as a record version, read by well-known actors.²⁷⁵ Popular songs about the heroic campaign sprang up,²⁷⁶ some included in a musical produced in 1979,²⁷⁷ while Sofronov had his verse set to music in an oratorio by K. Akimov, 'V serdtse i v pamiati' (In Heart and Memory), based on Brezhnev's memoirs.²⁷⁸ In a probable attempt to align himself with the correspondent's flattering comments, Brezhnev 'recalls' in his memoirs the contribution of Sergei Borzenko, working alongside political worker Mariia Pedenko and the poet Pavel Kogan; however, this 'memory' is flawed, as Kogan was killed in the fighting immediately following the German occupation of Novorossiisk in 1942,²⁷⁹ and Brezhnev did not arrive on Malaia zemlia until April 1943. This invented incident features, however, in the musical adaptation of Brezhnev's memoirs, which further propagates Brezhnev's version of events. Although this musical was in the same sentimental vein as Sofronov's play,

²⁷⁴ Michael Schudson, 'The Past in the Present versus the Present in the Past', in The Collective Memory Reader, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 287-290, p. 288.

²⁷⁵ Jutta Scherrer, 'Sowjetunion/Rußland: Siegesmythos versus Vergangenheitsaufarbeitung', in Mythen der Nationen, volume 2. 1945: Arena der Erinnerung, ed. Monika Flacke, Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 2004, pp. 619-657, p. 645.

²⁷⁶ Notably 'Malaia zemlia', 1974, words by N. Dobronravev, music by A. Pakhmutova. A film also appeared: Dmitrii Aleksandrovich, 'Malaia zemlia', USSR: 1979; and Mlechin refers to a stage production: Mlechin, Brezhnev, 2011, p. 594.

²⁷⁷ Malaia zemlia, composer Iurii Abramovich Levitin, lyricists E. Dolmatovskii and Iu. Miliutin, 1979. Levitin's musical score for Malaia zemlia is to be found in RGALI, f. 3313, op. 1, d. 96, with the libretto at d. 137.

²⁷⁸ Vera Ukharova, 'Oratoriia o Maloi zemle', Izvestiia, 20/12/1981, p. 6.

²⁷⁹ Pavel Kogan died on 23/09/1942, well before the Malaia zemlia campaign started (Konstantin Podyma, "Beskozyrka": Cherez gody i stoletii: Dokumental'naia povest', Novorossiisk and Moscow, 2008, p. 7).

composer Iurii Levitin and lyricists E. Dolmatovskii and Iu. Miliutin did not, however, attempt to fictionalize the protagonist. Rather, the narrator, book of memoirs in hand which he quotes extensively throughout the musical, represents the author Brezhnev himself.²⁸⁰ Although the start of the musical is relatively faithful to the book, commencing with Brezhnev's arrival on Malaia zemlia after his boat struck a mine, the campaign is further embellished by the introduction of sentimental and patriotic songs. The musical starts with Shostakovich's 'Novorossiisk Chimes',²⁸¹ the 18th Army gathers in Gelendzhik to a stirring military march, while later more solemn music proclaims a funereal tribute to Major Kunikov.

The most nationalistic sentiment is reserved for political worker Mariia Pedenko's song about the birch tree, a symbol of the Soviet Union. A woman also featured in the dramatized version of 'Malaia zemlia'. Sofronov's play included the female spiritual companion demanded by Socialist Realism, a certain Masha Kuzina, a kind-hearted character who tended the sick, like Mariia.²⁸² In Levitin's musical, Mariia dies during the fighting, only to re-appear at the end as a representative of the three million Party members who fell during the war.²⁸³ The cult of Mariia Pedenko gained ground in the 1970s, spawned by the cult of Brezhnev, an example of an individual whose identity was re-shaped in line with the war myth according to Brezhnev. In his memoirs, Brezhnev recognizes Pedenko's morale-boosting contribution to the Malaia zemlia campaign, where she not only undertook clerical and librarian duties, but also worked as an 'agitator', a member of the political section, in the production and dissemination of the locally produced news-sheet, Polundra. Far from dying on Malaia zemlia, Pedenko

²⁸⁰ See RGALI, f. 3313, op. 1, d. 137 for the libretto.

²⁸¹ See Chapter 4.1.

²⁸² Clark, The Soviet Novel, 2000, p. 183.

²⁸³ RGALI, f. 3313, op. 1, d. 137.

was wounded during the liberation of Novorossiisk, only to settle in Kiev after the war until her actual death in 1957.²⁸⁴

Pedenko had already published her memoirs in the form of her wartime diary shortly after the war, but it was not until her contribution was publicly recognized by Brezhnev that she was included in the official war cult.²⁸⁵ Georgii Sokolov notes that Brezhnev recalled Mariia during the reunion of 18th Army veterans in Moscow in May 1970, saying:

Do you remember Mariia Pedenko? A girl in the political section of the 255th Marine Infantry Brigade? For me, her face was the personification of many women who fought shoulder to shoulder with the men.²⁸⁶

Following Brezhnev's lead, Sokolov went on to include her story, 'Ryzhaia Polundra' (Redheaded Polundra), in his later memoirs,²⁸⁷ with further comments about her belatedly recognized role in the introduction and epilogue.²⁸⁸ An academic article published in Ukraine the following year confirmed her new status as Brezhnev's protégée, quoting extensively from his memoirs.²⁸⁹ Susanne Conze and Beate Fieseler find that memory of women participants in the war relied mainly on private, oral accounts. This may well have been the case for many women in the Soviet Red Army, with silences in memory due to the perceived stigma of often alleged sexual relations during the war. Thanks to Brezhnev, however, Mariia Pedenko was singled out from

²⁸⁴ See Brezhnev, 'Malaia zemlia', 1979, pp. 27-28; Mariia Pedenko, 'Polundra, Krasnoflottsy!': Povest', Kiev: Molod', 1980, p. 140-141; and N. N. Ivanova, 'Obraz zhenshchiny v proizvedeniikh frontovykh khudozhnikov', in Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine, 2005, pp. 91-94, p. 94.

²⁸⁵ Mariia Petrovna Pedenko, Frontovoi dnevnik, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1981 (first published in 1945; re-published in 1965 and 1979 in Kiev). A fictionalized version of Pedenko's memoirs, in which the protagonist is Natasha Goncharuk, was published posthumously from her manuscript, with an introduction using Brezhnev's words from 'Malaia zemlia' (Pedenko, 'Polundra, Krasnoflottsy!', 1980).

²⁸⁶ Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979, p. 159, repeated verbatim in Sokolov's afterword to Pedenko, Frontovoi dnevnik, 1981, p. 77.

²⁸⁷ Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979, pp. 149-159.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 8 and 379.

²⁸⁹ V. F. Mol'chenko, 'Geroinia "Maloi zemli"', Ukrainskii istorichnii zhurnal, 6, 1980, pp. 118-123.

several women on Malaia zemlia, with her place in the myth further propagated by Sofronov, Levitin and Sokolov.²⁹⁰

Many authors and publishers jumped on the band-wagon, recycling and re-working material from Brezhnev's Malaia zemlia.²⁹¹ Once mythologized, a narrative may further influence other individuals contributing to social memory to locate their own stories within the myth.²⁹² This indicates a continuing myth-building process, where the existing myth influences the individual, diametrically opposed to the mechanism proposed by Hynes whereby individuals contribute to the original construction of the myth.

Pedenko's is not the only story to have been revived by Brezhnev. Due to the overriding influence of Brezhnev's memoirs, many responses were spawned and individuals re-defined within Brezhnev's master-narrative, leading to a second stage of homogenization of memory according to the myth propagated by Brezhnev. Following the appearance of Brezhnev's memoirs, several veterans of Malaia zemlia suddenly published their own memoirs, once the door had been opened to them. A whole series of such memoirs was published in the Krasnodar region between 1978 and 1985 in the series 'Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska' (Novorossiisk's Military Feat), with the stated aim

²⁹⁰ Susanne Conze and Beate Fieseler, 'Soviet Women as Comrades-in -Arms: A Blind Spot in the History of the War', in The People's War: Responses to World War II in the Soviet Union, ed. Robert W. Thurston and Bernd Bonwetsch, Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000, pp. 211-234, p. 227; Roger D. Markwick, "'A Sacred Duty': Red Army women veterans remembering the Great Fatherland War, 1941-45', in Recalling the Past - (Re)constructing the Past: Collective and individual memory of World War II in Russia and Germany, ed. Withold Bonner and Arja Rosenholm, Iyvaskyla, Finland: Gummerus, 2008, pp. 315-326, pp. 322-3; and Svetlana Alexievich, U voiny – ne zhenskoe litso, Moscow: Palmira, 1985. See also V. S. Murmantseva, 'Zhenshchiny - voiny Maloi zemli', Voprosy istorii, 2, 1981, pp. 177-179, p. 179. Artistic representations of women on Malaia zemlia include nurses and one machine-gunner (L. A. Kolbasina, S. G. Novikov, L. A. Stepko, B. A. Trekhbratov, V. S. Shikin, and T. I. Iurina, eds., Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine, 2005, pp. 80-82). Other women are mentioned in both Sokolov's and Brezhnev's memoirs.

²⁹¹ For example, a new guide-book to Novorossiisk with substantial extracts from Brezhnev's memoirs was published in 1978: Boris Avksent'evich Privalov, Novorossiisk, Moscow: Planeta, 1978. A further book contained the text of Brezhnev's memoirs printed around glossy photographs of Novorossiisk and of Brezhnev in Novorossiisk, with one whole page dedicated to Mariia Pedenko's place in Brezhnev's memoirs (p. 40): Rubezhi Velikoi Epokhi: Fotoal'bom po motivam proisvedenii L. I. Brezhneva. Malaia zemlia; Vozrozhdenie; Tselina, Moscow: Planeta: 1980.

²⁹² See Kirschenbaum, The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad, 2006, p. 5.

of setting the war events in Novorossiisk alongside those of other better-known hero-cities.²⁹³ The series continued well after Brezhnev's death in 1982, probably due to the local interest generated by the regionally published works. Identical in size, format and style,²⁹⁴ the uniformity of the individual books in the series was possibly enforced due to increased censorship at the time,²⁹⁵ while their content was shaped by and conformed to the growing myth.

As a collection of memoirs influenced by collective memory, where each individual author relocates his own story within the Brezhnev myth, Brezhnev's appearance in these works is virtually mandatory. Most memoirists include a photograph of and a memorial tribute to Brezhnev, who was apparently recalled by them all, thereby reinforcing and further endorsing Brezhnev's memoirs in a spiral of myth-making.²⁹⁶ For example, Galatenko boosts Brezhnev's reputation as a wise commander, recalling him making a useful suggestion on the training of troops:

"Colonel Brezhnev requested the sailors to help the landing troops with respect to the crossing and landings. He says that you already have previous experience in landing operations, which should be shared with our troops and commanders."²⁹⁷

²⁹³ A. P. Marfin, Geroicheskii shturm, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1985, p. 203.

²⁹⁴ With a modest print-run of 25,000 each and priced between 15 and 30 kopecks, the series included the following memoirs: A. F. Galatenko, Katera idut k Myskhako, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1979; V. I. Minakov, Pod krylom - Tsemesskaia bukhta: Zapiski morskogo letchika, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1979; Kaida, Atakuet morskaiia pekhota, 1980; Savitskii, V nebe nad Maloi zemlei, 1980; I. V. Zhernovoi, Dal'she vrag ne proshel, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1980; Pedenko, Frontovoi dnevnik, 1981; V. T. Protsenko, Ognennye mili, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1981; G. A. Pshenianik, Novorossiiskii istrebitel'nyi, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1981; Bondar', Uroki muzhestva, 1982; V. I. Grezin, Narodnye mstiteli, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1982; S. T. Grigor'ev, Tak srazhalis' kommunisty, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1982; N. M. Voronkin and K. G. Lavrent'ev, Artilleristy Maloi zemli, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1982; A. V. Raikunov, Rota, za mnoi!, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1984; and Marfin, Geroicheskii shturm, 1985.

²⁹⁵ Kudryashov, 'Remembering and Researching the War', 2010, p. 104.

²⁹⁶ Il'ia Fomenko alleges that the myth according to Brezhnev generated many more 'witnesses' who actually believed the fabrications that they wrote: Vladimir Fomenko and Il'ia Khomenko, 'Svideteli i sud'i', Zerkolo nedeli, 13-19/06/2002, <<http://www.zn.ua/3000/3150/35385>> [accessed 23/11/2014].

²⁹⁷ Galatenko, Katera idut k Myskhako, 1979, p. 79.

In a similar vein, reinforcing the argument for homogeneity of content as well as form, Kaida relates how Brezhnev recommended the passing on of experience from sailors to soldiers:

Leonid Il'ich suggested directing experienced Malozemel'tsy sailors to instruct the soldiers who were taking part for the first time in such a difficult military operation as landings from the sea.²⁹⁸

By contrast, however, perhaps the most personal, least formulaic passage is by Bondar', who not only recalls Brezhnev on Malaia zemlia, but also met him as leader of the Soviet Union. Grigor'ev similarly recalls meetings with Brezhnev in 1974 and 1976 on key anniversaries, while even Savitskii, a former pilot, who would not have met Brezhnev during the war, speaks of his memoirs with authority.²⁹⁹

In the 'Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska' series individuals clearly demonstrate a tendency to smooth out differences for the sake of simplification and coherence of the war myth. Noting rather less state manipulation in her study of Leningrad than in Novorossiisk, where Brezhnev had seen action, Kirschenbaum similarly finds the increasing appropriation of the war myth by survivors in their own accounts towards the end of the Brezhnev era.³⁰⁰ While earlier works were produced by veterans with a genuine gift and motivation for writing, these later authors were not talented writers. They do not stand out amongst the memoirists of Malaia zemlia, their identity being subsumed by the overarching state ownership of the war narrative, and their own real

²⁹⁸ Kaida, *Atakuet morskaiia pekhota*, 1980, p. 41.

²⁹⁹ Bondar', *Uroki muzhestva*, 1982, pp. 53-55; Grigor'ev, *Tak srazhalis' kommunisty*, 1982, pp. 108-9; and Savitskii, *V nebe nad Maloi zemlei*, 1980, p. 154.

³⁰⁰ Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2006, p. 185. A similar merging of individual experience with the myth is noted in Smith, *Britain and 1940*, 2000, pp. 85-86; and Mark Connelly, "'We Can Take It!'" Britain and the Memory of the Home Front in the Second World War', in *Experience and Memory: The Second World War in Europe*, ed. Jorg Echternkamp and Stefan Martens, New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2010, pp. 53-69, p. 59.

stories transformed into myth.³⁰¹ Thus, by the time of Brezhnev's death, there was a state of total visible convergence of published war memoirs in Novorossiisk, due largely to state coercion and under the complete ownership of the state.

The overt inflation of Brezhnev's role in his memoirs and the self-aggrandizing monumentalization of war memory drew criticism from both dissident and Western scholars immediately after Brezhnev's death.³⁰² Michael Ignatieff, for example, is scathing of the war cult of the Brezhnev era:

Compared to the other great battles, the fight for Novorossisk would have been a minor skirmish had it not been for the fact that a young party propaganda officer named Leonid Brezhnev played a minor and inglorious role in the rear. [...] When masters invent tradition, they have the past re-written as the history of their own glorious beginnings.³⁰³

From a more personal point of view, Zhores Medvedev recalls both the campaign and Brezhnev's memoir:

Brezhnev's attempts to rewrite the history of the war were a source of derision amongst the military. As his 'personality cult' became more insistent, so he was more and more often described as an outstanding military leader who had played an

³⁰¹ Indeed, Thomas Lahusen comments that: 'People, their deeds and works, are remembered by History only if they succeed as story. Their lives may be told and retold as legend, altered to fit the needs of succeeding generations, or they may be analyzed, shaped into narrative, and catalogued with the biographies of other notable men and women.' (Thomas Lahusen, How life writes the book: Real socialism and socialist realism in Stalin's Russia, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997, p. 2). It should be noted that the memorial situation in the Soviet Union in 1982 was different from that in the West, particularly in the United States, where memory of World War II was affected by the adverse memory climate relating to the Vietnam War, such that collective frameworks for remembrance were avoided. (See Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, 'The Presence of the Past: Popular uses of history in American life', in The Collective Memory Reader, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 269-270, p. 269.)

³⁰² For example, Nina Tumarkin, Moscow's War Memorial: The Story of a National Symbol, Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College, 1988, p. 50.

³⁰³ Ignatieff, 'Soviet War Memorials', 1984, p. 158.

active part in the most important battles of the war. This was simply not true. The battle which took place near Novorossiisk in 1943, where he was the deputy of the commander for political work [...] was part of a not very successful military operation and not one of the crucial battles of the war as it is depicted in works written to elevate Brezhnev's role. I am in a position to form an independent opinion about this isolated section of the Southern front [...] for as a seventeen-year-old private in the infantry I was in the same army at the same place.³⁰⁴

This comment demonstrates the validity of the memories of two different people of the same event. In the face of Brezhnev's dominant narrative, however, Medvedev's opinion from the point of view of a hospitalized junior soldier would count for little. However, his opinion four decades after the events carried more scholarly authority in the West. Roi Medvedev is similarly scathing of the 'forged' memoirs, while Lazar Lazarev condemns Brezhnev's memoirs as a 'ghost-written biography, which included a glowing, fictionalised account of his own modest wartime service as a military commissar'.³⁰⁵

The literary response within the Soviet Union after Brezhnev's death was more muted but equally pervasive. If Brezhnev had defined other memoirists involved with the Malaia zemlia campaign for his own purposes, it was Brezhnev who was later re-defined by the memoirists. On the national level, the section relating to Brezhnev in Borzenko's original article on Malaia zemlia written in 1943 no longer appears in a collection of wartime dispatches published in 1982, while a later version of Zhukov's memoirs has the questionable paragraph about seeking Brezhnev's opinion removed.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁴ Zhores Medvedev, *Andropov*, 1983, p. 101.

³⁰⁵ Roi Medvedev, "'Malaia zemlia'", 08/10/2010; and Lazarev, 'Russian Literature on the War and Historical Truth', 1993, p. 34.

³⁰⁶ Sergei Borzenko, 'Malaia zemlia', in *Ot Sovetskogo informbiuro 1943-45*, ed. L. Lazarev, Moscow: Agentstvo pechaty Novosti, 1982, pp. 119-127. *Novyi mir* published the last three sections of Brezhnev's

Locally, however, the response was less drastic. Sokolov retains in all later editions of his memoirs the same brief passage about the kind and modest Colonel Brezhnev, narrated by the young Vasilii Zelentsov, to whom Brezhnev issues his Party card:

A colonel is sitting at the table. Thinnish, but with bushy, black eyebrows. He's wearing a simple soldier's uniform and greatcoat. He turns to me, smiling. His eyebrows lift a little, and I can see his bright, jolly eyes. [...] And do you know who that colonel was? [...] Brezhnev, the head of our landing army's political section.³⁰⁷

Similarly, the passage describes Brezhnev's rallying speeches, while the part about Brezhnev having been blown out of his boat by a mine remains.

It is the epilogues of Sokolov's memoirs, however, which clearly demonstrate the rise and fall of Brezhnev's cult of personality. In his final chapter of the 1967 edition, 'Dvadtsat' let spustia' (Twenty Years Later), four lines are devoted to Brezhnev, by then General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, who joined the veterans for the first major reunion on Malaia zemlia in 1963.³⁰⁸ This section was repeated verbatim in the 1971 edition of the book.³⁰⁹ By 1979, Brezhnev's memoirs were cited in the prologue by Admiral Kholastiakov,³¹⁰ who 'recalled' that Brezhnev took part in the actual planning of the landings,³¹¹ aligning both himself and Sokolov with Brezhnev's version of events. By then, the Malaia zemlia campaign was so famous that Kholastiakov compares it favourably with the Battle of Stalingrad. In Sokolov's

memoirs in January 1983, shortly after his death, but they were largely ignored (Mlechin, *Brezhnev*, 2011, p. 595). G. K. Zhukov, *Vospominaniia i razmyshleniia*. Vol. 3, Moscow: Novosti, 1995. The first six editions of Zhukov's memoirs contained the Brezhnev paragraph (Khinshtein, *Skazka o poteriannom vremeni*, 2011, p. 85).

³⁰⁷ Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, pp. 157-158.

³⁰⁸ This was on 15/09/1963 (Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, p. 386).

³⁰⁹ Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1971.

³¹⁰ Sokolov, *My s Maloi zemli*, 1979, pp. 7-9.

³¹¹ Murphy, *Brezhnev*, 1981, p. 76. This is a reiteration of claims in earlier films, see footnote 220.

epilogue, 'Tridtsat' let spustia' (Thirty Years Later), Brezhnev makes an early appearance in the second paragraph, by virtue of his attendance at reunions and his visit to Novorossiisk in 1974, which permeates the rest of the epilogue and will be analysed in detail in Chapter 3. Exaggerating the number of times Brezhnev crossed to Malaia zemlia and emphasizing the danger involved, Sokolov repeats the story of Brezhnev's boat hitting a mine. Details of his Party work on the beach-head follow, with the information that Brezhnev never forgot a name or a face. Furthermore, Sokolov attributes to Brezhnev in this edition the suggestion that he supplement his original book of memoirs with the memories of his comrades-in-arms. Brezhnev is given credit for supplying Sokolov with a list of addresses for this reason and also with helping in the organization of the first reunion in 1963. Thus Brezhnev is characterized alongside other leading military officers as a brave soldier, a trusty comrade and an organized leader.³¹²

Memory of the past has an important function in the building of an identity in the present. James Wertsch observes that, for an individual's identity, memory is more likely to privilege accuracy, while for a country collective memory is based rather on the need for a politically usable past.³¹³ In Sokolov's case, however, as in the 'Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska' memoirs, accuracy seems to have been discarded by the individual memoirist for the sake of toeing the Party line in the context of group and national identity. There may be two possible reasons for the homogeneity of memoirs after the appearance of Brezhnev's works, especially in relation to Brezhnev himself: either an unconscious reaction to a subliminal influence on collective memory, or a proactive response indicating a degree of pragmatic political awareness. Wertsch demonstrates how, in some cases, 'a text can structure meaning, communication and

³¹² Sokolov, *My s Maloi zemli*, 1979, pp. 369-370.

³¹³ Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering*, 2002, p. 35.

even thought', while 'another author's words may be appropriated by the recipient who then passes them on as his own words'.³¹⁴ This type of unconscious organic influence may be recognized in pervasive media content, with television and press coverage in the Soviet Union probably subjecting the malleable memory of an individual citizen (who may not even have read Brezhnev's memoirs) to the dominance of the collective. Alternatively, the pragmatic memoirist of the era may effect a deliberate reconstruction of personal memory, encouraged or coerced by the censor, to accommodate the unwritten literary guidelines of the era.

While it is probable that both mechanisms may be operating in the 'Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska' series, it is noticeable that Sokolov carefully crafted different editions of his memoirs to situate them within the memorial climate of the Soviet Union over nearly two decades, changing them proactively to suit the presentist attitude of the state. By Sokolov's final edition, published in 1985, most of the material is similar to previous editions, except the epilogue, 'Sorok let spustia' (Forty Years Later). Here, in complete contrast, while repeating sections from both 'Twenty Years Later' and 'Thirty Years Later', Sokolov removes every reference to Brezhnev.³¹⁵ Sokolov's reaction to the death of the agent of centralized memory suggests that the predominant influence on memoir relating to Brezhnev from 1978 to 1982 was the proactive type, residing mainly in the hands of the author, rather than an unconscious reaction to an overwhelming collective memory from above. Having largely removed Brezhnev from his memoirs by 1985, Sokolov finally left a probably more truthful version than Brezhnev's own memoirs for posterity.³¹⁶

³¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

³¹⁵ It is noticeable that at least two of the later memoirs in the series 'Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska', published after Brezhnev's death, contain no references to him, in contrast to earlier works in the series (Raikunov, *Rota, za mnoi!*, 1984; and Marfin, *Geroicheskii shturm*, 1985).

³¹⁶ Roi Medvedev compares Sokolov's work favourably with respect to Brezhnev: Roi Medvedev, "Malaia zemlia", 08/10/2010).

With Brezhnev written out of his own myth, copies of his memoirs were removed from school libraries and destroyed after his death, while references to Malaia zemlia on television were cut.³¹⁷ Thanks to Brezhnev, Malaia zemlia had become a national and international subject of derision and a symbol of the stagnation of the Brezhnev era.

³¹⁷ Documentary film "'Malaia zemlia" Leonida Brezhneva', 2010. The public attitude to Brezhnev in the capital hardened, following disclosures in 1987 by Soviet historians that 'Brezhnev's wartime exploits had been greatly exaggerated in "Malaya Zemlya", causing one letter-writer to state: "The work is not worth keeping in public libraries and the war museum since, as everyone knows, Brezhnev never wrote it.' (Philip Taubman, *New York Times*, 08/02/1988, <<http://www.nytimes.com/1988/02/08/world/across-soviet-brezhnev-s-name-falls.html?src=pm>> [accessed 29/01/2013]). See also changes to the television programme 'Minuta molchaniia': 'Minuta molchaniia', *TVmuseum.ru*, <http://www.tvmuseum.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=12899> [accessed 28/04/2013].

2.6 Conclusion

The periodic oscillations of frost and thaw during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras cultivated a delicate equilibrium between the state and would-be memoirists, within which both parties charted unknown waters and where historical accuracy was compromised in the interests of presentist politics. The outcome remained dynamic, with writers tacking to port or starboard according to the prevailing political wind. Although the earliest, pre-Brezhnev memoirs contain much detailed evidence, later works, particularly the 'Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska' series, are more general and appear to have been influenced by the political need to conform to the Brezhnev-centred myth.

In my analysis of the mechanism for the construction of the myth of Malaia zemlia, I have demonstrated that the myth developed over four distinct stages thanks to war correspondents and memoirists. Both bottom-up and top-down mechanisms were at play at different stages of myth formation; subject to variation in the official attitude to war memory, the memories of individuals were firstly collected, only to be subsumed within the official state war cult of the Brezhnev era to produce the authoritative collective myth which increasingly homogenized further memoirs. Individual memory thus became collective property, while local ownership of the myth was appropriated by the state, which also controlled the dissemination and interpretation of so-called documentary history.

In view of the state's didactic attitude to the production of culture, it is not surprising that the myth of Malaia zemlia developed in this way. The formulaic nature of Socialist Realism which led to the uniformity of literary form observed in many memoirs facilitated myth formation by their very homogeneity. This represents an extreme example of an epic myth in the Socialist Realist mould, situated within a glorious historical continuum from classical times to wars against the twentieth-century

invader. In this respect, and with the invocation in the present of memory of the event in the distant future, it seems to be even further developed than the myth of the siege of Leningrad, which, while known nationally at the time, concentrated rather on the immediate future. The two distinct war myths may be compared with the British myth of the mainly military conflict of the Battle of Britain in the case of Malaia zemlia, and the myth of the London Blitz in the case of Leningrad, which concentrated on the community spirit of ordinary citizens and the continuation of family life in a key city under bombardment.

If the siege of Leningrad was known nationally and internationally at the time, the myth of Malaia zemlia only became fixed in the national consciousness years after the war, thanks to the strong Brezhnev connection, without which it is likely that it would have remained local. The influence of Brezhnev's memoirs was so overwhelming that they permitted no contestation during his leadership, clouding and distorting history for the sake of political utility, although in the end Brezhnev's exaggerated claims probably served to sound the death-knell for the war cult. Their content did indeed represent a monumental memorial to Brezhnev's war service, although the sudden change in the memorial climate after Brezhnev's death underlines the greater integrity of Sokolov's memoirs as a memorial to his fallen comrades. It may be argued that memoirs are more useful to future generations than physical monuments in the commemoration of the dead, as they not only describe events, but also ascribe meaning to them, in this case as the justification for fighting a 'sacred' war to free the Motherland from the fascist invader. It will be left to later chapters to analyse the role of performative ritual and monuments (Chapter 4) and oral transmission (Chapter 5) in the further propagation of the myth of Malaia zemlia, while the following chapter will focus more closely on the special relationship between Brezhnev and Novorossiisk.

Chapter 3

Leonid Brezhnev: Local legend or national statesman?

People, their deeds and works, are remembered by history only if they succeed as story. Their lives may be told and retold as legend, altered to fit the needs of succeeding generations.³¹⁸

3.1 Introduction

In 2004 a bronze statue of Leonid Brezhnev was erected in the centre of Novorossiisk, decades after other statues to the General Secretary had been removed from public spaces across the country. Although Brezhnev's name was not linked with Malaia zemlia for the first twenty years after the war, during the late 1960s and 1970s a special relationship had developed between Brezhnev and Novorossiisk, cemented even before the publication of his memoirs by the General Secretary's visit to the town in 1974 to present the Gold Star representing its newly conferred status as a Hero-City of the Soviet Union. The new statue, an artistic representation of a local legend which has developed around Brezhnev's visit, encapsulates the personal rather than the political side of this relationship, serving to define the current identity of Novorossiisk with respect to Brezhnev. The Brezhnev statue is grounded in local society and is thus more specific than national memory, which barely recognizes the events to which it refers. National and local views of Brezhnev's place in history are not necessarily in opposition however, but offer complementary perspectives of the General Secretary, seen from a distance or in close detail through opposite ends of a telescope.

Much of the original evidence which I bring to bear in this chapter depends on a close study of the local press in Soviet Novorossiisk, which was subject to the political control of the Communist party. This media propaganda renders my evidence difficult

³¹⁸ Lahusen, *How Life Writes the Book*, 1997, p. 2.

to interpret from the viewpoint of the individual Soviet citizen, whose attitude to mnemonic events was subject to ideological pressure and the influence of the pervading war cult. Contemporaneous newspaper articles and recent oral interviews provide only subjective testimony of past circumstances: the former acting as the political tool of a Communist government and the latter as citizens subjected to manipulation by these very media sources. Both types of evidence are valid, however, if interpreted as social constructs of their time, the tangible product of memory matters in the Soviet Union. They are backed by other sources, including sound recordings of Brezhnev's speech, punctuated by noisy applause.³¹⁹ Similarly, promotional photograph albums and contemporaneous film provide valuable evidence of official priorities at the time of publication, if potentially subject to distortion and editing to guide viewers' interpretation.³²⁰

Even today, citizens of Novorossiisk have their attitude informed by the mass media, although views expressed in research interviews I conducted may be accepted as accurate reflections of current opinion on war memory. Malleable individual memories of the past are not only shaped by the press, however, but are also potentially subject to distortion by virtue of forgetfulness, blocking, bias or even misattribution.³²¹ It is therefore impossible to accept without interrogation statements made today as either factual evidence or representative of attitudes pertaining in the past. In contrast, the recently erected Brezhnev statue and the debate around its adoption suggest that collective memory represented artistically is one significant indicator of the current mnemonic identity of Novorossiisk.

In this chapter I demonstrate that Brezhnev's visit to Novorossiisk in 1974 affected the mnemonic environment in Novorossiisk such that an eventual divergence in

³¹⁹ For example L. I. Brezhnev: "Budet khleb, budet i pesnia", Russia: Kapel'meister, 2005.

³²⁰ See Section 3.2.

³²¹ See Schacter, The Seven Sins of Memory, 2001.

interpretation of Brezhnev's association with Malaia zemlia arose between national and local audiences. The visit shows characteristics of what Aleksandr Etkind terms a 'memory event'. This type of secondary mnemonic phenomenon occurs some time after the original, historic event, but is dependent upon memory of the original for its impact and (re-)interpretation.³²² Brezhnev's visit to Novorossiisk in 1974 was both secondary to and a product of his presence in the original Malaia zemlia campaign, in turn giving rise to its own memorial consequences in a series of reverberations through time. The Brezhnev visit, the agency and mechanism of subsequent reverberations and the extent of any consequent re-interpretation and divergence from national collective memory is the subject of this chapter.

I show that the public persona of Brezhnev, which had been carefully constructed during the war cult only to be deconstructed nationally shortly after Brezhnev's death, was re-constructed in Novorossiisk alone after the fall of Communism, overriding the connection still ingrained in national collective memory between Brezhnev and his myth of Malaia zemlia. With a national re-assessment of Brezhnev around his centenary in 2006, however, a more empathetic and nostalgic view has arisen nationally, which is closer in some aspects to the view consistently held in Novorossiisk. Moreover, the onset of a new war cult under President Putin has led to a rapprochement of perceptions of Malaia zemlia nationally and locally, albeit allowing for a revised role for the General Secretary in collective memory.

³²² Alexander Etkind, 'Mapping Memory Events in the East European Space', East European Memory Studies, 2010, pp. 4-5, p. 4. One obvious example of a memory event is the fall of the Berlin Wall, which invites comparison with the original event of its construction and also led to its own sequence of anniversaries.

3.2 Brezhnev comes to town



Heroes' Square, Novorossiisk³²³

Twenty-eight years after the naming of the first Hero-Cities of the Soviet Union, Novorossiisk eventually joined their ranks on 14th September 1973. On Heroes' Square a wall was erected overnight to mark the award, so that, by the next day, the words 'Hero-City' were evident, made of cement at first, with a later inscription carved in granite.³²⁴ The national press reported a celebratory rally of thousands of workers in the town, with a special sitting of the town's Communist Party Committee. The country was reminded of the reason for the honour, while in the local newspaper, *Novorossiiskii rabochii*, a brief history of the campaign was provided by Georgii Sokolov, the first key memoirist of Malaia zemlia.³²⁵

³²³ Photograph by author (08/05/2010).

³²⁴ Interview with Vitalii Lesik (07/05/2010).

³²⁵ 'Torzhestva v gorodakh-geroiakh', *Pravda*, 16/09/1973, p. 1; TASS, 'Podvig i trud chernomortsev', *Izvestiia*, 17/09/1973, p. 1; Captain A. Basov and Colonel V. Morozov, 'Nezabyvaemyi podvig: K

The scholarly verdict in the West was less laudatory. Observing the noticeable escalation of the war cult at the beginning of the 1970s, Nina Tumarkin finds that 'there is no question that Novorossiisk was given the honored title of hero-city exclusively because of the Brezhnev connection.'³²⁶ It is indeed indisputable that Brezhnev was closely involved with the award at this specific time, in view of his letter of congratulations written on 15th September 1973, which was reported nation-wide in Pravda the following day, the thirtieth anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk:

Dear Comrades!

Today is one of the most significant days in the history of the glorious town of Novorossiisk! Together with you, I feel sincere joy and pride in my links with the awarding to Novorossiisk of the supreme and honourable title of Hero-City. [...]

L. I. Brezhnev³²⁷

However, it is claimed by the former head of culture in Novorossiisk that Brezhnev had needed some prompting from the town, which had allegedly sent delegations to Moscow over a period of five years prior to 1973 to lobby his aide, V. A. Golikov, backing up their claim to fame with a portfolio of historical evidence supplied by the Novorossiisk museum director, Evgeniia Makarovna.³²⁸ It is unclear whether these visits actually initiated the idea of making Novorossiisk a Hero-City, or whether they simply substantiated an idea suggested by Brezhnev himself. In view of the fact that Kerch', which the 18th Army had liberated shortly after Novorossiisk, was made a Hero-City on the same day as Novorossiisk, the evidence points to the instigation of

30-letiiu osvobozhdeniia goroda Novorossiiska', Pravda, 16/09/1973, p. 3; and Georgii Sokolov, 'O dniakh geroicheskikh, o liudiakh-geroiakh', NR, 13/09/1973, p. 3. See also E. D. Prialkina, 'V zhizni est' minuty, kotorye ne zabyvaiutsia...', in Istoricheskie zapiski: Issledovaniia i materialy, vypusk 4, ed. S. G. Novikov and T. V. Raskatova, Krasnodar: Kubanskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 2003, pp. 294-299, p. 294.

Georgii Sokolov, 'O dniakh geroicheskikh, o liudiakh-geroiakh', NR, 13/09/1973, p. 3.

³²⁶ Tumarkin, Moscow's War Memorial, 1988, p. 50.

³²⁷ 'Torzhestva v gorodakh-geroiakh', 16/09/1973.

³²⁸ According to interviewee F7E.

both awards by Brezhnev, with the inevitable need for supporting documentation from the town itself perhaps leading to a perception amongst some residents of successful lobbying from below.

In his newspaper article, Sokolov stressed the pride of Novorossiisk in its connections with Brezhnev, while Izvestiia reported the content of a greetings telegram dispatched to Brezhnev after the rally, which, in common with other publications, over-estimated his involvement in the campaign 'as an active participant and organiser of the engagements for Novorossiisk'. The evidence thus points to Novorossiisk's having been honoured as a Hero-City mainly due to the Brezhnev connection, rather than to the military significance of the historical events.³²⁹

Brezhnev had written his letter of congratulations from the Crimea and did not capitalize politically on his links with Novorossiisk by visiting the town that month. Neither had Brezhnev visited Novorossiisk when the town was awarded the Order of the Great Patriotic War (first class) in May 1966, less than two years after he had become leader of the Soviet Union.³³⁰ As the momentum of the war cult built up, however, Brezhnev started to attend 18th Army veterans' reunions in Moscow, notably on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Victory Day in 1970.³³¹ Thus, although Brezhnev's name had been associated with Novorossiisk in the national press from 1966, the town had to wait until September 1974 for Brezhnev to return to Novorossiisk and present personally the Hero-City's Gold Star.

The official marking of the award of Hero-City status in both 1973 and 1974 enabled the town to celebrate the occasions in two different ways. While the festivities

³²⁹ Sokolov, 'O dniakh geroicheskikh, o liudiakh-geroiakh', 13/09/1973; and TASS, 'Podvig i trud chernomortsev', 17/09/1973.'

³³⁰ The award ceremony took place months later, with Politbiuro member A. P. Kirilenko representing the state ('Podvig na Chernomor'e', Pravda, 02/12/1966, pp. 1 and 3). However, Brezhnev's name was by then being officially linked with the war in Novorossiisk, see the article in the same paper by former Malaia zemlia war correspondent, Sergei Borzenko: Sergei Borzenko, 'Orden Novorossiiska', Pravda, 02/12/1966, p. 3.

³³¹ S. Borzenko, 'Vstrecha odnopolchan', Ogonek, 24, June 1970, pp. 4-5.

of September 1973 were devoted solely to the award, the events of 1974 focused on the person of Brezhnev himself, consolidating his position with regard to Novorossiisk in the past and in the present, with more significant consequences for the future than simply the Gold Star he brought with him.

Brezhnev left for Novorossiisk on 6th September 1974 from Moscow's Vnukovo Airport,³³² with the tone of his visit to Malaia zemlia having been set in the national press by articles in Izvestiia reminding readers of the significance of the campaign and the constant danger to those fighting there:

So what was Malaia zemlia, then? It was the landings; then standing in trenches nearly up to your knees in hot, spent cartridges, with the cold water of the Tsemes Bay behind you; it was when you could never retreat by even one step.³³³

Establishing Brezhnev's credentials under these testing conditions, the correspondent writes:

In the hottest days on Malaia zemlia, Colonel L. I. Brezhnev, Head of the Political Section of the 18th Army, was often to be seen. In the hardest days, he was alongside the troops.³³⁴

According to TASS, Brezhnev and his three aides, V. A. Golikov, G. E. Pukanov and A. M. Aleksandrov, arrived by helicopter to the welcome of veterans at the aerodrome on the site of Malaia zemlia, proceeding immediately to the stele of remembrance on the sea shore at Stanichka.³³⁵

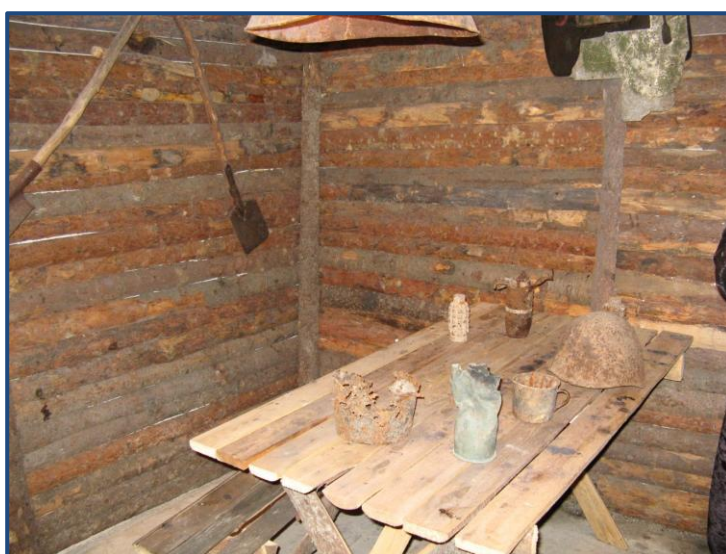
³³² TASS, 'Ot"ezd tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva v Novorossiisk', Izvestiia, 06/09/1974, p. 1. This was repeated in Pravda the following day: 'Ot"ezd tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva v Novorossiisk', Pravda, 07/09/1974, p. 1.

³³³ Iu. Ponomarenko, 'Bol'shaia slava Maloi zemli: Reportazh iz goroda-geroia Novorossiiska', Izvestiia, 06/09/1974, p. 1. The final line refers to Stalin's infamous 'Not one step back' Order No. 227 of July 1942.

³³⁴ V. Belov, 'Novorossiisk, gorod-geroi', Izvestiia, 05/09/1974, p. 4.

³³⁵ TASS, 'Serdechnaia vstrecha v gorode-geroe: Pribytie tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva v Novorossiisk', Pravda, 07/09/1974, p. 1. See also Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979, p. 365. Brezhnev flew from Moscow to Anapa, where he changed from an aeroplane to a helicopter for the final leg of his journey to Novorossiisk.

Photographs of Brezhnev, the monuments and crowds testify to the atmosphere of the occasion, where veterans wearing medals joined 'tens of thousands' of citizens on the newly cleaned streets to greet the General Secretary. Brezhnev then visited significant monuments and sites in the Malaia zemlia hinterland in the village of Myskahko outside Novorossiisk, including the wine-cellar in the main building of the communal vineyard which had acted as the headquarters of the 83rd Marine Infantry Brigade where Brezhnev had 'once talked with the heroes of Malaia zemlia'.³³⁶



Brezhnev's wine-cellar bunker in Myskhako³³⁷

³³⁶ TASS, 'Serdechnaia vstrecha v gorode-geroe', 07/09/1974; Iu. Alenchenko, 'Slava Novorossiiska', *Pravda*, 07/09/1974, p. 2; Ponomarenko, 'Bol'shaia slava Maloi zemli', 06/09/1974; and TASS, 'Serdechnaia vstrecha', *Izvestiia*, 07/09/1974, p. 2.

³³⁷ Photographs by author (06/04/2008).



The spot in Myskhako where Brezhnev planted a tree in 1974³³⁸



The 'Calendar' monument in Myskhako (1974)³³⁹

³³⁸ Photograph by author (10/05/2010).

³³⁹ Ibid..

Brezhnev planted a memorial tree by the 'Calendar' monument in *Dolina smerti* (the Valley of Death) in Myskahko, where large steles represent the days of the fiercest fighting in April 1943. His historical tour ended back in the town centre with a visit to the monument to the Unknown Sailor and the laying of flowers at the Eternal Flame.³⁴⁰

The following day, the official correspondent described 'tens of thousands' of citizens carrying red flags and banners, all heading for the 'Trud' Stadium:³⁴¹

We are walking in a dense flood of people to the stadium on this notable day, 7th September 1974. [...] Workers from the cement factories and the port, sailors, builders and teachers [...] are carrying bouquets of bright flowers, grown on the rocky slopes of Tsemes Bay. The dress uniforms of officers and generals are sparkling with awards and medals.³⁴²

As Brezhnev mounted the podium in the stadium, he was apparently greeted with a standing ovation, captured by press photographers, before speaking at length to the assembled crowd, and finally presenting the Gold Star to the town.³⁴³

In his speech Brezhnev outlined in the literary tradition of Socialist Realism Novorossiisk's military and political past, emphasizing the continuity of the devotion of its citizens to Communism and the building of socialism: the town's role in 1905 when setting up the first Council of Deputies in the country; its loyalty during the Revolution; the deliberate scuttling in 1918 of a squadron of ships rather than allowing them to fall into the hands of 'Imperial Germany'; and the rout of the White Guards in 1920 which precipitated their flight from the country at the end of the Civil War. Reminding the

³⁴⁰ TASS, 'Serdechnaia vstrecha', 07/09/1974 ; and also in *Novorossiiskii rabochii*, 07/09/1974, p. 1. Brezhnev's halt at the 'Calendar' monument was also reported by the young journalist whom we shall meet in Chapter 4, Konstantin Podyma, 'Postoite u kamennykh listov', *NR*, 07/09/1974, p. 4. A further monument, 'The Explosion', was also erected in Myskhako in 1974.

³⁴¹ B. Galatenko, 'Zvezda Pobedy', *LG*, 11/09/1974, p. 1.

³⁴² TASS, 'Rodina slavit gorod-geroi!', *Izvestiia*, 07/09/1974, p. 1.

³⁴³ Brezhnev's speech is reported in full in TASS, 'Rech' tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva', *Izvestiia*, 07/09/1974, pp. 1-2. See also CD recording of the speech on *L. I. Brezhnev: "Budet khleb, budet i pesnia"*, 2005.

audience of the lasting impression made by the fighting on all participants, Brezhnev noted the durability of memory, again invoking prime examples of Soviet history, which served to enhance the status of the Malaia zemlia campaign:

If a man has been a direct participant in some important event or other of his times, an event which comes to be the most important turning point in world history, this remains in his consciousness for all his life. It is comparable with the October Socialist Revolution and the Civil War for our Party's older generation.³⁴⁴

Further inflating local events, Brezhnev set them in the context of the strategic Battle for the Northern Caucasus with its rich supplies of oil. He also referred to the overall campaign in the Don region, thus expanding the significance of the 'bastion' of Novorossiisk and enabling a realistic comparison with Stalingrad, an uncontroversial example of a Hero-City.

Acknowledging creative artists in general, Brezhnev singled out the war correspondent Sergei Borzenko with poet Pavel Kogan for 'their fighting, passionate words'; sculptors of monuments; and Dmitrii Shostakovich, composer of the 'Novorossiisk Chimes'. Creative work was also evident throughout the visit. Local and national interests combined in the showing of the film 'Pamiat' navsegda' (Memory is forever) in Novorossiisk's 'Moscow' cinema, showing Brezhnev meeting 18th Army veterans. Furthermore, on the day of Brezhnev's arrival, a group of workers was called to the cinema studios to film another documentary, 'Bitva za Novorossiisk' (The battle for Novorossiisk),³⁴⁵ presumably to add retrospective credence alongside other shots of Brezhnev's visit. This artistic response to Brezhnev's visit ensured its national coverage,

³⁴⁴TASS, 'Rech' tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva', 07/09/1974, pp. 1-2.

³⁴⁵ Its director, Dzhemma Sergeevna Firsova, later won the Lenin Prize for directing a similar war film: 'Bitva za Kavkaz' (The battle for the Caucasus).

while a commemorative album produced by teachers in the region, Rodina slavit gorod-geroi (The Motherland salutes the Hero-City) circulated locally.³⁴⁶

The tone of Brezhnev's speech and further meetings was not only military and retrospective. It was evident throughout the visit that not only war memory was at play, as Brezhnev also praised the role of local industry in the country's economy: Novorossiisk apparently produced 'one quarter of the national tonnage of cement', while the port was 'well-known internationally'. Visits were made to the growing port and the 'Proletariat' cement works, where Brezhnev was reportedly 'welcomed everywhere by thousands of residents'. National and local journalists highlighted the post-war regeneration that had brought new life to the ruined town, with the vision of a prosperous future implied by the building of a new school and a maternity hospital with two hundred beds.³⁴⁷

This new emphasis on the future appears to have left the townspeople with no little responsibility. According to the press, the response from Novorossiisk was to express a wish to work even harder to fulfil the tasks of the five-year plan,³⁴⁸ with a certain P. Belen'kin of the 'October' cement works promising 'shock work' tactics: 'To the supreme award from the Motherland, the cement workers of our factory will respond with supreme productivity.'³⁴⁹ Belen'kin reminded readers of progress since the war: 'Our factory lay in ruins. In 1948 the citizens of Novorossiisk decided to build a new cement factory on the site of the former one.' By the following year, the new factory produced its first cement, in the context of a country-wide determination to rebuild factories and increase productivity: 'We worked as excellently as we fought in

³⁴⁶ P. Kostin, 'Rodina slavit gorod-geroi', NR, 11/09/1974, p. 3; and D. Rezaev, 'Fil'my o Novorossiiske', NR, 11/09/1974, p. 2. Footage of the visit is incorporated into films marking Brezhnev's seventieth birthday in 1976, see footnote 228.

³⁴⁷ TASS, 'Na zemle boevoi i trudovoi slavy', Pravda, 08/09/1974, p. 3; 'Na zemle, oveiannoii slavoi', Izvestiia, 09/09/1974, pp. 1 and 3; '31-ia godovshchina ratnogo podviga v Novorossiiske', 17/09/1974; and Galatenko, 'Zvezda Pobedy', 11/09/1974; and Ponomarenko, 'Bol'shaia slava Maloi zemli', 06/09/1974.

³⁴⁸ 'Znamenatel'naia data', NR, 14/09/1974, p. 1.

³⁴⁹ P. Belen'kin, 'Nash otvet – udarnyi trud', NR, 13/09/1974, p. 3.

the war.³⁵⁰ In this way the fight against the invader during the Great Patriotic War was likened in 1974 to the fight for socialism and the inherent economic productivity attributed to Communist ideology. However, in tacit acknowledgement of the benefits of capitalism and Western investment, Brezhnev also visited the new Pepsi-Cola factory built with American finance.³⁵¹ Thus, while the national media covered mainly the history behind the award of Hero-City status, the local emphasis was on the present and even the future.

It appears that, although the events took place in Novorossiisk, the official communiqués were written in Moscow, then telegraphed to Novorossiisk for minor 'correction' by local journalists.³⁵² With TASS firmly in control, in what was standard practice at the time, no local interpretation or deviation from the official line was possible. While the Novorossiisk press still reproduced the TASS reports, local reporting was different from the national. In Novorossiisk it was possible to see the monuments on Malaia zemlia on a daily basis, which may have caused them to have less impact than when their photographs appeared in Pravda or Izvestiia. In contrast, Brezhnev's interest in the town's post-war regeneration, housing and employment was of more interest locally than in the distant capital. However, official collective memory of the war and of Brezhnev's role on Malaia zemlia remained identical: the town professed particular thanks to the General Secretary for its award of Hero-City status, while Brezhnev's visit endorsed the town, thus promoting Brezhnev's own growing cult of personality through his historical connection with the Malaia zemlia campaign.

³⁵⁰ This alludes to the important Socialist Realist novel, Tsement (Cement), 1925, written by Fedor Gladkov following a prolonged stay in Novorossiisk.

³⁵¹ 'Na zemle boevoi i trudovoi slavy', NR, 10/09/1974, p. 1. For a discussion of the US and Soviet politics behind Pepsi-Cola's introduction to the Soviet Union, see Mlechin, Brezhnev, 2011, p. 496. See also Valerie Bunce, 'The Political Economy of the Brezhnev Era: The rise and fall of corporatism', British Journal of Political Science, 13, 1983, pp. 129-158, pp. 131, 145 and 148.

³⁵² Tat'iana Besedina, 'Brezhnev i Novorossiisk: o chem zhurnalisty "NR" ne napisali 25 let nazad', NR, 03/02/1999, pp. 4-5.

For a few years after Brezhnev's visit its memory lived on in Novorossiisk. A full account of the event was published the following year,³⁵³ while nationally the war cult increased to a climax with the publication of Brezhnev's memoirs in 1978. The 1979 edition of Sokolov's memoirs covered Brezhnev's visit in depth in the final chapter, 'Thirty Years Later'.³⁵⁴ Similarly, Grigor'ev, Savitskii and Grezin recalled 7th September 1974 in the 'Ratnyi podvig Novorossiiska' series of memoirs.³⁵⁵ Grigor'ev described the mood in the stadium as Brezhnev appeared on the podium:

There we were in the stadium. Everyone was rooted to the spot in expectation. Suddenly a wave of animation swept through the stadium. Thousands of people stood up, as enthusiastic applause broke out.³⁵⁶

According to Sergei Kudryashov, there is always the danger that the experiences of memoirists become 'fixed', being 'committed to memory, at later points in time', thus leading to biased recollections.³⁵⁷ Although this is noticeable when witnesses repeat the assertions of previous memoirists,³⁵⁸ in this case it is less likely, as these recollections are supported by photographs, newspaper reports and the testimony of others present at the time. However, these memoirs represent the final phase of adulation of Brezhnev both nationally and locally, as the war cult was dismantled centrally on Brezhnev's death in 1982. By 1985, Sokolov had removed all references to Brezhnev's visit, 'forgetting' this event, while expanding instead on the mood in the town when it was named a Hero-City in 1973.³⁵⁹ Although the visit of Brezhnev to Novorossiisk had caused the press and other media to reflect on the Malaia zemlia campaign for a time, its

³⁵³ Kolesov, *V pamiati i v serdtse - navsegda*, 1975.

³⁵⁴ Sokolov, *My s Maloi zemli*, 1979, pp. 365-366.

³⁵⁵ Grigor'ev, *Tak srazhalis' kommunisty*, 1982, p. 108; Savitskii, *V nebe nad Maloi zemlei*, 1980, p. 154; and Grezin, *Narodnye mstiteli*, 1982, p. 107.

³⁵⁶ Grigor'ev, *Tak srazhalis' kommunisty*, 1982, p. 108.

³⁵⁷ Kudryashov, 'Remembering and Researching the War', 2010, p. 89.

³⁵⁸ For example, F8D, a veteran of Malaia zemlia.

³⁵⁹ G. Sokolov, *My s Maloi zemli*, 1985, p. 376.

lasting repercussions did not become apparent until twenty-five years later, by which time aspects of the visit had developed into local legend.

3.3 The Godfather



'Malaia zemlia' by Aleksandr Kamper³⁶⁰

Artist Aleksandr Kamper works near the Valley of Death in Myskhako. On his studio wall hangs a collage entitled 'Malaia zemlia', composed from an old, torn canvas depicting a beach, which could well be the beach-head at Malaia zemlia, with the frontispiece of Brezhnev's memoir mounted on a hill overlooking the shore, rather as Mount Koldun overlooks the battle-field outside Novorossiisk. According to the artist, this work represents the memory of Malaia zemlia, with Brezhnev's book depicted as a monument overlooking an act of remembrance in which the viewer is taking part.³⁶¹ Kamper interprets the holes in the picture as gaps in collective memory of the Malaia

³⁶⁰ 'Malaia zemlia' picture copyright of Aleksandr Kamper. Author's photograph of the picture (09/05/2010) reproduced with permission from the artist.

³⁶¹ Information from extended interviews with Aleksandr Kamper in his studio (09/05/2010, 29/03/2011 and 08/02/2013) and several email exchanges, 2011 - 2013.

zemlia campaign, which have inhibited informed remembrance, thanks to Brezhnev's overpowering intervention of the 1970s. According to Kamper's explanation, Malaia zemlia is remembered almost exclusively thanks to Brezhnev, but because of Brezhnev's domination that memory has remained incomplete, overpowered by his memoirs to the extent that the full, factual picture has been prevented from emerging.

My research shows that this may well be true on the national, mythical level, despite the emergence of more recent historical perspectives on the war which have influenced collective memory since Brezhnev's death. On the local level, however, the gaps have been filled in two different ways: by hard historical facts derived from material and documentary evidence, and by local legend. Recently unearthed artefacts shed considerable light on the engagement, while schools' local history courses and an authoritative recent history of the campaign by local academic Tamara Iurina serve to propagate a more detailed narrative.³⁶² The rest of this chapter, on the other hand, will examine how a local legend sprang up around Brezhnev's visit, such that collective memory of this event as an addendum in its own right to the wartime campaign has reverberated through the town since 1999.

Brezhnev's visit to Novorossiisk marked a notable bifurcation of attitude to both Malaia zemlia and to Brezhnev himself on the national and local levels. For the country as a whole, the visit had a single significance: the bestowing of the Gold Star of the Hero-City on the town, thereby ratifying the award of 1973. This event was connected to the war alone, such that Brezhnev's name is integrally linked to that of Malaia zemlia and the war myth he constructed around it. Despite the subsequent deconstruction of both the Brezhnev era war cult and Brezhnev's cult of personality, this is the perception of Brezhnev and Malaia zemlia that has remained ingrained in the older generation, with the publication of Brezhnev's over-inflated memoirs providing evidence for this

³⁶² Iurina, *Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie*, 2008. See Chapter 5.

public interpretation. Perestroika, the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the difficult decade thereafter saw the national demise of official war memory. Only Izvestiia marked the significant fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war with a sarcastic article about Malaia zemlia, indicative of the scornful attitude to Brezhnev's memoirs still extant in society years after his death, a view that continues to this day, dormant in the minds of those old enough to remember the Brezhnev era.³⁶³

In Novorossiisk, however, the Brezhnev connection was evolving along a different path, as Brezhnev's visit of 1974 largely superseded the formal award of Hero-City status the previous year. Brezhnev's visit was a personal triumph for himself and the town, with the General Secretary's charisma in the present more than eclipsing distant memories of his wartime service on Malaia zemlia. Winning over officials, veterans and the public alike, Brezhnev's character and overt identification with Novorossiisk endeared him to the population, who claimed him as their own. If Brezhnev's wartime function on Malaia zemlia had played a minor role in shaping the post-war town, this visit of the General Secretary would influence the development of the newly-nominated Hero-City for a further thirty years, whilst marking a reconstruction of the persona of Brezhnev with the establishment of a burgeoning local legend in the process.

In 1999, towards the culmination of an era of instability, Novorossiisk looked back to a heyday in the town's history as the twenty-fifth anniversary of Brezhnev's visit approached. A key investigative newspaper article in Novorossiiskii rabochii exposed new evidence from witnesses that had been suppressed in 1974 in favour of the TASS reports which had dominated the local press.³⁶⁴ It is this first public examination of the significant event which both expressed and continued to formulate local opinion on

³⁶³ 'Malaia zemlia', Izvestiia, 14/09/1995, p. 5. See the wealth of Brezhnev anecdotes detailed in Maisurian, Drugoi Brezhnev, 2004, pp. 482-524.

³⁶⁴ Besedina, 'Brezhnev i Novorossiisk', 03/02/1999.

Brezhnev in the town, as the press still delves into 'hidden' aspects of Brezhnev's now legendary visit.

The national press had made no mention of where Brezhnev stayed in Novorossiisk, with only a passing comment about where other guests were accommodated.³⁶⁵ Since 1999 attention has been firmly focused on this aspect of the visit, which has become almost as important as his official schedule. According to journalist Tat'iana Besedina, the proposed hotel among the vineyards of Abrau-Diurso, the champagne-producing region of the Black Sea coast, offered insufficient suites of a suitably high standard. Furthermore, the long, winding road from the hotel to Novorossiisk was deemed by his staff to be uncomfortable for the General Secretary. For these reasons, on the day before Brezhnev's arrival, they suddenly started to assess other options in Novorossiisk itself, finally deciding on the Hotel Brigantina, which offered luxury suites, if not luxury furniture within them. In a last-minute compromise, the better quality furniture from the rejected hotel in Abrau-Diurso was rapidly transferred to suite 309 of the Hotel Brigantina, displacing existing guests.³⁶⁶

As part of my research I have interviewed several people in Novorossiisk who had either witnessed Brezhnev's visit or had heard about it from other family members, all proud to have seen him.³⁶⁷ Memories reinforce one another, tending to support in this case Kudryashov's view that they had been committed to memory at the time and then permanently 'fixed'.³⁶⁸ It is probable that they are all genuine, as my respondents span a broad age spectrum: F4G, for example, was in the first class at school, while M9A was already an elderly veteran at the time. F5H recalls how Brezhnev 'gave her his hand'

³⁶⁵ A brief reference to the Chernomorskaia and Brigantina hotels is made in Ponomarenko, 'Bol'shaia slava Maloi zemli', 06/09/1974.

³⁶⁶ Information from the former director of the Hotel Brigantina, Boris Timchenko, in Besedina, 'Brezhnev i Novorossiisk', 03/02/1999.

³⁶⁷ See Appendix B for a summary of interview methodology and Appendix C for a list of interviewees. Eleven interviewees stated that they had seen Brezhnev in 1974: F4G, M4B, F5H, F6E, F6F, M6B, M7A, F8B, F8C, F8D and M9A. F1A, F3A, F3F, F5I and M7B had heard from relations who witnessed the visit.

³⁶⁸ Kudryashov, 'Remembering and Researching the War', 2010, p. 89.

from his car, while he was on foot when F6F saw him. M7A saw Brezhnev on the road in his open car and then in the stadium, where he waved flag along with the crowd. F8D met Brezhnev at her workplace, the *sovkhos* (communal vineyard) in Myskhako, where 'he came to our corpus and talked to us'. Her colleague F8B was one of the workers lucky enough to meet Brezhnev at the aerodrome, standing alongside two women with babies:

He came up to us with open arms and greeted us [...] He gave presents to the children, writing on them 'a present from Grandfather Brezhnev'. [...] The next day we [...] gathered in the vineyard where we worked and we were all really happy. He got out of the car and said 'thank you'.

This story has been passed down through F8B's family with photographic clarity, mediated by a contemporaneous photograph depicting a bent old woman giving flowers to the General Secretary, taken when Brezhnev visited Mar'ina roshcha, another outlying village across the bay from Myskhako.³⁶⁹ According to F8B's granddaughter, she likes to imagine that this woman is indeed her own elderly grandmother, hardly conscious of the fact that the original woman was much older than her grandmother at the time, if nonetheless resembling her now, decades later. This example of what Marianne Hirsch terms 'post-memory' demonstrates the appropriation of a real memory by a younger generation who did not experience the event, with the projection of a later image onto an earlier one in a 'merging of people and times'.³⁷⁰ In this case, the woman in the photograph which has passed into local collective memory has been claimed by

³⁶⁹ This iconic photograph was widely disseminated in Novorossiisk, see V. A. Golikov, ed., *Novorossiisk*, Moscow: Planeta, 1978, p. 54.

³⁷⁰ 'Postmemory' is defined as 'the relationship of children of survivors of cultural or collective trauma to the experiences of their parents, experiences that they "remember" only as the stories and images with which they grew up, but that are so powerful [...] as to constitute memories in their own right.' See Marianne Hirsch, 'Projected Memory: Holocaust photographs in personal and public fantasy', in *Acts of Memory: Cultural recall in the present*, ed. Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe and Leo Spitzer, Hanover, NH and London: University Press of New England, 1999, pp. 3-23, p. 8.

another, younger individual in her attempt to reconstruct her own picture of that event.³⁷¹ This small-scale social construct has produced a sense of familial 'ownership' of public memory, which here is on a purely emotional level and without any rational basis, a product of the cultural environment surrounding Brezhnev's visit.

Brezhnev was not only the subject of photographs in 1974, but also used the occasion to gift some of his own wartime photographs to the Novorossiisk museum. Evdokiia Prialkina, then director of the museum, remembers Brezhnev's arrival on 6th September, 'immediately surrounded by women', in what was apparently the norm. It seems that Brezhnev was a great hit with the opposite sex, embracing them on his departure: 'a real man', as recalled by Larisa Kolbasina, the current director. Both women were struck by Brezhnev's insistence on simplicity: 'No need for fine-sounding words, such as "Dear Leonid Il'ich, we are very pleased..."'.³⁷²

It is noteworthy that considerably more female than male respondents in my survey spontaneously contributed their memories of Brezhnev's visit. This may demonstrate a reflection of the demographics of the ordinary citizens who encountered the General Secretary combined with the greater proportion of women in my interview sample. This phenomenon should, however, be compared with published local memoirs of the war, which were largely written and consumed by men who had played an active part.³⁷³ Memory of Brezhnev's visit in 1974 was claimed by the population as a whole, with the women more vocally endorsing Brezhnev's masculinity.

The outcome of the visit was that the museum was given a new building with extra exhibition space in the town centre.³⁷⁴ It is this type of aid which remains firmly in

³⁷¹ Bucur, *Heroes and victims*, 2009, p. 248.

³⁷² Prialkina, 'V zhizni est' minuty, kotorye ne zabyvaiutsia...', 2003, p. 296; Besedina, 'Brezhnev i Novorossiisk', 03/02/1999; and 'Brezhnev v vospominaniakh Novorossiitsev', *Kuban' TV*, 19/12/2012, <<http://kubantv.ru/rossija/23512-leonid-ilich-brezhnev-v-vospominaniakh-novorossiitsev/>> [accessed 06/08/2013].

³⁷³ With the notable exception of Mariia Pedenko, see Chapter 2.

³⁷⁴ The museum still maintains a display of Brezhnev's wartime role and his visit.

the minds of witnesses and has informed the opinion of many of the residents of Novorossiisk today, including newcomers to the town. Brezhnev's interest in the town's industry was emphasized in the local press shortly after his visit, with substantially more coverage of his meetings in the port, the cement factories and the new Pepsi-Cola factory than evident in the national press.³⁷⁵

When I first spoke to people in Novorossiisk about the town's attitude to Brezhnev I was told by the archivist of the Maritime Academy that I would not find anyone in Novorossiisk with a bad word to say about Brezhnev.³⁷⁶ And this, incredibly, seems to be largely true: Brezhnev certainly seems to enjoy more popularity in Novorossiisk than elsewhere in Russia. However, the majority of my subjects who volunteered this information reminded me not of Brezhnev's role on Malaia zemlia or his Communist ideology, but of the post-war support afforded to the almost annihilated town thanks to Brezhnev's intervention.³⁷⁷ Although younger respondents voiced more general approval of Brezhnev's help to Novorossiisk, more mature interviewees specifically credited Brezhnev with improving infrastructure (particularly the new trolley-bus lines);³⁷⁸ supporting the cement factories;³⁷⁹ expanding the port;³⁸⁰ and building better accommodation for the townspeople.³⁸¹ Three respondents cited this aid as an excuse for Brezhnev's not having visited the town in 1973 as soon as it was made a Hero-City, 'recalling' that Brezhnev had stated that he would only return to the town once

³⁷⁵ See Section 3.2 above.

³⁷⁶ Interview 05/05/2010. The concept that people have a different view of Brezhnev in Novorossiisk than elsewhere was stated explicitly by the manager of the veterans' council in Myskhako (19/03/2011).

³⁷⁷ 40% of my interviewees (aged from 18 to late 80s) volunteered this opinion without prompting, including Tamara Iurina, Professor of History at the Novorossiisk branch of the Moscow Institute for Economics and the Humanities. Interestingly, of these 49 subjects, at least 7 were relative newcomers to the town, who had assimilated this attitude to Brezhnev since their arrival, providing evidence for the efficiency of propagation of the post-war aspect of the Brezhnev myth.

³⁷⁸ F3E, F3F, M4C, M5E, F4C, M6D, F7A and F7B.

³⁷⁹ F4C and M6J.

³⁸⁰ F4C, M4C, M5F and M6C.

³⁸¹ F4C, M4C, F5H, F6E, M6A, M6D, M6J, F7B and M7D. In particular, the building of the 7th raion (quarter) with its *Brezhnevki* flats is credited to Brezhnev.

Novorossiisk looked worthy of its new status.³⁸² Although this is reinforced by Brezhnev's favourable comments on the excellent appearance of the town in his speech of 7th September 1974, a recent publication refers to Brezhnev's more disparaging remarks about the town on a visit to the 'Proletariat' cement works later the same day.³⁸³

Evidence suggests that state aid to Novorossiisk was supplied in one way or another from the late 1960s onwards throughout the first decade of the Brezhnev régime - assistance seen by many in Novorossiisk as proof of Brezhnev's special relationship with the town. There is no evidence to indicate that every Hero-City received special state support, but it is possible to surmise that this was in fact the case, as these strategic cities were largely destroyed during the war and needed substantial rebuilding. However, in the case of Novorossiisk, it is possible to postulate a rationale and mechanism for preferential development without Brezhnev's intentional intervention. Although Novorossiisk was not unique in enjoying new housing, infra-structure and industrial development during this period, its position on the Black Sea made it an ideal location for the export of wood from the north and oil from the Caucasus or Caspian regions, rendering development of the port and its infra-structure an economic priority for the Soviet Union. This led to a marked increase in population, requiring in turn the construction of new living accommodation and concomitant social amenities, until the town's appearance was indeed considered to be commensurate with its status as a Hero-City.³⁸⁴

Favouritism by Brezhnev may, however, be implied in the financial assistance to and economic promotion of Novorossiisk in the first half of the 1970s, which served to

³⁸² F4E, M6A and F7B.

³⁸³ 'The Head of State observed that the appearance of the town was not commensurate with its status as a Hero-City and that it would be necessary to solve the overall problems of Novorossiisk (with the building of housing, schools, hospitals and roads) at the national level.' (Novorostsement: 1882-2012, Krasnodar: Hyppogrifon, 2012, p. 31.)

³⁸⁴ Bunce, 'The Political Economy of the Brezhnev Era', 1983, pp. 130 and 137; and Erokhin, Novorossiisk, 2012, pp. 72-73.

increase the status of the town with respect to other cities in the region. Novorossiisk continued to receive state aid, despite the fact that its leadership had been denigrated for economic incompetence by the regional authorities in Krasnodar in the late 1960s.³⁸⁵ Furthermore, it must be concluded that the illogical decision to build the first Soviet Pepsi-Cola factory in Novorossiisk was indeed a sign of Brezhnev's favouritism, as asserted by local residents.³⁸⁶ The town has never been able to rely on a stable source of drinking water, a problem which is not totally resolved to this day,³⁸⁷ rendering it a dubious contender for American investment, despite its strategic position on the Black Sea. Contemporary journalists and the official town guide claim that Brezhnev arranged to send tankers by sea to bring badly needed water to the town, giving money for the construction of underground reservoirs.³⁸⁸ Once the water was flowing, and despite ongoing supply problems, the Pepsi-Cola factory was constructed in Novorossiisk when trade links with the United States were initiated.³⁸⁹ For these reasons, it seems that Brezhnev's soft spot for the town was in fact translated into targeted economic aid.

However, Brezhnev's connection with drinks and drinking water operates also at the more subtle level of local legend. It is documented that, when he was taken to the Valley of Death outside Myskhako, he was shown the *Kolodets zhizni* (Well of Life), where the defenders of Malaia zemlia had gone at night to fetch precious drinking water in the face of fire from Germans holding the upper ground.³⁹⁰ In an incident reminiscent

³⁸⁵ Yoram Gorlizki, 'Too Much Trust: Regional Party leaders and local political networks under Brezhnev', *Slavic Review*, 69, 2010, pp. 676-700, p. 693.

³⁸⁶ M4A, M5E and M6J. See also Evgenii Lapin, 'Vspomnim prezhnego Leonida Brezhneva', *NR*, 19/12/2006, p. 4. It is probably no coincidence that the factory was opened in 1974: PepsiCo, <<http://www.pepsico.com/PressRelease/PepsiCo-and-Pepsi-Bottling-Group-to-Invest-1-Billion-In-Russia-50-Years-After-Ru07062009.html>> [accessed 17/06/2013].

³⁸⁷ For example, Evgenii Rozhanskii, 'Bez dozhdia i vody ne budet', *NR*, 19/06/2013, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Index/40>> [accessed 19/06/2013]; and Ol'ga Ovcharko, 'Posledniaia kaplia?', *NR*, 08/02/2013, pp. 1-2.

³⁸⁸ Besedina, 'Brezhnev i Novorossiisk', 03/02/1999; and Erokhin, *Novorossiisk*, 2012, p. 73. This was reiterated by M4C, F5I, M5E, M6D, M6F, M6J, F7A and F8C.

³⁸⁹ Mlechin, *Brezhnev*, 2011, p. 496.

³⁹⁰ Aleksandrov and Godikov, 'Serdechnaia vstrecha v gorode-geroe', 07/09/1974; and Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, pp. 104-111; and Maisurian, *Drugoi Brezhnev*, 2004, p. 84.

of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well, television cameras following Brezhnev showed how he was re-introduced to a grey-haired woman, who as a young girl during the war had given him water from a bucket at the height of the battle.³⁹¹ This unexpected meeting apparently reduced Brezhnev to tears, supporting the claim of one elderly respondent that Brezhnev uncharacteristically declined the wine or vodka he was offered on that occasion, preferring to walk off, alone with his memories, to drink water from the adjacent spring.³⁹²

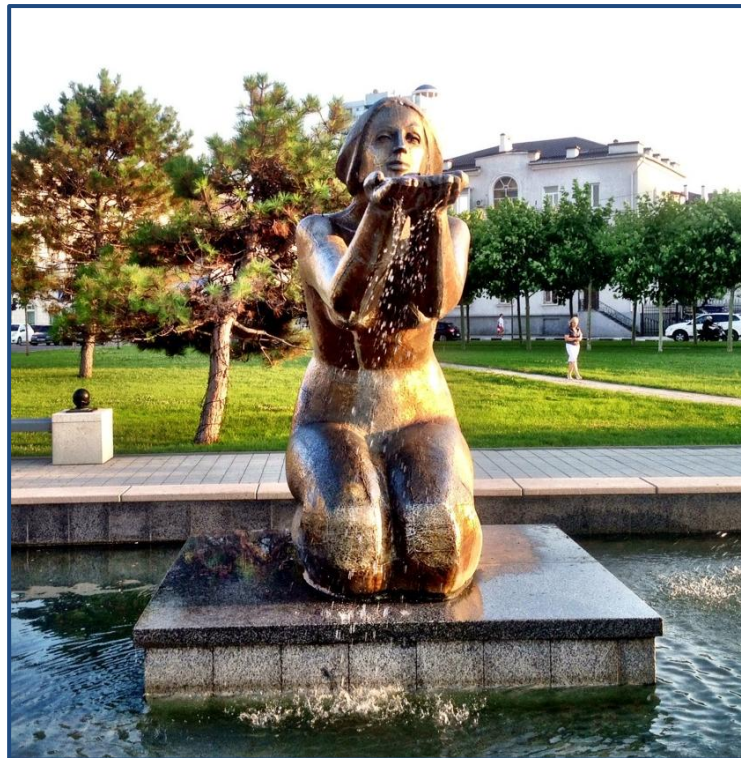
The links between Brezhnev and drinking water as a symbol of life and renewal are potent. The arrival of mains water, thanks to Brezhnev's intervention, was celebrated in 1973 by the erection of a statue on the promenade, *Dariashchaia vodu* (the Water-giver), the only statue to mains water in Russia.³⁹³ The original sculpture was replaced in 2006, on the reconstruction of the promenade, by a more elegant version by sculptor Aleksandr Suvorov, under the direction of the Mayor of Novorossiisk and with money donated by businesses, reinforcing the town's continued gratitude for a stable supply of drinking water.³⁹⁴

³⁹¹ The Holy Bible: The Gospel according to John 4, vv. 4-26; and Evgenii Matveev, Sud'ba po-russki, Moscow: Vagrius, 2000, p. 197.

³⁹² F7B.

³⁹³ Sergei Novikov, Novorossiisk: Istorija dlia vsekh, Stavropol': Kniga, 2007, p. 38. The sculptor was Vladimir Chilingarian.

³⁹⁴ Information from Galina Surmak, regional manager in charge of maintenance and planning of monuments in Novorossiisk (01/04/2011).



The Water-giver³⁹⁵

A female with softly sculpted features, the statue kneels in thanks and supplication with cupped hands holding water outstretched towards the sea, whence the water originally came. Offering the water to the people, she allows it to sprinkle into the pool at her feet, the source of a fountain, the first in Novorossiisk, which would not have been possible before the advent of the mains supply.³⁹⁶ Galina Krympokha, former archivist at the Maritime Academy, attributed the original statue to funds from Brezhnev himself,³⁹⁷ while M6F, a senior architect, connects the statue with Brezhnev's instructions to send water to the town and its ongoing importance as a result of the fragility of the supply even today. Reflecting the primitive emphasis on the gift of life through water, the statue continues to be linked with Brezhnev by some residents in his

³⁹⁵ Photograph by Sergei Krasnolobov (09/07/2013) and used with his permission.

³⁹⁶ Novorossiisk Museum, < http://www.ballion.ru/skulptura_daryashhaya_vodu.html> [accessed 18/06/2013].

³⁹⁷ Interview 05/05/2010.

symbolic role of a beneficent water god, complementing that of benefactor and patron to the town.³⁹⁸

Evidence for the changes in the attitude of the Hero-City to its patron may be found in promotional photograph albums of Novorossiisk published over the last three decades. While 1978's edition contains several pages dedicated to both Brezhnev's wartime role and his 1974 visit, by 1998 there was little interest in the General Secretary, when the equivalent publication had only one wartime photograph including Brezhnev in a total of fourteen, with no indication of his visit or his connection with the conferment of Hero-City status, in line with the more derogatory national understanding of Brezhnev's role. Following renewed interest in his visit, however, the latest luxury edition, published in 2012, indicates a reversal of attitude, with just one small photograph of Brezhnev on Malaia zemlia in 1943 amongst a total of forty-six, while his visit in 1974 is given much greater coverage alongside images indicating the increased status of the town as an industrial centre.³⁹⁹

In contrast to the national attitude to Novorossiisk, it is clear that not only war memory is at work locally today. Brezhnev's post-war role in Novorossiisk linked to his visit is indeed considered now to be more meaningful than his time on Malaia zemlia or his once-famous war memoirs. Brezhnev put this provincial town on the map of the Soviet Union to the extent that he has been likened to Lenin,⁴⁰⁰ deemed a 'godsend' by a priest,⁴⁰¹ and described as the town's 'godfather'.⁴⁰² Over the years, personal and public memories have been incorporated into the larger cultural narrative such that even

³⁹⁸ F7A recalled that the original statue was given to the town by Brezhnev.

³⁹⁹ Golikov, *Novorossiisk*, 1978; Igor' Platonov, ed., *Novorossiisk: 1838-1998*, Tula: Lev Tolstoi, 1998; and Erokhin, *Novorossiisk*, 2012, pp. 74-75.

⁴⁰⁰ M5B.

⁴⁰¹ M6B.

⁴⁰² The regional manager in charge of maintenance and planning of monuments in Novorossiisk (01/04/2011).

newcomers are inculcated with a duty of thanks to Brezhnev,⁴⁰³ who, according to all my respondents, did more than any other statesman for Novorossiisk. The town's popular sentiment is summed up by former Museum Director Prialkina:

If you ask anyone about Brezhnev today, they will talk about 'the era of stagnation', linking it with Brezhnev. This may be the political verdict of his rule. But in Novorossiisk we acknowledge the truth that, for us, we want to remember with sincerity Leonid Il'ich, 'the man who did more than anybody else for the development of our town.'⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰³ F2E, F3E, M3A, M3B, M3E, F4C and F5G.

⁴⁰⁴ Prialkina, 'V zhizni est' minuty, kotorye ne zabyvaiutsia...', 2003, p. 299.

3.4 'A man walking through the town': The making of a modern legend

Надоело говорить и спорить,
И любить усталые глаза...
В флибустьерском дальнем море
Бригантина подымает паруса...⁴⁰⁵

3.4.1 The erection of the Brezhnev statue

Exactly a decade after the publication of Brezhnev's memoirs, the state under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev decided to tear down the statue in Moscow erected on Brezhnev's death:

Where a monument to Leonid I. Brezhnev once stood, there is now an uneven sidewalk, covered with a dusting of snow and frozen dirt. The large black Cyrillic letters that spelled out his name on a nearby metal and concrete billboard have been erased.⁴⁰⁶

With Brezhnev consigned to national political oblivion and Moscow's Brezhnev Square renamed,⁴⁰⁷ the war cult of the Brezhnev era was formally dismantled. Indeed, following his discredited predecessors, two marble statues of Brezhnev are now to be found off the beaten track in Moscow's Muzeon sculpture park, relegated to the periphery next to the portable toilets in a corner full of superfluous Lenins and Stalins.⁴⁰⁸ These busts depict a statesman fallen from his pedestal, both literally and

⁴⁰⁵ 'Enough of talking and arguing,/And love of weary eyes.../Away on the pirate's sea/The brigantine unfurls her sails.' From 'Brigantina' (1937) by Pavel Kogan: see Iurina, *Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie*, 2008, p. 339. The poet was killed outside Novorossiisk in September 1942. The Hotel Brigantina was probably named after this poem.

⁴⁰⁶ Philip Taubman, *New York Times*, 08/02/1988, <<http://www.nytimes.com/1988/02/08/world/across-soviet-brezhnev-s-name-falls.html?src=pm>> [accessed 29/01/2013].

⁴⁰⁷ See Otto Boele, 'Remembering Brezhnev in the New Millennium: Post-Soviet Nostalgia and Local Identity in the City of Novorossiisk', *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, 38, 2011, pp. 3-29, pp. 7-8.

⁴⁰⁸ The Muzeon sculpture park is in central Moscow: <<http://www.muzeon.ru/museum.htm>>. Not only Brezhnev has suffered this fate in the re-writing of Soviet history: statues of Stalin have been virtually eradicated, while history has on the whole been kinder to portraits and statues of Lenin.

metaphorically, reinforcing the inflexibility in interpretation of monuments, which are rarely able to accommodate changes in the political scenery around them.⁴⁰⁹

In the light of Brezhnev's national fall from grace as a victim of Gorbachev's new official narrative of the Brezhnev era, it is all the more remarkable that public opinion in Novorossiisk would be so out of tune with the capital as to permit the erection in 2004 of the only monument to Brezhnev in Russia.⁴¹⁰ The political debate and a decision-making process revealing flexibility in interpretation of a superficially static monument shed light on the attitude to Brezhnev and the local interpretation of his role in the history of the Hero-City he created and patronized.

So interlinked are the reputations of Novorossiisk and Brezhnev that exactly thirty years after his famous visit of 1974 the town decided to erect a statue to him. Brezhnev was already integrally linked with the large Malaia zemlia memorial complex, completed at his instigation in 1982 and studded with quotations from his memoirs. Since 1974 he was also linked with the cluster of monuments in the Valley of Death, but more recent proposals to name a street after Brezhnev had come to nothing.⁴¹¹ This new statue would mark a further reverberation of the 1974 event, catapulting memory of Brezhnev's connection with Novorossiisk and Malaia zemlia well into the twenty-first century. The process of decision-making around the commissioning and erection of the statue acted as a catalyst for renewed discussion of both Brezhnev's role in the war and the visit itself, setting off an after-wave of further reverberations and some revision of memory during the heated debate involving local and regional officials and the public.

⁴⁰⁹ See Maya Nadkarni, 'The Death of Socialism and the Afterlife of its Monuments: Making and marketing the past in Budapest's Statue Park Museum', in *Contested Pasts: The politics of memory*, ed. Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 193-207, p. 195.

⁴¹⁰ Not counting a minor bust in Ukraine ('Svoi sredi svoikh', *NR*, 17/09/2004, p. 1) and a bust erected in 1982 in the Novorostsement works, later moved to the grounds of School No. 10 ('Pamiatniki General'nomu sekretariu TsK KPSS v gorode-geroe', *Munitsipal'naiia novostnaia lenta*, 19/12/2006, <<http://nrnews.ru/news/?id=315>> [accessed 03/09/2011]).

⁴¹¹ Evgenii Kharchenko, 'Iz zhizni pamiatnikov: Brezhnev vernulsia na Maluiu zemliu', *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, 18/09/2004, p. 3.

The conclusion of what may be viewed in retrospect as a protracted seven-year heritage controversy would eventually 'fix' the collective image of Brezhnev within the identity of Novorossiisk, thereby formalizing the rift between the national and the local view of Brezhnev's links with the Hero-City.

Monuments in Novorossiisk are normally subject to planning permission granted by the region.⁴¹² Although a previous proposal for a statue to Brezhnev by Vladimir Runov, a Novorossiisk member of the regional council in Krasnodar, had been rejected following a disagreement between the region and the town, a second proposal by Dmitrii Shishov was accepted.⁴¹³ As a Communist member of the regional council in Krasnodar, he not only had a vested ideological interest in reviving the connection of Novorossiisk with the longstanding General Secretary, but also the financial funds to back it. However, despite the support of Vladimir Siniagovskii, Mayor of Novorossiisk and majority United Russia party member, and another member of the area's relatively strong Communist Party on the Novorossiisk town council, the vote to erect the statue was by no means unanimous.

The leader of the minority Democratic Union voted against the statue, suggesting that the decision to erect it was only to be expected 'in a country of slaves', made by 'people who have no need of freedom'.⁴¹⁴ This minority opinion reinforced a controversial letter from a certain Mikhail Prorok published by Novorossiiskii rabochii when the statue was first mooted early in 2004. Citing the oppression of dissidents and ethnic minorities during the Brezhnev era as a reason not to erect the statue, he claimed that Novorossiisk would have developed naturally without the alleged support from the

⁴¹² Information from Galina Surmak.

⁴¹³ Svetlana Tur'ialai, 'Leonid Brezhnev vernetsia na Maluiu Zemliu', Kommersant, 26/08/2004, <<http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/500605>> [accessed 24/06/2013].

⁴¹⁴ 'Pamiatnik sovetskomu lideru 1964-1982 godov Leonidu Brezhnevu reshili ustanovit' vlasti Novorossiiska', Ural.ru, 25/08/2004, <www.ural.ru/news/life/news-42314> [accessed 23/06/2013].

General Secretary.⁴¹⁵ The newspaper was deluged with responses, the majority of those published arguing robustly for the erection of the statue on the grounds of the post-war aid given by Brezhnev to Novorossiisk, with only one published letter reminding readers of the waste of lives in Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan. Furthermore, a writer, Vladimir Aleksandrovich, was particularly indignant about the number of undeserved awards worn by Brezhnev in his latter years: 'He had more decorations than a New Year tree'.⁴¹⁶

According to the press, the statue was first proposed about a year before it was actually erected, but the arts committee charged with its implementation was still making the most important decisions on its form and site three weeks before the envisaged dedication date.⁴¹⁷ On 23rd August 2004 the sculptor, Nikolai Bugaev from Krasnodar, presented a scale model which won the support of committee members, Shishov and other local businessmen funding the project, pending final approval from the Mayor.⁴¹⁸ However, a prolonged debate failed to reach a conclusion about the best site for Brezhnev. It was decided not to stand him on a main road near the sea, as this would entail cutting down too many trees. More importantly, a site on Malaia zemlia itself was also excluded, not only because the relatively small statue would fade into insignificance beside the huge Malaia zemlia memorial on the shore, but also because of fears that this would reinforce 'past mistakes', when Brezhnev's role in the campaign had been inflated, which would reflect badly on both Brezhnev's memory and the identity of Novorossiisk itself.⁴¹⁹ This strategic political decision no longer overtly to

⁴¹⁵ Mikhail Prorok, 'Ne trat'es' na Brezhneva!', NR, 12/02/2004, p. 5.

⁴¹⁶ 'Brezhnev zhil. Brezhnev zhiv?', NR, 26/02/2004, p. 5. The title of this newspaper article recalls Vladimir Maiakovskii's poem 'Komsomol'skaia' (1924) with the refrain 'Lenin lived, Lenin is alive, Lenin will live on'.

⁴¹⁷ Sergei Karamaev, 'I Brezhnev takoi molodoi', lenta.ru, 17/09/2004, <<http://lenta.ru/articles/2004/09/17/brezhnev>> [accessed 03/09/2011].

⁴¹⁸ Notably Evgenii Kozyrenov, see Anan'eva, 'Svoi sredi svoikh', 17/09/2004.

⁴¹⁹ Mariia Anan'eva, 'Brezhnev ostanetsia v gorode vechno molodym', NR, 24/08/2003, p. 1.

associate Brezhnev with Malaia zemlia marked the formalization of the rift between opinion in Novorossiisk and the national attitude to Brezhnev.

Local opinion was voiced by Tigran Martirosian, former chief executive of the commercial port and Honoured Citizen of Novorossiisk (selected for this award in 1997 by the town council), who felt that Brezhnev's role after the war was far more important in the town's socio-economic development than his war service, an argument that was incomprehensible to the national press, who could only see Brezhnev's infamous connection with Malaia zemlia as the impetus for the monument. Following due consideration of political, historical and green issues, it was therefore decided to site the statue somewhere in the centre, in a place to be determined by the Mayor, possibly on a crossroads with connections to Lenin.⁴²⁰ Two days later, the Mayor agreed that the post-war argument prevailed, stating: 'The people of Novorossiisk remember, know and value Leonid Il'ich's contribution to the development of Novorossiisk'.⁴²¹ With this in mind and possibly to put the Communists in their place, he overruled links with Lenin and decided on a spot even closer to the centre, on Ulitsa Novorossiiskoi respubliki.

Brezhnev was finally lowered into position just in time for the official dedication of the statue on the anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk in 1943, 16th September. Andrei, Brezhnev's grandson, was invited to the ceremony. Fighting off autograph hunters from Brezhnev admirers, he declared himself 'shocked' to receive the invitation: 'I never would have thought that, with our current leaders, anyone would have the idea of erecting a monument to my grandfather.'⁴²²

⁴²⁰ Tur'ialai, 'Leonid Brezhnev vernetsia na Maluiu Zemliu', 26/08/2004; Mariia Aleksandrova, 'Pamiat' v bronze: Brezhnev vernulsia na Maluiu zemliu', *Gazeta*, 172, 17/09/2004, p. 4; Kharchenko, 'Iz zhizni pamiatnikov', 18/09/2004; and Anan'eva, 'Brezhnev ostanetsia v gorode vechno molodym', 24/08/2003.

⁴²¹ Tur'ialai, 'Leonid Brezhnev vernetsia na Maluiu Zemliu', 26/08/2004.

⁴²² It was reported that the sculptor hardly slept for the final two months; 'Svoi sredi svoikh', 17/09/2004. It may be questioned why this date was chosen, in view of the desire to avoid links with the war, but it represented the culmination of Novorossiisk's 'town days', lasting from about 11th to 16th September annually. Although 7th September, the date of Brezhnev's famous speech, or 12th September, the date of the town's foundation, may have been more suitable, it is unlikely that the statue would have been ready,



The Brezhnev statue, Novorossiisk⁴²³

The national press expressed equal surprise to be faced with a bronze statue depicting not the decrepit General Secretary remembered by the joke-tellers, well into his dotage with a chest covered in medals, but a much younger Brezhnev in civilian clothes, stepping out in fluid motion on his pedestal with knee bent, casually loosened tie, jacket slung over his shoulder. Shishov declared that he and the sculptor 'wanted to depict Brezhnev not as a leader, but as a person [...] much loved in Novorossiisk'.⁴²⁴ This is not a statesman or a war hero, but a normal human being, shown strolling through the town. Furthermore, in contrast to the huge Malaia zemlia war memorial, or even the statue of Lenin in the town centre, this bronze monument is on a more realistic human scale, being just over two metres tall and standing on a red granite pedestal 1.8 metres high. This statue represents the simple, very human Brezhnev who public

in view of its hasty preparation after the end of the decision-making process. ('Svoi sredi svoikh', 17/09/2004.)

⁴²³ Photograph by author (15/05/2010).

⁴²⁴ Anan'eva, 'Brezhnev ostanetsia v gorode vechno molodym', 24/08/2003. See also Mariia Aleksandrova, 'Pamiat' v bronze: Brezhnev vernulsia na Maluiu zemliu', *Gazeta*, 172, 17/09/2004, p. 4; and Kharchenko, 'Iz zhizni pamiatnikov', 18/09/2004.

opinion perceives came to award the Gold Star as an old friend of the town,⁴²⁵ albeit, as pointed out by the Chair of the Novorossiisk Historical Association, rather younger than the statesman who had visited the town in 1974, and substantially older than the wartime colonel.⁴²⁶

Brezhnev's character as recognized in Novorossiisk is implied by the working title of the statue: 'A man walking through the town'. Outsiders, however, had to pose the question 'through which town?' as they linked Brezhnev solely with his army uniform and military service on Malaia zemlia.⁴²⁷ The statue portrays Brezhnev's mythical modesty, simplicity and his respect for the town and its citizens,⁴²⁸ just as several war memoirs refer formulaically to Brezhnev's love for the troops and their love and respect for him in return.⁴²⁹ Elderly women even giggle as they recall how handsome Brezhnev looked in his younger days, recalling his common, populist touch,⁴³⁰ while Raisa Sokolova, the museum's chief archivist, has a portrait of the younger Brezhnev hanging on her office wall, a place where the current leader of the country would normally hang.⁴³¹ It may even be suggested that people are looking for examples of Brezhnev's more positive characteristics as if in denial of any weakness of character evident in Brezhnev's later years. If Brezhnev propagated the myth of Malaia zemlia through his memoirs, so Novorossiisk is now propagating through this statue the image of the

⁴²⁵ 'They met "our Il'ich" not only as GenSec, but also as an old acquaintance'. (Evgenii Lapin, 'Vspomnim prezhnego Leonida Brezhneva', *NR*, 19/12/2006, p. 4.)

⁴²⁶ 'Il'icha perenesut, esli na to budet volia zhitel'ei Novorossiiska', *MNL*, 26/02/2009, <<http://nrnews.ru/33912-.html>> [accessed 23/06/2013].

⁴²⁷ See particularly Tur'ialai, 'Leonid Brezhnev vernetsia na Maluiu Zemliu', 26/08/2004.

⁴²⁸ Noted in Bondar', *Uroki muzhestva*, 1982, p. 54; and Besedina, 'Brezhnev i Novorossiisk', 03/02/1999; supported by interviewees F6A, F6C, F7B and M7D.

⁴²⁹ Notably Borzenko, *Na avanpostakh*, 1964, p. 41; Borzenko, '225 dnei muzhestva i otvagi', 1978, p. 82; R. Ia. Kirpichev, *225 dnei muzhestva: Novorossiiskii desant 1943*, Krasnodar: Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1978, p. 9; G. Sokolov, *My s Maloi zemli*, 1979, pp. 365-6; Pedenko, "'Polundra, *Krasnoflottsy!*", 1980, pp. 5-6; Pedenko, *Frontovoi dnevnik*, 1981, p. 77; and Grigor'ev, *Tak srazhalis' kommunisty*, 1982, p. 108.

⁴³⁰ F6A, F6F and F8D.

⁴³¹ Visits made on 28/03/2011 and subsequently.

charismatic man still loved by local collective memory: the mythical Brezhnev in his prime, before his physical and mental decline.

William Tompson, Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle have posited a plausible periodization of the Brezhnev era which may serve to explain the apparent difference in recollection of Brezhnev between Novorossiisk and the rest of the country.⁴³² The citizens of Novorossiisk saw Brezhnev at his peak, a memory of the 1974 visit fixed in the new statue, which took place months before his first stroke led to a steady deterioration in his physical and mental stamina. In contrast, it appears that the older generation of the rest of the country recalls the later, ailing Brezhnev: confused, highly dependent and open to flattery. This apparent change in character is discussed by Sergei Semanov in a nuanced defence of the General Secretary, contrasting the old man of the caricatures, with slurred speech, thick eyebrows and weighed down with medals, with the genuine patriot who remained 'less hysterical' than Khrushchev, less cruel than Stalin and less corrupt than present-day politicians, if lacking in decisiveness and somewhat weak-willed.⁴³³

The centenary of Brezhnev's birth in 2006 provided an opportunity for a national reappraisal of the legacy of his lengthy term in office, with a protracted debate in Literaturnaia gazeta, the appearance of new biographies and the publication of a plethora of survey data. In an attempt to get to grips with the apparent paradoxes of the era, the national press contrasted the stern realities of Soviet tanks entering Czechoslovakia, the war in Afghanistan, domestic censorship, the repression of dissidents and the non-availability of beer, with leadership in space exploration and, on the ground, the germination of a middle class, free and improving education and health

⁴³² Tompson, The Soviet Union under Brezhnev, 2003, pp. 20-22; Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, 'Brezhnev Reconsidered', in Brezhnev Reconsidered, ed. Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002, pp. 203-217, p. 208.

⁴³³ Sergei Semanov, 'Leonid Neodnoznachnyi', LG, 48, 2006, p. 3. For a portrait of the young Brezhnev, proving his organizational skills and leadership, see Aleksandr Kuznetsov, 'I Brezhnev takoi molodoi...', LG, 50, 2006, p. 4.

services, high levels of employment and personal security, the building of new housing stock, development of industry and steady economic development.⁴³⁴ Some recent Russian works remain as critical of Brezhnev as Gorbachev and historians Roi and Zhores Medvedev in the past, notably Leonid Mlechin, who highlights the stagnation of the Brezhnev era and mocks Brezhnev's wartime role.⁴³⁵ Despite this, a more nuanced and empathetic view is coming into fashion, with the benefit of greater historical perspective and a political climate that is searching for positive aspects of the Soviet past.⁴³⁶ Most recently, Aleksandr Khinshtein's biography of Brezhnev defends an era of stability, while others argue that twenty-first century wars, widespread corruption, the removal of free state benefits, high levels of unemployment and homelessness make the Brezhnev era seem like a golden age of the past. As Khinshtein points out, there is a dichotomy between the current mood of nostalgia for the Brezhnev era and continuing criticism of its economic, political and social stagnation.⁴³⁷ Some nostalgia for the time when the Soviet Union was regarded as a significant world power is certainly evident in recent official surveys and is possibly indicative of the political conservatism of the Putin régime. There have even been re-interpretations of the 'stagnation' label aimed at Brezhnev, emphasizing rather the stability, peace and calm enjoyed in the country for the first time in the twentieth century.⁴³⁸

One possible answer to this apparent paradox lies in the periodization of the era which is the subject of increasing nostalgia amongst the older generation, for whom it

⁴³⁴ See discussions in *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Nos. 39-40, 42, 44, 46, 47, 48 and 50, 2006.

⁴³⁵ Medvedev, *Lichnost' i Epokha*, 1991; Medvedev, *Politicheskie portrety*, 2008; Medvedev, *Andropov*, 1983; and Mlechin, *Brezhnev*, 2005.

⁴³⁶ For example, Maisurian, *Drugoi Brezhnev*, 2004 with its Brezhnev jokes; and Semanov, *Dorogoi Leonid Il'ich*, 2007.

⁴³⁷ Khinshtein, *Skazka o poteriannom vremeni*, 2011. See also Sergei Kara-Murza, 'Zolotoi "zastoi"?', *LG*, 44, 2006, p. 4; Dimitrii Karalis, 'Natsional'nyi geroi?', *LG*, 46, 2006, p. 4; Sergei Kurginian, *LG*, 47, 2006, p. 4; and Semanov, 'Leonid Neodnoznachnyi', 2006.

⁴³⁸ Edwin Bacon, 'Reconsidering Brezhnev', in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, ed. Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002, pp.1-21, pp. 4-6; Press Release No. 359, *VTsIOM*, 15/12/2005, <<http://wciom.ru/index.php?id=268&uid=2113>> [accessed 28/06/2013]; Sergei Kurginian, *LG*, 47, 2006; and Boris Kagarlitskii, 'Dorogaia stabil'nost', *LG*, 47, 2006, p. 4.

represented their youth. While it is tempting to suggest that the nostalgia may be predominantly reserved for the early part of the era, with the criticism aimed largely at the latter years, the official survey data is not so discriminating.⁴³⁹ In the specific case of Novorossiisk, however, many residents maintain that Brezhnev's personal patronage led to a change in gear in the developmental progress of this town in the early 1970s.⁴⁴⁰ In contrast, the later era of national stagnation was overseen by the older Brezhnev who instigated the construction of a spate of what some scholars deem to be unnecessarily large war memorials, including the one on Malaia zemlia,⁴⁴¹ and 'wrote' his memoirs, which still link Novorossiisk and Brezhnev in the mind of a generation.

Otto Boele has studied the erection of the Brezhnev statue in Novorossiisk from the point of view of a sense of nostalgia for the Brezhnev era amongst people of a certain age.⁴⁴² However, my research indicates that much more than nostalgia was behind the erection of the statue: the protracted town council and media debate indicates that the majority of those involved, both elected councillors and the public across a wide age-range, speak of their affection for and gratitude to Brezhnev himself rather than the Soviet régime he represented. This reveals a further dichotomy, whereby the people of Novorossiisk are now apparently sufficiently at ease with the Brezhnev connection to separate the politics of the era from the character of its leader, applauding his good traits while not seeming totally blind to his faults, and still telling the same jokes as elsewhere. Remembered no longer for the memoirs which put Novorossiisk on the map, but rather for his post-war contribution to the town, Brezhnev is now regarded in Novorossiisk if not with absolutely uncritical worship, certainly with empathy on a

⁴³⁹ Press Release No. 359, *VTsIOM*, 15/12/2005.

⁴⁴⁰ Serafima Prorocheskaia, 'Ia gorzhus', chto zhila v SSSR', *NR*, 26/02/2004, p. 5.

⁴⁴¹ Particularly the Stalingrad monument, which Konstantin Simonov saw as tasteless: 'An authentic heroic monument should always be as modest as the heroes themselves'. (Scherrer, 'Sowjetunion/Rußland', 2004, p. 643.) Tumarkin criticizes the 'vulgarity and gigantism' of memorial complexes (Tumarkin, 'Story of a War Memorial', 1993, p. 126), while Scott Palmer speaks of 'Pharaonic excess': Palmer, 'How Memory was Made', 2009, p. 378.

⁴⁴² Boele, 'Remembering Brezhnev in the New Millennium, 2011.

human scale, like his statue. As concluded by local historian Tamara Iurina, several more informed respondents offered a relatively balanced retrospective view of Brezhnev as a man who had definitely been on Malaia zemlia, simply doing his duty courageously in the war, while probably not deserving four Hero of the Soviet Union medals. Furthermore, people consider that he was so busy leading the country in the 1970s that he had to have professional help with his memoirs, just like many other leading statesmen.⁴⁴³

3.4.2 Re-location of the Brezhnev statue

With memory of Brezhnev formalized and stable in Novorossisk, if different from that in the rest of the country, the news that it had been decided to move the statue less than six years after its installation on Ulitsa Novorossiiskoi respubliki marked the start of a public debate to determine the new site and, with it, a battle for the ownership of the similarly re-positioned memory of Brezhnev's connection with Novorossiisk. Even if the issues remained local with an agreed collective memory, the significance of the statue and its location were still hotly debated in a decision-making process that provides a case-study in local politics of remembrance.

Monuments are usually expected to stay in one place for well over a human lifetime, despite any potential need for reinterpretation as the political climate changes. Their very longevity has led Jan Assmann to see 'objectivized culture' as being even more permanent in society and better reinforcing social identity than orally transmitted memory.⁴⁴⁴ On the other hand, Paul Connerton, arguing from a postmodern temporal

⁴⁴³ A considered view voiced in particular by M4B, M4C, F5A, M5E, F6C, M6B, M6C, M6D, F8C and M8A. Iurina, *Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie*, 2008, p. 272.

⁴⁴⁴ Jan Assmann, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', *New German Critique*, 65, 1995, pp. 125-133. This view is endorsed by Mikhail Yampolsky, 'In the Shadow of Monuments: Notes on

perspective, points to human longevity and 'the increasingly rapid cycles' by which we now live, which render the lifespan of objects such as monuments increasingly insignificant with respect to their human counterparts.⁴⁴⁵ However, six years cannot be regarded as a long time from the point of view of a statue or the community in which it stands. Furthermore, Connerton has argued that, once monumentalized, the subject of a memorial may safely be forgotten, partly because the scale and relative instability of modern city space undermine it as a focal point.⁴⁴⁶ The latter may be true in the case of the modest Brezhnev monument although perhaps Connerton, with modern American cities rather than provincial Russia in mind, is not familiar with the enormous scale of many Soviet monuments. Certainly, the gigantic Malaya zemlia war memorial at Stanichka stands immovable and unconquerable in the face of changes to the promenade nearby, a testament to the stability in both space and time of Soviet monuments.⁴⁴⁷

The small Brezhnev statue was definitely not forgotten for long, with the 2004 debate on its siting clearly unfinished business, thereby defying Connerton's assertion that monuments quickly fade into the background. When it had been originally positioned no-one had counted on the rapidity of the Mayor's extensive urban renewal programme along the promenade and Ulitsa Novorossiiskoi respubliki, bulldozing everything in its path; nor of the subsequent erection in December 2008 just yards from the Brezhnev statue of an enormous column commemorating the independent Novorossiisk Republic of 1905 after which the road was named. Bearing in mind the monument to the town's founder nearer the sea at the bottom of the avenue, the road was becoming increasingly crowded with memorial statues with arguably conflicting

iconoclasm and time', in *Soviet Hieroglyphics: Visual culture in late twentieth-century Russia*, ed. Nancy Condee, Bloomington, IA and London: Indiana University Press and BFI, 1995, pp. 93-112.

⁴⁴⁵ Paul Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 122.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-131.

⁴⁴⁷ This confirms the argument by Yampolsky, 'In the Shadow of Monuments', 1995.

symbolism, such that the small 'alien' Brezhnev statue was at risk of being 'swallowed' in the shadow of the double-headed eagle on the new column.⁴⁴⁸

Hodgkin and Radstone properly question who has the right to decide where a memorial should be sited possibly years after the event it commemorates, in view of potentially conflicting political, economic and emotional interests.⁴⁴⁹ In this case, in view of the different vested interests of various groups of citizens, it was decided to reassure the public by the convening of a committee of experts to advise on the best site for the monument's re-location. To allay potential public concern, an open consultation for citizens was announced, with a full-scale media debate launched on local television and in the press.⁴⁵⁰ Although the monument was built with private money, the original sponsors do not seem to have been consulted, although, towards the end of the discussions, the issue was also debated in the local *Duma* (town council).

It was necessary firstly to establish if the statue should be moved at all and, if so, then where. There was some initial conflict between the committee of experts and citizens, with the former under the Mayor's remit to find a suitable alternative location and the vociferous latter, mainly the elderly and financially-conscious largely anti-Communist younger residents, questioning the sense of the move at all, citing in letters to Novorossiiskii rabochii the projected financial burden on the town of 500,000 roubles for the exercise, while warning of the worst excesses of Communism.⁴⁵¹ Despite the differences, however, most parties were united in wishing to retain the statue in Novorossiisk due to Brezhnev's strong connection with the Hero-City, at the same time rejecting calls to place him on Malaia zemlia for the very reasons discussed in 2004.

⁴⁴⁸ 'Il'icha perenesut, esli na to budet volia zhitelei Novorossiiska', 26/02/2009.

⁴⁴⁹ Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, 'Introduction: Contested pasts', in Contested Pasts: The politics of memory, ed. Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 1-21, pp. 1; 11-12.

⁴⁵⁰ 'Sud'bu pamiatnika reshat publichno', NR, 28/02/2009, p. 2.

⁴⁵¹ 'Genseka podvinut', NR, 19/02/2009, p. 5. For an analysis of the different points of view, see Boele, 'Remembering Brezhnev in the New Millennium', 2011.

It became obvious through local television coverage in February 2009 that the committee of experts was seriously advocating a move from the centre of the town to the periphery, namely to a small square in front of the Hotel Brigantina on Anapa Shosse, the main road entering Novorossiisk from the north-west, just over a mile from the town centre.⁴⁵² The justification for this proposed move stemmed paradoxically from the informal character of the statue itself. Whereas on its erection the statue was described as depicting Brezhnev's beloved simplicity and modesty, it was conveniently recalled in 2009 that it could also convey something more temporally and locationally specific to the town, based on the hotel in which Brezhnev stayed on his 1974 visit, the Brigantina.

According to the local press, the statue commemorates the evening of 6th September 1974, when local social memory holds that Brezhnev gave his bodyguards the slip to stroll down the road towards the town centre. He apparently popped into a shop, 'striking the assistants dumb with surprise', and then 'bumped into someone or other in the street' where he exchanged a few words incognito. It is this simple rumour, unmentioned in the official TASS reports of Brezhnev's visit, which has become a 'living legend' in Novorossiisk since it appeared in the public domain in 1999, a generation after an alleged evening stroll whose actual occurrence seems highly improbable, in view of the tight security arrangements around the General Secretary's visit.⁴⁵³

A whole myth of alleged details has been built up around the walk, with some sources claiming that an old woman engaged Brezhnev in conversation; although she did not recognize the General Secretary, she spoke well of him, saying that she had

⁴⁵² Cited in 'Genseka podvinut', 19/02/2009.

⁴⁵³ Besedina, 'Brezhnev i Novorossiisk', 03/02/1999; 'V Novorossiiske perenesut pamiatnik Brezhnevu?', 2009; Sergei Novikov, 'Chelovek proshel po gorodu', *Novorossiiskie vesti*, 07/11/2009, p. 4. One source claims that the walk took place on 8th September, in the company of his aides (Lapin, 'Vspomnim prezhnego Leonida Brezhneva', 19/12/2006).

known him during the war, thereby moving Brezhnev to tears.⁴⁵⁴ In view of its similarity with Brezhnev's documented meeting with old women in Myskhako and at Mar'ina roshcha, it is probable that this detail is in fact an incorrect compilation of circumstances. Eyewitnesses to Brezhnev's alleged walk are hard to find, just as very few ordinary soldiers or marines seem to have met Brezhnev on Malaia zemlia during the war.⁴⁵⁵ Here is a potent example of the robustness of perceived collective memory, even when faced with virtually no evidence of individual memory, perhaps just a wish that has developed into collective consciousness and so-called historical fact. What matters is the social memory that has developed, a perception of the past expressed by some in the town as a coherent narrative. Jeffrey Olick points out that collective memory is not necessarily located in the memory of any one person, such that, in this case, the legend is based on a collective representation of Brezhnev's positive qualities which underline his love for the town and its citizens.⁴⁵⁶ This is an example of a narrative trope indicating people's wish to believe the best of their rulers, whereby an important personage dons common dress to mingle with the people.⁴⁵⁷ Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith argue plausibly that such 'contemporary legends', while untrue by definition, are 'generally believed by gullible people', indicating the reinforcing nature of rumour on a large scale whose original source cannot be identified and which can therefore be neither confirmed nor disproved. According to Bennett and Smith, such legends 'appear to be substantiated, though they are ultimately unsubstantiated (and probably unsubstantiatable)?'.⁴⁵⁸ It appears that this urban legend which did not arise

⁴⁵⁴ Lapin, 'Vspomnim prezhnego Leonida Brezhneva', 19/12/2006.

⁴⁵⁵ Novikov, 'Chelovek proshel po gorodu', 07/11/2009. However, one fourth-hand source pointed to the walk being witnessed by the owner of a restaurant near the Brigantina (M6J).

⁴⁵⁶ Jeffrey Olick, 'Introduction', in The Collective Memory Reader, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 3-62.

⁴⁵⁷ For example, King Richard on his return from the Holy Land, as portrayed in Walter Scott's Ivanhoe (1820). See also Bradford B. Broughton, The Legends of King Richard I, Coeur de Lion, The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1966.

⁴⁵⁸ Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith, 'Introduction', in Contemporary Legend: A Reader, ed. Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith, New York and London: Garland, 1996, pp. xxi-xxxix, pp. xxii-xxiv.

until 1999 informed the representation of Brezhnev in the statue erected in 2004, thereby taking on a long-lasting life of its own through the statue which has fixed it in official memory. Thus the interpretation of the statue reinforces the local perception of Brezhnev, an indication of the power of memory as a social construction.

It does not necessarily matter to the residents of Novorossiisk whether the story is true or not: in either case the legend depicts the Brezhnev they 'own' whose characteristic traits are transmitted both by the media and the statue itself, helping to fix the role of Brezhnev in local collective memory in an agreed episode within the town's past. In this respect the legend of Brezhnev's evening stroll differs from the war myth projected in his memoirs of *Malaia zemlia*, whose veracity was subject to substantial doubt.

Although the committee was adamant that the Brigantina location was more historically justified, many people, especially the older generation, preferred Brezhnev's presence in the centre, where it was convenient to pop by, lay flowers and pay their respects. After all, they argued, Brezhnev did not only walk in the vicinity of his hotel, but brought the Gold Star to Heroes' Square in the centre of the town. The committee stuck to its guns, however, strengthening its argument with the fact that, unlike the town centre or the promenade, there are no significant monuments in the area where Novorossiisk is entered from the north-west, deeming Brezhnev to be a good attraction for incoming tourists.⁴⁵⁹

The role of the press in the protracted debate was key in offering an opportunity to ordinary citizens to have their say through letters and online comments. Vladimir Burlakov, editor of *Novorossiiskii rabochii*, sees the role of Novorossiisk's most popular daily newspaper as a platform for public debate.⁴⁶⁰ Indeed, emotive letters and articles

⁴⁵⁹ Novikov, 'Chelovek proshel po gorodu', 07/11/2009; and 'Genseka podvinut', 19/02/2009.

⁴⁶⁰ Interview 06/02/2013.

on both sides of the argument were published in the paper in the spring of 2009.⁴⁶¹ On the other hand, the Mayor's official publication, Novorossiiskie vesti, targeting the educated middle class,⁴⁶² acted as a mouth-piece for the opinions of its editor, Sergei Novikov, key proponent of the move to the Brigantina.⁴⁶³ The town that was always united in its love of Brezhnev was thus divided over where to put him, in an open battle over the ownership of collective memory. In the end, the argument favoured by the committee of experts won the day, aesthetically linking the Soviet statesman with the concrete Soviet-era hotel. In October 2009 a *postanovlenie* (resolution of intent) appeared in Novorossiiskie vesti signalling the decision to re-locate the statue to the square in front of the Brigantina.⁴⁶⁴

However, a further resolution reversing this decision appeared four weeks later, apparently following a deluge of adverse comments from citizens. It was therefore assumed that the statue would, after all, remain in its original position, with the solitary response on the official town website exclaiming 'Thank God!'.⁴⁶⁵ This was still not the final word on the affair, however. Seven months later it became apparent that the statue would, after all, be moved, but not very far, staying on the same avenue where the majority of citizens had demanded he remain. Moreover, in a further about-turn, Brezhnev would be rotated through 180° to face the sea, appeasing those who still preferred to connect him with his role on Malaia zemlia, while officially billed as for architectural reasons.⁴⁶⁶ Following the eighteen-month decision-making process,

⁴⁶¹ Eleonora Kivachitskaia, 'Sprosite narod!'; Igor' Sergeevich, 'Vy kogo guliat' ne puskaete?'; V. Vasil'ev, 'Teper' ochered' Novorossiiska povoevat' za Brezhneva', 'V. Rudik, 'Zamakhnulis' eshche na odnogo russkogo soldata', NR, 19/02/2009, p. 5; Riazanovy Ivanenko, 'Milosti prosim k nam!'; V. A. Rodchenko, 'Uvidit vsia strana'; Irina Zinchuk, "'Propisku" pamiatnikam – podbirat' ne naspek'; Sergei Novikov, 'Ubezhat' ot eklektiki', NR, 21/02/2009, p. 2; Evgenii Kofman, Viktoriia Zhdanova, Tat'iana Kulakova, Anatolii Chernenko and El'vira Skliarova, 'Pochemu liudi voiuut s pamiatnikami?', NR, 04/04/2009, p. 5.

⁴⁶² According to its editor, Sergei Novikov (26/03/2011).

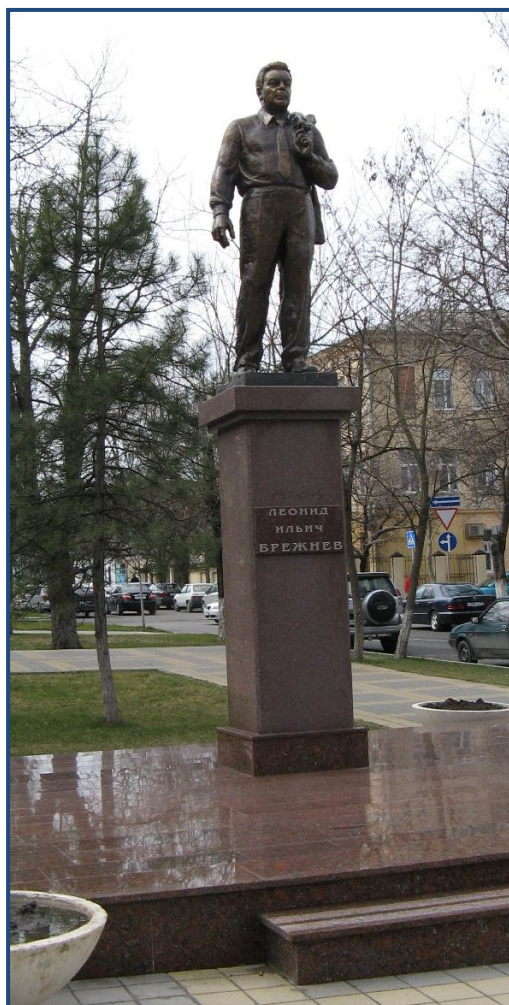
⁴⁶³ Novikov, 'Chelovek proshel po gorodu', 07/11/2009.

⁴⁶⁴ *Postanovlenie* No. 3525 of 12/10/2009, NV, 20/10/2009, p. 7.

⁴⁶⁵ *Postanovlenie* No. 3920 of 13/11/2009. See 'Leonida Il'icha v Novorossiiske resheno ostavit' v pokoe', MNL, 19/11/2009, <<http://nrnews.ru/38470-.html>> [accessed 23/06/2013].

⁴⁶⁶ Vitalii Chaika, 'Brezhnev "poidet" k moriu', NR, 29/06/2010.

Brezhnev was finally moved to his new location two hundred metres from the original site in July 2010.



The re-located Brezhnev statue⁴⁶⁷

If the committee thought that it should have been the main decision-making body in the process, it was wrong, having been over-ruled by the Mayor, with backing from the town council.⁴⁶⁸ Revelations by key committee members eight months later demonstrated that the decision remained controversial,⁴⁶⁹ with one claiming that the Mayor had succumbed to political pressure from several older citizens who had

⁴⁶⁷ Photograph by author (24/03/2011).

⁴⁶⁸ According to *Duma* member Iurii Andrievskii (07/02/2013).

⁴⁶⁹ M5E and M6F.

telephoned him directly.⁴⁷⁰ Many ordinary citizens indeed perceive the decision to have been made by the Mayor,⁴⁷¹ while others see the discussions as reflecting communal will,⁴⁷² perhaps facilitated by the public debate in Novorossiiskii rabochii, whose editor felt that his paper had played the key role as 'the defender of truth' in the town.⁴⁷³ The very fact that such a prolonged and complex debate took place underlines the fact that memory may be collective, but that its significance remains debatable. This analysis of the issues of agency in collective memory does not indicate a clear-cut case of top-down or bottom-up decision-making, but demonstrates that the Mayor apparently rejected the officially appointed committee and acted according to the wishes of those people who had lobbied him directly in the old Soviet way in an act of political self-defence. It seems that the case was swung by older citizens, more emotionally connected with the Brezhnev image, and more used to the old-fashioned, direct approach which occasionally succeeded in the past with petitions to the tsar or even Stalin.⁴⁷⁴ Their last-minute intervention prevailed over the much-vaunted democratic discussions in the media or the planned, more academic debate of the committee.

The paradox of the twists and turns of the debate with its many last-minute decisions represents a victory of informality over the more formal approach and a victory of political utility over historical accuracy, following a decision-making process that seems to have moved one step forwards towards democracy and two steps back to the old Soviet ways. The statue's location was influenced not by the appointed 'trustees of memory',⁴⁷⁵ but by the generation which remembered Brezhnev's visit, who chose the

⁴⁷⁰ M6F.

⁴⁷¹ M3B, M3C, M3D, F5G, F5H and M5G. Some respondents widened the scope to include the 'authorities' in general, including F3I, F4G, F4H and F5G.

⁴⁷² Including F3A, M3A, F5A, F5M, F5N, M5B, M6F, M6J and M7D.

⁴⁷³ Interview 06/02/2013.

⁴⁷⁴ It is suggested that the Mayor does, in fact, over-rule some decisions in Oksana Mashkarova, 'K glave – kak v posledniuu instantsiiu', NR, 29/12/2010, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/1945/1>> [accessed 05/09/2011].

⁴⁷⁵ The expression is from Ashplant, et al., 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration', 2000, p. 43.

image of Brezhnev's link with Novorossiisk to be projected to their successors. It seems that the Mayor's political power for the present and the foreseeable future is built on the past, employing a more traditional, patriarchal type of authority and manipulating collective memory within a presentist paradigm.

Most respondents were not too concerned with the re-location and remain philosophical or even pleased about the outcome,⁴⁷⁶ although some were not happy with the convoluted process.⁴⁷⁷ Other citizens express sentiments that would seem totally out of place in the capital: one contributor to a newspaper accords Brezhnev god-like status by referring to the 'blasphemy' of moving his statue, while 'Ania' sees the re-location as traumatic as the exhumation and re-interment of a close friend: 'Poor Brezhnev – he should be left in peace after his death'.⁴⁷⁸

For the moment, Brezhnev has settled into his current position. Despite the fact that several trees have been cut down to improve the line of sight from the sea (trees that have suddenly been judged 'unstable', but which in 2004 were hotly defended), the whole avenue, with its new fountain on the original spot of the monument, looks pleasingly open and symmetrical. The tall Novorossiisk Republic column in the centre is flanked by the smaller monuments to the founder-father and to Brezhnev, effecting an implicit comparison between Nikolai Raevskii, the town's founder, and Brezhnev, its post-war patron. Similarly, the symbol of the state in the form of the double-headed eagle atop the new monument complements the smaller statesman, linking the first days of Communist ideology with the later days of socialism.⁴⁷⁹ In a re-signifying of space in

⁴⁷⁶ F4I, F5A, F5H, F6E and F6F. Their positive verdict had much to do with the general refurbishment of the area and the installation of new gardens and a fountain.

⁴⁷⁷ F3F and M6D. M4B considered the whole debate to have been a '*potoploka*' (quagmire) and blamed the *Duma* for the outcome rather than the local authorities.

⁴⁷⁸ 'Leonid Il'ich obretet novuiu propisku', *MNL*, 21/10/2009, <<http://nrnews.ru/38024-html>> [accessed 23/06/2013]. See also 'Leonida Il'icha v Novorossiiske resheno ostavit' v pokoe', 19/11/2009; and V. Rudik in 'Zamakhnulis' eshche na odnogo russkogo soldata', *NR*, 19/02/2009, p. 5. See also Boele, 'Remembering Brezhnev in the New Millennium', 2011, p. 27.

⁴⁷⁹ The avenue is named after the incipient class revolution in December 1905, when posters called citizens to support the struggle by means of local councils. On 17th December a telegram was sent to the

the town centre there is now an historical continuum along the central reservation of the avenue, with an arrow of time running from the town's foundation in 1838, via the 1905 republic to the Brezhnev era, such that the street may be read as a spatial memorial device within the topography of the modern town, where the image of Brezhnev on a human scale and with a human lifespan seems totally in proportion.

Now that the memory controversy is over and interest in it gradually wanes with the death of the older generation who fought with and for Brezhnev, it is possible that he may rest in rather too much peace as the statue fades comfortably into the memorial background of the town, as Connerton would propose.⁴⁸⁰ Although popular as a background for wedding photographs,⁴⁸¹ it is notable that the statue is not to be found on the tourist trail catering for the few cruise ship passengers from England and the United States starting to visit the town.⁴⁸² According to one guide, she does not want to mention the statue to tourists, as she connects Brezhnev with his memoirs which she knows are false.⁴⁸³ Visitors are therefore shown the impressive Malaia zemlia memorial complex, whose inscriptions are often no longer recalled to be quotations from Brezhnev's memoirs. The Brezhnev connection apparently remains Novorossiisk's private secret as far as foreigners are concerned, despite the fact that many of them would have heard of the former leader of the Soviet Union, demonstrating some continuing embarrassment on the part of some, at least, in Novorossiisk about the notorious Malaia zemlia memoirs.

If 2004 led to a debate about Brezhnev's character and 2006 to a re-appraisal of his political legacy, the 2009 discussion focused on whether Brezhnev should remain in

Tsar saying that the whole town was in anarchy and that revolutionaries had taken power from the Vice-Governor. Power was passed for two weeks only into the hands of a council of deputies which introduced a people's court and an 8-hour working day. (I. Krivosheina, 'Ulitsa smotrit v budushchee', NR, 11/10/1980.)

⁴⁸⁰ Connerton, How Modernity Forgets, 2009, pp. 99-131.

⁴⁸¹ 'Leonid Il'ich obretet novuiu propisku', 21/10/2009.

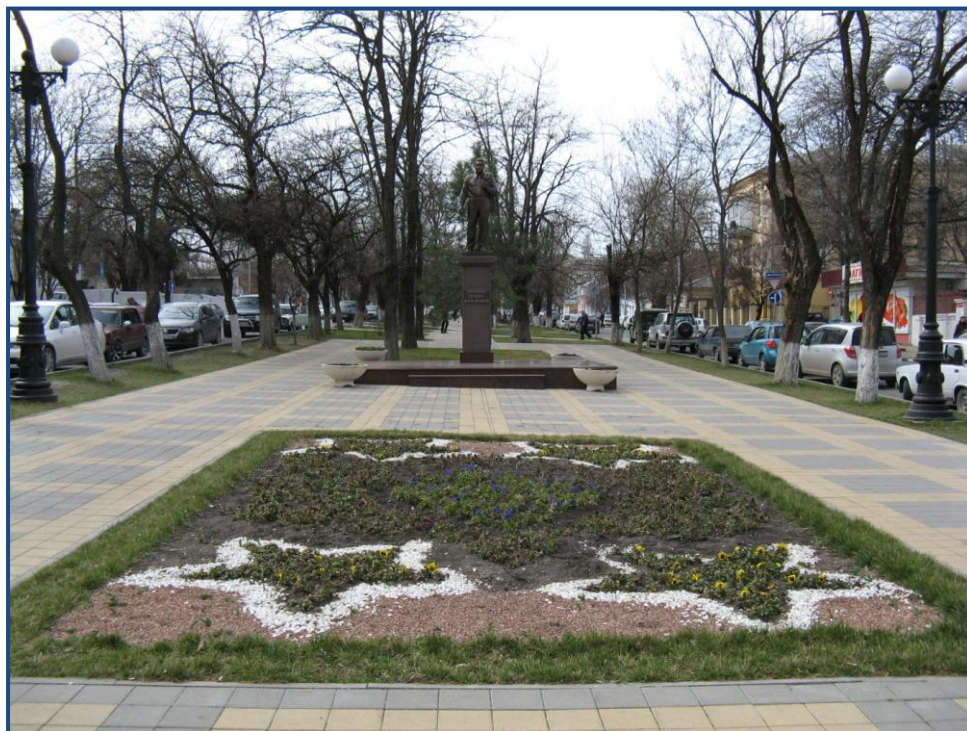
⁴⁸² Interview with Cruise Manager at 'Voyages of Discovery' (06/11/2012).

⁴⁸³ F4K.

the centre of town or on the periphery, while confirming the re-positioning of memory to privilege the 1974 visit over Brezhnev's wartime role in 1943. Thanks to the continuing impact of the visit and its perceived economic consequences on the local consciousness, a decade of 'reverberations' took place from 1999 to 2009, long after the 1974 visit, itself decades after the Malaia zemlia campaign which originally saw Brezhnev's involvement and led to the conferment of Hero-City status on the town. With this background still dominating public opinion, particularly amongst the older generation, Brezhnev was eventually deemed too important to be relegated to the outskirts of the town, which gave rise to a new commemorative discourse of the legendary walk in a revision of collective memory, such that Novorossiisk now officially commemorates the charismatic private man rather than the statesman or soldier, in contrast to, but complementing memory of the General Secretary elsewhere in the country which has remained caricaturized and largely static since his death, if with some softening evident around the time of his centenary. In Novorossiisk, it is Brezhnev's perceived largesse and his more intimate side which are recalled: personal conversations and informal repartee. In line with the rest of the country, however, the Brezhnev era is loved or hated in equal measure by those who remember it, another facet of the town's paradoxical identification with the man, if not always with the state he represented.

However, despite the fact that Novorossiisk went to great lengths to deny connections with Brezhnev's war service through the statue in civilian clothes, once the statue had been re-located the garden at its feet was decorated with four Hero stars as if in compensation for their absence on Brezhnev's clothing. This action is completely at odds with the national attitude to Brezhnev's war 'heroism'. For example, in the central hall of the war memorial complex opened in 1995 on Moscow's Poklonnaia gora is a list of all the Heroes of the Soviet Union, with special mention of those receiving the award

more than once. Although Brezhnev's name is on the wall, he is not singled out as a multiple holder. From this point of view, Novorossiisk soon came back into line with the rest of the country and by 2013 the Hero stars were gone.



Brezhnev's four 'Hero of the Soviet Union' stars restored⁴⁸⁴

If Brezhnev's once-dominant wartime role is on the wane in the local collective narrative, it is still subject to political exploitation on a modest scale. Most notably, the Mayor of Novorossiisk distributed specially reprinted copies of Brezhnev's Malaia zemlia to veterans during the 2002 local election campaign,⁴⁸⁵ while Brezhnev's picture appears on metal badges issued by the Mayor since 2010 to children accompanying parents and grandparents to political meetings.⁴⁸⁶ In 2010 the young Colonel Brezhnev was one of a series of local Heroes of the Soviet Union on the badges, linking the

⁴⁸⁴ Photograph by author (24/03/2011). Brezhnev was awarded Hero of the Soviet Union stars on his birthday on four occasions, in December 1966, 1976, 1978 and 1981. (Khinshtein, Skazka o poteriannom vremeni, 2011, pp. 628-630.)

⁴⁸⁵ 'Leonid Brezhnev vernetsia na Maluiu Zemliu', 26/08/2004.

⁴⁸⁶ Information from F5A and F5Q.

forthcoming sixty-fifth anniversary of Victory Day with the local elections. In a further series issued before the parliamentary elections, Brezhnev was depicted as the older statesman in a series of Soviet and Russian leaders who had visited Novorossiisk, from Tsar Aleksandr to Prime Minister Putin. Whereas in the first series, the image of the genuine Hero Tsezar' Kunikov is juxtaposed against the giant Malaia zemlia memorial, in the later series, it is the Soviet leader who is clearly linked with the monument erected at his instigation. With these badges, Brezhnev is used as a political tool to attract both the young and the elderly, just as Brezhnev himself employed his connection with Malaia zemlia for his own political ends.

In contrast, the main political driver for the re-location of the Brezhnev statue was simply the Mayor's sudden plans for urban regeneration, which altered the physical and political landscape around the statue to the extent that its very meaning was subject to a process of re-examination. Following a heritage controversy which exposed differences of opinion towards memory of Brezhnev and his role with respect to Novorossiisk, Brezhnev's position nonetheless remains central both physically and metaphorically to the town's identity today. The statue has enabled differences between memory of the elderly statesman and the younger private person to be publicly resolved in Novorossiisk. Largely thanks to memories of 1974 fixed in the minds of older citizens and now crystallized in the statue, the town has collectively selected the image of Brezhnev to be propagated to future generations: the image of an energetic man in the prime of life rather than the caricature of the overseer of a period of stagnation embraced by much of the rest of Russia. This significant difference underlines the importance of personal contact and communication with the General Secretary in an era when attitudes were generally formed and dictated by the more remote official mass media, which were instrumental in building up the war cult and disseminating Brezhnev's memoirs. Brezhnev's 1974 visit to Novorossiisk was key in determining the

town's current interpretation of their own Leonid Il'ich, largely by means of the legends which have grown up around this charismatic and very human being.

3.5 The state comes to town again



'Land for sale: Malaia zemlia' by Aleksandr Kamper⁴⁸⁷

Aleksandr Kamper's latest creative comment on Malaia zemlia is a photograph of land near the beach in Myskhako, allegedly being sold as building plots for more holiday homes for wealthy Muscovites who may never even have heard of the campaign.⁴⁸⁸ In a statement about the abuse of the integrity of memory, Kamper has placed this photograph over the red letters of the title page of a book of what seems to be Brezhnev's memoirs,⁴⁸⁹ appearing to be part of what is regarded as the 'sacred' earth

⁴⁸⁷ Picture copyright of the artist, sent to the author by personal email (15/11/2011) and reproduced with the artist's permission.

⁴⁸⁸ According to F4C and M5C, but disputed by Larisa Kolbasina, Director of the Novorossiisk Museum (28/01/2014).

⁴⁸⁹ Not Brezhnev's memoirs on this occasion, but a work from 1952, according to Kamper (personal email 17/11/2011). However, the font is remarkably similar that used in an early edition of Brezhnev's Malaia zemlia, see Kamper's work in Section 3.3 above.

beneath.⁴⁹⁰ By this artistic device the collage speaks of the sacrilege of selling this piece of local memory: 'Land for sale: Malaia zemlia'. Although the physical land of Malaia zemlia is claimed to be for sale to the highest bidder, memory of both Brezhnev and the campaign itself remains useful, more often than not for reasons of political expediency.

Under President Putin the commemorative politics of the state are subject to renewed intensification, which, far from conflicting with local memorial interests, actively promotes them in Novorossiisk, resulting in a basic harmony of approach which fosters local war memory as in the Brezhnev era. While this may not be true in other towns or regions of the former Soviet Union,⁴⁹¹ collective memory of the war in Novorossiisk is evolving as a consensus of local and national political interests, with some notable differences from the case at the height of the Brezhnev war cult.

The increasing use of war symbolism as in the Mayor's badges is one indication of the nation-wide impact of a second war cult under Putin.⁴⁹² Scholars argue that the narrative of war victory is possibly the only theme, historical or otherwise, that can unite Russians today: the inherent social control and consequent solidarity are arguably even more necessary to the political élite in Russia at the beginning of the twenty-first

⁴⁹⁰ Many memoirs and citizens speak of the sacred earth, soaked with blood (for example Sokolov, *Malaia Zemlia*, 1967, pp. 138 and 348; and Aleksandr Komlik, Head of the Myskhako Local Authority (23/03/2011)).

⁴⁹¹ See, for example, Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2010; Qualls, 'Who Makes Local Memories?'; and Brown, *Memory at War in the Crimea* (University of Cambridge).

⁴⁹² The Putin era war cult has been well documented in, for example, Scherrer, 'Sowjetunion/Rußland', 2004; I. Kurilla, 'The Symbolic Politics of the Putin Administration', in *Identities and Politics during the Putin presidency*, ed. Philipp Casula and Jeronim Perovic, Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2009, pp. 255-269; Lovell, *The Shadow of War*, 2010; Ivo Mijnsen, 'The Victory Myth and Russia's Identity', *Russian Analytical Digest*, 72, 2010, pp. 6-9; Myriam Désert, 'Comment sont regardés les films sur la Grande Guerre patriotique dans la Russie actuelle?', *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies*, 12, 2011; Lisa Kirschenbaum, 'World War II in Soviet and Post-Soviet Memory', *Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, 38, 2011, pp. 97-103; N. E. Koposov, *Pamiat' strogogo rezhima: istoriia politika v Rossii*, Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2011; Olga Kucherenko, 'That'll Teach'em to Love Their Motherland!: Russian Youth Revisit the Battles of World War II', *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies*, 12, 2011; Stephen M. Norris, 'Memory for Sale: Victory Day 2010 and Russian Remembrance', *Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, 38, 2011, pp. 201-229; and Elizabeth A. Wood, 'Performing Memory: Vladimir Putin and the Celebration of World War II in Russia', *Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, 38, 2011, pp. 172-200.

century than in the Brezhnev era, when one official ideology united the Soviet Union.⁴⁹³

It has been suggested that top-down nationalism is often a reaction to a period of social transition.⁴⁹⁴ This may have been a reason for the start of the war cult in Russia following the years of economic and political uncertainty of perestroika and the 1990s. More recently, however, the image of a strong and united nation is politically useful in the face of increasing criticism from abroad over the conflict in Ukraine.

If Putin's war cult may be deemed a top-down response to the uncertainty of the Gorbachev and El'tsin leaderships or a challenging foreign policy, the cult of the more politically stable Brezhnev era may be attributed to the character of the General Secretary himself. However ridiculed the figure of the elderly statesman, the monuments erected nationwide and his re-introduction of Victory Day celebrations were popular, while the re-intensification of the latter under Putin probably contributes to some extent to the conservative wave of nostalgia for the Brezhnev era.⁴⁹⁵ It is notable that Putin himself also admits to 'a clear respect, even nostalgia' for the past,⁴⁹⁶ stating that the fall of the Soviet Union was the 'greatest geopolitical catastrophe' of the twentieth century.⁴⁹⁷ Scholars have documented general and specific similarities between the policies of Putin and Brezhnev: Bacon and Sandle see a number of parallels with the Brezhnev years,⁴⁹⁸ while Khinshtein regards Putin as Brezhnev's natural and more successful successor.⁴⁹⁹

On 29th August 2011 Novorossiiskii rabochii reported that crowds thronged around the Brezhnev statue in Novorossiisk to watch the arrival of Prime Minister Putin

⁴⁹³ Bo Petersson, National Self-Images and Regional Identities in Russia, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001, p. 60. Wolfe points out that 'Russia has no history of civic nationalism' which could provide the necessary symbolism to mobilize the people, see Wolfe, 'Past as Present, Myth, or History?', 2006, p. 277.

⁴⁹⁴ For example, Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', 2008; and Bodnar, 'Remaking America', 2011, p. 266.

⁴⁹⁵ See Sections 3.3 and 3.4 above.

⁴⁹⁶ Bacon and Sandle, 'Brezhnev Reconsidered', 2002, p. 206.

⁴⁹⁷ From Putin's annual address to parliament (25/04/2005).

⁴⁹⁸ Bacon and Sandle, 'Brezhnev Reconsidered', 2002, p. 205.

⁴⁹⁹ Khinshtein, Skazka o poteriannom vremeni, 2011.

astride a Harley-Davidson motor-bike, a mode of transport that defines his leadership character as more macho and youth-oriented by far than Brezhnev's sedate procession through the streets by open-topped car in 1974. Hand firmly on the throttle rather than waving to the crowds, the black leather-clad Putin led a cavalcade of a thousand rock bikers rather than Brezhnev's retinue of elderly Soviet dignitaries.⁵⁰⁰

From the museum ship 'Mikhail Kutuzov', once one of the most powerful cruisers of the Soviet navy, Putin reminded the audience of the military campaign to liberate occupied Novorossiisk, urging them to remember 'the heroes who fought to regain the town at enormous cost'. Putin recalled that the heroic landing troops who freed Novorossiisk had for their motto '*dvizhenie tol'ko vpered!*' (moving only forwards). His words were seized upon as a political slogan by local and national media in the light of the forthcoming national elections of December 2011.⁵⁰¹ Referring probably to Stalin's notorious 'Not one step back' Order No. 227 of July 1942 which prohibited the surrender of Soviet troops during the war, leading to many unnecessary deaths, its use indirectly confirms accusations of some scholars of a return to Stalinism under Putin.⁵⁰² Spectators at the rock concert were treated to an extravagant pyrotechnic display illuminating a reconstruction of the liberation of Novorossiisk. 'Pervyi kanal', the official state television channel, confirmed the spurious connection of the concert with the war, recalling that the anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk was less than three weeks away.⁵⁰³

⁵⁰⁰ Lina Gritsenko, 'Vladimir Putin priznaet dvizhenie tol'ko vpered', NR, 30/08/2011, <<http://novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/3731>> [accessed 30/08/2011]. These bikers were members of the Night Wolves club, who were sanctioned by the USA in December 2014 for their overtly nationalistic role in the Ukraine crisis.

⁵⁰¹ Gritsenko, 'Vladimir Putin priznaet dvizhenie tol'ko vpered', 30/08/2011; 'Vladimir Putin pribyl v Novorossiisk, gde primet uchastie v mezhdunarodnom baik-shou', Pervyi kanal, 29/08/2011, <<http://www.ltv.ru/news/print/183762>> [accessed 21/07/2013].

⁵⁰² The part of the troops' oath referring to 'not one step back' is mentioned in an (at the time unpublished) contemporary poem by Senior Lt. Nekrasov. (Sokolov, Malaja Zemlia, 1967, p. 332.) See also footnote 333. Brezhnev was also accused of a campaign of re-Stalinization, see Chapter 2.3.

⁵⁰³ Kuz'mina, 'V Novorossiiske prem'er-ministr vozglavil kolonnu baikerov', 30/08/2011; and 'Vladimir Putin pribyl v Novorossiisk', 29/08/2011.

President Putin did not visit Novorossiisk on the seventieth anniversary of the landings in February 2013, although he had been in Stalingrad the previous day, an indication perhaps that one Hero-City is more important than another.⁵⁰⁴ However, when Prime Minister, Putin had visited Novorossiisk just before Victory Day in 2010, following a television interview with an impromptu walkabout which I witnessed.⁵⁰⁵ In contrast with Brezhnev's solo evening stroll from the Hotel Brigantina, Putin's 200 metre walk was in the presence of Regional Governor Aleksandr Tkachev and a strong security guard. Although apparently spontaneous, the walkabout was both well-managed and consummately professional, responding to demands from the crowd for Putin's personal appearance. The Prime Minister was clearly idolized by the waiting women in much the same way as a younger Brezhnev had appealed to the female workers of Novorossiisk in 1974, although Putin betrayed no trace of Brezhnev's mythical modesty.

It is notable, however, that Putin made no mention of either the General Secretary or Malaia zemlia on his visits to Novorossiisk, preferring to speak about victory and heroism in general rather than in specific terms, thus giving the impression that Brezhnev has been written out of the official state narrative. In contrast, in an apparently concerted campaign of re-recognition of the political utility of the war myth in Novorossiisk on the national level, President Dmitrii Medvedev noted in his blog-post the day after Putin's walkabout that his own grandfather had fought on Malaia zemlia. Furthermore, in his online biography, Medvedev records, with a trace of humour, that his grandfather had, however, never met Brezhnev during his time on

⁵⁰⁴ Two male respondents (M3A and M4A) feel that Novorossiisk is not really worthy of its Hero-City status, preferring instead the new lesser title of 'Town of Military Glory', although the majority of citizens of Novorossiisk are adamant that the town is a genuine Hero-City, supported by Semanov, Dorogoi Leonid Il'ich, 2007, p. 72.

⁵⁰⁵ Outside the Novorossiisk veterans' council and television studio (07/05/2010). See Marina Rybkina and Sergei Mukhtarov, 'Putin v nov' chaeval s frontovnikami', NR, 08/05/2010, p. 1; and 'VIP-vizit', NV, 11/05/2010, p.2.

Malaia zemlia, reinforcing common scepticism about Brezhnev's inflated wartime role. Thus Malaia zemlia was again on the official agenda as part of the increasing momentum of the new national war cult, providing wartime credentials for the President's family.⁵⁰⁶

While investigating opinion about Brezhnev's Malaia zemlia memoirs today, thirty years after Brezhnev's death, I interviewed thirty-four subjects in other parts of Russia, with no connection to Novorossiisk. Of these, nobody under the age of forty had heard of Malaia zemlia at all, showing that it is not part of the war myth for the younger generations. Although three subjects in their early forties had not heard of Malaia zemlia, a convincing majority, 85% of those over forty, who would all have been over the age of fifteen and in full-time education or employment before Brezhnev's death, still connected the name of Malaia zemlia irreverently with boring lessons of Soviet political ideology and a wealth of Brezhnev jokes, in much the same way as illustrated by Medvedev's comments.⁵⁰⁷ It is apparent that, for them, Novorossiisk's Gold Star is considered to be as phoney as the awards hanging on Brezhnev's chest when he visited Novorossiisk in 1974.⁵⁰⁸

President Putin may have avoided mentioning the Brezhnev connection, perhaps wishing to avoid adverse comparison between the two statesmen, but his own family's challenging wartime experience in Leningrad adds strength to his image of dutiful son and father within the war cult. Thanks to his own personal connection with the war and

⁵⁰⁶ 'My grandfather, Afanasii Fedorovich Medvedev, volunteered for front-line service in 1941, and fought on Malaia zemlia, just outside Novorossiisk. Whenever he spoke about this, there were always tears in his eyes, and he seemed to re-live the whole experience on each occasion.' (Dmitrii Medvedev, 'Velikaia Otechestvennaia voina nikogda ne budet dlia nashogo naroda istoricheskoi abstraktsiei', Prezident Rossii, 08/05/2010, <<http://www.kremlin.ru/news/7681>> [accessed 20/05/2010]). 'Actually, he never met Brezhnev, but he was really there. According to his memories, it was a real inferno.' (<<http://medvedev.kremlin.ru/biography>> [accessed 20/05/2010].) However, President Medvedev made no reported comments on the war when visiting Novorossiisk during a tour of military bases in the south of Russia in 2009, suggesting that the war cult is driven largely by Putin's impetus. ('Presidentskii desant', Rossiiskaia gazeta, 15/07/2009 <<http://www.rg.ru/2009/07/15/medvedev.html>> [accessed 26.07.2013].

⁵⁰⁷ The cut-off date of birth after which subjects have no knowledge of Malaia zemlia appears to be around 1967.

⁵⁰⁸ Brezhnev was wearing one Hero of Socialist Labour and one Hero of the Soviet Union star.

his promotion of war memory, Putin could almost be deemed a hero in both past and modern terms.⁵⁰⁹

If Putin is regarded as a masculine leader, it is in a different mould from the popular perception of Brezhnev in Novorossiisk, which was based on his actual wartime service as well as his promotion of the town economically. Brezhnev possessed a modest, common touch which resonated with the people then, deploying his war medals where motorcycle imagery is more likely to appeal to younger Russians today. However, Brezhnev had genuine links with Novorossiisk, rather than merely visiting the town for overtly political reasons. Similarly, popular scepticism about Brezhnev's war memoirs and Putin's KGB past detract from their cults of personality vis-à-vis the war cult. Although with vastly different leadership styles, both men enjoyed at their prime a wide following and a lengthy term of office in which to establish a strategic political use of war memory.

Evidence may indicate a concerted campaign of re-recognition of the political utility of the war myth in Novorosiisk on the national level, but it is only on the local level that Brezhnev's connection with the war remains politically useful. At the time of Brezhnev's famous visit of 1974, the state in the person of the General Secretary owned memory of the war in general and of Malaia zemlia in particular. Under the current memorial climate, the war has become both an existential narrative of Russia's national identity and a metaphor for national unity. The current war cult demonstrates the régime's temporally retrograde and dogmatic influence on remembrance, confirming the presentist approach to collective memory as proposed by Hobsbawm.⁵¹⁰ Within this unifying environment of state ownership of collective memory of victory is situated the

⁵⁰⁹ Putin's father was wounded by shrapnel and his mother narrowly escaped starvation. Simmons and Perlina, *Writing the Siege of Leningrad*, 2002, p. xviii; and Richard Sakwa, *Putin: Russia's choice*, London and New York: Routledge, 2004, pp 2-3. See also Wood, 'Performing memory', 2011, pp. 176 and 198.

⁵¹⁰ Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', 2008.

specific memory of the liberation of Novorossiisk in 1943. It is this uncontroversial fact of liberation which is now recognized nationally, rather than the seven-month campaign on Malaia zemlia preceding it, which remains almost exclusively as local memory

3.6 Conclusion

During the Malaia zemlia campaign, one concern voiced by the troops was the isolation of the beach-head from the rest of the country (*Bol'shaia zemlia*), and the wish to re-join the two to form a complete whole.⁵¹¹ Despite the geographical reunion in 1943, the national and local attitudes to the campaign were not always aligned over the next seventy years. Whereas state and town were united in the significance of Malaia zemlia during the war cult of the Brezhnev era, a gulf in interpretation arose after Brezhnev's death, only for them to become largely reconciled with the re-appropriation of the local war myth by the state in the twenty-first century, if without reference to Brezhnev's role on Malaia zemlia.

Despite substantial unity over the headlines of the war myth today, there exists a deeper, more complex interaction of national and local understanding with respect to Brezhnev and Malaia zemlia. While Putin's interpretation of the myth retains only the single unmired fact of the liberation of Novorossiisk from German occupation, locally it has developed further nuance and legend over the years thanks to the re-examination of popular memory of Brezhnev's significant visit to Novorossiisk in 1974 upon the erection of the new Brezhnev statue. The result of the re-location of public memory is that the nation and the town now own two complementary myths regarding Brezhnev's link to Novorossiisk.

Thanks to Brezhnev's perceived economic largesse and a series of reverberations following his visit, the Hero-City has collectively placed Brezhnev in a politically convenient legendary post-war niche. Paradoxically, memory of Brezhnev remains integral to the war myth in Novorossiisk for the older generation in other parts of Russia, while the town itself has shifted memory to what it assumed would be less controversial civic territory. As a result of a protracted period of re-negotiation exposing

⁵¹¹See footnote 50.

cultural and generational differences in attitude to a common past, a new local collective identity with respect to Brezhnev has been established, whereby he is remembered mainly as a patron of the town rather than as a war hero. In contrast, the following chapter examines remembrance of the genuine heroes of the Malaia zemlia campaign.

Chapter 4

Respect for the dead: Ritual and monumental remembrance

В молчании застыли все вокруг:
Куранты бьют мерно в тиши,
И гордо рвется к небу Вечный огонь.

Его зажгли мы в память всех людей,
Отдавших за Родину жизнь.
Этот великий подвиг
В наших живет сердцах.⁵¹²

4.1 Introduction

Every hour on the hour since 1960, from the first hesitant notes on the celeste to the final triumphant orchestral crescendo, the strains of Dmitrii Shostakovich's 'Novorossiisk Chimes' have rung out across Heroes' Square, where the tomb of the Heroes of the Soviet Union killed during the Malaia zemlia campaign has stood since 1946, with the relatively early addition of the Eternal Flame in 1958.⁵¹³ Commissioned in the name of the citizens of Novorossiisk by the Secretary of the town's Communist Party, Shostakovich's requiem for the fallen heroes indicates not only the inevitable passing of time, but also links past and present in its regular remembrance of those who fell on Malaia zemlia.⁵¹⁴ This chapter analyses the community's respect for the military dead still demonstrated in Novorossiisk by means of annual rituals of remembrance and monumental commemoration, with consideration also given to those exceptional cases where such esteem is not evident.

⁵¹² 'In the silence everyone has stopped still:/The chimes beat regularly in the quiet air,/And the Eternal Flame burns up to heaven./We lit it in memory of all those/Who gave their lives for the Motherland./These heroic deeds/Live on in our hearts.' Text from the Shostakovich Museum by G. Bel'kind, Headmaster of School No. 3, 1964, intended as words for the 'Novorossiisk Chimes'.

⁵¹³ All dates pertaining to monuments are from records held in the Novorossiisk Museum archives.

⁵¹⁴ 'Novorossiiskie kuranty', Shostakovich opus 111b; K. Mikhailov, 'Dmitrii Shostakovich v Novorossiiske', in *Istoricheskie zapiski: Issledovaniia i materialy, vypusk 3*, Krasnodar: Severnyi Kavkaz, 1999, pp. 268-278.

Memory is a temporal concept in three ways. Firstly, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, the substance and detail of memory is time dependent, changing with the political tide which may potentially imbue the war narrative with different meanings; secondly, it is able to recall the past in the present, almost unconsciously relating the former to the latter, with time itself able to expand or contract flexibly on the part of both society and the individual remembering the past; and thirdly, the passage of time can wipe away traces of the past, scattering personal memories and eroding memorials with a corresponding increase in entropy as time marches inexorably onwards. In establishing the dynamics of the transmission of memory, this chapter will demonstrate that the rich culture of memorial traditions in Novorossiisk merges to produce a unique perception of mythical time, which interacts with and occasionally dominates historical time.

Both historical and memorial identity are often linked to a specific space,⁵¹⁵ a concept particularly relevant to the small area of Malaia zemlia, where geographical identity is perhaps easier to preserve than living memory as the number of original witnesses decreases. With the passage of time, the role of direct oral and written narrative in the propagation of the war myth has been taken over by a monumental and ritual tradition of remembrance with its own mnemonic symbolism in a different type of commemoration whose collective ownership renders it simpler, more general and thereby more enduring.

Victory Day celebrations remain popular across post-Soviet Russia today,⁵¹⁶ where the introduction in 2005 of the *Georgievskaiia lenta* (St George ribbon) as a symbol of war memory has proved particularly successful in capturing and moulding the national mood. Harnessing the energy of young people to distribute ribbons in return

⁵¹⁵ Mark Bassin, Christopher Ely and Melissa K. Stockdale, 'Introduction: Russian Space', in Space, Place, and Power in Modern Russia: Essays in the new spatial history, ed. Mark Bassin, Christopher Ely and Melissa K. Stockdale, DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010, pp. 3-19, pp. 11-12.

⁵¹⁶ Discussed in Jonathan Brunstedt, 'Building a Pan-Soviet Past: The Soviet War Cult and the Turn Away from Ethnic Particularism', Soviet and Post-Soviet Review, 38, 2011, pp. 149-171.

for donations to veterans' charities, the *lentočka* movement has been both praised and condemned as a top-down exercise in the intergenerational marketing of memory across the country and beyond, a potent symbol of the widespread propagation of the current war cult and its values.⁵¹⁷ While Victory Day will be examined in more detail in Chapter 5, this chapter analyses a second mnemonic symbol linked with young people and in this case unique to maritime Novorossiisk: the *beskozyrka*, a simple sailor's cap. The *beskozyrka* is the focal point of respect for the individual within the collective in a more sober annual ritual of remembrance of the dead, with its origins in a provincial bottom-up memory movement in Brezhnev's Soviet Union.

Although a successful tradition may serve to cement a society,⁵¹⁸ any inertia associated with a tradition, even one strongly linked with local identity, risks leading to stagnation, as evidenced by the political environment of the Brezhnev era. There is the associated risk that the ritual may become static and boring, with over-reliance on what Connerton terms 'habit-memory' leading to popular apathy rather than a proactive commitment to remember.⁵¹⁹ However, my evidence suggests that, in the context of widespread external change, a society may adapt an old tradition for new conditions by grafting new rituals or language onto the original ceremony of commemoration. It is perhaps not surprising that an analysis of the development of the Beskozyrka tradition over time reveals gradual changes in the ritual which define each successive generation and serve to prevent potential mnemonic stagnation. In this chapter I show that, thanks to national and local conditions under which collective war memory is thriving, increasing empathy with and respect for the courage of the troops is demonstrated such that this continuing legacy of the youth of 1968, far from being discarded after

⁵¹⁷ [9may.ru](http://gl.9may.ru), <<http://gl.9may.ru>> [accessed 26/06/2012]. On commercialization, see Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011.

⁵¹⁸ See Edward Shils, *Tradition*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981, p. 25.

⁵¹⁹ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 1989, p. 23.

Brezhnev's death like many other aspects of the Soviet war cult, is increasingly relevant to the identity of the contemporary Hero-City of Novorossiisk.

Today's emphasis on ritual and monumental memory implies collective agreement on the interpretation of memory. However, the dead who are remembered remain individuals within the agreed collective narrative, whose personal remembrance is also important to their familial descendants. This dichotomy raises the question of how to locate the individual within collective memory: both individual victims of war and the individuals remembering them today, for whom collective memory may not be an adequate or accurate representation of their feelings or attitude to events of the past. I demonstrate that not all the fallen can be accommodated or respected within the war myth, revealing different categories of war dead. The town's relationship with the fallen troops may seem straightforward, but deeper analysis exposes the ongoing challenges to respect afforded to innocent civilians and the enemy.

There is a tension between today's official memory and some degree of forgetting, either unintentional or selective. Monuments seen on a regular basis may fade into the habitual landscape, while there is also evidence of some official and unofficial embarrassment at other aspects of the war which may have been conveniently omitted from the popular myth of *Malaia zemlia* which, while representing collective memory, may not be able to accommodate every single sub-group in a potentially polyphonic memorial situation. This chapter analyses the opposition between mainstream memory which dictates the official mnemonic identity of Novorossiisk and is located visibly in and around the town centre, and some aspects of remembrance on the fringes of organized society, often situated on the geographical periphery. In particular, opinion and practice in the modern centre of Novorossiisk is compared with that in its *sel'skii okrug* (rural district), Myskhako, standing on the site of the worst of the *Malaia zemlia* battle.

With a continued emphasis on the examination of agency, this chapter analyses the mechanism for the intergenerational transmission of ritual and monumental memory. Contrary to what may be expected in a monolithic society, I reveal some evidence for what appears to be a bottom-up mechanism within the parameters of the Brezhnev era war cult and even some conflict with the authorities in the Putin era. I also demonstrate that society in Novorossiisk appears to value individualism and a distinctly local slant where respect for the dead of Malaia zemlia is concerned.

4.2.1 Hats off to Heroes: A tribute from the young people of Novorossiisk

So many fearless young sailors in pea-jackets and caps perished in the deep. So many times we saw dead sailors' caps floating on the sea.⁵²⁰

The Beskozyrka ritual was invented in 1968 not by the national élite responsible for Victory Day celebrations, but by a small group of young Novorossiisk residents. However, this Soviet group was also no doubt under the influence of the state's burgeoning war cult shortly after Brezhnev's appointment as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1964.

The change in state policy to promote war memory was anticipated in Novorossiisk in 1963, when the local Communist Party newspaper, Novorossiiskii rabochii, filled a whole page with war memories, while in 1965 the same paper was exceptionally published on a Sunday, devoting its whole four-page edition to the revived Victory Day celebrations.⁵²¹ With a build-up of the memorial climate nationally and locally during the mid-1960s, the time was ripe for a new form of commemoration in Novorossiisk. In January 1968 a ten-line paragraph appeared in the youth section of Novorossiiskii rabochii, advertising *Operatsiia 'Beskozyrka'* (The 'Beskozyrka' Operation), a procession taking the 'torch of glory', lit from the Eternal Flame on Heroes' Square, to the site of the Malaia zemlia landings in the small hours of 4th February, in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the start of the battle.⁵²²

The youth group promoted by Novorossiiskii rabochii was inspired by the creation in 1962 of a literary club for young readers, *Klub iunykh kommunarov* (The

⁵²⁰ Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979, pp. 367-8.

⁵²¹ Captain M. Shiriamov, 'Zavtra - Prazdnik Pobedy', NR, 08/05/1963, p. 2; and NR, 09/05/1965.

⁵²² 'Operatsiia "Beskozyrka"', NR, 12/01/1968, p. 4.

Young Commune Members' Club) by Komsomol'skaia Pravda, the official organ of the Communist youth movement, the Komsomol.⁵²³ The Novorossiisk off-shoot of the readers' club, named 'Shkhuna rovesnikov' (the Schooner 'Young Contemporaries'), encouraged its teenage members (so-called *Shkhunatiki*) to form the land-based crew of an imaginary schooner, incorporating a system of ranks, an oath of adherence and passwords for meetings.⁵²⁴ The founding captain and self-proclaimed helmsman of the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov' was the novice Novorossiiskii rabochii journalist, Konstantin Podyma. Gathering his crew in November 1965 through a new youth page in Novorossiiskii rabochii, the 19-year old invited all 'romantics' and 'fantasists' to set sail with him on a journey of dreams, discussion and self-discovery.⁵²⁵ Thus started the weekly meetings in their 'cabin' in the Novorossiiskii rabochii offices,⁵²⁶ leading to a series of romantic exploits deemed by a former *Shkhunatik* to be typical of the eccentricity of the club members.⁵²⁷

Although the *Shkhunatiki* may in retrospect consider themselves to have been atypical of their generation, they were probably rather the product of their times and cultural environment, with relatively normal family backgrounds including peasants, accountants, workers in the port, doctors and managers in industry.⁵²⁸ Indeed, according to Gleb Tsipursky's analysis, most of the readers of Komsomol'skaia Pravda in the early 1960s represented 'conformist youth', who identified with the values propagated by the newspaper, including the strong sense of patriotism disseminated from above, a view

⁵²³ Konstantin Podyma, Vechnyi ogon': ty gori, ne sgorai..., Moscow: Pilotnoe izdanie, 2008, p. 8. Podyma states that the club was the brainchild of S. L. Soloveichik.

⁵²⁴ A Komsomol magazine for teenagers named Rovesnik was popular in the 1960s. (Sergei I. Zhuk, 'Religion, "Westernization", and Youth in the "Closed City" of Soviet Ukraine, 1964-84', Russian Review, 67, 4, 2008, pp. 661-679, p. 672.) A real ship's crew on the Bering Sea started a literary journal from their cabin probably early in 1965, upon which the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov' may have been modelled. (L. Lysenko, 'Schastlivogo plavaniia, "Seskor"', Iunost', 3, 1966, p. 142.)

⁵²⁵ Konstantin Podyma, Schastlivogo plavaniia, 'Shkhuna Rovesnikov'!, Moscow: Detskaia literatura, 1975, pp. 5-6.

⁵²⁶ Raisa Sokolova, Beskozyrka, Novorossiisk: Departament kul'tury Krasnodarskogo kraia, c. 2005, pp. 8-9.

⁵²⁷ *Shkhunatiki* were 'angular rather than curved' (email from F6H, 05/09/2013).

⁵²⁸ F6H.

extrapolated by Jeffrey Brooks to the relationship between the press and the Soviet population in general in the early Brezhnev years.⁵²⁹ However, it is evident that this local club brought its own creative interpretation to the pervading examples in national youth publications.

Members of the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov' apparently revelled in an atmosphere of literary romanticism, adopting as their hero the poet Pavel Kogan, who met his death outside Novorossiisk in September 1942. The young people regularly spent the night changing a red flag on the summit of Sakharnaia golova, the hill where he was killed in battle.⁵³⁰ This interest in Kogan is a local reflection of the influence of the romantic poetry and song which became fashionable with young people in the post-Stalin era of the 1950s and 1960s, when student anthems included Kogan's 'Brigantina' (1937), typical of the 'bardic song' of the Thaw years. Inna Sokolova describes the popularity of 'exotic heroes', including the sea captains featured in Kogan's work, deeming the 'piratical ethos' in the bardic oeuvre 'a romantic symbol, an expression of an active perspective on life, a testimony to faith in one's own strength and the hope of success', producing a 'state of spiritual emancipation'.⁵³¹ Furthermore, Ludmilla Alexeyeva suggests that 'Brigantina' is in fact Kogan's tribute to Nikolai Gumilev, the poet well-known for his *Wanderlust*.⁵³² No doubt the perceived freedom of a sea captain was attractive to shore-bound teenagers with little chance of significant travel. It therefore comes as no surprise that, with their combination of idealistic romanticism and respect for the war dead, the group decided to mark the anniversary of the landings in 1968 in a special way, framing themselves within the pervading memorial context. Their idea was

⁵²⁹ Gleb Tshipursky, 'Conformism and Agency: Model young Communists and the Komsomol press in the later Khrushchev years', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 7, 2013, pp. 1396-1416; and Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!*, 2000, p. 241.

⁵³⁰ F6H; Konstantin Podyma, *... chtob ikh ne zabyvali my: Dokumental'nye ocherki*, Novorossiisk and Moscow: 2009, p. 28; and Iurina, *Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie*, 2008, p. 163.

⁵³¹ Inna Sokolova, 'Bardic Song: From Exotica to Utopia', *Russian Studies in Literature*, 41, 2005, pp. 83-100, pp. 84-85.

⁵³² Ludmilla Alexeyeva, and Paul Goldberg, *The Thaw Generation: Coming of age in the post-Stalin era*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1990, p. 30.

to commemorate unburied troops who had died at sea by carrying a sailor's peakless uniform cap (the eponymous *beskozyrka*) four kilometres through the streets of the town just after midnight. The hat would then be ceremonially lowered into the sea at Stanichka, surrounded by wreaths of flowers.

This ceremony is a reflection of the increasing focus on military-patriotic youth training in the Brezhnev era, strongly endorsed by the Komsomol organization. Membership of the Komsomol was expected for school-children and students aged from fourteen to twenty-eight who became members of a primary cell, the bottom layer of a complex hierarchy of management mirroring the Communist Party organization. Komsomol activities centred on the war cult were highly controlled by nationalist sympathizers and encouraged by novels and memoirs about the war. Furthermore, young people were taken to visit war sites and monuments as part of their moral upbringing (*vospitanie*).⁵³³

Novorossiisk teenagers were possibly even more exposed to memory of the war than many of their peers. According to a former member of the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov', the young post-war generation of Novorossiisk was regaled with stories of wartime exploits recounted by their fathers and grandfathers.⁵³⁴ Moreover, it is claimed that the *Shkhunatiki* would routinely find grenades, shell-cases and human remains,⁵³⁵ breeding a feeling of involvement in war memory from childhood and a sense of identification with the young partisans who had fought outside Novorossiisk during the war.⁵³⁶

⁵³³ Nikolai Mitrokhin, *Russkaia partiia: dvizhenie russkikh natsionalistov v SSSR, 1953-1985 gody*. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2003, pp. 114-116 and 277; A. Yurchak, *Everything was Forever until it was no more: The Last Soviet Generation*, Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006, ch. 3; and Brunstedt, 'Building a Pan-Soviet Past', 2011, pp. 163-166.

⁵³⁴ F6H (interview 05/02/2013 and personal email, 15/09/2013).

⁵³⁵ For similar experiences, see Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, pp. 14-27.

⁵³⁶ Konstantin Podyma (05/02/2013).

However, Podyma and two female *Shkhunatiki* categorically dismiss suggestions of direct Komsomol influence on the original Beskozyrka ceremony,⁵³⁷ although it is probable that the overwhelming state propaganda machine of their youth went largely unnoticed due to its ubiquitous nature. They do, however, acknowledge Party support from the editor of Novorossiiskii rabochii, Grigorii Pogibel', a member of the *gorkom*, the town committee of the Communist Party, who provided premises for their meetings and encouraged the already independent youngsters to plan the ceremony themselves, while nonetheless checking on the organizational details.⁵³⁸ Rather more direct input into the meetings is recalled, however, by Viktor Saloshenko, Second Secretary of the Novorossiisk Komsomol Committee at the time, who claims to have implemented all the organization of which he deemed the young people incapable.⁵³⁹

F6H claims that it took time for the authorities to come to terms with the group's sometimes unusual projects, although Podyma believes that the Komsomol was unwilling to help in the early days because of the absence of prestigious veterans from the first ceremony. This difficulty may reflect not only the status that the veterans would bring to the ceremony, but possibly points to a problem with permission for a group procession, which would gain credibility with the presence of veterans. Podyma alleges that there was some peripheral involvement from the KGB, whose border guards set up searchlights along the shore to light up their proceedings,⁵⁴⁰ a claim disputed by F6H. In the light of competing claims and the lack of decisive evidence from the Komsomol records, it is difficult to gauge with certainty the degree of influence from above. The Beskozyrka movement may possibly have been the product of an organized campaign

⁵³⁷ F6H and F7E (05/02/2013).

⁵³⁸ The *gorkom* offices were situated very close to those of the newspaper (Konstantin Podyma). See also Podyma, Vechnyi ogon', 2008, p. 19; and 'Mify – ne rify, no v farvatere "Beskozyrki" – ni k chemu!', Novorossiiskie izvestiia, 16/02/2011, <<http://novodar.ru/index.php/novohistory-punkt/2148-mnrnvfbnkch-02-2011>> [accessed 21/12/2011]. Parents of some marchers also worked for the Communist Party (Podyma and F7E).

⁵³⁹ V. Saloshenko, Obiazan skazat', Krasnodar: Severnyi Kavkaz, 1998, p. 11.

⁵⁴⁰ 'Mify – ne rify!', 16/02/2011.

by the Komsomol leadership, which, under the influence of the national memorial climate, tapped into the enthusiasm and inventiveness of the younger generation.

Involving only twenty-two young people and six adults at first, including two veterans of Malaia zemlia, the newly invented ritual of Beskozyrka faltered for a time, being banned by a Communist Party bureaucrat the following year, despite its patriotic intent and the country-wide encouragement of youth initiatives.⁵⁴¹ Party concern may have been due to a degree of nervousness about potential crowds of young people gathering together following the protest events in Moscow against the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, as, although the ceremony was permitted officially in 1970, it was restricted to a much smaller area.⁵⁴² Thanks to the intervention of influential veterans and the *gorkom*, local Komsomol officials were apparently finally convinced of the value of the ceremony and gave it their approval in 1971.⁵⁴³ By the outing of the third Beskozyrka the number of participants had increased dramatically to a critical mass of five thousand, such that by 1973 the press was already referring to it as an established tradition.⁵⁴⁴

The rise in popularity of the Beskozyrka ritual during the 1970s mirrored the development of the war cult nationwide. The early Beskozyrka tradition was apparently welcomed by both young and old, fusing the patriotic commemoration desired by the older generation with the romance of a secret society attractive to its young inventors. Sokolov recalls the emotion evoked by the ceremony as veterans silently remembered their fallen comrades, linked with their gratitude for the opportunity to pass on this

⁵⁴¹ E. I. Ostapenko and N. I. Aleshichev (V. D. Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', in *Istoricheskie zapiski: Issledovannii i materialy, vypusk 4*, ed. S. G. Novikov and T. V. Raskatova, Krasnodar: Kubanskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 2003, pp. 261-273).

⁵⁴² Ibid.; and Podyma, 'Beskozyrka', 2008, pp. 41-2.

⁵⁴³ 'Mify – ne rify!', 16/02/2011. Saloshenko claims that, without his official Komsomol presence at all meetings of the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov', its members risked being taken for dissidents by the KGB (Saloshenko, *Obiazan skazat'*, 1998).

⁵⁴⁴ Podyma, 'Beskozyrka', 2008, pp. 41 and 47; and 'Plyvi, beskozyrka', *NR*, 07/02/1973, p. 3.

memory to the younger generation.⁵⁴⁵ In contrast, the main aspect of Beskozyrka apparently enjoyed by the younger generation was the night-time torch-lit procession and the secrecy of a complex system of passwords,⁵⁴⁶ an adventure in keeping with the romantic leanings of the *Shkhunatiki*, nurtured by the state emphasis on 'romantic militarism'.⁵⁴⁷ Furthermore, the system of ranks and the military parade of Beskozyrka reflected official war cult values, which promoted a convergence of generations that would ensure the ceremony's success.

4.2.2 A changing tradition or a tradition of change?

The juxtaposition of the concept of longstanding tradition with a relatively young state such as post-Soviet Russia may seem paradoxical, particularly bearing in mind the unsettled years of perestroika and the 1990s, when Beskozyrka struggled to survive. Hobsbawm contends that newly invented traditions may be more widespread during periods of rapid social change and modernization to which older established traditions may succumb.⁵⁴⁸ In contrast, it may be argued that the comfort of any tradition, however young, is particularly welcome within an environment rendered unstable by war, political or financial crisis. According to Edward Shils, it is the very normativeness of tradition which acts as 'the inertial force which holds society in a given form over time'.⁵⁴⁹ Similarly, Connerton sees the importance of ritual mainly in its invariance over time.⁵⁵⁰ Halbwachs confirms that rituals tend to remain constant over time, even when society as a whole is in the process of change, as, especially in these circumstances,

⁵⁴⁵ Sokolov, *My s Maloi zemli*, 1979, pp. 367-8.

⁵⁴⁶ Podyma, *Beskozyrka*, 2008, pp. 11-34.

⁵⁴⁷ Brunstedt, 'Building a Pan-Soviet Past', 2011, p. 163. This was exemplified by the publication from 1964 to 1990 of a series of biographies of romantic figures in history, 'Plamennye revoliutsionery' (Fiery Revolutionaries). See Jones, 'The Fire Burns On?', 2015.

⁵⁴⁸ Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', 2008.

⁵⁴⁹ Shils, *Tradition*, 1981, p. 25.

⁵⁵⁰ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 1989, p. 23.

people tend to cling to tradition for the perceived security it offers, a position endorsed by Hobsbawm.⁵⁵¹

On the other hand, any inertia associated with a tradition, even one strongly linked with local identity, risks leading to stagnation. There is the related risk that the ritual may become static and boring, with over-reliance on habit-memory leading to popular apathy rather than a proactive commitment to remember. However, my evidence suggests that, in the context of widespread external change, a society may adapt an old tradition for new conditions by grafting new rituals or language onto the original ceremony of commemoration. It is perhaps not surprising that an analysis of the development of the Beskozyrka tradition over more than four decades reveals gradual changes in the ritual. The organizers of Beskozyrka have adopted a process of re-invention and rejuvenation, enabling each generation to place its own stamp on the ritual, while serving to prevent mnemonic stagnation and promote local identity. I demonstrate that the series of changes in Beskozyrka has been established not merely as the passive response typical of a comfortably apathetic society, but in a proactive attempt to attract young people and propagate war memory across the generations. Furthermore, in view of the scale and frequency of these innovations, it may even be argued that the concept of change in the Beskozyrka ritual has become an invented tradition in its own right.

Minor changes to the ceremony included a variation in the route in the 1970s to take in the monument to the Unknown Sailor, the ribbons of his *beskozyrka* flowing prominently behind his head.

⁵⁵¹ Halbwachs, On Collective Memory. 1992; and E. J. Hobsbawm, 'The Social Function of the Past', Past Present, Volume 55, 1972, pp. 3-17.



Monument to the Unknown Sailor, Novorossiisk (1961)⁵⁵²

With even younger children and their parents in mind, the time was brought forward firstly to the afternoon and then the evening of 3rd February, better facilitating cross-generational transmission. Raisa Sokolova describes the addition of a solemn oath to the proceedings in 1978, the tenth anniversary of the tradition and the week during which Brezhnev's memoirs were published.⁵⁵³ Repeating the oath made by Major Tsezar' Kunikov's troops prior to battle, the young people swore to become a living memorial to those who had given their lives. The original marine infantry had sworn to die for their country:

We will give up our own will, strength and blood, drop by drop,
for the life and happiness of the people, for you, our beloved
Motherland!⁵⁵⁴

Furthermore, their historic success was reinforced in a dispatch from the War Council:

⁵⁵² Photograph by author (10/05/2010).

⁵⁵³ Sokolova, *Beskozyrka*, c. 2005, pp. 16-17.

⁵⁵⁴ Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, p. 10.

Your fathers, mothers, wives and children will be proud of your defence, courage and heroism. We know that this small area of land will become great and will bring about the liberation of our fathers, mothers, wives and children groaning under the fascist yoke.⁵⁵⁵

The heroes of Malaia zemlia were thus situated in a mythical historical continuum, charged with ensuring the freedom of their children, the generation responsible for the invention of the Beskozyrka tradition. In contrast, the oath made by the Beskozyrka carriers in 1980 principally reflected the prevailing ideology of the Brezhnev era, as participants vowed to strive to work hard to fulfil Communist ideals, including the stringent economic demands of the tenth five-year plan.⁵⁵⁶ It is perhaps not surprising that, in a ceremony with links to the General Secretary's wartime service, political ideology further complicated simple memory. Despite an ostensible wish to commemorate the past, this pragmatic consideration of the political environment confirms that, towards the end of the Brezhnev era, national concerns barely connected with war memory had taken over the local myth of Malaia zemlia.

In the early years after the fall of the Soviet Union interest in Beskozyrka waned in line with national trends after Gorbachev had dismantled the Brezhnev era war cult.⁵⁵⁷ Newspaper reports of the ritual are scarce and several of my respondents mentioned that Beskozyrka in its original form barely survived,⁵⁵⁸ with one member of the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov' blaming the decline on the end of the Komsomol

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 8. Also reproduced in Grechko, *Bitva za Kavkaz*, 1967, pp. 279-280.

⁵⁵⁶ Sokolova, *Beskozyrka*, c. 2005, pp. 16-17; and leaflet held in the archives of Novorossiiskii istoricheskii muzei-zapovednik: 'Operatsiia "Beskozyrka-80"', MA 15049, Novorossiiskoe PPO, zak. No. 334 (21/01/1980).

⁵⁵⁷ Merridale, 'War, Death and Remembrance in Soviet Russia', 2000, p. 79. Stephen Lovell considers that 'war was not central to Gorbachev's self-understanding as it had been for his predecessors'. (Lovell, *The Shadow of War*, 2010, pp. 9-10.)

⁵⁵⁸ For example, Vitalii Lesik. in charge of other rituals of remembrance (07/05/2010); M5F, a senior lecturer; and F3A, a teacher (10/05/2010). The local press makes no mention of Beskozyrka in 1993, the fiftieth anniversary of the landings.

organization,⁵⁵⁹ which had apparently continued to endorse the ceremony since 1971. However, a retired headmistress recalls that one hundred children from each of the local schools were invited during the 1990s to the town's theatre for a different type of commemoration involving about 5,000 annually,⁵⁶⁰ reinforcing the claim that the town's head of culture and other founding members of the ceremony kept the ritual alive.⁵⁶¹ This is plausible, since, following the town council's decision to take over responsibility for the ritual, it was back to full strength in 1998 for its thirtieth anniversary.⁵⁶²

For forty-five years the fact that *two* landings had actually taken place in 1943 was rarely recalled in collective memory, which privileged the successful Malaia zemlia campaign over the failed landings at Iuzhnaia Ozereika. In recent years *two* torches have been lit and *two* hats carried to the beaches: the first to Malaia zemlia in the usual fashion, and the second transported by tank to the more distant Iuzhnaia Ozereika, where the ritual has evolved slightly differently, with its own committed following.⁵⁶³

The twenty-first century has seen a partial return under President Putin to more conservative Soviet values, a renewed emphasis on *vospitanie* and the development of a new war cult. Once again, politicians promote a common interest in social coherence and continuity with the Soviet past, presenting the people with an image of a strong and united nation. As will be shown in Chapter 5, it seems that the involvement of the younger generation is central to current policy for the propagation of war memory, utilizing many of the strategies of the Brezhnev era.

⁵⁵⁹ F7E.

⁵⁶⁰ F7A (23/08/2013).

⁵⁶¹ F7E.

⁵⁶² Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, p. 268; and '... Beskozyrka na volne', NR, 04/02/1998, p. 1.

⁵⁶³ According to the manager of a local veterans' council (19/03/2011).



Beskozyrka at the Eternal Flame on Heroes' Square⁵⁶⁴

My observations indicate that the majority of Russians of all ages welcomes the associated ceremonies and ritual reminiscent of the Brezhnev era, particularly Victory Day in May.⁵⁶⁵ However the notoriously cold weather in February provides a ready-made excuse for inhabitants of Novorossiisk to stay indoors and not attend Beskozyrka. Some respondents search for further reasons for non-attendance, explaining how they would like to join in the procession, but would find it difficult to get there in the rush-hour traffic; moreover, they claim that their children are tired after school.⁵⁶⁶ Possibly with this in mind, the organizers introduced in 2010 a newly invented off-shoot of Beskozyrka, *Svecha v okne*, the 'candle in the window' movement, whereby those staying at home are encouraged to show their solidarity with the marchers outside by lighting a candle to place in the window as they pass by. Heavily promoted by the town council on posters and in newspaper advertisements, this modern

⁵⁶⁴ Photograph by author (03/02/2013).

⁵⁶⁵ See also Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011; and Wood, 'Performing Memory', 2011.

⁵⁶⁶ Notably M3D, F4F, F4H and F4I.

idea is reminiscent of other ceremonies of remembrance world-wide.⁵⁶⁷ This new supplementary invented tradition is particularly popular amongst women not wishing to venture outdoors,⁵⁶⁸ and involves far more people than ever before, even if they do not demonstrate the commitment of those taking part in the cold. Like the addendum of the St George ribbon to Victory Day, this is an innovation grafted onto an older, established tradition, having the effect of enriching, rejuvenating and refreshing the ritual, rendering it more attractive to the younger generation and their parents. Furthermore, a new daytime Beskozyrka especially for children was introduced in 2013, attracting a further audience of 4,700 young people,⁵⁶⁹ a cohort of citizens not able to deploy excuses when taken to the ceremony by their teachers, as their families respond to a complex mixture of social expectation and freedom to attend.

The highlight of 2011 was a reconstruction of the landings at Malaia zemlia, repeated annually since then. Such events have become very popular globally, including in Russia, where the annual reconstruction of the Battle of Borodino attracts large crowds. War memory in twenty-first century Russia increasingly refers to less controversial ubiquitous heroism rather than to the more specific examples still being cited in the 1990s. In contrast, there is considerable local geographical detail in the reconstructions, which bring to life the generalisms of the national war myth with some local historical accuracy.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁷ For example in Great Britain on the centenary of the start of WW1 in 2014.

⁵⁶⁸ For example F2A, F3F, F3I, F5N and F6F.

⁵⁶⁹ Oksana Mashkarova, 'Vakhtu pamiati budut nesti i deti', *NR*, 18/01/2013, p. 2; Lina Gritsenko, 'Detiam pokazali, kto nastoiashchii supergeroi', *NR*, 05/02/2013), p. 2; and interview with Deputy Mayor Natal'ia Maiorova (04/02/2013).

⁵⁷⁰ Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011, p. 217; and Julie Buckler, 'Taking and Retaking the Field: Borodino as a site of collective memory', in *Rites of Place: Public commemoration in Russia and Eastern Europe*, ed. Julie Buckler and Emily D. Johnson, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2013, pp. 203-223, p. 218.



Re-enactment of the landings (1) ⁵⁷¹

A re-enactment on the actual battle site can be a very powerful means of propagating collective memory, while still representing a relatively passive experience for the large audience. In contrast, the more intimate group in Iuzhnaia Ozereika witnessed a different spectacle in 2011. In a seemingly spontaneous gesture, the *beskozyrka* bearer, young marine Ivan Ognev, attracted gasps of admiration from spectators as he strode into the sea up to his shoulders to deposit the hat on the waves. An exchange of messages in an online forum established that he had gone into the water of his own accord, in a surge of empathy with the original landing troops, and with no orders from above, effectively bringing the myth to life.⁵⁷² In the light of this personal tribute in braving the winter waves, it appears that the romanticism of the young founders of Beskozyrka lives on, at least in Iuzhnaia Ozereika,⁵⁷³ where there remains some scope on the fringe for the individual in organized remembrance today.

⁵⁷¹ Photograph by Anatolii Pozdniakov (03/02/2013), copyright of the photographer and reproduced with his permission.

⁵⁷² Ol'ga Gailesh, 'Novorossiisk "Beskozyrka 2011"', *MNL*, 04/02/2011, <<http://www.nrnews.ru/news/?id=42581>> [accessed 09/02/2011] and online responses.

⁵⁷³ Although the lack of romanticism in most modern youngsters is bemoaned by G. A. Krympokha in: 'Proshchaite, Galina Alekseevna', *NR*, 22/08/2011, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/3658>> [accessed 02/09/2011].



The *beskozyrka* bearer lays the hat and wreath in the sea⁵⁷⁴

However, this originally spontaneous part of the ceremony has now been incorporated into the main ritual at Malaia zemlia, an indication perhaps of the increasingly centralized control of Beskozyrka, both administratively in the organization by the town council, and physically in the ranks of Cossacks holding the spectators at bay. Such top-down intervention has prompted some negative comments in online discussions about over-organization and the desecration of genuine memory for the sake of political utility.⁵⁷⁵

What started out as a series of sometimes minor innovations and refinements to the invented tradition of Beskozyrka has become a tradition of invented change in its own right. Even in 2012, more changes were still being promised by the press:

⁵⁷⁴ Photograph by Anatolii Pozdniakov (03/02/2013), copyright of the photographer and reproduced with his permission.

⁵⁷⁵ Online responses to Gailesh, 'Novorossiisk "Beskozyrka 2011"', 04/02/2011.

From year to year the movement [...] does not change, but on each occasion the programme acquires new memorial components. This year will be no exception.⁵⁷⁶

Despite the innovations, there is comfort in the continuity of symbolism in the Beskozyrka tradition. With candles, caps and ribbons, its interpretation and essence remain constant, although the consistency of symbolism permits only one interpretation of the past, in accord with the conventions of the war myth, albeit widely endorsed by the local population. My observations and interviews indicate that Beskozyrka still appeals to the same members of society: teachers, cadets and veterans, although the first actors would hardly recognize the scale of today's operation and the veterans are becoming fewer. With the participation of schools, the interest of parents is guaranteed, with some young families new to Novorossiisk learning about Beskozyrka and coming to appreciate local history thanks to their children, as in the case of the original inventors.⁵⁷⁷

In contrast, responsibility for the Beskozyrka ritual, founded by and traditionally associated with the young people of Novorossiisk, was taken over in 1999 by the regional youth committee in Krasnodar, this time involving a committee *for* youth rather than the younger generation themselves, who thereby appear to have lost their ownership of the ceremony. The following year, Beskozyrka became known as a pan-Russian operation, its name today emphasizing its roots: *Vserossiiskaia molodezhnaia patrioticheskaiia aktsiia 'Beskozyrka'* (The Pan-Russian Patriotic Youth Movement 'Beskozyrka').⁵⁷⁸ Despite the implicit geographical expansion, attendees are largely local, with the financial burden of the ceremony falling on the town of Novorossiisk, whose Mayor now takes responsibility for its implementation, possibly

⁵⁷⁶ Evgeniia Simanovich, "'Svechu v okne" mozhet zazhech' kazhdyi', *NR*, 23/01/2012, <<http://www.novorab.ru/>> [accessed 23/01/2012].

⁵⁷⁷ For example F3C, M3E and F4L. See Chapter 5 for a detailed examination of this phenomenon.

⁵⁷⁸ Sokolova, *Beskozyrka*, c. 2005, pp. 17-19.

reflecting some local rivalry over the ownership of memory between the Hero-City of Novorossiisk and the regional centre of Krasnodar. The 2011 advertising pamphlet, published by the region, confirms the continued emphasis on youth participation, although there is no mention of its young founders and their vision, indicating perhaps that the authorities are anxious to take all the credit.

Despite this omission, Podyma, a prolific inventor of tradition both in Novorossiisk and Moscow, has numerous publications on Beskozyrka and other less well-known memorial rituals to his credit.⁵⁷⁹ For over forty years he consistently propagated the myth of Malaia zemlia, building up a legend around the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov', which, he claims, spread from Novorossiisk to other 'outposts' around the Soviet Union.⁵⁸⁰ At the same time he nurtured his own personality cult as its 'romantic' founder and only true guardian of memory.⁵⁸¹ In Novorossiisk Podyma's name has become just as recognized as those of the real heroes of Malaia zemlia. While children learn about the history of Kunikov and his landing troops,⁵⁸² older interviewees are equally likely to speak about the propagation of memory through Podyma's Beskozyrka ritual,⁵⁸³ which has also been assimilated into the local history of the town, albeit a generation younger than the war itself.

The mnemonic vicious circle may have been broken through the tradition of change, but Soviet society's traditional values are increasingly being projected through ritual onto the younger Russian generation, subject today to domination and

⁵⁷⁹ For a description of a ritual invented by Podyma in 1976 to commemorate those who died on the first night of the war in 1941, see Podyma, *Vechnyi ogon'*, 2008, p. 5. Other works on memory by Podyma include: *Na volne pamiati*, Moscow and Novorossiisk: Sentiabr', 2008; *Beskozyrka*, 2008; and *...chtob ikh ne zabyvali my*, 2009.

⁵⁸⁰ Podyma, *Vechnyi ogon'*, 2008, p. 5.

⁵⁸¹ Sokolova, *Beskozyrka*, c. 2005; and Professor Tamara Iurina, "Teleurok grazhdanstvennosti, posviashchennyi 40-letiiu operatsii "Beskozyrka", *Novaia Rossiia*, 03/02/2008. Furthermore, 15,000 documents await scholarly study in Podyma's archive, RGASPI.

⁵⁸² According to the history curriculum of School No. 6 and the Bekar School in Novorossiisk. Information is also propagated in local libraries.

⁵⁸³ A total of 65 out of 124 interviewees.

determination by the élite who now organize Beskozyrka, rather than the young romantic idealists of 1968.

4.2.3 The time and tide of memory

Confiding her personal thoughts during remembrance ceremonies, a respondent reflects: 'I think behind my eyes: I try to imagine it, from films and books, how awful it was: explosions, how they lived. It must have been very hard.'⁵⁸⁴ This statement demonstrates that, even though today's remembrance rituals represent a highly organized communal experience, they nonetheless offer the opportunity for an individual, if silent, response. This is a good example of trans-temporal empathy promoted by a successful memorial ritual, whereby each person's imagination may be converted into a time-machine capable of linking two distant moments in time by the act of memory. The return to the past through anamnestic recall raises the question of the complex temporality of memory with respect to historical time - time which is often perceived as linear and unidirectional, but which may also be perceived as cyclical thanks to the annual rhythm of anniversaries.⁵⁸⁵ Furthermore, during the Beskoyrka reconstructions a reversal of time is apparent on the very same space where the landings took place, reducing the perceived relative time gap between past and present with a resultant increase in identification between present-day participants and the original troops. In this manner, Wolfe argues that 'the past becomes something experienced, rather than understood or examined'.⁵⁸⁶

Monuments tend to preserve the past in the present in much the same way as ritualistic tradition, where cyclical temporal movement gives the impression of static

⁵⁸⁴ F4G.

⁵⁸⁵ A study of the neuroscience of memory is beyond the scope of this thesis.

⁵⁸⁶ Wolfe, 'Past as Present, Myth, or History?', 2006, p. 266.

time around the monumental focus of rituals. However, Mikhail Yampolsky argues persuasively for a special flow of time around a monument rather than time merely standing still:

A monument creates around itself a kind of special temporal expanse in which time moves differently than in other places, a sort of mystical protective zone that surrounds the monument and is apparently connected with the experience of temporal metamorphosis.⁵⁸⁷

In the case of Novorossiisk, those taking part in the Beskozyrka ritual act as time-travellers, approaching the Malaia zemlia monument from the present, crossing the timeless space around it, to arrive in the past via the Brezhnev era as they reach the monument itself. Thus the monument in the shape of the prow of a motor launch, erected in 1982, seems transformed back into the original craft it represents, while its Socialist Realist sculpted depictions of the original 1943 landing troops are transformed into the ranks of the modern soldiers reconstructing the landings. This blurring of time zones evident even today is reminiscent of Socialist Realism, which recycled heroic historical precedents as a fore-taste of the implied reality in the future, thus merging present time with past and promised future.⁵⁸⁸ The static monument and the memory it channels may have outlived the heroes, but still transmit the timeless testimony of non-contestable patriotic heroism appreciated by all stake-holders in the Beskozyrka ritual.

⁵⁸⁷ Yampolsky, 'In the Shadow of Monuments', 1995, p. 96.

⁵⁸⁸ See Chapter 2.2 and Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 2000, p. 40.



Re-enactment of the landings (2)⁵⁸⁹

According to Sokolov, the *beskozyrka* floating on the water is carried by the same waves as in 1943, themselves depicted as insensitive carriers of memory of those who lost their lives: 'They will never return, no, these lads will never return to shore. Only the senseless waves beat on the shore, remembering the past ...!'⁵⁹⁰ Thus the sea itself is deemed to be an agent in the apparent closing of the temporal gap between 1943 and today. Not only the waves recall the night, apparently. A classmate of Konstantin Podyma feels that nature as a whole sees the need to reproduce the conditions of 1943 in tribute to the troops.⁵⁹¹ An aspect of the war myth expressed by respondents of all ages includes the legendary icy wind and stormy weather every year on the night of 3rd - 4th February.⁵⁹² Podyma himself stated on one of his recent visits to Novorossiisk: 'It is appointed by nature that it is always foul weather on 3rd February in Novorossiisk,

⁵⁸⁹ Photograph by Anatolii Pozdniakov (03/02/2013), copyright of the photographer and reproduced with his permission.

⁵⁹⁰ Sokolov, *My s Maloi zemli*, 1979, p. 368.

⁵⁹¹ F6F.

⁵⁹² Sokolova, *Beskozyrka*, c. 2005, p. 14. Interviewees include F2A, F4G, F4I, M5B, F6F and F8C.

with wind, rain, and bitter cold which penetrates to the bones.⁵⁹³ In a masterpiece of understatement, Novorossiiskii rabochii proclaims: 'On this day, tradition is religiously observed not only by citizens, but also by the weather. A warm wind never blows on 3rd February.'⁵⁹⁴ Women, particularly, refer to wearing layers of clothes for the ceremony,⁵⁹⁵ while some men endorse the sentiment expressed by a Novorossiiskii rabochii journalist: 'The harsh weather reminded descendants of the conditions experienced by Kunikov's troops landing in the icy waves of the Black Sea.'⁵⁹⁶ Podyma, describing in 1975 the first Beskozyrka seven years previously, emphasized the similarities: 'The February night was freezing and windy. Exactly the same as many years ago ...'. Even the password on that night reflected the prevalent winter wind in Novorossiisk: *Nord ost* (north-easterly).⁵⁹⁷ In 2012, myth became reality, as hardy citizens turned out in unprecedented temperatures.⁵⁹⁸

There is never good weather on 3rd February. Never! But this year the temperature plunged even below yesterday's -15C, with wind too, a change from the usual more tolerable -3C.⁵⁹⁹

A cyclical, quasi-biological ritualistic chronology may promote an illusion of timelessness and permanence, linking past and present time while offering both continuity and stability.⁶⁰⁰ It is as if traditional time stands still, while historical time marches on regardless. However, thanks to the continuing tradition of innovations

⁵⁹³ 'Fevral'skii poryv', NR, 29/01/2011, p. 3.

⁵⁹⁴ Viktoriia Nikolaenko, "'Beskozyrka" vskolykhнула volny nashei pamiaty', NR, 04/02/2011, p. 1.

⁵⁹⁵ For example F3A, F3K (23/03/2011), F4G, F6D (09/05/2010), F7B (08/05/2010) and F7C (19/03/2011).

⁵⁹⁶ Especially M3A (10/05/2010) and M5B. Evgenii Rozhanskii, 'Zashchitnikam tvoim, podvigu tvoemu, Novorossiisk', NR, 05/02/2014, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/11327>> [accessed 07/02/2014].

⁵⁹⁷ Podyma, Schastlivogo plavaniia, 'Shkhuna Rovesnikov', 1975, pp. 67-8.

⁵⁹⁸ F3A by personal email (04/02/2012).

⁵⁹⁹ 'V Novorossiiske sostoialas' sorok chetvertaia operatsiia "Beskozyrka"', NR, 03/02/2012, <<http://www.nrnews.ru/news/?id=47939>> [accessed 04/02/2012]. However prevalent the myth, it could not influence the unusually high temperatures of February 2013: 'Tak zharko v nachale fevralia v krae bylo 30 let nazad', NR, 08/02/2013, p. 2.

⁶⁰⁰ E. Zerubavel, Hidden Rhythms: Schedules and calendars in social life, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

associated with the Beskozyrka tradition, serving to give the impression of a renewed ceremony every year, the circular ritualistic time with its associated danger of stagnation is not so marked.

Over the years since the war, the addenda to the myth of Malaia zemlia, with their own ritualistic chronology, have been incorporated in tandem with the original, producing a uniquely complex local memorial time running alongside the national. The annual cycle of anniversaries is quite demanding: the town library and museum keep a special calendar so that nobody and nothing is forgotten.⁶⁰¹ The erection of wartime monuments hinged on the most well-known anniversaries, many of them having been completed in a significant year after the war. Similarly, books dealing with local history or traditions tend to be published in key years. The Beskozyrka tradition, which was started on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the landings, has its own anniversary, too. One recent book, for instance, links the thirty-fifth anniversary of the landings with the tenth anniversary of Beskozyrka itself, giving almost equal importance to both, indicating that the mythical time of ritualistic tradition has virtually converged with linear historical time.⁶⁰² A newspaper article in 2007 completely misunderstands the dates, though, confusing the commemoration with the actual historical event, and stating that 2007 would see the thirty-ninth anniversary of the landings, rather than the thirty-ninth anniversary of Beskozyrka.⁶⁰³ It is tempting to infer that the journalist was a relatively young person, for whom the fixed temporal horizon of 1968 seemed just as far away as 1943, such that real time and mythical time have actually converged. Certainly, it provides further evidence that, for some at least, the act of commemoration has become

⁶⁰¹ 'Kalendar' znamenatel'nykh i pamiatnykh dat goroda-geroia Novorossiiska na 2012 god: A u nas vse daty-kruglye', *NR*, 25/01/2012, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/4847>> [accessed 26/01/2012]. Not only specifically war-related anniversaries have an impact on people's consciousness: respondents also mention other significant maritime dates, including *Morskoi uzel* (Sailor's knot) (F5A) and *Den' Flota* (Day of the Fleet) (M7D).

⁶⁰² Sokolova, *Beskozyrka*, c. 2005, p. 15.

⁶⁰³ 'Galina Krympokha prochitala lektsiu o vysadke desanta na Maluiu zemliu starsheklassnikam shkoly No. 30', *MNL*, 01/02/2007, <<http://nrnews.ru/news/?id=2729>> [accessed 2/9/2011].

more significant than the distant event it commemorates, while also suggesting that memory of the Malaia zemlia campaign in Novorossiisk is indeed incomplete without the Beskozyrka tradition.

Jan Assmann considers memorial rituals themselves to be suspended from the onward movement of linear time, forming 'islands of time', or 'memorial spaces'. Assmann's reading is supported by Eviatar Zerubavel's observation that what is historically worthy of commemoration appears amplified in time with respect to the mundane, suggesting that time appears to slow down at key points in the calendar. From a similar perspective, Christine Boyer visualizes days of remembrance as 'blank' spaces in the calendar.⁶⁰⁴ My research indicates that time is experienced differently by locals for Beskozyrka and on Victory Day. The latter is always a holiday from work, loved by all and celebrated by families together, both a 'blank' and a red-letter day. On the other hand, Beskozyrka breaks the established socio-temporal order, eating into free time on a long February evening, when many families would prefer to be at home.⁶⁰⁵ They would much rather be strolling the streets on 9th May than 3rd February, suggesting that Beskozyrka does not have the same impact as an 'island' on the memorial calendar as Victory Day.⁶⁰⁶ But since 2010, even the private time of those not taking part in the procession outside has been invaded by ritualistic time thanks to the 'candle in the window' movement, which also demands extra 'memorial space' as the Beskozyrka ritual expands into people's homes.

⁶⁰⁴ Assmann, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', 1995, p. 128; Eviatar Zerubavel, 'Calendars and History: A comparative study of the social organization of national memory', in States of Memory: Continuities, conflicts, and transformations in national retrospection, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick, Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2003, pp. 315-337; and M. Christine Boyer, 'The City of Collective Memory: Its historical imagery and architectural entertainments', in The Collective Memory Reader, ed. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 378-381, p. 381. The semiotic significance of monumental islands in time as well as space, is examined in Yampolsky, 'In the Shadow of Monuments', 1995.

⁶⁰⁵ For a useful discussion on public and private time, see Zerubavel, Hidden Rhythms, 1981, p. 141.

⁶⁰⁶ Indeed, M2H admits that he had to be reminded at the last minute that Beskozyrka was happening, which would not have been the case with Victory Day.

There is no doubting the spatial and temporal expansion of Beskozyrka. What started out as a small-scale evening event now takes up the whole of the day and evening on 3rd February, and most of the previous day, as increasing numbers of delegates from other towns are invited to take part in an ever-longer programme of events in a growing statement of local identity. Furthermore, schools devote the whole month of February to patriotism, the new top topic of the Russian curriculum, almost seamlessly linking history of the landings on 3rd February with Defender of the Fatherland Day (*Den' zashchitnika Otechestva*) on 23rd February.⁶⁰⁷ Similarly, the colonization of time by wartime memorial dates impinges on other existing anniversaries in Novorossiisk. The anniversary of the 1943 liberation falls on 16th September, just days later than the anniversary of the town's foundation on 12th September (1838). A joint poster advertizes a full week of celebrations and processions, merging the original foundation of the town with its post-war re-foundation thanks to the liberation. Here, the more recent memory predominates, with the St George ribbon and other military symbolism covering all advertising material for both anniversaries.

Under many circumstances, a tradition may gradually die out within a few generations due to inertia, reflecting the natural tendency of memory to decrease over time. In the case of Beskozyrka this has not happened, due partly to the programme of innovations and also to the dominant war cult of the Putin era. Since the war cult of the Brezhnev era the national tide has gone out and come back in again, and now, national and local memory seem to be synchronized. It was noticeable when I attended Victory Day in Novorossiisk in 2010 that the local procession was in line temporally with, if spatially distant from, the national celebrations on Red Square, through a projection of national events on an enormous screen. Commemorative time, reinforced by political

⁶⁰⁷ According to the head-teachers of School No. 6 (13/05/2010) and the Bekar School (06/05/2010).

and popular will, seems to have the power to expand flexibly, to colonize adjacent days and even weeks. It is probable, though, that, with the death of the last veterans, time may eventually run in a more linear fashion, when historical rather than mythical time rules memory of the Great Patriotic War, and Malaia zemlia finally becomes distant local history in Novorossiisk.

4.2.4 The turning of the tide

In the Russian Orthodox tradition, the exact site of burial is a vital focus for socially prescribed mourning.⁶⁰⁸ In the case of soldiers lost at sea, with no obvious monument or grave for the individual bereaved family to visit, the simple sailor's cap floating on the waves provides the only focal point for tributes of flowers and the expression of emotion, much as the eternal flame for the Unknown Soldier provides a focus for memorial tribute in Moscow.

The original Beskozyrka ceremony also served to fill a ceremonial vacuum in the Soviet Union. Celebrations in February are not uncommon in other societies to alleviate the tedium and hardship of the long winter before the days lengthen and the signs of spring appear. In a blend of Christian and pagan tradition, many countries hold a carnival week at the beginning of February before the onset of the rigours of Lent, although the traditional Russian carnival *Maslenitsa* was banned in Soviet times. Beskozyrka is neither joyous nor food-orientated, but does involve those elements of flame and liturgy more often associated with church ritual. Similarly, the sailor's hat is borne in procession and laid on the waves in an act resembling an offering to the memory of the landing troops. Reinforcing this interpretation, one respondent throws

⁶⁰⁸ Catherine Merridale, 'Russia', in Glennys Howarth and Oliver Leaman, eds., Encyclopedia of Death and Dying, London: Routledge, 2001, pp. 390-1.

sweets and biscuits into the sea behind the hat and the wreaths, as her own small sacrifice to the dead.⁶⁰⁹

Secular collective memory and organized religion have much in common, with 'sacralized' war memory perhaps becoming a surrogate religion or faith system in Novorossiisk. Candles are very often lit in a Russian Orthodox church in an act of memory and are carried by President Putin in official services of remembrance. The quasi-religious symbolism of the liturgy and ritual of Beskozyrka is evident in the symbols of light and fire, the imagery of sacrifice and martyrdom. According to journalist Evgenii Rozhanskii, each small flame in the 'living sea' of candles in the Beskozyrka procession represents 'the soul of a dead soldier'. With implicit religious symbolism, the new 'candle in the window' movement now effectively brings the sacred memorial ritual into the secular home, using the symbolism of the candle to shed light on memory. The placing of the candle on a windowsill, visible from the outside, also breaches any remaining barriers between the collective and the private with respect to memory.⁶¹⁰

Although few Soviet soldiers in the war were overt Christians, the Orthodox Church today is very close to the state, a situation accepted by veterans and encouraged by Putin, who ensures that priests pray for the war dead.⁶¹¹ The joint influence of state and Church should aid in principle both the retention of collective memory and the inculcation of conservative moral values. However, some of my respondents did not feel the necessity for the presence of a priest at Beskozyrka,⁶¹² viewing it as a purely secular occasion, despite the claim by local priest Father Georgii Fedorenko that 95% of

⁶⁰⁹ F7C.

⁶¹⁰ Barbara Misztal, 'Durkheim on Collective Memory', *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 3, 2003, pp. 123-143, p. 139; Merridale, *Ivan's War*, 2006, p. 378; and Rozhanskii, 'Zashchitnikam tvoim, podvigu tvoemu, Novorossiisk', 05/02/2014.

⁶¹¹ Merridale, *Ivan's War*, 2006, pp. 378-9.

⁶¹² Particularly male interviewees M5D, M5F and M7B, who stressed the mixture of faiths and ethnicities of the original troops.

the population of Novorossiisk are Orthodox believers. Father Georgii considers his presence at Beskozyrka to be vital. He has been invited by the Mayor to attend in an official capacity for the last eight years, demonstrating the increasing importance of the Church in Russia both socially and politically. While wearing his own military medals, Father Georgii's role remains largely symbolic, as he is not usually invited to speak, in contrast to his input on other memorial occasions, such as re-interments, requiems and Victory Day.⁶¹³

Russian tradition holds the earth of graves as sacred, with implications for the sanctity of war memory in Novorossiisk through the soil.⁶¹⁴ Anointed through the spilling of heroes' blood, Malaia zemlia has thus acquired the status of holy land. This was recognized by Georgii Sokolov: 'Malaia zemlia [...] is a sacred place for Black Sea troops', with even a sniper's rifle acquiring religious significance for a new generation of soldiers.⁶¹⁵ This sentiment was embedded in the war myth upon the award of Hero-City status to the town in 1973: 'You live on sacred earth, where the blood of defenders of the Fatherland has poured onto every stone', which was captured in the popular song 'Malaia zemlia, sviashchennaia zemlia' (Malaia zemlia, sacred land) of the same year.⁶¹⁶ Respondents confirmed that Malaia zemlia is regarded as 'sacred ground',⁶¹⁷ land 'soaked in blood',⁶¹⁸ while the communal grave on Heroes' Square is regarded as 'the most sacred place in Novorossiisk'.⁶¹⁹ Taking the sanctity of the land to an extreme degree, F5G declared that she would never swim in the sea locally, as it too covers

⁶¹³ Interview with Father Georgii (14/03/2011) with corroboration from M1B, M2H, M5D, F7B, F7C and M9A. See also 'Soldaty obreli pokoi', *NR*, 17/09/2012, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/6564/3>> [accessed 07/10/2012].

⁶¹⁴ Merridale, 'Russia', 2001, p. 390

⁶¹⁵ Sokolov, *Malaia zemlia*, 1967, pp. 348 and 354.

⁶¹⁶ 'Malaia zemlia', A. Pakhmutova and N. Dobronravov, 1974; and E. D. Prialkina, 'Novorossiitsy chtiat i pomniat', in *Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine*, 2005, pp. 150-153, p. 150.

⁶¹⁷ M4D, M4E, F5G, M5F, F6D, M6B, M6C, F7B, M9A and the Head of the Local Authority in Myskhako.

⁶¹⁸ M5C, F6D and F7B; F8C regarded the poppies on the wasteland as a symbol of the blood shed there.

⁶¹⁹ M9A.

sacred ground.⁶²⁰ Religious superstition is also evident in flowers placed on one large stone as if on an altar located on the memorial wasteland adjacent to the Malaia zemlia memorial where the Beskozyrka procession ends. Reminiscent of a shrine, this stone is deemed by one respondent to be the site of the miraculous oozing of the blood of heroes from the earth on which they fell, as if in recognition of their martyrdom.⁶²¹

There is no doubt that religion does play a part in memory today, but, according to my evidence, that part is largely in the personal sphere, for example when individuals pay their respects to the fallen by their gravesides on *Den' pamiati i skorby* (Day of Remembrance and Sorrow) on 22nd June, the more solemn anniversary of the start of the war in the Soviet Union in 1941, when a priest is usually present.⁶²² There is a marked difference in tone of private commemoration concentrating on the pain of loss with the larger, official ceremonies which employ generalized expressions of martyrdom, sacred duty, love of the Motherland and patriotism.⁶²³

Issues of personal mourning may no longer be applicable so long after the war, but individuals must still make a choice whether or not to attend a traditional ritual, even if subject to group pressure. The evidence in Novorossiisk demonstrates a strong commitment by attendees to the Beskozyrka ceremony in the face of often daunting weather conditions which serve only to strengthen the bond between those remembering and those remembered. Most participants in the Beskozyrka tradition are not simply passive spectators, but are able to justify their presence, usually accepting some physical discomfort as an aid to their interpretation of the ritual. This may not always be true for those simply watching a reconstruction, but it remains the case for those making the longer journey to the beach at Iuzhnaia Ozereika outside Novorossiisk. Here, the

⁶²⁰ F7B considered the water to have been 'red with blood'.

⁶²¹ M3A.

⁶²² F7B and F7C.

⁶²³ For a similar observation in the United States following the Vietnam War, see Bodnar, 'Public memory in an American city', 1994, p. 75.

genuinely involved younger participants are compared favourably with the original *Shkhunatiki* by Galina Krympokha, an Honoured Citizen of Novorossiisk, who is credited with keeping the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov' and its crew afloat over the long years since its inception: 'There are no indifferent eyes there'.⁶²⁴

It is possible that the current wave of nostalgia for the Soviet Union plays a role in the popularity amongst older people of rituals of remembrance dating back to the Brezhnev era. In contrast, there is evidence that some young adults may have experienced enough of the Beskozyrka tradition following years of enforced participation as school-children.⁶²⁵ However, the tradition is re-fuelled with fresh blood as newcomers to the area seem keen to attend the ceremony,⁶²⁶ while locals bring friends from further afield to experience it at first hand,⁶²⁷ attracted by the unique maritime connotations of the ritual.⁶²⁸

It is clear that there remains a place today for traditional ritualistic ceremony in this modern, youth-oriented society, despite the fact that an established tradition may be regarded as a sign of conservatism in a society, as it simply maintains the status quo. In Novorossiisk my evidence suggests that the combination of the new state-sponsored war cult of the Putin era, with the influence of the more reactionary, provincial older generations, is sufficient to counteract the sometimes anti-traditional attitude of young people.

Although currently larger than ever, the numbers attending Beskozyrka remain substantially smaller than those celebrating Victory Day in Novorossiisk, mainly due to the different nature of the remembrance involved. As a celebration of national victory in 1945, Victory Day is less solemn than Beskozyrka, although a requiem for the dead is

⁶²⁴ 'Fevral'skii poryv', *NR*, 29/01/2011, p. 3; and Tat'iana Staroverova, *NR*, 30/11/2010, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/1733>> [accessed 02/09/2011].

⁶²⁵ For example, M1A.

⁶²⁶ 8 out of the 12 relative newcomers to the town interviewed claimed that they take part in Beskozyrka.

⁶²⁷ According to F3E (16/03/2011).

⁶²⁸ For example, friends from other towns are invited by M4C (29/03/2011) and F7A.

held early on Victory Day, before the start of the main celebrations. Citizens feel that Victory Day is a different type of event: national, happier and more celebratory, while Beskozyrka demands a more thoughtful approach to memory, which, according to some respondents, comes directly from the romantic soul of the young people of Novorossiisk.⁶²⁹

The continuing sense of identification with Beskozyrka of the younger generation, with the gratitude and participation of many of their elders, maintains a sense of social cohesion that may easily have died out with other traditions during the 1990s. Furthermore, its original, specifically local interpretation endures, despite and also thanks to a series of changes, usually regarded as elements of creative enrichment of the ceremony and recently taking their inspiration from commemorative norms world-wide rather than a small local youth club. Shils may regard originality as the enemy of tradition,⁶³⁰ but, in Novorossiisk, it has helped to avoid any dilution of meaning and has guaranteed the longstanding popularity of Beskozyrka, which is now at an all-time high, with no sign of ritual fatigue. Official council figures state that 15,000 participants in 2011 remembered the heroes of 1943,⁶³¹ while figures for 2013 suggest that a record 23,500 attended the ceremony (10% of the total population of the town), an indication of the growing popularity of the tradition.⁶³² Although Beskozyrka remains a ceremony reinforcing local identity, Podyma has claimed that visitors from 270 other towns have taken part over the years.⁶³³ In 2011, for example, delegates were invited from other hero-cities to take part in a series of events and a ritual on a much larger scale, while

⁶²⁹ Voiced by several respondents, particularly F3I.

⁶³⁰ Shils, *Tradition*, 1981, p. 236.

⁶³¹ 'V Novorossiiske proshla Vserossiiskaia vakhta pamiati "Beskozyrka-2011"', *Ofitsial'nyi sait administratsii i Dumy munitsipal'nogo obrazovaniia gorod-geroi Novorossiisk*, 04/02/2011, <<http://www.admnvrsk.ru/index.php/2010-02-26-12-44-41/4277--1-2011r>> [accessed 09/02/2011]. This figure was revised upwards to nearer twenty thousand by the local press: Gailesh, 'Novorossiisk "Beskozyrka 2011"', 04/02/2011.

⁶³² Provisional figure from Deputy Mayor Maiorova (05/02/2013).

⁶³³ Podyma, *Beskozyrka*, 2008, p. 47. Podyma claims that, over the 45 years since its inception, 350,000 people have taken part in the ceremony: Oksana Mashkarova, 'Novorossiisk pomnit!', *NR*, 05/02/2013, p. 1.

coverage on the national television news confirmed the status and identity of Novorossiisk nationwide.⁶³⁴ With the national focus in 2013 on the seventieth anniversary of victory in Stalingrad,⁶³⁵ however, the only visiting delegation to Novorossiisk was from the regional capital, Krasnodar. The considerable local and national media hype serves to convince many younger respondents that Beskozyrka is famous world-wide, such that they express naïve surprise that it remains unknown in Western Europe.⁶³⁶

For today's ritual, it is the town council which bears the brunt of, and takes the credit for, the organization of Beskozyrka. This indicates a new uncompromising recognition of the significance of the ceremony on the part of the town. It is in this respect that responsibility for the propagation of memory has changed most significantly, with the original transmission of Beskozyrka by the younger generation now centralized and controlled by the local authorities, and the only remaining spark of individuality and spontaneity on the periphery now formally incorporated into the official mainstream narrative at Malaia zemlia.

Young people in Novorossiisk appear today to be less able or willing to use their own initiative in the field of memory than in the Brezhnev era. What started as a rare example of a bottom-up ritual in the Soviet Union, albeit under the not insignificant influence of the Brezhnev era war cult and possibly the Komsomol leadership, has become more like the top-down type of invented tradition described by Hobsbawm, with its stress on the propagation of social values through collective memory. As Russia experiences a second cult of war memory under Putin, the Soviet emphasis on patriotism and moral education of the young are once again in evidence, affording

⁶³⁴ 'Novosti', Pervyi kanal , 0900, 04/02/2011), <<http://www.1tv.ru/newsvideoarchive/pd=04.02.2011>> [accessed 08/07/2012].

⁶³⁵ This took place on 2nd February, while the Beskozyrka ceremony was on 3rd February 2013.

⁶³⁶ See also reference to the alleged fame of the 'Shkhuna Rovesnikov' in its heyday throughout the Soviet Union: Evgenii Lapin, "'Shkhuna" ne spuskaet parusa', NR, 08/11/2010), <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/1509/24>> [accessed 20/11/2011].

national and local conditions under which this unique remembrance ritual is thriving and where increasing empathy with the landing troops is demonstrated. It is notable also that, although started under Brezhnev, this ceremony has no connection with the former General Secretary, focusing instead on the individuals who died, and thus serves to deflect attention from his memoirs. There may be a growing audience of schoolchildren to ensure its future propagation, but, nonetheless, the tradition would not last unless enjoying popular approval from the public as a whole, with the support of local and regional authorities. The proactive maintenance of this tradition with its regular re-invention helps to define the mnemonic identity of the Hero-City of Novorossiisk and ensures that the myth of Malaia zemlia remains at the heart of the local community.

4.3.1 The place of the dead within collective memory: Trees, trenches and topography

Мы были большими, как время.
Мы были живыми, как время.
Теперь —
мы в легендах прославленных дней.
Теперь —
мы в поэмах и прозе.
Теперь —
мы в граните и бронзе
Теперь —
мы в безмолвье могильных камней.⁶³⁷

Ritualistic commemoration is only one means of keeping war memory alive. Respect for the dead is demonstrated in other ways, more often individual rather than collective and less organized rather than planned, traditional remembrance. However, with natural lapses of memory and the death of living witnesses, each successive generation becomes further removed temporally, if not spatially, from the events of 1943, leading to the dissipation of memory with the passage of time. In this respect, memory behaves in a similar fashion to the thermodynamic concept of entropy.

Entropy may be described as the probability of a closed system existing in a particular state, or simply its degree of disorder.⁶³⁸ Thus highly organized solids possess a low entropy, while more randomly organized fluids are higher in entropy. Entropy increases naturally with time,⁶³⁹ as organization of a system inevitably decreases, unless energy is expended in counteracting the resultant disorder. I shall therefore invoke the concept of 'societal entropy' as a useful tool for analysing the effects of the relentless

⁶³⁷ 'We were as big as time./We were as alive as time./Now we are found in legends of those renowned days./Now we are found in epic poems and prose./Now we are found in granite and bronze./Now we are found in the silence of gravestones.' Robert Rozhdestvenskii, 'Pesnia pavshikh v boiu' (1971), Robert Rozhdestvenskii: Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh, Vol. 2, Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1985, p. 496.

⁶³⁸ More scientifically, entropy, S , is equated to $k \ln W$, where k is the Boltzmann constant, and W the number of possible molecular arrangements (R. D. Harrison, ed., Revised Nuffield Advanced Science Book of Data, Harlow: Longman, 1984, p. 148).

⁶³⁹ This is one implication of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, see, for example, Graham Hill and John Holman, Chemistry in Context, Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson, 1989, p. 395.

flow of physical time since the war in Novorossiisk. Without man-made intervention, the passage of time and natural increase in entropy would lead eventually to the complete atomization of memory resulting in collective forgetting. When external agencies intervene in the natural process, however, time can appear to stand still, and even go into reverse, as order is re-imposed on the natural process of decay. This process of reorganization demands the input of considerable energy: from the state in the form of a dominant war cult; from a community with the collective will to retain memory of the past through ritualistic and monumental remembrance; and even from exceptionally motivated individuals. It has been shown that energy is expended annually by the community in maintaining and even enriching the Beskozyrka tradition, rather than letting the tradition die out. Similarly, most local monuments are maintained rather than being allowed to fall into disrepair. It will therefore be argued that war memory in Novorossiisk exhibits an unnaturally low entropy status, a reflection of the collective will to promote and maintain respect for the dead.

The modern town of Novorossiisk is a geographically limited memorial site, its topography a dynamic testament to the priorities of the community. The mnemonic identity of the Hero-City of Novorossiisk was largely established during the Brezhnev era when many monuments were erected and new streets named. An equilateral triangle inscribed across the bay delineates maritime memory, linking an existing World War I naval monument to the 'Defence Line' arch (1978), marking the Soviet front just outside Novorossiisk in the north-east, to the Malaia zemlia monument opposite, a stylistic motor launch which replicates the abstract triangular shape in concrete.⁶⁴⁰

⁶⁴⁰ Information and plans thanks to the head of the regional planning department for monuments in Novorossiisk (01/04/2011).



The Malaia zemlia memorial (1982)⁶⁴¹

The functional town landscape must tread a fine balance between the need to remember and the need to forget.⁶⁴² Thus the two hundred war monuments and forty-two streets named after war heroes present a real risk to memory inflation and consequent devaluation, with the possibility that they may gradually fade into the cityscape and be taken for granted.⁶⁴³ With the Brezhnev memorial statue a notable exception, monuments, once placed in their permanent position, normally remain there as a testament to collective memory, even if human memory starts to fail. However, the natural increase in entropy with time also dictates the gradual decay of stone and concrete. Shelley's poem 'Ozymandias' (1817) expresses this inexorable process,

⁶⁴¹ Photograph by author (10/05/2010).

⁶⁴² Connerton identifies an inherent failure of war memorials, contending that, once erected, their presence assists communities to discontinue their duty of remembrance. (Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets*, 2009, p. 29.)

⁶⁴³ Prialkina, 'Novorossiitsy chtiat i pomniat', 2005, p. 151; also the constantly updated collection of newspaper articles in the Novorossiisk Gor'kii Library: [Ikh imenami nazvany ulitsy](#). See also Yampolsky, 'In the Shadow of Monuments', 1995, pp. 93-4; and Nina Tumarkin, 'Story of a War Memorial', in *World War 2 and the Soviet People*, ed. John Garrard and Carol Garrard, New York: St Martin's, 1993, pp. 125-146, p. 126.

depicting a monument subsumed by entropy, the decaying remains serving only to emphasize the dominance of time over the memory of a once-powerful ruler.⁶⁴⁴ In contrast, monuments that are well maintained can demonstrate both the desire of a community to retain memory and, transcending time, the importance to the community of the event or people commemorated.

Towns often rely on old buildings as an everyday reminder of their history. This is not the case in Novorossiisk, however, where the joint bombardment of Soviet and occupying forces destroyed 96.5% of pre-war buildings.⁶⁴⁵ In the period of post-war reconstruction it was decided by the state to retain unaltered the shelled former palace of culture adjacent to the cement works as a monument to the damage endured by the town, rather like Dom Pavlova in Stalingrad.⁶⁴⁶ In a similar fashion, on the other side of the main road stands the rusty skeleton of a railway coach bearing the marks of hundreds of bullets. These two monuments have been left deliberately unreconstructed, symbols of the accelerated increase in entropy caused by the violence of war.

There was a danger in the 1990s of many newer monuments falling into permanent disrepair, but this is certainly not the case in today's Novorossiisk, where most show signs not of decay, but rather of well-planned upkeep. Although the state controls the maintenance of some major Brezhnev-era memorials, the upkeep of most is devolved to the regional department for the preservation of monuments, and thence to local agencies. The Mayor, possibly with his shrinking budget in mind, holds public competitions to renovate monuments, while encouraging local firms and schools to sponsor the maintenance of their chosen memorial.⁶⁴⁷ For example, although originally

⁶⁴⁴ P. B. Shelley, *Percy Bysshe Shelley: The major works*, ed. Zachary Leader and Michael O'Neill, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 198.

⁶⁴⁵ See footnote 153.

⁶⁴⁶ Information from Galina Surmak. See also A. Gorognichenko, 'Zdanie-pamiatnik', *NR*, 13/09/1973, p. 3.

⁶⁴⁷ The annual Novorossiisk budget for the maintenance of monuments in 2010 was 1.25 million roubles, see 'Raskhody gorodskogo biudzheta', *NR*, 29/06/2010. The state's Ministry of Culture provided 1.4

under state control, and then taken over by the region, the upkeep of the concrete motor torpedo boat erected in 1968 and standing astride the promenade is in the de facto hands of a well-known Novorossiisk company.⁶⁴⁸



Motor torpedo boat monument (1968)⁶⁴⁹

More parochially, in Myskhako, the village just outside Novorossiisk, the budget is stretched by the local authority's encouragement of volunteers to spend weekends in April sprucing up the monuments in this vestige of Communism, the *subbotnik* day, dedicated to the refreshing of collective memory in time for the Victory Day celebrations.⁶⁵⁰

million roubles in 2011, but this was insufficient: Evgeniia Simanovich, 'Pamiatniki – v pochinku', NR, 31/08/2011, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/3753> > [accessed 05/09/2011]. See also 'V Novorossiiske prodolzhaetsia konkurs na luchshee sodержanie pamiatnikov i monumentov', MNL, 11/08/2009, <<http://nrnews.ru/news/?id=37149>> [accessed 04/09/2011]; and Simanovich, 'Pamiatniki – v pochinku', 31/08/2011.

⁶⁴⁸ According to records in the museum archives, the state was in control of this monument in 1974, with responsibility transferred to the region the following year, and back to the state in 1995 for renovations in 1996. A plaque on the monument indicates that the firm 'OOO Delo' sponsored the renovations in 2005.

⁶⁴⁹ Photograph by author (02/04/2011).

⁶⁵⁰ Interviews with the manager of the veterans' council, Myskhako (08/05/2010) and the Myskhako town councillor (23/03/2011).

Monuments demonstrate very low entropy both temporally and materially, while the present is fluid and ever-changing, always fading into the more entropic future. Unlike rituals, which may and do change, monuments and their associated space and time are generally more resistant to change. The monument's temporal stagnation neglects, however, the ravages that may be wrought by time itself, with its increase in entropy effecting a degradation as in the case of Ozymandias, which could well serve to diminish and alter its significance in the future. Moreover, a monument may reign in its own time-zone and space, but time moves on around it, during which its surroundings may change, potentially undermining the monument's meaning.

In order to preserve the Malalia zemlia memorial in its own space-time zone, the conservation area around it has been left totally uncultivated,⁶⁵¹ the ground still retaining the lines of the trenches established by the landing troops in the first days of the campaign.⁶⁵² The whole area was curtained off from nearby buildings by a line of 225 poplars, representing the number of days the land was defended. Time may have stood still in the protected area, but it moved rather too quickly on the perimeter. The expected lifespan of the trees was curtailed by the adverse climate in a triumph of entropic decay over man-made order. Likened by Novorossiiskii rabochii to the fallen landing troops, the dead trees were replaced by young ash trees in 2010, prized for their robustness in extremes of weather, and sourced, ironically, from Berlin.⁶⁵³ Continuing the simile, the head of the council's environmental department observed that the landing troops also wore green, and that the red autumnal leaves of the ashes recall the spilled blood of the brave troops.⁶⁵⁴ Today, the thin ranks of young trees stand guard over the

⁶⁵¹ According to documents held in the office of the museum archivist, the state is responsible for the monument's upkeep, while local authority architects are responsible for the area around it.

⁶⁵² See Rozhanskii, 'Zashchitnikam tvoim, podvigu tvoemu, Novorossiisk', 05/02/2014.

⁶⁵³ Viktoriia Nikolaenko, 'Nemetskie iaseni budut derzhat' oboronu na Maloi zemle', NR, 05/11/2010.

⁶⁵⁴ This observation is reminiscent of the widespread belief, particularly amongst older female interviewees (F5J, F5K, F6F and F8C), that the poppies flourishing on the rough ground around the

sacred site of Malaia zemlia, screening it from the quotidian, thanks to the new generation of local councillors who are actively endorsing the renewed national cult of war memory.

If the Malaia zemlia complex is deliberately kept apart from the encroachment of new buildings, the spatial impact of the Valley of Death complex in Myskhako has been diminished by the intrusive presence of an avenue of large, dark trees and a complex of new houses.⁶⁵⁵ The organized row of tall concrete columns charting the events of the days of April 1943 at the height of the battle still dominates the small area, however, to the detriment of the main 'Explosion' monument, representing the mythical 1.2 tonnes of enemy metal that rained down on each of the Soviet troops on Malaia zemlia.



The 'Explosion' monument (1974)⁶⁵⁶

monument are symbolic of the spilled blood of the landing troops. This may be compared with the symbolism attached to poppies as vehicles of memory in Great Britain.

⁶⁵⁵ Dedicated by Brezhnev during his 1974 visit.

⁶⁵⁶ Photograph by author (10/05/2010).

This sculpture vividly depicts the chaos of war, its shards of metal fused together randomly in a solid representation of a high-entropy situation, where death is just around the corner.

In contrast, the Socialist Realist concrete of most of the other main war monuments in the town is the product of low-entropy, organized memory. This is the case of the monument marking the boundary of Malaia zemlia and occupied Novorossiisk. This example demonstrates further the mainly local significance of the town's monuments, as it depicts the *Malozemelets* Viktor Kaida, recognizable to many in Novorossiisk as he settled here after the war.⁶⁵⁷



'Sailor with the grenade' monument (1972)⁶⁵⁸

However, even seventy years after the war, the memorial landscape of Novorossiisk is not entirely static, with a new generation of statues and memorials for

⁶⁵⁷ Kaida, *Atakuet morskaiia pekhota*, 1980. Designed by two local veterans, the monument was erected in 1972, eight years before Kaida wrote his memoirs.

⁶⁵⁸ Photograph by author (10/05/2010).

the town centre being publicly discussed.⁶⁵⁹ In contrast, on the periphery, some monuments have been allowed to fall into disrepair. When one of the first simple memorials high on the slopes of Mount Koldun started to disintegrate, artist Aleksandr Kamper designed a new monument, erected with his own resources in 2008.⁶⁶⁰ His successful attempt to take on the ravages of time and increasing entropy met with defeat, however, when the department for the preservation of monuments became involved and ordered him to remove the new monument on the grounds that it was not in keeping with the overall plan. Kamper retaliated by accusing the local authorities of being guilty of 'designer' rather than 'genuine' memory.⁶⁶¹ After a second battle of Malaia zemlia, on this occasion a battle for the ownership of collective memory, during which Kamper won the support of the local press and its readers, his monument was eventually officially recognized in 2009.⁶⁶² Kamper's supporters believe that the officials should be grateful for his help, deeming them reluctant to spend limited resources on the proper maintenance of outlying memorials, while concentrating largely on the more high profile, central monuments.⁶⁶³ In this case, overwhelming popular support from below succeeded in overcoming the top-down organization of monuments, which normally carries more weight than any bottom-up individualization of memory.

It is fair to say that the town is doing (almost) everything in its power to maintain monumental memory of Malaia zemlia. Spontaneity with regard to ritualistic tradition

⁶⁵⁹ For example, according to F5I, M6F and M7B, consultation is taking place about the popular demand from older residents for the erection of a monument to the *khamsa*, the small fish, which, according to the local war myth, kept the partisan population from starvation during the occupation. A new monument to sailors' wives has recently been erected on the promenade.

⁶⁶⁰ Interviews with Aleksandr Kamper (09/05/2010 and 29/03/2011); confirmed by F5J, F5K, F7B and F7C.

⁶⁶¹ Personal emails from Aleksandr Kamper (17/11/2011 and 09/05/2012). It should be noted, that Kamper replaced the original modest obelisk with a large, red, Soviet-style metal star, possibly not to everyone's taste.

⁶⁶² Matvei Prokopenko, 'Initsiativa nakazuema?', *Nash Novorossiisk*, 25/09/2008, <<http://www.nnvrsk.ru/?article=1891&fullarticle=print>> [accessed 16/11/2011]; and Matvei Prokopenko, 'Kampera ne tol'ko zametili, no i priznali', *NN*, 23/04/2009, <<http://www.nnvrsk.ru/?article=2519&fullarticle=print>> [accessed 16/11/2011].

⁶⁶³ Particularly F3K and F7B.

may be viewed as 'romantic', perceived to be at the heart of the bottom-up invention of the Beskozyrka ritual, but, where recent ceremonies and monuments are concerned, the organization of memory is paramount to the local authorities. Bottom-up individualization exists on the periphery, but is discouraged by top-down bureaucracy. Veterans may be succumbing to the effects of ageing, but monuments, in this respect, are more permanent than living memory, thanks to careful preservation which reverses the natural increase of entropy with time. If this maintenance should be halted, when there is perhaps no longer the political will or financial resources available, then chaos would set in, and monuments and memory crumble.

4.3.2 People on the periphery

Not only monuments but also dead bodies increase in entropy with decay. In the light of the distribution of the fallen on Malaia zemlia, the ongoing task of collecting together their scattered remains in order to pay due respect according to traditional values also involves an organizational decrease in entropy. Although thirty-seven communal graves have been established in Novorossiisk since 1943, the town still appears anxious to provide a fitting place of rest for all the fallen.⁶⁶⁴ In 2010 all the war dead from the town cemetery on Myskhakskoe Shosse were transferred to a new burial place across the road with a view over Malaia zemlia.⁶⁶⁵ New marble plaques list the names of over 2,500 war dead of several nationalities, gathered together in this probably now final resting place.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶⁴ Evgenii Aleksandrov, 'Bratskaia mogila', *NR*, 24/09/2010.

⁶⁶⁵ 'Otkryt dlia poseshcheniia monument na Myskhakskom shosse', *NV*, 11/05/2010, p. 2.

⁶⁶⁶ Personal inspection indicated Armenians, Georgians and Ukrainians and the grandfather of the current president of Kabardino-Balkaria.

Not all lie in such salubrious circumstances, however. F7C has spent her retirement years collecting money to ensure the decent burial of the fallen. This altruistic 'Mother Teresa' of Novorossiisk, according to her friends, raised the money for the construction of new crosses on the site of a dozen vandalized graves in Myskhako, testimony that not all show the same respect for memory of the dead.⁶⁶⁷ Following her intervention, Maritime Academy cadets have taken on responsibility for the upkeep of the graves. Similarly, Aleksandr Kamper discovered two metal plaques in a Myskhako school yard, discarded from a nearby monument. Having found temporary, wooden boards in their place, with the names of the deceased written in marker pen, he successfully campaigned for the restoration of the original plaques.⁶⁶⁸ The battle against entropy is apparently not yet over in the outlying areas.

Any high entropy, disorganized pattern of death is disturbing in the Russian tradition, where it is culturally important to bury a soldier near to home in order to complete the grieving process and enable remembrance to be conducted with both humanity and respect.⁶⁶⁹ Relatives still come to Novorossiisk in search of information about their ancestors, for example M6H, who travelled to Myskhako from the Urals in 2010 in search of the final resting place of his father. Thanks to the meticulous records of the Veterans' Council, he was shown the communal grave where his father lay and was able for the first time to mourn his death as a result of his pilgrimage.

According to local historian Tamara Iurina, it is impossible to quantify the number of dead in the campaign, with estimates ranging up to 30,000.⁶⁷⁰ What is

⁶⁶⁷ Interviews with F6D and F7B.

⁶⁶⁸ Matvei Prokorenko, 'Plity – na lom?', *NN*, 08/10/2008.

⁶⁶⁹ Karen Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011, pp. 41-42. See also Merridale, 'War, death and remembrance in Soviet Russia', 2000; and Merridale, 'Russia', 2001, p. 390.

⁶⁷⁰ Interview with Professor Tamara Iurina (05/05/2010).

undeniable, however, is that bodies continue to be exhumed, in a process lauded by the press, which sees the execution of search work a patriotic duty:⁶⁷¹

On the slopes of Mount Koldun and Sakharnaia golova outside Novorossiisk, and the Anonymous Heights around Iuzhnaia Ozereika, our soldiers' bones lie bleaching... It is said that the war will not be considered finally over until the last fallen soldier is buried.⁶⁷²

Recently, over forty bodies were found on the shore in a hitherto unknown communal grave dating from the first days of the Malaia zemlia campaign.⁶⁷³ Sometimes bodies are found during excavations prior to building or reconstruction work; for example five skeletons were exhumed in 2009 under the auspices of the *Novorossiiskii tsentr poiskovykh rabot* (Novorossiisk Centre for Search Work) during the laying of foundations for a new school sports hall.⁶⁷⁴ Most exhumations, however, follow the location of bodies on Mount Koldun, which is constantly, if not entirely systematically, being searched by small groups of amateurs licensed by the Ministry of Defence. Teams must be fully trained and accredited in the appropriate methodology and are financed jointly by the state, the region and the local authorities, with some voluntary contributions.⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷¹ Evgenii Lapin, 'Novorossiisk pomnit', *NR*, 18/09/2013, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/10115>> [accessed 13/12/2013].

⁶⁷² Denis Kurov, 'Nikto ne zabyt?..', *7 dnei Kubani*, 18/05/2003, p. 2.

⁶⁷³ Evgenii Rozhanskii, 'Bratskaia mogila imen ne sokhranila', *NR*, 03/10/2013, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/10267>> [accessed 13/12/2013].

⁶⁷⁴ Documentary evidence provided by the Head of School No. 6.

⁶⁷⁵ *Voprosy uvekovecheniia pamiati pogibshikh pri zashchite Otechestva*, 2006; *Zakon Krasnodarskogo kraia o poiskovoi rabote*, 1997; and *Protokol ekskumatsii odinochnogo zakhroneniia*. President Putin wishes to introduce military supervision for search work to ensure that no explosives fall into the wrong hands, according to 'Russia: Digging up the Dead', *BBC Radio 4*, 13/01/2014.

M4D, an amateur archaeologist for over thirty years, is leader of the local branch of the regional search organization 'Nabat', which has several teenage members.⁶⁷⁶ He spends his weekends on Koldun with a metal detector, searching for the bodies of dead soldiers in order to have them reinterred in a respectful and organized way.⁶⁷⁷ Unexploded grenades and shells are frequently unearthed and destroyed by experts; indeed, in 2010 M4D was decorated with the *Za razminirovanie* medal, awarded to those whose search work has led to the destruction of more than 3,000 explosive devices.⁶⁷⁸ According to M4D, his sons often accompany him into the forests of Koldun, which he sees as an opportunity to pass on memory, expertise and a love of local history. He regards this activity not only as aiding the propagation and organization of memory, however. In common with the inventors of Beskozyrka, M4D finds the whole adventure 'romantic', thanks to the combination of fresh air and nature during a night in the open 'by a campfire, under the starry sky'.⁶⁷⁹ It is this element of romanticism which has become synonymous with genuine and creative war memory from below in Novorossiisk, often to be found on the fringes of society and where young people are involved.

Recently exhumed Soviet bodies are reinterred every year in September, the anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk, in a tradition dating from 1998. Sixty-two were buried in the cemetery on Kabakhakha Hill overlooking Novorossiisk in 2012, with a further twenty-five in 2013, while thirty-five bodies discovered on Koldun were

⁶⁷⁶ Krasnodarskaia kraevaia obshchestvennaia poiskovaia organizatsiia 'Nabat'. The word means a funeral bell. Such search organizations were formed originally in the 1960s, see Wolfe 'Past as Present, Myth, or History?', 2006, p. 267.

⁶⁷⁷ M4D by personal email (12/04/2011).

⁶⁷⁸ Official statistics show that 83 hand-grenades and 655 mortars were dug up in the area as recently as 2004: E. V. Romanov, 'Krovotochashchie rany voiny', in *Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i Pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine*, 2005, pp. 158-161, p. 160. F4C and F5G mentioned recent press reports of children losing limbs to unexploded devices. The Head of the Novorossiisk Historical Association confirmed the occasional discovery of 500kg unexploded bombs in outlying suburbs (26/03/2011).

⁶⁷⁹ M4D by personal email (12/04/2011).

interred in 2010 in the communal grave in the centre of Myskhako.⁶⁸⁰ This gradual but substantial decrease in entropy brings together the scattered remains of decaying bodies, so that they may finally be identified, if possible. The details and personal possessions of newly discovered soldiers are passed to the town museum's archivist, who works meticulously on the identification process.⁶⁸¹ The names are then entered into a memory capsule inside a red heart 'beating' at the apex of the triangular Malaia zemlia monument, the pinnacle of centralized memory in Novorossiisk, both spatially and organizationally. In 1982, when the monument was originally dedicated, 5,000 names of the fallen were listed in the capsule. Every year, on 8th May, new names are added in what is called *Aktsiia pamiat'* (the Memory Movement). Reflecting the amount of search and identification work carried out recently on the site of Malaia zemlia and the slopes of Mount Koldun, a significant 991 new names were added in May 2012, with a further twenty-three on 16th September, the thirtieth anniversary of the erection of the monument, making a total of over 14,000 identified dead troops afforded the official and central respect the town deems due to them.⁶⁸²

Following lobbying by groups of amateur searchers, the state has recently committed to recognizing the fact that thousands of bodies across Russia still remain where they fell in the war. The remains of the first 'unknown soldier' were laid in the Aleksandrovskii Garden alongside the Kremlin wall on 3rd December 1966, at the start of the Brezhnev era war cult. In 2014 the same day was officially named the Day of the

⁶⁸⁰ Aleksandrov, 'Bratskaia mogila', 24/09/2010; 'Soldaty obreli pokoi', *NR*, 17/09/2012, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/6564/3>> [accessed 07/10/2012]; and Lapin, 'Novorossiisk pomnit', 18/09/2013.

⁶⁸¹ Interviews with Raisa Sokolova from 28th March - 1st April, 2011; and Raisa Sokolova, *Memorial'nyi kompleks v gorode-geroe Novorossiiske*, Novorossiisk: KADO, 2006, pp. 8-9. Despite this, the director of the town museum stated that 511 bodies remained unidentified in 2010 (interview 12/05/2010).

⁶⁸² 'Iubilei pamiatnika otmenili ritualom "Pamiat"', *NR*, 18/09/2012, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/6565/2>> [accessed 07/10/2012].

Unknown Soldier, one further memorial date in the increasing calendar of special days of the Putin era war cult.⁶⁸³

4.3.3 The forgotten few

The complementary work of the official agencies (the regional monuments planning department, the town council and the museum) and enthusiastic amateur search workers should ensure, in theory, that each individual soldier may eventually be recognized by collective memory. However, some of the bodies discovered on Koldun are inevitably those of the enemy. Experienced searchers recognize that German soldiers were usually buried more carefully than the Soviets, and often wore crucifixes.⁶⁸⁴ Search organizations try to involve families in the repatriation and burial of their dead. A coachload of German relatives visited Novorossiisk in the 1990s,⁶⁸⁵ and a video documentary was made more recently by a further German family travelling to Myskhako to reclaim their ancestor.⁶⁸⁶ If not repatriated, remains of Wehrmacht soldiers are passed on for re-interment to the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge, the German war graves commission.⁶⁸⁷ Since 2008, soldiers from the Kuban' front have been buried in a new German war cemetery in Apsheronk, the only one in the south of Russia,⁶⁸⁸ as there is no German cemetery in Novorossiisk, due apparently to continuing prejudice against the occupiers.⁶⁸⁹ Although the searchers themselves claim to care

⁶⁸³ 'V Rossii otmechaiut Den' Neizvestnogo soldata', *AIF*, 03/12/2014, <<http://www.aif.ru/society/history/1396958>> [accessed 05/12/2014].

⁶⁸⁴ M4D, F2F and M5E.

⁶⁸⁵ According to F5M.

⁶⁸⁶ Robert Gold, 'Du sollst nicht töten!', Germany: 2010. A copy is now held in the local school museum by history teacher F5F.

⁶⁸⁷ Information from M4D. *Volksbund*, <<http://www.volksbund.de>> [accessed 25/02/2012].

⁶⁸⁸ Anna Lebedeva, 'Krasnodarskii krai. V Apsheronke ofitsial'no otkryto nemetskoe kladbishche', *Novaia gazeta*, 08/09/2008, <<http://www.novayagazeta.ru/news/38745.html>> [accessed 25/02/2012].

⁶⁸⁹ Confirmed by Sergei Novikov, Chair of the Novorossiisk Historical Association; and Dr. V. V. Denisov, Head of the Faculty of History and Philosophy at the Maritime Academy. For similar objections

equally for bodies from both sides, they accept that it would be hard for most locals to treat German soldiers with the empathy shown to the Soviets.⁶⁹⁰ It seems that the myth of Malaia zemlia is not yet ready to accommodate a German war cemetery in the town:⁶⁹¹ German trees may be welcome in Novorossiisk, but German bodies offer only awkward and unwanted memories of the 'fascist enemy' still popularly depicted with hatred.⁶⁹²

One focus of revulsion for the enemy is a twenty metre obelisk at Volch'i Vorota, an isolated spot six miles to the northwest of Novorossiisk, which commemorates the many nameless civilians who were taken there by the Gestapo and shot during the occupation of Novorossiisk in an action superficially similar to Holocaust events in Ukraine. Indeed, the very name of the monument, '*Nepokorennym*' (To The Unvanquished), is reminiscent of the film '*Nepokorennye*' (The Unvanquished) about the execution of Kiev's Jews at Babii Iar in 1941.⁶⁹³

This monument was erected on the twentieth anniversary of the liberation of Novorossiisk in September 1963, one of the first to appear outside the town centre. It was one of two large monuments inaugurated in the same week, marking for the first time the places where hundreds met their death. The main memorial was the stele at Stanichka, standing next to the beach where the landings took place and where the large Malaia zemlia complex would be constructed in 1982. In contrast to the highly visible monument on the shore, however, it may be concluded that the outlying memorial obelisk did not attract much public attention, as it is not mentioned in the leading article of *Novorossiiskii rabochii's* anniversary edition, where other town-centre monuments do

in Belarus, see Amir Weiner, 'In the Long Shadow of War: The Second World War and the Soviet and Post-Soviet World', *Diplomatic History*, 25, 2001, pp. 443-456, p. 443.

⁶⁹⁰ M4D by personal email (12/04/2011).

⁶⁹¹ Extended interview with Sergei Novikov (26/03/2011).

⁶⁹² The popular term is 'fascist occupiers'. Also noteworthy is the 2011 bike show reconstruction of the liberation of Novorossiisk (see Chapter 3.5) showing burning German soldiers falling from a Soviet cruiser. (Personal email from F3K, 07/09/2011.)

⁶⁹³ Mark Donskoi, '*Nepokorennye*', Kiev: Kiev Studios, 1945.

feature.⁶⁹⁴ The difference may be due purely to the location, but also possibly to the fact that the stele commemorates the deaths of service personnel, whereas the obelisk to The Unvanquished is a memorial to civilians. A short article a few days later refers to the thousand 'Soviet patriots' who were 'victims of a mass execution [by firing squad]'.⁶⁹⁵ Similarly, the official entry in the Novorossiisk museum archives refers to a new monument 'erected on the place where the German fascist occupiers carried out a mass execution of residents of the town of Novorossiisk'. According to the plaque on the monument, it commemorates the 'residents of Novorossiisk and the landing troops of the Soviet Army who were tortured and shot on this spot in 1943 by the fascist occupiers', with no mention of the Jewish population of the town being specifically targeted by the enemy. In both cases the wording about the victims is as generalized as on the Holocaust memorial at Babii Iar, which refers only to the death of 'citizens of Kiev', a euphemism used to signify the city's Jewish population.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁹⁴ 'Pis'mo drugu', NR, 15/09/1963, p. 1; 'Nepokorennye', NR, 24/09/1963, p. 2; and 'Vechnaia pamiat' geroiam', NR, 24/09/1963, p. 2.

⁶⁹⁵ 'Zhertvam massovogo rasstrelia' ('Nepokorennye', NR, 24/09/1963, p. 2).

⁶⁹⁶ Tumarkin, The Living and The Dead, 1994, p. 124; and Zvi Gitelman, 'Politics and Historiography of the Holocaust in the Soviet Union', in Bitter Legacy: Confronting the Holocaust in the USSR, ed. Zvi Gitelman, Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997, pp. 14-42, p. 20. The monument at Babii Iar was not erected until 1976.



Monument to The Unvanquished (1963)⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹⁷ Photographs by author (26/03/2011).

I first heard of the monument's existence after twelve years of annual visits to Novorossiisk. This silence may reflect its geographical position well outside the town, but also the fact that it is not commonly visited, situated also on the periphery of collective memory. A certain reticence about both the presence of the monument itself and the nature of the dead remains, evidence of some discomfort and possibly even of ongoing anti-Semitism in the town. Only four out of 124 respondents (3.2% of my sample) voluntarily mentioned the existence of this monument.⁶⁹⁸ The Jewish woman who first alerted me to its presence maintained that all those executed were Jews,⁶⁹⁹ while an historian was adamant that the victims were simply representative of all those civilians who stayed in the town during the German occupation, mainly ethnic minorities, including Jews, Greeks, Czechs and Tatars.⁷⁰⁰ Another historian, however, agreed that most were Jews, although usually given the blanket term of 'Communists' in a half-hearted denial of a Holocaust event in Novorossiisk.⁷⁰¹

Scholars agree that memory of the war with respect to Jews in the Soviet Union is a troubled area. The lack of certainty about 'The Unvanquished' is a reflection of widespread silence about the Holocaust in the country for decades after the war. Even during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras public debate about Jewish citizens was often couched in generalisms, with the use of euphemisms and 'coded' references. Substantial official anti-Semitism and suppression of information about the Holocaust led to the virtual elimination of specific reference to Jewishness, and many films, plays and poems about the fate of Jews in the war were banned or heavily censored.⁷⁰² Indeed,

⁶⁹⁸ F5I, M5F and two historians: M5E and M6C.

⁶⁹⁹ F5I.

⁷⁰⁰ M5F.

⁷⁰¹ M5E. Merridale points to the state's refusal to acknowledge the special grief of Jewish Holocaust survivors: Merridale, 'War, death and remembrance in Soviet Russia', 2000, p. 76.

⁷⁰² Rumours of mass executions of Jews were mainly accepted only in Jewish families during the war, with little mainstream press coverage and a tendency to universalization of victims through referrals to 'citizens' rather than Jewish victims. Post-war Soviet historiography either failed to mention or simply generalized the mass execution of Jewish citizens. A person's Jewishness was superficially not noteworthy, in contrast with the situation earlier in the twentieth century and even during the war, when

only two years after the erection of the Novorossiisk monument, Elie Wiesel observed amongst the Jewish community in the Soviet Union a constant fear of informers, finding Jewishness 'somewhere between a dirty word and a state secret'.⁷⁰³ During the same period that saw the patriotic foundation of the Beskozyrka movement to commemorate the fallen landing troops of Malaia zemlia, a different type of right-wing, anti-Semitic Russian nationalism was evident in the country,⁷⁰⁴ probably partly responsible for the suppression of full details of a Holocaust event outside Novorossiisk. The continuing lack of explicit reference to Jews cannot be explained merely by the relatively small numbers of murdered Jews in comparison with overall Soviet deaths in the war. While it is possible that the Soviet population genuinely considered ethnicity to be irrelevant within an ideology which embraced internationalism, information about the fate of the Jews in the war was suppressed to the extent that it is only in the last two decades that knowledge of the Holocaust in the Soviet Union has become widely disseminated.⁷⁰⁵ In Novorossiisk lessons on the mass execution of Soviet Jews are now delivered in schools

the Soviet intelligentsia included a high percentage of Jews, who were also prominent in the mediation and reporting of the war itself. There may have been no central state policy in relation to the depiction of Jews in the press during the war, but the overt role and influence of Soviet Jews was downplayed under the guise of 'cosmopolitanism' in the post-war years. See Petr Vail' and Aleksandr Genis, 60-e: Mir sovetskogo cheloveka, Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1988, pp. 269-279; Alexeyeva and Goldberg, The Thaw Generation, 1990, pp. 43-67; Gitelman, 'Politics and Historiography of the Holocaust in the Soviet Union', 1997, p. 18; Brooks, Thank You, Comrade Stalin!, 2000, p. 215; Zvi Gitelman, 'Remembrance of Things Past: Soviet histories and Jewish memories', in Recalling the Past - (Re)constructing the Past: Collective and individual memory of World War II in Russia and Germany, ed. Withold Bonner and Arja Rosenholm, Iyvaskyla, Finland: Gummerus, 2008, pp. 289-302; Jeremy Hicks, 'Confronting the Holocaust: Mark Donskoi's "The Unvanquished"', Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema, 3, 2009, pp. 33-51, pp. 35 and 45; Olga Gershenson and David Shneer, 'Soviet Jewishness and Cultural Studies', Journal of Jewish Identities, 1, 2011; and Berkhoff, Motherland in Danger, 2012, Chapters 6-8.

⁷⁰³ Elie Wiesel, The Jews of Silence: A personal report on Soviet Jewry, trans. Neal Kozodoy, Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1967, pp. 12-14; Gershenson and Shneer, 'Soviet Jewishness and Cultural Studies', 2011; and Arkadi Zeltser, 'Differing Views among Red Army Personnel about the Nazi Mass Murder of Jews', Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History, 15, 2014, pp. 563-590.

⁷⁰⁴ See Alexander Yanov, The Russian New Right: Right-wing ideologies in the contemporary USSR, Berkeley, CA: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1978; and Mitrokhin, Russkaia partija, 2003.

⁷⁰⁵ David Shneer, 'Picturing Grief: Soviet Holocaust Photography at the Intersection of History and Memory', American Historical Review, 115, 2010, pp. 28-52.

by the local Jewish community,⁷⁰⁶ but do not feature specifically in the mainstream school curriculum.⁷⁰⁷

If the monument to The Unvanquished outside Novorossiisk in fact recalls a Holocaust event, it is not, however, included in The Black Book of such mass executions in the Soviet Union, nor is there any reference to it in Iurina's recent history of the battle for Novorossiisk, or the new historical guide to the town.⁷⁰⁸ According to the head of the regional planning department in charge of the maintenance of monuments in Novorossiisk, a war commission reported in Novorossiiskii rabochii in January 1945 referred to the deaths on this spot of 425 Red Army soldiers and some sixty civilian women and children in 1942 and 1943. However, the Novorossiisk library today refers to the deaths of seven thousand 'peaceful citizens and prisoners of war', while the research website of the 'Babi Yars' organization has claimed that 1,000 of the pre-war population of 1,595 Jews in the town were shot here.⁷⁰⁹ Although the latter two claims are not incompatible, the death of 1,000 Jews out of a total of 1,595 represents a substantial proportion (63%) of the Jewish population of Novorossiisk, a statistically significant figure hidden in the library's overall number of 7,000 citizens out of an overall pre-war population of over 109,000 (which represents only 6% of the total number).⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁶ 'Uroki Kholokosta v Novorossiiske', Federatsiia evreiskikh obshchin Rossii, 18/01/2006, <<http://www.feor.ru/news/index.php?newsid=1861>> [accessed 15/01/2014].

⁷⁰⁷ Information from the curriculum of School No. 6 and the Bekar School.

⁷⁰⁸ Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, The Black Book: The ruthless murder of Jews by German-fascist invaders throughout the temporarily-occupied regions of the Soviet Union and in the death camps of Poland during the war of 1941-1945, trans. John Glad and James S. Levine, New York: Holocaust Library, 1981; Iurina, Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie, 2008; and Erokhin, Novorossiisk, 2012.

⁷⁰⁹ 'Pamiatnik "Nepokorennye"', Tsentral'naia gorodskaiia biblioteka im. Gor'kogo, <http://www.ballion.ru/pamiatnik_nepokorennye.html> [accessed 15/01/2014]; and 'Krasnodarskii krai', Babi Iary Rossii: Memorialy zhertv kholokost,

<<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:8fsudwz11qUJ:www.holomemory.ru/place/89%3Fregion%3D35+%&cd=4&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk>> [accessed 15/01/2014].

⁷¹⁰ Erokhin, Novorossiisk, 2012, p. 55. This pre-war figure was, however, reduced considerably by the early days of the German occupation by the departure from the town of refugees and those serving in the armed forces.

If the background of the victims remains uncertain, so too does the date of the mass execution. The Babi Yars organization has stated that the Jewish population in Novorossiisk was massacred on either 22nd September or 16th October 1942,⁷¹¹ shortly after the German occupation commenced on 10th September 1942, whereas witness testimony suggests that any remaining civilians in the town were either shot as partisans or fled the city during the period October 1942 to August 1943,⁷¹² which would accord with the date (1943) on the monument's plaque. It is likely, therefore, that, although the monument is stated to commemorate the deaths of all citizens plus some landing troops over a protracted period, it actually stands on the site of one mass execution of mainly Jewish civilians carried out in the early days of the occupation, while the mass grave was used for further non-Jewish victims during 1943.

According to one newspaper article, which as recently as 2005 makes no specific reference to Jews, the thousands who were summarily executed were mainly women and children, as most of the men had already left to join the army or had been dispatched to German forced labour camps.⁷¹³ In this respect, the monument to The Unvanquished belies the popular myth of *Malaia zemlia*, while the narrative of the events it recalls is similarly marginalized. Most monuments in Novorossiisk support the popular war myth, which extols individual and collective military heroism and martyrdom, rather than recalling the ignominious defeat and subsequent mass death of civilians. This indicates a myth composed of a comfortable, straightforward narrative around a usable past, from which any potentially embarrassing facts have been omitted, just as incidences of industrial unrest or corruption are often side-lined in Britain's war

⁷¹¹ 'Krasnodarskii krai', *Bab'i Iary Rossii*.

⁷¹² 'Nepokorenyye', *NR*, 14/09/2013, p. 9. *Novorossiiskii rabochii* covers this issue in a balanced manner in this recent article, providing testimony from two 'eye-witnesses' of the occupation: one a member of a Jewish family who recalls the German orders to the Jewish population to gather together prior to their execution, and one with connections to the partisan movement.

⁷¹³ Evgenii Rozhanskii, 'Nepokorenyye', *Vol'naia Kuban'*, 22/01/2005, p. 6.

myth.⁷¹⁴ Indeed, two of the few interviewees who suggested that Novorossiisk did not really deserve its Hero-City status gave the reason that no civilians were present or suffered during the fighting, in contrast with the first tranches of 'genuine' Hero-Cities.⁷¹⁵

The Jewish community is unable to commemorate its dead either individually or communally in the central and concrete fashion enjoyed by other ethnic minorities. For example, the Greek residents of Novorossiisk openly commemorate their own hero, the wartime pilot Vladimir Kokkinaki, whose bust stands in the middle of the town.



Monument to Vladimir Kokkinaki (1975)⁷¹⁶

⁷¹⁴ Connelly, "We Can Take It!", 2010, p. 61. Irwin-Zarecka also notes the elimination of morally repugnant deeds from collective memory, to leave a more comfortable account: Irwin-Zarecka, Frames of Remembrance, 1994, p. 120.

⁷¹⁵ M3A and M7B.

⁷¹⁶ Photograph by author (26/03/2011).

According to respondents of Greek nationality, on Victory Day Greeks gather around the monument to lay tributes of remembrance, singing and dancing in the shade of the trees,⁷¹⁷ while a plaque of remembrance on the wall of the side-chapel of the Uspenskii sobor, the main Russian Orthodox church, lists two hundred names of those of Greek ethnicity who died in the war.⁷¹⁸

Remembrance and respect for the dead of the Jewish community, in contrast, exists on the periphery of official memory, evidence of prejudice and discomfort still to be found in certain hidden and sensitive areas of Novorossiisk's past, despite attempts by the Jewish community to incorporate itself into mainstream war memory through an exhibition in the central Veterans' Council and to present itself as part of the town's rich ethnic heritage in the main children's library.⁷¹⁹ It is probable that the Jewish significance of the monument to The Unvanquished is implicitly acknowledged by many, including possible anti-Semites. It was desecrated in 2003, according to a Jewish information website, which openly accuses the town in general and Novorossiiskii rabochii in particular of racial intolerance, although other monuments with no minority ethnic connotations have been similarly vandalized.⁷²⁰ Unlike the mainstream Soviet troops buried in Novorossiisk, the names of the civilian Unvanquished are not remembered, in contrast with the locally well-known name of the Jewish soldier and poet Pavel Kogan, who was certainly admired by the post-war younger generation, although his ethnicity was not overtly mentioned by the *Shkhunatiki*.⁷²¹

⁷¹⁷ F2F and F4F.

⁷¹⁸ Information from F4F, whose family was deported to Kazakhstan in the war. See also Novorossiiskoe gorodskoe grecheskoe obshchestvo, <<http://www.nvrskgreek.ru>> [accessed 11/01/2015].

⁷¹⁹ 'Dve vystavki v Novorossiiske', 15/09/2005, Federatsiia Evreiskikh Obshchin Rossii <<http://www.feor.ru/news/index.php?newsid=833>> [accessed 08/03/2014]; and 'Vystavka evreiskoi obshchiny v Novorossiiske', Federatsiia Evreiskikh Obshchin Rossii, 26/09/2008, <<http://www.feor.ru/news/index.php?newsid=6414>> [accessed 08/03/2014].

⁷²⁰ 'V Novorossiiske antisemity oskvernili pamiatnik, ustanovlenniy na meste rasstrela natsistami evreev', Sem40: Tsentral'nyi evreiskii resurs, 30/07/2003, <<http://www.sem40.ru/index.php?newsid=53590>>, [accessed 15/01/2014].

⁷²¹ Amir Weiner considers Jewish soldiers 'politically invisible': Weiner, Making Sense of War, 2001, p. 39.

Whereas the press now reports some executions during the occupation,⁷²² evident embarrassment about the monument's significance was shown by the regional officer in charge of monuments, who, when questioned, refused to discuss with me the event commemorated by the memorial. This type of reaction is confirmed by Stephen Lovell, who deems the topic of occupation awkward in view of 'current political concerns' which may imply allegations of collaboration with the enemy within occupied territory in the betrayal of Jewish civilians,⁷²³ certainly not a part of the original war myth, but an area coming under increasing popular and academic scrutiny, particularly in western areas of the former Soviet Union, notably Ukraine and the Baltic states.⁷²⁴

Collaboration during the occupation of Novorossiisk was acknowledged by local historian M5E, while academic F3H confirmed that this is a research topic in local universities. My evidence suggests that collaboration with the enemy is suspected amongst some interviewees, if largely unspoken. Three respondents indicated that occupied cities in Ukraine became 'stigmatized' due to an enemy presence which induced collaboration,⁷²⁵ while Novorossiisk was viewed as above 'contamination' thanks to the 'sacred' presence of the troops on Malaia zemlia,⁷²⁶ which placed the town above suspicion and on a par with Leningrad and Stalingrad. Only after several

⁷²² 'Nepokorennye', 14/09/2013.

⁷²³ Stephen Lovell, *The Shadow of War*, 2010, p. 321.

⁷²⁴ See, for example, Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-44*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 2001; Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and death in Ukraine under Nazi rule*, Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap, Harvard University Press, 2004, p. 77; Jeffrey W. Jones, "'Every Family Has Its Freak": Perceptions of Collaboration in Occupied Soviet Russia, 1943-1948', *Slavic Review*, 64, 2005, pp. 747-770; Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*, USA: University of North Carolina Press, 2005; Olga Baranova, 'Collaboration by the Soviet Citizens with the Nazi Occupation Authorities during the Great Patriotic War: How the issue was represented and treated in Soviet, Western and post-Soviet Russian and Belarusian historiography', in *Recalling the Past - (Re)constructing the Past: Collective and individual memory of World War II in Russia and Germany*, ed. Withold Bonner and Arja Rosenholm, Iyvaskyla, Finland: Gummerus, 2008, pp. 267-276; Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower, eds., *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, testimony, memorialisation*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008; and Karel C. Berkhoff, *Motherland in Danger: Soviet propaganda during World War II*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012, pp. 223-243. See also Gitelman, 'Politics and Historiography of the Holocaust in the Soviet Union', 1997, pp. 33-34.

⁷²⁵ M3A F4C and M5F.

⁷²⁶ F4C and M5F.

meetings did one respondent trust me sufficiently to voice the rumour that the Kuban' Cossacks had assisted enemy forces to enter and occupy Novorossiisk, in view of the fact that the town was defeated apparently without much opposition.⁷²⁷ The implication of Cossacks in the occupation is, however, at odds with the official current stance whereby Cossack forces are invited to take part in ceremonies of remembrance, for example Beskozyrka and Victory Day, in an apparent political positioning of the identity of the town around its Cossack heritage as well as its maritime status, in what may represent a vying for position with Krasnodar, the regional capital and historically the base of the Kuban' Cossacks.⁷²⁸ This conservative and potentially nationalistic re-alignment of the identity of the town has, however, provoked questions about the integrity of their inclusion in official ceremonies as they are not 'natives' of Novorossiisk, evidence of ongoing suspicion of Cossacks amongst some residents.⁷²⁹

On the whole, however, the memory message in Novorossiisk demonstrates considerable consensus, with a common attitude to history underlined by a common geographical identity with respect to the war.⁷³⁰ This memory exhibits the low societal

⁷²⁷ F4C, M4A, M4B and F7B. It is alleged that the Soviet plans were betrayed to the German Abwehr, which caused the failure of the Iuzhnaia Ozereika landings: Petr Iliushkin, 'Poisk vedet pogranichnik', Stavropol'skie gubernskie Vedomosti, 11-18/07/2007, <<http://www.guberniya.ru>> [accessed 19/11/2014].

⁷²⁸ On the negative aspects of Kubanocentrism, see S. G. Novikov, 'Istoricheskoe kraevedenie v svete kontseptual'nogo osmysleniia mestnoi istorii', in Istoricheskie zapiski: Issledovannia i materialy, vypusk 4, ed. S. G. Novikov and T. V. Raskatova, Krasnodar: Kubanskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 2003, pp. 300-309, p. 307. The official town news website has a special section on Cossacks in Novorossiisk: MNL, <<http://www.nrnews.ru/news/kazachestvo-novorossiyska/>> [accessed 11/08/2014]. Both F5A and M5E claimed that Cossacks are placed on guard at the central monuments whenever official visitors from Krasnodar visit Novorossiisk. See also Barbara Skinner, 'Identity Formation in the Russian Cossack Revival', Europe-Asia Studies, 46, 1994, pp. 1017-1037; Georgi M. Derluguian and Serge Cipko, 'The Politics of Identity in a Russian Borderland Province: The Kuban Neo-Cossack Movement, 1989-1996', Europe-Asia Studies, 49, 1997, pp. 1485-1500; Hege Toje, 'Cossack Identity in the New Russia: Kuban Cossack Revival and Local Politics', Europe-Asia Studies, 58, 2006, pp. 1057-1077; Marie Jego, 'Cossack cadets fill a gap in Russia's sense of security and patriotism', Guardian Weekly, 26/02/2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/feb/26/russia-cossacks-cadets-volgograd>> [accessed 19/01/2015]; and Courtney Weaver, 'Cossacks ride again as Russia seeks to fill ideological void', Financial Times, <<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d60a9994-a297-11e2-bd45-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2lCriOIoI>> [accessed 20/11/2013].

⁷²⁹ Online response to Gailesh, 'Novorossiisk "Beskozyrka 2011"', 04.02/2011.

⁷³⁰ See further Julie Buckler and Emily D. Johnson, 'Introduction', in Rites of Place: Public commemoration in Russia and Eastern Europe, ed. Julie Buckler and Emily D. Johnson, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2013, pp. 3-12, p. 6.

entropy status typical of considerable organization and centralization, reflecting the energy expended to promote and maintain rituals and monuments by both state and society. Despite the overall control of the authorities, however, it is clear that there is still room on the fringe for the personalization of memory, whether it concerns the family of a German soldier or the distant son of a Soviet battle victim. It is also the case that memory seems more personal in Myskhako, on the periphery of the control of the Novorossiisk authorities, but at the very centre of the worst of the battle. This close-knit community appears to care deeply and genuinely about the honour due to its war dead, seeing them as people rather than mere statistics. Away from the centre of Novorossiisk, the villagers retain a close connection with the earth, demonstrating a greater respect for old Russian burial traditions than huge Soviet monuments. Dissent, when it exists, serves only to promote the values of dignity and humanity in death and remembrance, which sometimes risk being forgotten in the official narrative. Official and unofficial interests often complement each other constructively, with a common mnemonic aim; on occasion, however, the tension between so-called 'designer' and 'genuine' memory is evident in the ongoing local debate over who is the true guardian of memory.

4.4 Conclusion

My research reveals Novorossiisk as typical of contemporary Russian society from the point of view of nationwide commemorative events: Novorossiisk boasts as many if not more monuments than other occupied towns, rendering the town's history difficult to forget. However, remembrance here shows some idiosyncratic features, notably the key monuments specific to the town and the commemorative Beskozyrka ritual, all proving that remembrance was capable of taking on a distinctly local form, even under the centralized and authoritarian conditions prevalent in the Soviet Union. It is largely the unique Beskozyrka ceremony, in addition to the legendary Brezhnev connection, which distinguishes Novorossiisk from other Hero-Cities of the former Soviet Union.

Led by the Mayor and the media, the population as a whole takes part in Victory Day celebrations and many support the Beskozyrka tradition, which continues to complement the nationally propagated war myth. The positive stance of the local authorities on the regular rejuvenation of the local ritual and the maintenance of most central monuments provides evidence of their political utility in promoting the town's mnemonic identity. The battle against the entropic decay of monuments by the ravages of time appears to be won for the moment. The top-down emphasis on organization with respect to both ceremonies and monuments produces a low entropy state for memory with little room for individualization or bottom-up initiative such as that perceived in the foundation of the Beskozyrka movement. On the other hand, and paradoxically despite the increase in centralization of war memory with time, Novorossiisk still professes an admiration for the tradition of romanticism and spontaneity associated with war memory from below.

It is also apparent that, amidst remembrance on a large scale, there is scope for small groups of enthusiastic and committed searchers on the periphery to make a difference on an individual scale, to guarantee the place of the dead both physically and

metaphorically, demonstrating that there is still a place for grassroots action in the memory field. It is here on the geographical fringe, however, that my evidence suggests that any dissent and questioning of the official memory message is more likely to occur.

Respect for the Soviet military war dead is widespread in Novorossiisk, despite isolated instances of vandalism. When it comes to memorialization of non-mainstream groups, notably enemy troops and civilians, my evidence indicates that they are largely ignored both officially and in the popular consciousness. In these cases, respect is only shown by their immediate families in the case of German soldiers, or by the Jewish community, in the case of *The Unvanquished*, where historical silence is evidence of a long-term and ongoing struggle to come to terms with some aspects of the past that do not conform to the official war myth.

My research has also revealed a unique perception of mythical time in Novorossiisk, which expands and contracts flexibly while occasionally dominating historical time. This is a key factor in the establishment of cross-generational empathy and identity, a subject pursued in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

The mnemonic socialization of the young through formal and informal education

Помните!
Через века,
 через года,—
помните!
О тех,
кто уже не придет
 никогда,—
помните!⁷³¹

5.1 Introduction

A group of cynical young searchers for war artefacts outside modern Saint Petersburg is suddenly transported back through time to besieged wartime Leningrad. Their experience of the fear and hardship of soldiers in the trenches builds up cross-generational empathy and even love, which changes their moral perspective on the war. This is the fictional story-line of the film 'My iz budushchego' (We are from the Future), 2008, drawn to my attention by some younger interviewees who claimed that it had influenced young people in Novorossiisk.⁷³² The film addresses the fact that some of the younger generation in Russia are becoming more diffident about the war with increasing temporal distance from historical events. At the same time numbers of veterans and participants in the war are decreasing inexorably, rendering direct transmission of memory to the young less viable. Rather than letting memory of the war fade into history, however, the town of Novorossiisk appears to be promoting mnemonic social cohesion within the framework of a new state war cult through a series

⁷³¹ 'Remember!/Across the centuries, across the years, - /remember! /About those who will never return, - /remember!' From Rozhdestvenskii's 'Rekviem' (1960): Robert Rozhdestvenskii: Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh, Vol. 1, Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literature, 1985, pp. 205-218.

⁷³² M2F, M3B, M3C, M3D, F4C, F4J, F4H and M4D. Andrei Maliukov, 'My iz budushchego', Russia: 2008, the first of a trilogy of films.

of educational measures designed to effect the successful transmission of the agreed local war myth from generation to generation.

This chapter assesses the effectiveness of the inter-generational propagation of the war myth in Novorossiisk by an analysis of the various mechanisms deployed by different social groups within the community of remembrance to educate the younger generation individually and collectively. It is difficult to imagine the propagation of social memory without interaction between members of the community. Different 'frames of remembrance' and 'spheres of influence' around a young citizen exist through agencies such as the state, the family and mainstream educational establishments.⁷³³ Each individual is influenced by the various overlapping social circles of which they are a member, for example in the case of young people the school, youth club, local library or their own immediate and extended family, whilst they are also influenced more remotely by national and local mass media. A spectrum of different agencies of influence, from the individual to the state, may thus be invoked, incorporating a multitude of voices often reinforcing each other, but possibly varying in their attitude to memory. No one of these agencies may offer a totally correct reading of memory, but, when put together, they establish a largely coherent overall narrative.

The education of the young in memory matters takes place both formally and informally: in educational institutions, within the family and in the wider social circle. The aim of this chapter is to identify the most effective means of propagation to the younger generation, those who will in the future potentially bear responsibility for further transmission of the war myth. The formative influence of older generations on the young in the propagation of historical memory through conservative and conserving

⁷³³ Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance*, 1994; Ashplant, et al., 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration, 2000; and Peter Carrier, 'Political and Ethical Contexts of Collective Memories of the Second World War', in *Recalling the Past - (Re)constructing the Past: Collective and individual memory of World War II in Russia and Germany*, ed. Withold Bonner and Arja Rosenholm, Iyvaskyla, Finland: Gummerus, 2008, pp. 245-255.

institutions, such as the family or museums, is well documented in scholarship, where the normative transmission of systems of beliefs and practices is recognized as the root of social cohesion.⁷³⁴ I have observed that this is reinforced in Novorossiisk by a tendency for what I term 'reverse propagation', where the young transmit back the memory message to their elders, a spontaneous phenomenon which serves to consolidate and maintain the myth. In contrast, more modern influences such as the mass media and films may undermine the consistency of transmission, while a rejuvenation of the message has been noted in ritualistic tradition.

Successful cross-generational transmission of memory depends on effective communication between generations, the opposite of any possible generation gap in society which may cause inter-generational tension and lack of understanding. In contrast to Western society, the post-war Soviet Union vaunted the absence of a generation gap, actively encouraging 'meetings of generations' (*vstrechi pokolenii*) whereby the moral education (*vospitanie*) of young people was formally effected by their elders, often citing examples of wartime heroism and patriotism.⁷³⁵ This chapter examines the renewed deployment of veterans today in the *vospitanie* of the young, alongside continuing moral education by family members and teachers, where individual and collective memory of the war is propagated at the confluence of generations.

The very act of transmission of the war myth serves also to reinforce the identity of all citizens of Novorossiisk with respect to the Malaia zemlia campaign, linking them in a quasi-familial mnemonic chain to the landing troops. My analysis of the relative influence of the various agencies promoting remembrance permits the construction of a

⁷³⁴ See Durkheim, *Moral Education*, 1925; Marc Bloch, 'Mémoire collective, tradition et coutume: A propos d'un livre récent', *Revue de synthèse historique*, 40, 1925, pp. 73-83; Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 1992; and Shils, *Tradition*, 1981.

⁷³⁵ Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, p. 133.

hierarchical model of social interaction demonstrating the complexity of the memorial influences on society in general and young people in particular.

Evidence for the cross-generational transmission of memory through official education was captured by an examination of school syllabuses and targeted interviews with the Deputy Mayor in charge of education and schools; four headteachers; the Deputy Principals of the Maritime Academy and the Novorossiisk branch of the Moscow Institute for Economics and the Humanities; five lecturers in higher education, including three history specialists; ten schoolteachers; and four librarians. The mechanism of unofficial education was evaluated by an analysis of all my research interviews, with particular reference to the responses of veterans and young people.

5.2 Genes and generations: Informal transmission of memory in the family

Images and symbolic constructs of the past are imprinted, almost in the manner of genetic information, on our sensibility.⁷³⁶

In 2017 a 200-tonne memory capsule currently resting on the sea bed will be opened in Novorossiisk. Dreamt up and organized fifty years previously by the 'Shkhunarovesnikov', it contains 'letters to the future' written by 118 adults and children to their descendants.⁷³⁷ Among the memorial articles offered by the public and sealed in the capsule are several war medals, evidence that the propagation of war memory to future generations was deemed important by residents as early as 1967. It seems that these descendants concur: journalist Evgenii Lapin writes in 2013 of the 'return to a duty of memory' as 'the most important task of patriotic education'.⁷³⁸

Generations are thus mutually linked in two directions in the transmission of the war myth: looking backwards to their antecedents and forwards to their descendants in a mnemonic chain. Although the *Shkhunatiki* were only one generation removed from their parents who fought in the war, young people today are temporally more distant from the war experienced by their great-grandparents. With veterans becoming fewer, artefacts such as war medals, which bridge mnemonic distance, are increasingly significant in the propagation of memory if the past is to become closer in the imagination of the younger generation. While examining the mechanism and effectiveness of the familial transmission of memory, this section analyses whether the family as an integral part of society, where physical proximity is often most marked, values and even needs its ancestors in order to retain its mnemonic identity. Information

⁷³⁶ George Steiner, *In Bluebeard's Castle: Some notes towards the re-definition of culture*, London: Faber and Faber, 1971, p. 13.

⁷³⁷ Saloshenko, *Obiazan skazat'*, 1998, p. 16; and Sokolova, *Beskozyrka*, c. 2005, p. 10.

⁷³⁸ Evgenii Lapin, 'Novorossiisk pomnit', 18/09/2013.

about the mechanism of familial propagation of memory was obtained from two perspectives: from discussions with younger respondents and with older generations, some of them war veterans. Personal interviews with twenty-two young adults aged eighteen to twenty-nine revealed that a substantial 59% of subjects had discussed the wartime role of their grandparents and great-grandparents with them, indicative of oral transmission of memory through meaningful conversations.⁷³⁹

This type of propagation appears to be responsible for what I term the 'genetic' construction of memory through the family, a method of propagation typical of traditional pre-Soviet folkloric transmission, whereby older family members act as links in a memory chain which connects today's citizens genetically with the landing troops. Already in the nineteenth century the Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov had referred to Russian soldiers at the Battle of Borodino as 'a mighty, spirited tribe',⁷⁴⁰ underlining in the language of Romanticism the positive military traits possessed by the soldiers which were passed down to their descendants. Two hundred years after Borodino Vladimir Putin held his 2012 election address, perhaps not by chance, on 23rd February, Defender of the Fatherland Day, when Russian military courage is celebrated. Putin utilized this occasion to proclaim:

We are a victorious nation. This is in our genes, in our genetic code and it is transmitted from generation to generation.⁷⁴¹

In contrast, Serguei Oushakine points to a link with the past through a more negative continuity, whereby generations are united in sadness through rituals of loss, symptomatic of a 'patriotism of despair'.⁷⁴² This claim refers largely to victims of more recent wars and is an aspect of genetic inheritance not observed in the Hero-City of

⁷³⁹ F1B, F1C, M1A, M1C, M1D, F2B, F2C, F2E, M2B, M2C, M2D, M2E and M2H.

⁷⁴⁰ From the final stanza of Lermontov's 'Borodino'.

⁷⁴¹ 'Miting v podderzhku kandidata v Prezidenty RF Vladimir Putina sobral 130 tysiach chelovek', Pervyi kanal, 23/12/12, <www.1tv.ru/news/election/199798> [accessed 21/03/2014].

⁷⁴² Serguei Oushakine, The Patriotism of Despair: Nation, War and Loss in Russia, Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2009, p. 6.

Novorossiisk, where Beskozyrka and commemorative requiems highlight gratitude today for victorious and justified death during the Great Patriotic War, rather than despair over the 'devalued military sacrifice' perceived in the wars in Afghanistan and Chechnia during the unstable final decades of the twentieth century.

In Novorossiisk the genetic belief system stresses continuity with the past - not with the Soviet Union in general, but rather through a local, familial connection which is also evident in the feeling of empathy with the landing troops demonstrated particularly at Beskozyrka.⁷⁴³ My research indicates that the propagation of memory is linked to the transmission of a belief and behaviour system as if through cultural DNA, due partly to the strong sense of tradition in the town and partly to the educational mnemonic environment cultivated by the state, schools and the local authority as well as within the family unit. Many of my interviewees were able to point to their individual ancestors who had fought locally and subsequently settled in Novorossiisk, while respondents at both ends of the age spectrum claimed that they had inherited the hardy and heroic character of their forebears.⁷⁴⁴ Moreover, social memory in general is deemed by some to be transmissible through the blood-line in a similar fashion,⁷⁴⁵ with one town councillor regarding collective memory as 'our blood, our duty, future and past together'.⁷⁴⁶ It is this perceived duty of memory which seems to motivate the older generations to educate younger family members in the tradition of commemorative practices. Extrapolating from the individual to the community in general, the headmistress of School No. 6 observed that the heroism typical of wartime is transmitted through ritual, as if 'caught' by the younger generation in the form of improved behaviour: '*geroicheskoe iavlenie diktuet povedenie*' (an heroic event dictates

⁷⁴³ 'The harsh weather reminded their descendants of the conditions in which Kunikov's troops landed in the icy waves of the Black Sea.' Rozhanskii, 'Zashchitnikam tvoim, podvigu tvoemu, 05/02/2014.

⁷⁴⁴ Notably M1A and F8C.

⁷⁴⁵ See also Hodgkin and Radstone, *Contested Pasts*, 2003, p. 153.

⁷⁴⁶ MSD.

behaviour).⁷⁴⁷ One local historian commented on this phenomenon, claiming that 'it is as if they drink it in their mothers' milk',⁷⁴⁸ while a former soldier believes that the town's inhabitants 'were born' from Malaia zemlia,⁷⁴⁹ suggesting that the courageous qualities of the heroes are as desirable in a family as in a tribe or race. Indeed, a young teacher sees war memory as part of the town's 'living organism', whereby knowledge about Malaia zemlia is 'naturally' assimilated.⁷⁵⁰ Claims of a passive, informal assimilation of both heroic qualities and memory itself, much as first language acquisition, must, however, be questioned, due to the many more formal measures taken to ensure the mnemonic socialization of the young. Whatever the mechanism of transmission, the resulting sense of familial memory and cross-generational identification nurtured in the young is epitomized in the memorial slogan ubiquitously found on school walls in Novorossiisk: '*Pobeda deda moia pobeda*' (My grandfather's victory is my victory).

One manifestation of the inter-generational transmission of values is the post-wedding ritual, where myth is effectively propagated as generations come together at local war memorials to lay flowers as a token of respect to the war dead.⁷⁵¹ Although in many cases the original meaning of this tradition has been lost, for the first post-war generation such visits in homage to the heroes were extremely important.⁷⁵² Most of those mainly female respondents who volunteered relevant information interpreted this pan-Russian tradition as a mark of gratitude and indebtedness to ancestors who had given their own lives so that their children and grandchildren would be able to live in

⁷⁴⁷ Interview 27/10/2010.

⁷⁴⁸ M5E.

⁷⁴⁹ M4B.

⁷⁵⁰ F3A.

⁷⁵¹ See Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, p. 144.

⁷⁵² F4E and Prialkina, 'Novorossiitsy chtiat i pomniat', 2005.

freedom and happiness.⁷⁵³ The sites most frequently visited are the main Malaia zemlia memorial complex and the smaller Valley of Death complex in Myskhako, where it is apparently usual for the bridegroom to pose at the base of a map of the Malaia zemlia campaign, while the bride climbs to the top for the photographs,⁷⁵⁴ in a pose suggesting the supremacy of the woman in the new family. Evdokiia Prialkina also refers to visits to the Well of Life monument in Myskhako, linking the only water source on Malaia zemlia with the successful future of young married couples. Justifying the local meaning behind the tradition using a further genetic trope, she claims that the characteristic of faithfulness is transmitted from the landing troops to the younger generation: 'It is as though the Malozemel'tsy, through their heroic lives, bequeath their faithfulness to young people in their life together.'⁷⁵⁵ It is thus implied that the mutual loyalty of a married couple guarantees the continuity of life through the floral tributes to the war dead. Furthermore the Soviet post-war expression of lament at the death of millions of young soldiers, '*Skol'ko ne rodilos' detei pogibshikh soldat*' (How many soldiers' children were never born!),⁷⁵⁶ implicitly places a duty on a new family to replace both those who died and their unborn children. The war myth and the celebration of married life are thus linked with the necessity and ability, through water from the Well of Life, to procreate and propagate a new family. Here, in a symbolic exchange,⁷⁵⁷ the newly-weds leave flowers in thanks for the gift of life, both theirs and those of their yet unborn children, who may also inherit the heroic character of the war dead, in what seems to be almost a fertility ritual. From my discussions, however, the subtleness of interpretation of this tradition by the older generations is lost on the young, who seem to act out of custom alone, with no overt reference to the war except

⁷⁵³ F2A, F3A, F3E, M3A, F4C, F4D, F4E and F6A. See also Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, p. 144.

⁷⁵⁴ F3E.

⁷⁵⁵ Prialkina, 'Novorossiitsy chtiat i pomniat', 2005, p. 151.

⁷⁵⁶ F6A.

⁷⁵⁷ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 1997, p. 94.

the use of monuments as a backdrop for wedding photographs,⁷⁵⁸ providing memory of a different kind for the new family unit.

In modern Novorossiisk there is evidence that the conservative values of the post-war years still exist, as many adults praise the return in the twenty-first century of aspects of *vospitanie* and patriotic education familiar from their own youth in the Komsomol or Young Pioneer organizations.⁷⁵⁹ Any potential generation gap is partly narrowed by this nostalgia for what parents and grandparents deem idealistic aspects of the Soviet past. However, despite the general strength of family bonds and the varied mechanisms by which the young are exposed to war memory in Novorossiisk, my research indicates that there are some families who do not pass on the memory tradition from one generation to another. One elderly man, a child during the war, blamed the family if a child is disaffected, seeing it as their clear duty to transmit memory,⁷⁶⁰ although young parents born at the time of change may have different values and little regard for memory.⁷⁶¹ Some children may live in small family units or atomized families who do not spend much time together, such that they are not exposed to an upbringing which includes discussions within the family about the war.⁷⁶² This situation is seen as abnormal by some of my respondents: families are accused of being 'illiterate' or 'bad parents', incapable of joining in the collective social movement for memory transfer,⁷⁶³ while others are considered '*nepravil'nye liudi*' (not proper people).⁷⁶⁴ This is an indication that an educated, well brought up young person is expected by society to think in a socially correct way about the war, due to the 'proper' promotion of socially

⁷⁵⁸ F3A.

⁷⁵⁹ F2E, M2H, F3F, M4F, F5C, F5E, F5G, M5E, M6A, M6B, M6M, F7B, F8D and M9A

⁷⁶⁰ M7D.

⁷⁶¹ Teacher F4A.

⁷⁶² This correlation was noticed by Headmaster M4C.

⁷⁶³ According to the Head of the Local Authority in Myskhako.

⁷⁶⁴ Head of the Veterans' Council in Myskhako.

accepted traditional values within the family. Any deviation that may threaten social cohesion invites condemnation.

A sense of connection with the past may be imbued with the mediation of family archives, letters, photographs and other artefacts, which render memory more vivid and tangible, engaging younger generations more than a dry narration. Although some older respondents narrated their histories to me without any material props, others employed old photographs to mediate their account. According to my observations, visual aids may act as aides-mémoire, partly dictating the rote repetition of narratives. I observed this with two older women who recounted their own memories of the war to me identically on two occasions, both times clutching photographs of themselves as young women.⁷⁶⁵

Harald Welzer's study of intergenerational family narrations finds that they can be gradually re-shaped over time due to re-evaluation and the need for a new meaning as any changes in the political environment affect the perceptions of both the teller and the listening descendants.⁷⁶⁶ Similarly, Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson argue that mythical elements in both public and private collective memory form a continuing historical presence, being continually reshaped for the utility of an individual.⁷⁶⁷ Retrospective re-positioning of one's own life story may enable the deployment of some historical perspective, as in the case of memoir literature. Kirschenbaum finds alongside this a common renegotiation of the narrator's identity in order to maintain the compatibility of individual and collective memory.⁷⁶⁸ Although it is not possible to confirm that this is happening in individual cases in Novorossiisk, it is known that,

⁷⁶⁵ F7C and F8A.

⁷⁶⁶ 'Both individual and collective life stories are constantly overwritten in light of new experiences and needs, and especially under conditions of new frames of meaning from the present.' (Harald Welzer, 'Re-narrations: How pasts change in conversational remembering', *Memory Studies*, 3, 2010, pp. 5-17, p. 15.)

⁷⁶⁷ Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, 'Introduction', in *The Myths We Live By*, ed. R. Samuel and P. Thompson, London and New York: Routledge, 1990, pp. 1-22.

⁷⁶⁸ Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2006, p. 5.

whereas during the war soldiers would declare that they were fighting for Stalin,⁷⁶⁹ later memoirs declared that they were fighting for Communism,⁷⁷⁰ while accounts today hold that the war was fought for the people (*narod*).⁷⁷¹ Welzer finds that oral narratives become simpler over time, with any problems and ambiguity removed, and plots rearranged to form an idealized linear account, much as in the case of the war myth in general and as is evident in local memoir literature.⁷⁷² Consistency of narrative was demonstrated in one woman's story of her childhood in the war, related to me in identical terms on three different occasions, providing evidence of the rehearsed version of the past which she wished to propagate.⁷⁷³

While there are clear parallels between collective memory and that of individuals, it is important to note the significance of group collective memory for the individual within the dominant influence of the state war cult, despite the variety of wartime experiences of my interviewees, who included military personnel, deportees and child internees.⁷⁷⁴ Jerome Bruner and Carol Fleischer Feldman propose that groups develop shared stories to define their identity and in order that members may find a common significance in their own memorial narratives which make use of a shared culture.⁷⁷⁵ It has been noted by scholars that individuals accommodated their own memories within Soviet ideology, while retaining their individual histories despite an overriding state

⁷⁶⁹ See Chapter 2.2.

⁷⁷⁰ For example, Brezhnev's *Malaia zemlia*.

⁷⁷¹ For a discussion on the place of Stalin in war memory, see Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011.

⁷⁷² Welzer, 'Re-narrations', 2010, p. 15.

⁷⁷³ F7B. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of her story.

⁷⁷⁴ Respondents included six war veterans (F8A, F8D, M8B, M8C, M9A and M9B), including a nurse, two naval officers, a soldier, a bomber pilot and a political worker on Malaia zemlia. Further respondents include other categories of war survivor, including two Crimean Tatars who were deported to Uzbekistan towards the end of the war and who now have veteran status (F8B and M8A). Others were children during the war years, for example a *maloletnii uznik* (young internee), a *veteran truda* (veteran of labour), a refugee and a teenager returning to Novorossiisk at the end of the war (F7B, M7A, M7C and M7D respectively). I also interviewed a *blokadnik* who had been in the siege of Leningrad.

⁷⁷⁵ Bruner and Fleischer Feldman, 'Group Narrative as a Cultural Context of Autobiography', 2005.

narrative,⁷⁷⁶ leading sometimes to a difference between the memory of individuals and the state-propagated myth.⁷⁷⁷

This concurs with my findings of the subjective situation of some personal narratives within the collective, evidence of a complex interrelationship of private memory and public ideology, past and present. However, my interviewees' generally rather diffident and self-deprecating accounts do not conform with Welzer's claim of a 'cumulative heroization' of the protagonist over time,⁷⁷⁸ particularly those events related by deported Crimean Tatars.⁷⁷⁹ Most of my older interviewees tended to place a positive spin on the end of their war stories, which always ended with the highlight of their career, that is where they were when the war ended on Victory Day 1945, or how they returned to Novorossiisk to build a new life after the war.⁷⁸⁰ This could, however, be a biased result, as my sample in this age range was limited and it is possible that survivors who felt less positive about their war experiences may not choose to relate them to a stranger. One interesting and full account showed the influence of others' war memoirs which had probably caused the narrator to re-formulate her own history. She claimed to have been present at events depicted by others of which it was unlikely that she had any direct memory,⁷⁸¹ indicating possibly some distortion or self-delusion possibly causing unconscious changes in narrations of memory over time.

Individual memories narrated today may not always be totally reliable, but do represent a personal mnemonic construction within collective social memory, sometimes indicative of subjective tension between memory and history. It is impossible to measure in retrospect the accuracy of an individual's memory with regard

⁷⁷⁶ Merridale, *Night of Stone*, 2000. For a non-Russian examination of the meaning of oppressive popular memory for individuals, see Rosenzweig and Thelen, *The Presence of the Past*, 1998.

⁷⁷⁷ Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994. The 'complicated interweaving of the political and the personal' is also recognized in Kirschenbaum, *The Legacy of the Siege of Leningrad*, 2006, p. 5.

⁷⁷⁸ Welzer, 'Re-narrations', 2010, p. 8.

⁷⁷⁹ F8B and M8A.

⁷⁸⁰ F7B, F7C, M7D, F8A, F8B, F8D, M8A and M8B.

⁷⁸¹ F8D.

to historical fact, but Schudson, Connerton and Schacter all emphasize the probability of increasing distortion and (sometimes selective) forgetting with time. If detail is lost over time, it is also possible that the voiced memory of any pain or humiliation in the past is suppressed, whether consciously or unconsciously blocked by the narrator, and giving rise to a more positive spin on the past than events actually merit.⁷⁸²

My research indicates that those who took part in the war are largely happy to talk about their memories today, however stereotyped.⁷⁸³ However, psychological scars may understandably prevent discussion of some topics within the family, either on the part of the older family member or a younger descendant. One teenager indicated to me that she felt uncomfortable discussing her great-grandmother's wartime experiences with her, as she had been raped by occupying forces.⁷⁸⁴ The great-granddaughter's obvious embarrassment was matched by that of a further student at the Moscow Institute for Economics and the Humanities in Novorossiisk, whose distress at her family's experiences during the war prompted her refusal to take part in a class on local history.⁷⁸⁵ Apart from these individual cases of discomfort, no intergenerational tension or narratives counter to the accepted war myth were offered, such as found in Canada by Graham Carr.⁷⁸⁶ All my interviews with young and old alike pointed rather to cohesion, consensus and empathy across generations.

In a traditional society, memory often passes from grandparents to children, whose parents are usually busy working. The older generation takes responsibility for memorial practices and informal education, such that propagation of memory tends to

⁷⁸² Schudson, 'Dynamics of Distortion in Collective Memory', 1995, pp. 346- 353; Schacter, The Seven Sins of Memory, 2001; and Paul Connerton, 'Seven Types of Forgetting', Memory Studies, 1, 2008, pp. 59-71. There is a wide range of scholarship on trauma theory which is potentially relevant but beyond the scope of this thesis.

⁷⁸³ F7B, F7C, M7D, F8A, F8B, F8D, M8A and M8B. However F6C indicated that her father and mother never wanted to talk about the war, an experience reinforced by F7A.

⁷⁸⁴ F1C.

⁷⁸⁵ According to one local history lecturer (12/05/2010).

⁷⁸⁶ Graham Carr, 'War, History, and the Education of (Canadian) Memory', in Contested Pasts: The politics of memory, ed. Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 57-78.

skip the middle generation.⁷⁸⁷ Correspondingly, most of my younger interviewees mentioned the significant role of grandparents rather than parents in the transmission of memory, even if those grandparents were themselves not war veterans.⁷⁸⁸ This indicates that there is possibly more opportunity and desire for grandparents to discuss the war with children than for busy parents, especially in a more modern society with working mothers and sometimes a single parent.⁷⁸⁹ The ritual of oral narration may promote historical understanding and empathy in younger family members, binding generations together through memory. In contrast, younger generations may find the narratives of personal memories of the war by their grandparents and great-grandparents repetitive and performances rendered more irritating due to the natural forgetting of old people. However, with the mediation of mnemonic artefacts, family narratives are more subjective and personal, often possessing a sense of intimacy that cannot be reproduced in a more formal, collective environment. From the high percentage of veterans claiming to recount war memory to their grandchildren or others of a much younger generation, however, it appears that it may in fact prove easier to talk about the war to a young generation decades after the event than it was to talk to one's own children soon after the event.⁷⁹⁰

Although they were not specifically asked, some middle-aged interviewees could also recall how they had heard from their own parents and grandparents about the war: some recounted to me long and personal stories of their relations' wartime experiences in Novorossiisk gleaned from direct personal transmission.⁷⁹¹ 20% of subjects between

⁷⁸⁷ The necessity for the active role of key generations in the transmission of the past is discussed in Jelin and Kaufman, 'Layers of Memories', 2000.

⁷⁸⁸ 14 respondents (64%): F1A, F1B, F1C, M1A, M1C, M1D, F2A, F2B, F2C, M2A, M2B, M2C, M2D and M2E.

⁷⁸⁹ Stated by F6A and F6C.

⁷⁹⁰ F6C stated that she was sad that her parents did not talk openly about the war when she was young, therefore she is particularly eager to transmit memory to her own grandchildren. The headmistress of School No. 6 claimed that some veterans find it more difficult to talk to their own family than to a class of schoolchildren.

⁷⁹¹ Additionally, F5I's aunt had written her own memoirs.

the ages of thirty and sixty-nine volunteered the fact that that their father or grandfather had fought in the war,⁷⁹² while 14% offered the information that their parents or grandparents had talked to them about Malaia zemlia.⁷⁹³ The sense of personal family history remains strong for some families, thanks mainly to direct communication of memory transmitted by older generations.

As those with direct memory of the war die, current and future generations will be recipients only of indirect post-memory, when family influence may well diminish in favour of institutional collective memory. For the moment, though, several of my interviewees, both men and women, related how they personally propagate the story of Malaia zemlia to younger family members, often with their own subjective interpretation. Some parents and grandparents see it as natural to pass on memory about local history in the same way as their own parents. F6F 'studies' the story of Malaia zemlia with her grandson using the same dated children's book that she used to read to her children.⁷⁹⁴ M3E, like F4G, takes advantage of the Beskozyrka ritual for conversations with his son about the war, while some employ Victory Day for this purpose.⁷⁹⁵ M4D uses the opportunity of weekends searching on Mount Koldun to discuss war memory with his teenage son. For the younger parents, the monuments and street names in the town provide a vehicle for the transmission of memory. M3E and F3C, for example, respond to their children's requests to read to them the information on monuments to heroes; for incomer F3C, this activity also teaches her about local history at the same time. F3E is similarly prompted by questions about streets named after heroes, while others more proactively take their children to museums,⁷⁹⁶ or for a tour of

⁷⁹² F3E, F3F, F3G, F3K, F4E, F4G, F4H, F5B, F5I, M5C, M5F, F6A, F6E, M6C, M6G and M7B.

⁷⁹³ F3E, F3F, F3G, M3E, F4G, F4H, F5I, M5B, M5C, M5F and F6A. Females seem to be either more open about having had discussions at home and/or to have taken part in more discussions about the war.

⁷⁹⁴ Nikolai Kambulov, *Gorod-geroi Novorossiisk*, Moscow: Malyshev, 1979.

⁷⁹⁵ Including F4C, F4G, M4A, M4B and F6C.

⁷⁹⁶ For example F6A.

the historical sites.⁷⁹⁷ Many questions are prompted by school lessons, and provide the opportunity for family reinforcement. Families also contribute to school lessons by providing personal information for class discussion and websites. Many young parents claimed a sense of responsibility to pass on memory of Malaia zemlia to younger generations.⁷⁹⁸ For example F4I felt a duty to answer relevant questions: 'If the children say "let's remember", then parents must do so too.' However, not all have the time and one man admitted that his children were simply not interested in family history.⁷⁹⁹

From my evidence, it is impossible to deduce whether men or women are dominant in the intergenerational transmission of memory in the family, although women were largely more open in offering information to a woman interviewer. This concurs broadly with Artemi Romanov's findings about the perceived communication satisfaction gained by Russian grandparents in talking with their grandchildren: grandmothers tend to disclose more personal information, while grandfathers are more willing to talk about their opinion on historical events.⁸⁰⁰ From my research it seems, however, that men may be more proactive in finding opportunities for discussion and interested in talking about the war in general, while women are more responsive to questioning and are more involved with school homework projects, while grandparents of both genders play an important role.

'Reverse propagation', the more unusual but naturally-occurring means of inter-generational transmission of the war myth from younger to older family members, is opposite to the traditional mechanism of transmission from older to younger generations found in a society with little population mobility. This mechanism of intergenerational familial transmission is illustrated by a conversation documented by a

⁷⁹⁷ For example M7D.

⁷⁹⁸ For example F3C, F3E, F3G, F4I and M4B.

⁷⁹⁹ M5B.

⁸⁰⁰ Artemi Romanov, 'Russian grandparent-grandchild communications: Stories about the past and current events', *Russian Journal of Communication*, 5, 2013, pp. 141-160.

journalist during the 2014 Beskozyrka ceremony, when an eight-year old boy was overheard telling his mother what he had been taught about the Malaia zemlia landings at school.⁸⁰¹ Four relative newcomers to Novorossiisk confirmed to me that they had learned about local war history from their children, who had in turn been taught about it at school.⁸⁰² These examples also provide evidence that the history of Malaia zemlia is not widely known to people outside Novorossiisk, even though many older Russians recollect the name from Brezhnev's memoirs.

Conversations at home about the war may also be triggered by the amplification of military material in the mass media around Victory Day, reflected notably in the local press which concentrates particularly on articles about individual veterans and their memories. According to Barbie Zelizer, the press is often an unrecognized agent of the propagation of memory, determining both the form and the content of its transmission.⁸⁰³ In Novorossiisk, however, it is also a site of memory construction in its own right. The local press encourages investigative journalism in the 'exposure of truth' about the history of the war, while continuing to carry social interest stories about veterans and their past.⁸⁰⁴

War documentaries and fictional films old and modern invade the home in the Victory Day period, shown on both state and other television channels.⁸⁰⁵ This diet of war material is inescapable for three days, with the war classics probably welcomed by

⁸⁰¹ Rozhanskii, 'Zashchitnikam tvoim, podvigu tvoemu, Novorossiisk', 05/02/2014; and 'Lentochka Pobedy', NR, 05/05/2011, <www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/2779> [accessed 09/05/2011].

⁸⁰² F3C, F3D, F3I, F4I, F4L and F5G.

⁸⁰³ Barbie Zelizer, 'Why Memory's Work on Journalism does not reflect Journalism's Work on Memory', Memory Studies, 1, 2008, pp. 79-87. See also Carolyn Kitch, 'Placing Journalism inside Memory - and Memory Studies', Memory Studies, 1, 2008, pp. 311-320.

⁸⁰⁴ See also Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011, pp. 215-219.

⁸⁰⁵ For example from 8th to 10th May 2013 residents of Novorossiisk could watch the following on Pervyi kanal, the official state channel: 'Snaiper-2. Tungus'; 'Khronika pikiruiushchego bombadirovshchika'; 'Ozhidanie polkovnika Shalygina'; 'Marshal Rokossovskii. Liubov' na linii ognia'; 'Diversant. Konets voiny'; 'Privet ot "Katiushi"'; 'V boi idut odni "stariki"'; 'Protokoly voiny'; 'Letiat zhuravli'; 'Odin shans iz tysiachi'; 'Ballalda o soldate'; 'Belorusskii vokzal'; 'Otets soldata'; 'Velikaia voina. Bitva za Berlin'; and 'Ialta - 45'. The local channel Rossiia 1 (Kuban) showed 'Sorokapiatka'; 'Otets'; 'Tri dnia leitenanta Kravtsova'; 'Privet s fronta'; 'Po zakonam voennogo vremeni'; '1943'; 'Operatsiia "Taifun". Zadaniia osoboivoi vazhnosti'; and 'Prikazano unichtozhit'. Operatsiia "Kitaiskaia shkatulka".

older citizens, if considered over-intrusive by one younger resident.⁸⁰⁶ Based on published television schedules, all such films shown in 2013 were of Russian or Soviet provenance;⁸⁰⁷ indeed F5D cited a television documentary about the fear in Russia that American war films such as 'Saving Private Ryan' are too influential on young people who may fail to understand the role of the Soviet Union in the war.⁸⁰⁸ Olga Kucherenko claims that most young people acquire their knowledge of history informally through film,⁸⁰⁹ which may serve to influence or even distort their understanding. In contrast, my research in Novorossiisk indicates rather the greater influence of formal education about local and national history. However, within the informal family circle, it is possible that younger viewers experience the 'prosthetic memory' described by Alison Landsberg, which offers a mechanism 'at the interface between a person and a historical narrative about the past' for the acquisition of powerful memories which were not actually experienced. According to Landsberg, films about history may evoke private feelings from a collective experience in the past such that the distinction between history and memory is blurred, whilst at the same time introducing an ethical dimension that may be absent from personal narrations or collective rituals of remembrance.⁸¹⁰

Discussions about the war are not necessarily uniform across all families in Novorossiisk and children may have different degrees of exposure to direct narratives from an older generation. Furthermore, the family is not the only agent of propagation of the war myth, although some respondents pointed to the primacy of the family by virtue of direct and personal transmission,⁸¹¹ with emotional triggers guiding interpretation. The familial mechanism, where present, is always supplemented and

⁸⁰⁶ M3A.

⁸⁰⁷ NR, 10/05/2013, pp. 5-12.

⁸⁰⁸ Steven Spielberg, 'Saving Private Ryan', USA: 1998.

⁸⁰⁹ Kucherenko, 'That'll Teach'em to Love Their Motherland!', 2011, para. 16.

⁸¹⁰ Alison Landsberg, The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture, New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2004, pp. 2, 19 and 24.

⁸¹¹ F2E and M2H.

complemented by experiences from other sources, including formal school lessons and extra-curricular experiences. Indeed, many family conversations may not happen without some prompting from the mass media or other external agencies. Despite the pervading influence of the war cult, many interviewees, both men and women, contend that the family plays the largest role in the propagation of memory, arguing for a link between a child's upbringing and the transmission of war memory, an indication of the importance of memory from below. One young woman, whose grandfather fought in the war, considered on the other hand that the family's role should be even more important than it is.⁸¹² In general, however, respondents apparently wish to uphold and transmit the memory and values of previous generations, viewing this as an indication of the patriotism of the family which values its military ancestors and its own current mnemonic identity.

⁸¹² F2E.

5.3 The educational role of veterans

To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.⁸¹³

Veterans are not only valued within the confines of the family circle, but have become increasingly esteemed within Russian society as a whole, which recognizes the role they play in the propagation of war memory to the young. A special guest at the central Veterans' Council in May 2010 was Prime Minister Putin, who took tea with a group of veterans on his visit to Novorossiisk,⁸¹⁴ just as Brezhnev had socialized with former 18th Army combatants during his visit in 1974.⁸¹⁵ Such public acknowledgment of the value of war veterans would not have been possible, however, in the early post-war years when veterans' organizations were prohibited. The special status of the returning Soviet war heroes, with their privileged access to employment and education, turned out to be a temporary measure, as most benefits were cancelled by 1948 and disabled veterans widely ignored.⁸¹⁶

The situation in Novorossiisk was an exception to the rule, however, probably thanks to a longstanding tradition in the town of attention to the welfare of veterans from earlier conflicts, particularly the Civil War, when Novorossiisk had witnessed the exodus of many White supporters.⁸¹⁷ From 1931 veterans in Novorossiisk received significant benefits in kind, for example free entry to museums and 50% remission on theatre and cinema tickets, and by 1934 they had special access to health services, free

⁸¹³ John McCrae, 'In Flanders Fields' (1915), In Flanders Fields and other poems of the First World War, London: Arcturus, 2009, p. 128.

⁸¹⁴ Marina Rybkina and Sergei Mukhtarov, 'Putin v Novorossiiske chaevnichal s frontovnikami', NR, 08/05/2010, p. 1.

⁸¹⁵ Sokolov, My s Maloi zemli, 1979, p. 365.

⁸¹⁶ Natalia Danilova, 'Veterans' Policy in Russia: A puzzle of creation', in The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies, 2007, p. 3; and Mark Edele, 'Collective Action in Soviet Society: The case of War Veterans', in Writing the Stalin Era: Sheila Fitzpatrick and Soviet Historiography, ed. Golfo Alexopoulos, Julie Hessler and Kiril Tomoff, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 117-132, pp. 121-123. Although the government did little to change this state of affairs until the 1960s, Khrushchev permitted the formation of a Soviet Committee of War Veterans in 1956 to take part in international events, rather than supporting the interests of veterans within the Soviet Union.

⁸¹⁷ Novikov, Novorossiisk, 2007, p. 27.

travel on trams and free entry to communal baths.⁸¹⁸ In 1936 a fund was established locally to support veterans, in line with the national wish to retain memory of Civil War heroes.

The onset of the Great Patriotic War in 1941 saw many of these same veterans leave Novorossiisk for the front, only to return after the war with several other serving officers, men and women. Formal meetings of veterans were few, but, with a planned exhibition in the Novorossiisk museum on the fifteenth anniversary of the Malaia zemlia campaign in 1958, an official organization for veterans of the Great Patriotic War was established to collect and organize exhibits. Crucially, at this time the veterans collectively and individually started publicly to recount their memories to young people under the auspices of the local Komsomol, although the reception of these often repetitive stories by children may not always have been positive.⁸¹⁹

The duty of veterans as 'authorized witnesses' to educate the younger generation in war memory was also reflected in the stated motives for the publication of war memoirs during the war cult of the Brezhnev era. In exchange for their political loyalty the state implemented a new national policy for war veterans, such that, from 1965, veterans increasingly enjoyed privileged access to health services, housing, transport and sanatoria in line with the growing war cult in what Natalia Danilova terms a 'reciprocal contract'.⁸²⁰

Mark Edele suggests that clashes with Communist Party organizations often took place nationwide, thanks to the transfer of power from Party organs to local veterans' clubs.⁸²¹ However, in Novorossiisk collaboration with the Komsomol continued to develop, involving significant educational work by the Veterans' Council with young

⁸¹⁸ Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, pp. 261-262.

⁸¹⁹ Ibid., p. 263.

⁸²⁰ Danilova, 'Veterans' Policy in Russia', 2007, p. 3.

⁸²¹ Edele, 'Collective Action in Soviet Society', 2011, pp. 123-124.

people in the Pioneers organization.⁸²² Grassroots lobbying of Brezhnev by the public forced the government to acknowledge the preferred status of veterans by increasing their benefits, consolidating the mutually beneficial implicit social contract between the state and veterans of the Great Patriotic War. By 1978 they were entitled to interest-free loans for the construction of houses and an annual holiday, with 50% reduction on long-distance travel to state sanatoria. Alongside material benefits, they were also granted the right to gather together, an important and necessary privilege granted to those from whom the state needed absolute loyalty and reflecting the political interests of the final years of Brezhnev's cult of war memory.⁸²³

The status of veterans came under closer state scrutiny with the onset of the war in Afghanistan in 1979, resulting in veterans of the Great Patriotic War enjoying greater recognition and privileges than those of this later, less successful conflict.⁸²⁴ The Novorossiisk Veterans' Council moved to new premises in Novorossiisk in 1981, where the central Council is still housed, and the first women joined the group in 1982, reflecting an increasing national recognition of the role of women in the war.⁸²⁵ During this period serious social care for the elderly started to be included in the group's work, known as the *Zabota* (Care and attention) programme, entailing a constant dialogue with the local authorities.⁸²⁶ This work continued through the changes of the early 1990s, despite economic problems and reforms, as the El'tsin government realized that the support of the older generation was necessary.⁸²⁷ The preferred status of Great Patriotic War veterans was confirmed in the law 'On Veterans' in 1995, until the de facto failure of the reciprocal contract with the economic crisis at the end of the 1990s,

⁸²² Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, pp. 266-267.

⁸²³ Edele, 'Collective Action in Soviet Society', 2011, pp. 117, and 124-128.

⁸²⁴ Danilova, 'Veterans' Policy in Russia', 2007; and Oushakine, *The Patriotism of Despair*, 2009.

⁸²⁵ Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, pp. 269-270. See also Aleksievich, *U voiny ne zhenskoe litso*, 1988; and Markwick, "'A Sacred Duty'", 2008, pp. 315-316.

⁸²⁶ Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, p. 270.

⁸²⁷ Smith, *Mythmaking in the New Russia*, 2002, p. 99.

when many benefits were cancelled and the status of veterans devalued with the rouble.⁸²⁸ The need of many veterans became so urgent in Novorossiisk that the local group appointed a lawyer to give free consultations on their rights.⁸²⁹ Only in 2004, when many previously tangible benefits such as free transport and accommodation were replaced with a regular financial award in Putin's controversial national 'monetization of benefits', did veterans claw back some of their financial security.

Today the reciprocity embedded in the implicit contract between veterans and the state is even more evident than in the Brezhnev era. The new war cult under Putin has led to a re-mobilization of the few remaining veterans to appear in ceremonies of remembrance and to educate the young, such that it now appears that their public identity is linked predominantly with the war. Veterans are therefore in a position of key responsibility for the transmission of memory through the *vospitanie* of children, looking Janus-like in two directions: backwards to the past and forwards towards the younger generation. In a mutually beneficial role, they have become national treasures as probably the most important emotional ingredient of the war cult, to be wheeled out, bedecked with medals accrued over the years, by national and local politicians on every occasion connected with the Great Patriotic War, to the extent that I propose that there is now a veritable cult of veterans.⁸³⁰ In return, veterans have at last obtained the state and public acknowledgment they demanded during the final years of the twentieth century with a whole range of privileges amongst other less tangible marks of respect which provide evidence of their new, special position within society. However, it is their current status in comparison with the poorer treatment of veterans of more recent

⁸²⁸ Danilova, 'Veterans' Policy in Russia', 2007, pp. 6-7; and Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, p. 271.

⁸²⁹ Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, p. 271.

⁸³⁰ This recent attention to war veterans largely excludes those of other more recent conflicts in common with the war cult.

conflicts that reflects the importance attached to this particular group in their twilight years.

Victory Day celebrations are particularly significant, when every Great Patriotic War veteran receives an annual congratulatory letter from the President. Since 2013 citizens have been encouraged to pick up a post-card in a post-office to send their thanks to a local veteran.⁸³¹ In Novorossiisk the Mayor issues invitations to all local veterans to attend theatre performances and concerts, dinners and the main Victory Day procession, where they are placed in seats of honour. Gifts are showered on veterans at this time. To celebrate the sixty-fifth anniversary of Victory Day in 2010 the Mayor of Novorossiisk gave every veteran in the town a collection of items full of symbolism to recall their war years, including a triangular 'letter from the front', writing paper and a pencil, a bar of soap, a pouch of rough tobacco with a box of matches, a canteen and a bottle of wine.⁸³² This recent special treatment is evident in a campaign of banners and posters on buses, kiosks and walls put in place across the town by the local council: 'Dear veteran, your victory is eternal', 'Memory of your exploits will live forever' and 'Thank you for the victory, liberators of the town'. Improvements in their circumstances are also acknowledged by some veterans themselves,⁸³³ and are linked by some interviewees to the fact that there are now very few remaining veterans and that the country is finally economically able to honour and care for them properly in their old age.⁸³⁴

Care and attention to war veterans is not only evident on Victory Day, however. Those veterans in Novorossiisk who in 2005 were still judged locally to be 'living in

⁸³¹ Pochta Rossii, <www.russianpost.ru/rp/company/ru/home/creativ/arhive/thank_fellow> [accessed 13/04/2014].

⁸³² According to Deputy Mayor Galina Aleinikova (02/04/2011).

⁸³³ F7B, M7A and F8A.

⁸³⁴ F3A, F3K and F6C.

hard times [... needing] basic attention, help and support',⁸³⁵ now receive substantially more than ever before, most privileges being granted to mark significant anniversaries after the end of the war. In addition to the free medicine and health services normally found across the country, veterans of the Great Patriotic War in Novorossiisk are offered subsidized accommodation in new blocks of flats built by the local authority under orders from Putin prior to the sixtieth anniversary,⁸³⁶ and specially designed for those with disabilities, with a designated social worker for each building.⁸³⁷ In 2010, for the sixty-fifth anniversary, the Novorossiisk town council supplemented golden signs marking the graves of veterans with new red plaques on the walls of the homes of living veterans. This gesture of respect was welcomed by some respondents who for the first time were able to recognize and offer congratulations and help if necessary to their elderly neighbours,⁸³⁸ while those with cars were encouraged by posters throughout the town to 'pick up a veteran'. Sealing the social contract, most schools in Novorossiisk look after their sponsored veterans: teachers and children give support throughout the year by cleaning or shopping,⁸³⁹ and special gifts are offered on Victory Day, for example a new refrigerator full of food.⁸⁴⁰

However the most important year-round work with veterans in the community is provided by the chain of Veterans' Councils in the region. According to a regional representative from Krasnodar,⁸⁴¹ there were eight remaining Heroes of the Soviet Union living in the region in 2013, while about six thousand veterans of the Great

⁸³⁵ I. I. Bramnik, 'Gorodskoi komitet veteranov navstrechu 60-letiu pobedu', in Novorossiisk: Pamiat' i pravda o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine, 2005, pp. 147-149, p. 149.

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁸³⁷ Information from Councillor Iurii Andrievskii (07/02/2013). In contrast, support for veterans of more recent wars comes largely from privately funded charities.

⁸³⁸ M3A, M3B and F4A. This social movement is called 'A veteran lives nearby', according to the Mayor of Myskhako's annual plan of memorial activities.

⁸³⁹ F3A and M3A.

⁸⁴⁰ Head teachers of Schools No. 6, 19 and the Bekar School.

⁸⁴¹ Interview 03/02/2013.

Patriotic War still live in Novorossiisk.⁸⁴² In 2006 the responsibility for veterans' welfare was devolved to local authorities, although veterans of the Great Patriotic War still receive their pensions from the federal government.⁸⁴³ Although many veterans still cling to the belief that the state has a 'moral duty' to compensate them for their valuable war service,⁸⁴⁴ the ongoing social obligation to veterans in return for their role in the propagation of war memory is largely met by committed locals rather than any state mechanism. Funded partly by the region and partly by the town council,⁸⁴⁵ the smaller area councils in and outside the town look after their local community veterans, who form what Jay Winter terms 'fictive kinship groups' or 'families of remembrance',⁸⁴⁶ which promote common mnemonic interests whilst also comprising a mutually supportive social group.

In the outlying village of Myskhako the Head of the Veterans' Council has worked there on a part-time basis for fourteen years, if for very little pay.⁸⁴⁷ Her office is located in the main town council building, which also houses the post-office, guaranteeing a stream of visitors who often stop by for a cup of tea and a chat.⁸⁴⁸ The central position of the office is convenient for collaborative work with staff responsible for youth affairs and the local Mayor himself in adjacent offices. The veterans are all known personally to the Veterans' Council. Indeed, the organization is so mutually supportive that it is difficult to distinguish between the veterans themselves and those slightly younger elderly people who help organize the series of activities throughout the year. Encouraged by the local Mayor and councillor, the Veterans' Council contributes substantially to the morale of members through commemorative activities.

⁸⁴² According to the Head of the town Veterans' Councils (03/02/2013).

⁸⁴³ Danilova, 'Veterans' Policy in Russia', 2007, p. 7.

⁸⁴⁴ Oushakine, *The Patriotism of Despair*, 2009, p. 165.

⁸⁴⁵ Krasnodar veterans' councils representative (03/02/2013) and Councillor Andrievskii.

⁸⁴⁶ Winter, *Sites of memory, sites of mourning*, 1995, pp. 40-54; and Winter, *Remembering War*, 2006, p. 136.

⁸⁴⁷ 500 roubles per month, according to M8B.

⁸⁴⁸ From personal observation over several visits in May 2010, March 2011 and February 2013.

Over the period running up to Victory Day vintage war films are shown in the palace of culture in Myskhako, to which veterans have free entry.⁸⁴⁹ The library, similarly located in the palace of culture, also welcomes veterans, who not only still read the occasional war memoir,⁸⁵⁰ but often attend anniversary parties organized by the Veterans' Council and librarians jointly. For example, children presented flowers to a certain veteran at a ceremony held in her honour,⁸⁵¹ with a presentation showing images of her both today and as a young person in the war, stressing her current identity as that of a war veteran. Another Novorossiisk veteran stated that she appreciates flowers given to her by children as an indication of their *vospitanie*.⁸⁵² In return for this attention from the state, region and town, many veterans are conscious of their continuing implicit duty to educate (*vospityvat'*) children in a revived tradition harking back to the Soviet Union of the post-war years.⁸⁵³

However, the most important sign of loyalty to the state in exchange for the receipt of benefits is the public appearance of veterans at ceremonies of remembrance, especially Victory Day, a cultural indicator of the influence of the current war cult. From my observations, most veterans appear to welcome the recent increase in pomp of the Victory Day celebrations, while some particularly appreciate the participation of young people,⁸⁵⁴ who, since 2005, have been encouraged by the state to distribute St George ribbons prior to and on Victory Day.⁸⁵⁵ Flying from car bumpers, wing mirrors and aerals, these symbols of war memory are superficially reminiscent of British poppies, being offered in exchange for contributions to veterans' welfare. While the official St George ribbon website proclaims it an instrument of remembrance,

⁸⁴⁹ In 2010 a poster advertised the following old favourites: 'In August 1944'; 'The Ballad of the Soldier'; 'The Second Front'; 'The Cranes are Flying'; 'Romance in the Field'; and 'The Fall of the Third Reich'.

⁸⁵⁰ Librarians F4J, F5J and F5K.

⁸⁵¹ F8A.

⁸⁵² F8D.

⁸⁵³ Merridale, *Ivan's War*, 2006, pp. 374-375.

⁸⁵⁴ F7B, M7D and M9A.

⁸⁵⁵ For a discussion of the St George ribbon, see Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011.

respect and thanks to veterans, their distribution, through the support of the political youth organization *Molodaia gvardiia* (The Young Guard) and the educational movement *Studencheskaia obshchina* (The Students' Society), bears little resemblance to the charitable activities of the Royal British Legion, although both British and Russian movements direct the funds collected to veterans of all wars.⁸⁵⁶



Prime Minister Putin wearing the St George ribbon in Novorossiisk in 2010⁸⁵⁷

The *lentochnka* (ribbon) movement has already gained the status of a tradition in Novorossiisk. Based upon the much older award made to military personnel in the reign of Catherine the Great and named after the patron saint of Russia, it is an example of a newly invented tradition built on a past system that resonates particularly well in the current memory climate, as evidenced by its universal acceptance within a very short period of time. An innovation grafted onto an older, established tradition, it has the effect of enriching, rejuvenating and refreshing the Victory Day celebrations, thereby rendering them more attractive to a newly mobilized younger generation. In this way, it

⁸⁵⁶ 'Georgievskaja lentochnka', 9may.ru, <<http://gl.9may.ru>> [accessed 26/06/2012]. The symbol was appropriated as a sign of war victory and Russian nationalism during the Russian invasion of Crimea and mainland Ukraine in 2014.

⁸⁵⁷ Photograph by Evgenii Nikitin (07/05/2010), copyright of the author.

has a similar supplementary function to the 'candle in the window' movement, which has also become an invented tradition in its own right.

This symbol has been recycled for current mnemonic and political use, promoting shared ownership of memory and capable of stimulating a spectrum of nuances as each generation reads something slightly different into the ribbon. F5D, a headmistress, recognizes it as a longstanding symbol that has recently been resurrected, supported by F7C, who feels that it retains its association with the pre-revolutionary Cross of St George, with its implications of heroic exploits and love of the fatherland. The St George ribbon poster, distributed widely in the region in 2010, contains an overt reference to the great USSR at its centre, but the ribbon itself demonstrates military continuity from pre-revolutionary, through Soviet to post-Soviet times. Stephen Norris also finds that the ribbon resonates well with veterans, who remember its use on Stalin's Order of Glory awarded to rank and file soldiers. Despite this, he argues persuasively that it successfully fills the national need for a symbol of war memory not tainted with Stalin.⁸⁵⁸ The *lentočka* tradition appeared to be popular in Novorossiisk in 2010, when it was hard to see anybody without one. In addition to its fund-raising function, it is seen by many as an aid to memory in its own right. For example, F8D, a war veteran, regards it as the declaration of a national wish to remember. A Novorossiisk newspaper journalist sees in the orange and black stripes a memory of the flame and smoke of war,⁸⁵⁹ while M7B recalls it as the ribbon worn on a Soviet sailor's cap, the legendary *beskozyrka*, whose symbolism needs no further explanation in this maritime town. It is not surprising that the ribbon that offers something for everyone should be so popular:⁸⁶⁰ in an overt connection with the resistance to the occupation of the Soviet

⁸⁵⁸ Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011, pp. 225-226.

⁸⁵⁹ Mashkarova, 'Lentočka Pobedy', 05/05/2011.

⁸⁶⁰ Indeed, Katherine Verdery argues that a political symbol is particularly potent 'not because everyone agrees on its meaning but because it compels interest despite divergent views of what it means': Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, Columbia University Press: New York, 1999, p. 29.

Union in 1941, it was even appropriated by pro-Russian fighters in Ukraine in 2014, not only as a symbol of memory and (Russian and Soviet) victory, but also of continued resistance to a government which some perceive to be illegitimate. In marked contrast, F3F reads into the *lentochka* something particularly relevant to the domestic political climate: the gift of democracy from the Russian state to the people who crave it.

In the hands of energetic young people, the St George ribbon enables the transmission of memory from young people to the now passive oldest citizens, as the propagation of memory undergoes a process of reverse propagation. On Victory Day the memory message, with its new symbolism, defies the traditional propagation mechanism from older to younger generations, ensuring an evident solidarity between generations.

Through its attraction to young people, the *lentochka* movement introduces a new, rejuvenating element into the already successful Victory Day celebrations. My observations in 2010 indicated that young university students in bright red 'uniform' tee-shirts bearing the slogan '*Ia pomniu! Ia gorzhus!*' (I remember! I am proud!) seemed to control the Mayor's invited Victory Day audience, marshalling veterans as they handed to each a *lentochka* and an anniversary baseball cap. Victory Day, in this respect, has been appropriated by the new younger generation, not necessarily at their instigation, but apparently without coercion and with their tacit agreement, as evidenced by the enthusiasm with which they perform their duties. The Deputy Director of the Maritime Academy admitted that this may be exceptional behaviour, as his students do not always want to attend ceremonies of remembrance, deploying barely relevant excuses about lack of time. With their strong link to the military, however, students of the Maritime Academy seem bound by an inescapable social duty to be official representatives of their generation at Victory Day and other mnemonic rituals.

If the official Victory Day ceremony in the centre of Novorossiisk is orchestrated by the local authority and largely in harmony with events on Red Square, less formality was observed on the town periphery in Myskhako in 2010. Veterans were gathered together in a brown military tent at a *soldatskii prival* (military field kitchen), feeding their nostalgia with war-time rations, mainly *kasha* (buckwheat porridge) washed down with quantities of vodka, all served by Cossacks. The old people gathered together in groups around the tables to sing war songs, pausing only at the interruptions of modern ring-tones as family members called to congratulate their own veteran. Such was the camaraderie among this community of remembrance that the pensioners seemed deaf to the official entertainment by children, local dancers and singers, in an example of overwhelming bottom-up ownership of a remembrance celebration by the oldest citizens. Eventually, the official speeches over, all participants came together on the same inter-generational wavelength as the vodka flowed, the officials retired and the unofficial dancing started. Apparently these veterans are not only enjoying their official recognition, but are happy to have taken full ownership of their new privileged social status in their twilight years.

5.4 Formal education of the younger generation

Детям своим
расскажите о них,
чтоб
запомнили!
Детям
детей
расскажите о них,
чтобы тоже
запомнили!⁸⁶¹

On 1st February 2013, the seventieth anniversary of the Malaia zemlia landings and the liberation of Stalingrad, Novorossiisk schoolchildren from five schools, university students and Cossack cadet soldiers took part in a Skype conference with counterparts in Volgograd. Organized and scripted in advance by the Mayor's office, this 'tele-bridge' also linked Novorossiisk veterans with those of the Battle of Stalingrad in an explicit comparison of the two Hero-Cities: 'Malaia zemlia - Mamaev kurgan'.⁸⁶² With a spectrum of age-ranges taking part, the event contrived to link themes appealing to the old using the modern technology attractive to the young, thereby effectively closing any virtual generation gap. The conference, 'The Patriotic Education of the Young on the Basis of an Heroic Past', claimed to instil patriotic values amongst young people, including a respect for the past and loyalty to their country, by its new approach to military-patriotic education and citizenship.

One of the ambiguities facing traditionalists wishing to propagate memory is the fact that history inevitably looks backwards to the past, whereas the tendency for the younger generation is to look forwards to the future. If not carefully nurtured in memorial tradition, the young may rebel against their elders, promoting a dismissal of the past with its inherent values. In contrast, successful propagation of memory may

⁸⁶¹ 'Tell your children about them [the war heroes]/so that they remember!/Tell your children's children about them,/so that they also remember!' From Rozhdestvenskii's 'Rekviem' (1960): Robert Rozhdestvenskii, 1985, pp. 205-218.

⁸⁶² Information sheet thanks to Deputy Mayor of Novorossiisk (05/02/2013).

lead to a mnemonic vicious circle and consequent stagnation, leading eventually to unquestioning acceptance, which seems to be largely the case today in a younger generation inculcated with *vospitanie*. Older generations may tend to select the content, transmitting a simplified, positive message in order to promote cultural consensus and maintain the continuity of the war myth, although its interpretation may change slightly from generation to generation.

Under the current war cult the state has driven a nationwide campaign to involve young people in patriotic activities, just as in the youth clubs, Pioneer and Komsomol organizations of the Soviet Union under Brezhnev.⁸⁶³ The renewed emphasis on moral education of the young has become almost synonymous to many respondents with the belief system of collective memory: in Novorossiisk well brought up young people are expected to pay respect to the dead in accordance with tradition. A *vospitannyyi* young person today is deemed to be almost a clone of his or her Soviet counterpart, with the qualities of patriotism, respect, modesty and good moral behaviour both recalled and judged positively by older generations. According to one historian, it is exactly these aspects of *vospitanie* that won the war, ideologically embedded through a unique type of patriotism expected of Communists.⁸⁶⁴ There was a period during the 1990s when *vospitanie* and patriotism were not seen as so important, however, according to several respondents who criticized the mass failure to remember the history of the war and retain memory of the dead.⁸⁶⁵ The noticeable return to a more conservative style of education under Putin is exemplified by the re-introduction of school uniforms throughout Russia from September 2014.⁸⁶⁶ Today, once again, it is *vospitanie* which is viewed as both instilling patriotism and as a necessary foundation for the propagation of

⁸⁶³ According to historian F5C.

⁸⁶⁴ F5E.

⁸⁶⁵ For example, F3H, M3A, F4C, F4H, M4B, M5B, M5F and M9A.

⁸⁶⁶ According to retired head teacher F5D in a personal discussion (15/07/2014).

memory.⁸⁶⁷ *Vospitanie* is seen to be bred mainly by families and schools,⁸⁶⁸ while some recognize the role of social rituals and the local authorities.⁸⁶⁹ If this is the case, then it is at the confluence of school and family that memory is most effectively transmitted. Moral education of the young is inculcated in schools thanks to the new emphasis on patriotism, a topic now included in the school curriculum, dictated by the state,⁸⁷⁰ to the endorsement of many parents and grandparents.⁸⁷¹ Documentary evidence from schools indicates that a new syllabus for 'Patriotic Work' was introduced in Russian schools in 2010, following a state decision to prioritize citizenship in the school curriculum. This decision was implemented by the regional authorities, each school being responsible for designing its own new courses. These include some material in common with other educational establishments across the country and some location-specific content. Furthermore, every school and the Maritime Academy have designated senior members of staff who are responsible for the design and implementation of the syllabus and for the *vospitanie* of the students.

A formal argument for the introduction of Patriotic Work into the curriculum forms the preface to the new syllabus for School No. 6 and the Bekar School. It points to governmental concern at the loss of 'spiritual values' and growing 'social diffidence' during the period of economic and political changes from the end of the 1990s, which, the document recognizes, apparently reduced the sense of patriotism and respect for Russian culture and led to a decrease in *vospitanie* of the younger generation.⁸⁷²

⁸⁶⁷ F4E, M5E, F6A and M6A.

⁸⁶⁸ F5A, F5G and F5N.

⁸⁶⁹ F5G, F5N and M6A.

⁸⁷⁰ Patriotism is the important new top topic of the curriculum, according to the headteachers of School No. 6 (13/05/2010), School No. 19 (29/03/2011) and the Bekar School (06.05/2010).

⁸⁷¹ F3F, F3J, F4C, F4E, M4F, F5L, F5N, F6A and F6C. It is noteworthy that most interviewees expressing views on moral education are women. For a nuanced study of patriotism amongst the young, comparing state and non-official values, see Anne Le Huérou, 'Where Does the Motherland Begin? Private and Public Dimensions of Contemporary Russian Patriotism in Schools and Youth Organisations: A View from the Field', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 67, 2015, pp. 28-48.

⁸⁷² All references are from the 55-page Bekar School syllabus for patriotic work in the academic year 2010-2011 ('Patrioticheskaia rabota: rabota s uchashchimsia, 2010-2011 uchebnyi god').

Endorsing the government's educational findings, Merridale observes in the twenty-first century an increasing degree of collective amnesia in Russian society, where the young often lack an engagement with the past, despite a stated desire to look back promoted by the new war cult.⁸⁷³ Furthermore, there may be a potential conflict between the need to remember of survivors and their descendants, as the event remembered becomes increasingly alienated in time and space from those remembering.⁸⁷⁴ Making no apologies for the ideological content of the new curriculum, the Bekar syllabus specifically bemoans the increase amongst young people of diffidence, self-centred individualism, cynicism, aggressiveness and lack of respect towards veterans, largely attributed to 'media propaganda [...] falsifying national history' and the propagation of non-Russian traditional values, with a commensurate decrease in the motivation of young people to join the armed services.⁸⁷⁵

The aim of the new syllabus is to introduce 'a renewed emphasis on patriotic upbringing [*vospitanie*] as one of the most important educational tasks'. At the top of the list of themes is the 'desire to observe memory of dead troops', closely followed by the encouragement of 'respect for elderly people'; love for the town of Novorossiisk within the Russian Republic; 'pride in the Russian army' and its veterans, linked with a 'wish to serve one's Fatherland'; and the 'development of a sense of patriotism' based on 'the cultural and patriotic values of the glorious [...] military traditions of the Russian people', encouraging the participation in regional and town commemorative events. The transfer of historical knowledge and collective memory to the younger generation at school also takes place through a variety of other mechanisms: history lessons; a series of 'lessons in courage' (*uroki muzhestva*), dedicated form periods (*klassnye chasy*); local

⁸⁷³ Catherine Merridale, 'Amnesiac Nation', *Index on Censorship*, 34, 2005, pp. 76-82.

⁸⁷⁴ For a study of the fragmentation and collapse of the intergenerational chain of memory, see Hervieu-Leger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, 2000.

⁸⁷⁵ For a discussion of disaffection within the armed services, see Anna Colin Lebedev, *Le Coeur Politique des Mères: Analyse du mouvement des mères de soldats en Russie*, Paris: EHESS, 2013.

studies (*kraevedenie* or *Kubanovedenie*); and visits to libraries and museums, both in the school and the town.

History remains central to the school curriculum from an early age, often taught by specialists. The teaching of modern history in schools and universities has evolved over the decades since 1945, the subject of historical revisionism at the mercy of the political ideology of the state.⁸⁷⁶ During Stalin's rule history lessons revolved around Leninist dogma and rote learning. Little was written about the war in the post-war years: archives were closed to researchers and questioning of the official version of the past was not encouraged.⁸⁷⁷ A subjective and dogmatic Stalinist version of the history of the war, full of distortions and omissions, finally appeared in 1963 with the publication of the multi-volume The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union. It depicted the devastating German invasion of first few months of the war in 1941 in a less disastrous light, while also inflating the role of Stalin and the Communist Party at the expense of that of the military leaders and the Allies.⁸⁷⁸ Party members became officially endorsed role models for young people in a string of selected exploits, reinforcing the impression of state-sponsored mythology rather than analytical history. For example, the work

⁸⁷⁶ The role of the school in the transmission of memory is explored in Fentress and Wickham, Social Memory, 1992. The transmission of war memory in Canadian schools, linking public history to private memory through the use of 'retrospective identification' of successive generations is discussed in Carr, 'War, History, and the Education of (Canadian) Memory', 2003. Narrated through the prism of the family, idealized memory may cause tension in cases where the original event may have been ethically controversial, see Welzer, 'Re-narrations', 2010. For a discussion of the history of the war in Brezhnev era schools, see Graham Lyons, ed., The Russian Version of the Second World War, London: Leo Cooper, 1976. A new syllabus for Soviet history in Georgia is treated by Jay Winter, 'Thinking about Silence', 2010, p. 29. For an analysis of reforms in school and university teaching of history in Russia, see Catherine Merridale, 'Redesigning History in Contemporary Russia', Journal of Contemporary History, 38, 2003, pp. 13-28. For a thorough analysis of the school history curriculum, see Thomas Sherlock, Historical Narratives in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia: Destroying the settled past, creating an uncertain future, New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 168-173. For recent history texts see David Wedgwood Benn, 'The Teaching of History in Putin's Russia', International Affairs, 84, 2008, pp. 365-370.

⁸⁷⁷ Senior military leaders were removed and memoirs discouraged, see Chapter 2; and Lazarev, 'Russian Literature on the War and Historical Truth', 1993, p. 31.

⁸⁷⁸ M. Gallagher, The Soviet History of World War II: Myths, Memories and Realities, New York: Praeger, 1963.

refers to a Komsomol member at Stalingrad who died whilst blowing up nine tanks,⁸⁷⁹ an exploit similar to that of young Viktor Chalenko on Malaia zemlia.⁸⁸⁰

Some attempted revisionism and a cautious attempt at historical accuracy in Khrushchev's thaw of the early 1960s was followed by the intellectual conservatism and neo-Stalinism of the Brezhnev era. Aleksandr Nekrich's work, 1941, 22 iunia (22 June 1941: Soviet historians and the German invasion) (1965), was officially condemned and the author expelled from the Communist Party in 1967. An increase in censorship during the 1970s led to further clamp-downs on revisionist historians who had gone too far in the pursuit of historical accuracy.⁸⁸¹

No wonder that oral memory was considered by some to be more accurate than that propagated by the state, a situation which is the opposite of that generally accepted in the West, but which is still observed in Russia.⁸⁸² In general public collective memory had been so shaped by the narratives provided by their leaders that memory of the war depended largely on mythology rather than historical accuracy until the Gorbachev years. An increase in interest in history in the mass media of the late 1980s, when previously taboo topics were gradually opened up to historical *glasnost'*, led to a plethora of revelations from 1988 to 1991.⁸⁸³ Gorbachev himself appeared to encourage such openness about history:

We have studied it, admitting miscalculations and mistakes, and learning lessons even from the difficult and tragic periods of our

⁸⁷⁹ Lyons, The Russian Version of the Second World War, 1976, p. 52.

⁸⁸⁰ See Chapter 2.3.

⁸⁸¹ Davies, Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution, 1989, p. 102; and Markwick, Rewriting History in Soviet Russia, 2001, pp. 34, 37 and 229.

⁸⁸² Stephen F. Jones, 'Old Ghosts and New Chains: Ethnicity and memory in the Georgian Republic', in Memory, History, and Opposition under State Socialism, ed. Rubie S. Watson, Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research, 1994, pp. 149-165, p. 153. The place of the individual with respect to history is also discussed in Merridale, 'Redesigning History in Contemporary Russia', 2003. For the case with respect to the Vietnam War, see Sturken, Tangled Memories, 1997.

⁸⁸³ Davies, Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution, 1989, pp. 9-10; Merridale, 'Redesigning History in Contemporary Russia', 2003, p. 16; and Sherlock, Historical Narratives in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia, 2007, pp. 2, 17 and 22.

history. For us it is not acceptable to smooth out history. It already exists. And it is only a matter of showing it correctly. It is a matter of our honesty, responsibility and scientific approach.⁸⁸⁴

This official attitude resulted in the evolution of a more questioning society after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. It remained short-lived, however. Igor Dolutskii's particularly influential anti-Stalinist, anti-Communist school history textbook Otechestvennaia istoriia XX vek (History of the Fatherland in the Twentieth Century) was published in 1994, only to be removed from the Ministry of Education's list of approved books in 2003 following criticism of its less than positive treatment of the Great Patriotic War. Overseeing a return to state officialdom in history, Putin himself intervened in the discussions, demanding that school textbooks should help imbue patriotism amongst the young in the interests of social solidarity. After Dolutskii's extreme anti-Soviet work, more positive assessments were demanded in a textbook competition administered by the Ministry of Education, resulting in the publication of a new national favourite, Nikita Zagladin's Istoriia Otechestva. XX vek (Twentieth Century History of the Fatherland), 2007. Although Zagladin's previous work on global history (Istoriia Rossi i mira v XX veke) had continued the theme of anti-Stalinism of the 1990s, his new prize-winning text failed to condemn the Soviet Union outright for its weaknesses during the war, choosing rather to recognize its successes in a more balanced and analytical style, more acceptable to a society looking for a sense of pride in their recent history.⁸⁸⁵ This is the authorized history text-book used for senior classes in Novorossiisk schools, which reinforces the lack of strategic importance of Novorossiisk in the context of the whole war by mentioning it only once, in a list of

⁸⁸⁴ Pravda, 13/01/1988, p. 3.

⁸⁸⁵ Sherlock, Historical Narratives in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia, 2007, pp. 168-174.

towns liberated in September 1943, as part of a chapter on the Great Patriotic War covering forty-three pages.⁸⁸⁶

This uncontroversial textbook contrasts with another history book by A. V. Veka, which, according to one bookshop assistant, is popular in the town.⁸⁸⁷ This work, although making no mention at all of Novorossiisk, includes decidedly negative comments about Stalin, for example his absence from the centre of power in the first days of the war and his notorious 'Not one step back' order.⁸⁸⁸ In complete contrast to the hype of Victory Day in Russia today, Veka attributes war victory to the Soviet people rather than to Stalin or his generals. Similarly treated are the controversial punishment battalions (*shtrafnye batal'ony*) to which 'cowards and traitors' were dispatched, despite what the author deems the equally incompetent actions of their leaders.⁸⁸⁹ This is an aspect of the war which some of my respondents wished to see fully exposed and dissected in the media, in order to 'learn the truth' about the past.⁸⁹⁰ The current vogue for national introspection appears to be in complete contrast to Stalin's fear of historical accuracy.

A whole spectrum of publications exists today, ranging from this example to the most conservative texts lauding the country's successes throughout and thus aiding the triumphal nationalism disseminated by Putin in his construction of a victorious continuity from the past through to the present. Exposés of the past may surface in some more liberal publications, but these are read largely by adults who grew up in the 1990s rather than schoolchildren today. Historical revisionism during the Putin era has led to some overgeneralization of events of the war in schools, such that children are socialized politically not to question in detail the accepted message of a victorious

⁸⁸⁶ N. V. Zagladin, S. I. Kozlenko, S. T. Minakov and Iu. A. Petrov, *Istoriia Rossii. XX - nachalo XXI veka (fifth edition)*, Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2007. Novorossiisk is mentioned on page 243.

⁸⁸⁷ A. V. Veka, *Istoriia Rossii*, Minsk and Moscow: Kharvest, 2003.

⁸⁸⁸ Veka, *Istoriia Rossii*, 2003, pp. 872 and 890. See also footnotes 333 and 502.

⁸⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 891-892 and 928.

⁸⁹⁰ M3A, F4H, F7A

nation. It may be politically useful to disseminate a more generalized history when a detailed narrative risks detracting from the accepted war myth. Novorossiiskii rabochii bemoans the lack of specific information in modern school text-books, appreciating that it is only because the town is a Hero-City that memory is so strong and schools are able constructively to supplement the official books with local background.⁸⁹¹ In Novorossiisk the myth of Malaia zemlia is so positive that it bears more detailed scrutiny than many other local war myths in school lessons.⁸⁹²

Here there is little evidence of the degree of historical amnesia observed in the capital, where both James Wertsch and Catherine Merridale note the lack of engagement with the past of the younger generation.⁸⁹³ While my observations show evidence for the continuation of traditional, local memory in provincial Novorossiisk, Merridale observes in the larger cities a clear generation gap, with older people recalling, albeit at some temporal distance, the 'dismal days of fake heroes and bogus achievements' while the younger generation demonstrates almost no understanding or memory of the situation in which their parents were raised.⁸⁹⁴ Merridale argues robustly that a lack of knowledge of the past imbues a failure to read any warning signs of a potential new dictatorship, a situation of collective amnesia which may suit the country's ruling élite. This insight suggests that a return to the domination of top-down manipulation of memory may flourish in the face of public apathy, linked to uncertainty about the constantly changing interpretations of the past.⁸⁹⁵ From my findings in Novorossiisk, however, the state war cult is thriving not in the face of public apathy, but fuelled rather by a local self-interest in the promotion of the war myth, which boosts the

⁸⁹¹ Mashkarova, 'Lentochka Pobedy', 05/05/2011.

⁸⁹² Teacher F4B stated that more concrete facts about the war are taught now than previously.

⁸⁹³ Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 2002; and Catherine Merridale, 'Amnesiac Nation', 2005.

⁸⁹⁴ Merridale, 'Amnesiac Nation', 2005, pp. 79-81.

⁸⁹⁵ For an examination of the relationship between myth and history in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, with an analysis of Putin's exploitation of myth for political expediency, see Sherlock, Historical Narratives in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia, 2007.

status of the town regionally and nationally and inculcates a sense of pride which is passed on to the younger generation.

This pride is propagated also by school lessons in courage, which foster, by their very name, a positive genetic concept of military prowess. They concentrate on local patriotism in the Great Patriotic War through films, seminars, essays and competitions. These lessons are mainly held during periods of the academic year when memory events take place locally, for example during January in the approach to Beskozyrka, leading up to Victory Day in May, and around the anniversary of the town's liberation in September. Starting in a narrow context, where the youngest pupils learn to 'love their small Motherland', the syllabus aims to develop military-patriotic consciousness through an appreciation of local war history. Thus children of all ages are taken on guided tours of the town's monuments; watch educational films on the history of Novorossiisk;⁸⁹⁶ learn about the heroes of Malaia zemlia; read books about the war; build up exhibitions of memorabilia and literature;⁸⁹⁷ meet with former pupils now serving in the armed forces or as military cadets in the Maritime Academy and veterans of the war in Afghanistan; and take part in class competitions.⁸⁹⁸

There are no official text-books in Novorossiisk for these lessons in courage, in contrast to the situation in the Hero-Cities of Moscow and Volgograd.⁸⁹⁹ Although material suitable for the whole age spectrum is suggested in recommended lesson plans, the choice and delivery is largely left to the discretion of the individual form teacher. There is inevitably some repetition of material from year to year with the inherent risk of boredom amongst the older pupils,⁹⁰⁰ although one teacher at School No. 28 was

⁸⁹⁶ For example: 'In memory of the heroic landings', 'Novorossiisk: history and modernity', 'The Strategy for Victory', 'Georgii Zhukov: Military leader'.

⁸⁹⁷ Often collected from home (F4B).

⁸⁹⁸ For example: producing the best creative work on the Great Patriotic War (from pictures to essays and poetry).

⁸⁹⁹ According to teacher F4B.

⁹⁰⁰ F4F.

praised by the town's official online news-site for getting the pupils to use 'innovative technology' through the compilation of their own PowerPoint presentations.⁹⁰¹ This proactive approach appears, however, to be the exception rather than the rule in the face of the usual more didactic material.

A more personal approach is realised through the visit of local veterans to schools in a renewal of the Brezhnev era system, when veterans would go into the classrooms on special mnemonic occasions.⁹⁰² Only veterans of the Great Patriotic War are involved in such 'Meetings of Generations',⁹⁰³ which are often also held in local libraries, sometimes with specific aims formulated by the local authority's youth department as in the Skype conference with Volgograd.⁹⁰⁴ This practice allows a confluence of living generations that should, in theory, be more effective at propagating memory than films or books, although the age of the veterans today means that their presence is largely symbolic. There is evidence that veterans still welcome the experience of transmitting memory to the younger generation;⁹⁰⁵ they may even find it easier to talk to unknown young people than to their own families.⁹⁰⁶ However, offering the same clichéd stories as in previous years, they may find it hard to make themselves heard or understood across what in reality is an almost insurmountable generation gap. While appreciating the importance of such meetings,⁹⁰⁷ teachers realise that veterans' narratives can fail to resonate with some pupils, often less than conscientious boys,⁹⁰⁸

⁹⁰¹ 'Vneklassnoe meropriiatie "V pamiati i serdtse navsegda"', MNL, 04/02/2011, <<http://www.nrnews.ru/news/?id=42580>> [accessed 09/02/2011].

⁹⁰² However, Wolfe points to 'hypocrisy and bad faith' around the deployment of veterans in schools: Wolfe, 'Past as Present, Myth, or History?', 2006, p. 266.

⁹⁰³ Councillor M4F.

⁹⁰⁴ Interviews with relevant local authority personnel (05/02/2013). For example, discussions concerning the relevance of rituals of remembrance for young people today, see 'Kruglyi stol "Vstrecha pololenii"', MNL, 30/01/2012, <<http://www.nrnews.ru/news/?id=47853>> [accessed 01/02/2012].

⁹⁰⁵ M7D.

⁹⁰⁶ Observed by the Headmistress of School No. 6.

⁹⁰⁷ Headmistress of the Bekar School.

⁹⁰⁸ Teachers F3B, F4B and M4C.

who may be more attracted to war films depicting young men closer in age to themselves.

My evidence suggests that aspects of the patriotism syllabus that may be more effective include those where the young people have some control of the situation and are able to make their own choices. This applies across the age range; for example, one eight-year old child became absorbed in a project on Malaia zemlia about which he had written three whole pages,⁹⁰⁹ while a teenage pupil wrote a longer essay on his computer about Brezhnev's memoirs,⁹¹⁰ demonstrating a notable exception to his peers in his interest.

Students at the Maritime Academy and the Moscow Institute for Economics and the Humanities also follow courses on local history which remain largely popular, according to senior academics,⁹¹¹ such that some modules on Malaia zemlia are also broadcast on local television.⁹¹² Unlike the school curriculum, local war history is set in the context of the whole of the Second World War in Maritime Academy courses on twentieth-century history, whereas the History department of the Institute for Economics and the Humanities specializes in local history: its faculty head Professor Tamara Iurina is the local expert on the military history of Malaia zemlia. Dr V. V. Denisov, Head of the Faculty of History and Philosophy at the Maritime Academy, finds that about 50% of student cadets choose to write essays or dissertations on Malaia zemlia, several of whom go on to write doctoral theses on related subjects.⁹¹³ Not all students are equally motivated, however: apparently a minority demonstrates no real interest in local history, although Dr Denisov contends that it is the duty of the faculty

⁹⁰⁹ According to his grandmother, F6F.

⁹¹⁰ M1A.

⁹¹¹ Deputy Director of the Moscow Institute for Economics and the Humanities and Head of the Faculty of History and Philosophy at the Maritime Academy.

⁹¹² For example, Iurina, 'Teleurok grazhdanstvennosti', 2008.

⁹¹³ Some recent doctoral topics are listed in Iurina, 'Novorossiiskoe protivostoianie 1942-1943 gg.', 2003, p. 234.

to counteract any indifference. This is done partly by an emphasis on personal links, despite the fact that this area of history is becoming increasingly abstract, as family members who participated in the war have died and students are no longer able to discuss at first hand their roles in the war. The Maritime Academy has a policy of inviting cadets to do family research,⁹¹⁴ and to bring family photographs into the academy, where a substantial display of over fifty enlarged photographs was mounted in the entrance hall in 2010 to mark the sixty-fifth anniversary of Victory Day.⁹¹⁵

My evidence suggests that the linking of influences from both family and educational institution is particularly effective in the transmission of memory. The onus is on the young people in both schools and the Maritime Academy to collect photographs, memoirs, letters or other artefacts, such that they have nominal responsibility for the propagation of memory, if actually required to do so by their teachers. The act of collection of such mnemonic material also prompts discussions in the home about the past, serving to revive family history at the instigation of the younger generation, another example of reverse propagation. The information collected by schoolchildren is either displayed for all to see, uploaded onto internet websites collating such data, or used as material for classroom presentation.⁹¹⁶ By means of computer technology, old family photographs and other information may be refreshed and brought to a wider audience, especially those parents of older classes invited into school to observe some lessons in courage.⁹¹⁷

In 2003 Merridale observed a stark division between academic history and popular history.⁹¹⁸ In today's schools and universities in Novorossisk, however, there seems to be a greater merging of the two, as personal family stories are integrated into

⁹¹⁴ Galina Krympokha, Archivist.

⁹¹⁵ Dr V. V. Denisov, Dr Sergei Panchenko, Deputy Director of the Maritime Academy, and personal observation.

⁹¹⁶ F4B, F7A and F8D.

⁹¹⁷ Bekar School syllabus for Patriotic Work.

⁹¹⁸ Merridale, 'Redesigning History in Contemporary Russia', 2003, p. 27.

class history lessons. Thus the aim of the syllabus 'to strengthen the role of the family in patriotic education' is apparently achieved through children taking home ideas from school and then returning with more information gathered from discussions within the family which may be shared with their peers to stimulate further collaborative study. This personal approach permits the incorporation of the individual family's history into collective memory, enabling the construction of a unique bank of material in each school in the region.⁹¹⁹ Information about family participants in the war may also be deposited in a growing number of nationally available online 'books of memory', whose creation is probably prompted both by a fear of forgetting and the political environment of the war cult, while offering a site where more specific memory may be held in a largely uncensored environment.⁹²⁰ Having captured huge numbers of testimonies, this memory bank constructed from below and eminently accessible, through the medium of modern computer technology attractive to the younger generation, may be seen by young people as more truthful, if more complex and multi-voiced, than one-dimensional official state memory. Similarly, students often have internet access to information from other countries,⁹²¹ leaving them with the difficult unfiltered decision of what information to trust.

Digital school archives complement the collections in school museums which focus on specifically local material.⁹²² Unlike English school archives, which often maintain a list of alumni who fell in the war, they largely contain artefacts collected in the immediate area. For example, the museum in School No. 27 in Myskhako was opened in 2007 thanks to the parent of a pupil who wished to have a space for his finds

⁹¹⁹ Headmistress of School No. 6. She says that information is deposited at the website <<https://gimn1.novorossiysk.net/memor/index.html>> ; however, it is vulnerable to attack and therefore not recommended for scrutiny.

⁹²⁰ For example, <www.pobediteli.ru>; <www.battlefield.ru>; and <<http://www.iremember.ru>>. See Norris, 'Memory for Sale', 2011, pp. 200-221.

⁹²¹ F4H and M5F.

⁹²² Museums in Schools No. 6 and 27 were examined.

while conducting searches in the vicinity,⁹²³ whereas the museum in the Maritime Academy was created by *Shkhunatik* Galina Krympokha as a repository for records of the 'Shkhuna rovesnikov'.⁹²⁴ Furthermore, a new museum is planned in Myskhako, evidence of the increasing numbers of visitors to the village who are interested in its war history.⁹²⁵

Schools also have their own small libraries, but the nineteen public libraries in and around Novorossiisk work closely with teachers, especially with regard to the delivery of lessons in courage.⁹²⁶ Teachers walk their classes to the closest library for special occasions to make use of the better facilities and resources.⁹²⁷ For example, the patriotism syllabus for the Bekar School refers to library presentations such as 'The Young Heroes of Novorossiisk' and 'The Streets of Novorossiisk are named after them'.⁹²⁸ The latter topic is seen as significant by librarians, as, through their children, it teaches newcomers to the town about the heroes of the past through the geography of the present in a further example of reverse propagation.⁹²⁹ Librarians sometimes go into schools to deliver lessons on the war,⁹³⁰ and schools similarly send children to the libraries to do research on local history,⁹³¹ although one young respondent claimed never to have set foot inside a library during his school years.⁹³² The role of libraries in the propagation of war memory was welcomed by parents,⁹³³ one of whom appreciated the gift by the children's library to seven-year olds of different books on local war

⁹²³ M4D and F5F.

⁹²⁴ Tat'iana Staroverova, 'Novorossiiskii kraeved Galina Krympokha: Snova rvu na sebe tel'niashku', *Zhivaia Kuban'*, 01/12/2010, <<http://www.livekuban.ru/node/216972>> [accessed 28/01/2011].

⁹²⁵ Councillor for Myskhako and the Head of the local authority, 23/03/2011.

⁹²⁶ F4J.

⁹²⁷ F3I.

⁹²⁸ A lesson in courage, 'Thanks to the heroes who died in battle', was delivered by librarians in School No. 11: 'Urok muzhestva "Spasibo im, geroiam, v bitvakh pavshim ..."', *MNL*, 07/02/2011, <<http://www.nrnews.ru/news/?id=42589>> [accessed 04/01/2015].

⁹²⁹ F5L.

⁹³⁰ F5J and F5K. See also a lesson in School No. 26: 'Bibliotechnye uroki "Vstretimsia u Vechnogo ognia"', *MNL*, 01/02/2011, <<http://www.nrnews.ru/news/?id=42540>> [accessed 01/02/2012].

⁹³¹ F4J. According to F3D, her 11-year old son regularly chooses library books on the war and also attends library exhibitions on the war, possibly influenced by his father.

⁹³² M1A.

⁹³³ Particularly F3D, F3F, F3I and F4G.

history that they could exchange with their class-mates.⁹³⁴ This type of education is important, according to librarians, because a survey conducted by the Novorossiisk Historical Association indicates that today's young people tend not to read many books,⁹³⁵ relying mainly on films, television and the internet for information.⁹³⁶ In response, the Novorossiisk central library has created a small cinema and a large audio-visual room,⁹³⁷ while the community library in Myskhako has a computer with a big screen, gifted by the Councillor for Myskhako, which is suitable for group presentations on war history.⁹³⁸ An historical club for young people also holds meetings in the central library.⁹³⁹

Furthermore, one large room in the central library is devoted to *kraevedenie* (local area studies).⁹⁴⁰ Rooted in the region, this subject has become increasingly important in the twenty-first century, probably viewed as a more humanistic antidote to the new post-Soviet history texts, which may have been deemed either too general or too negative in their revelations. Librarians collate photograph albums and newspaper articles about the Novorossiisk area to cater for the research interests of students and the delivery of school lessons on the locality, also part of the patriotism syllabus, reinforcing the identification of the Malaia zemlia campaign with this relatively small geographical area.

There may be no alternative for young people but to remember, based on the substantial content of the patriotic syllabus in schools and the equivalent emphasis on local history in the institutions of higher education. However, the patriotic education of

⁹³⁴ F4G.

⁹³⁵ F3J, F5L and M5E. In an attempt to attract children to the library, there is a catalogue of war-related works on the central library's website: [Tsentralizovannaia sistema detskikh bibliotek goroda Novorossiiska](http://www.bibldetky.ru/vystavka/1801-vystavka.html), <<http://www.bibldetky.ru/vystavka/1801-vystavka.html>> [accessed 23/04/2014].

⁹³⁶ Librarian F4J.

⁹³⁷ F4J. I observed a group of teenage Cossack cadets watching a film about Beskozyrka (05/02/2013).

⁹³⁸ Librarians F5J and F5K.

⁹³⁹ F3J, F4J and M5E.

⁹⁴⁰ On the concept of *kraevedenie*, see Novikov, 'Istoricheskoe kraevedenie v svete kontseptual'nogo osmysleniia mestnoi istorii', 2003; and Emily D. Johnson, [How St. Petersburg learned to study itself: The Russian idea of kraevedenie](#), University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006.

young people is not restricted to the classroom: perhaps the most noticeable role of schoolchildren and students in the town is their attendance at ceremonies of remembrance under the auspices of their educational establishments. Schoolchildren are expected by both the state and the local authorities to attend the ritual at Heroes' Square early on 9th May.⁹⁴¹ At the Eternal Flame the headmistress of School No. 6 reads Robert Rozhdestvenskii's poem 'Requiem' before the playing of Shostakovich's 'Novorossiisk Chimes' and the official minute's silence, after which the generations are united in their respect for the dead as children and veterans lay flowers together.⁹⁴² Families also take children of all ages to the Victory Day commemorations,⁹⁴³ just as in the Brezhnev era,⁹⁴⁴ although, from my observations, lone teenagers were more common in the centre of Novorossiisk than in rural Myskhako, while younger children were present with their parents in both places, a probable reflection of the greater buzz and more dynamic activities in the centre of town. Genuinely attractive to teenagers and young adults is the Victory Day procession through the town centre with its increasing quantities of military hardware, in a provincial replication of the impressive column of tanks and rockets that thunders over Moscow's Red Square, leading to a sense of nationalistic pride.⁹⁴⁵

The most obvious participation of schoolchildren in rituals, however, is their standing on guard duty at war memorials (*vakhta pamiati*), a nationwide tradition dating from the Soviet era.⁹⁴⁶ While most monuments have their guard on Victory Day only,

⁹⁴¹ Teacher F5A and Headmistress F7A.

⁹⁴² It is similarly expected by the local authorities that schoolchildren perform in a town concert for veterans before Beskozyrka, while most schools take members of older classes to the ritual itself (according to the Headmistress of the Bekar School).

⁹⁴³ For example, M2A, F2E, F3I, F4H, M4B, F6F and personal observation.

⁹⁴⁴ M5F recalled being dressed in a sailor suit on Victory Day, while M4B suggested that there is no longer a duty to attend, as in the Soviet era.

⁹⁴⁵ M1A, M2A and F3I.

⁹⁴⁶ Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 1994, p. 134; and Elena Trubina, "'You can see now just how small all of you are': Rhetorical spaces of Volgograd", in *Recalling the Past - (Re)constructing the Past: Collective and individual memory of World War II in Russia and Germany*, ed. Withold Bonner and Arja Rosenholm, Iyvaskyla, Finland: Gummerus, 2008, pp. 21-29.

the Eternal Flame has a constant daytime guard of older pupils drawn from local schools. This tradition, dating from the height of the Brezhnev era war cult, is known as 'Post No. 1', reflecting the special 'sacred' significance of the place where the tomb of the heroes of Malaia zemlia is located on Heroes' Square. This ritual was inaugurated in 1975, the year following Brezhnev's visit to Novorossiisk, by veteran naval captain Vitalii Lesik, with the support of the Communist Party and Komsomol *gorkom*,⁹⁴⁷ although the tradition is now facilitated and funded by the town council through its department of culture, which provides uniforms for the young guards.⁹⁴⁸

Some parents recall with nostalgia their own stints of guard duty from their youth,⁹⁴⁹ and appreciate a constructive activity provided by the state for their children which replicates the values of the older generations.⁹⁵⁰ Welcoming this aspect of *vospitanie* for their children, they proudly watch and photograph them.⁹⁵¹ For different reasons, the young people themselves appear content to take part in the ritual, regarding selection for the duty as an honour, which also brings relief from school and the chance to strut around the square armed with an automatic rifle.⁹⁵²

Composed originally from Komsomol or Pioneer members, the guard of 'living memory' is now fulfilled by twenty schoolchildren, ten boys and ten girls aged fourteen to sixteen, who have a whole week off school for their turn in the duty roster, involving 1,900 young people annually drawn from most schools in the town. The tradition is so longstanding, the only one in the region to continue during the 1990s,⁹⁵³ that it now commemorates not only the heroes of Malaia zemlia, but also former *Postovtsy* (people who stand on military guard) who died in Afghanistan or Chechnia. In an almost

⁹⁴⁷ Starikova, 'Veteranskoe dvizhenie v Novorossiiske', 2003, p. 268.

⁹⁴⁸ Councillor Andrievskii.

⁹⁴⁹ F4B and M5F.

⁹⁵⁰ F3F.

⁹⁵¹ F4C.

⁹⁵² M1A

⁹⁵³ According to Vitalii Lesik (07/05/2010); Galina Krympokha (05/05/2010) and F3A.

unchanging continuation of the Soviet tradition, the young guards wear naval uniform and take a solemn oath, a reminder of that made by the Malozemel'tsy prior to the landings:

As I start my guard duty at Post No. 1 by the flame of eternal glory, I solemnly swear to be worthy to the end of my days of the memory of the heroes who gave their lives in the battles for the fatherland!

I swear to hold my weapons in my hands as firmly as did Tsezar' Kunikov and Nikolai Sipiagin, defenders of the Hero-City of Novorossiisk!⁹⁵⁴

Previous *Postovtsy* include influential members of the local community, including the Deputy Director of the Maritime Museum, and current town councillors, who have an inherent wish to retain the ritual.⁹⁵⁵ In this way a self-propagating mechanism for the inter-generational maintenance of memory is effected, which is endorsed by schools,⁹⁵⁶ parents,⁹⁵⁷ and young people.⁹⁵⁸

For decades Captain Lesik taught groups of young people how to march and hold their rifles,⁹⁵⁹ presenting the official face of the town to important visitors and foreign delegations and patrolling his territory on Heroes' Square until well past his 90th birthday.⁹⁶⁰ Both the ritual and its leader have apparently built up their own myth over the years: Lesik is an Honoured Citizen of Novorossiisk and Post No. 1 appears in school lessons of patriotism, stimulating creative work by pupils, such as the acrostic poem composed collaboratively by a group of children for the sixty-fifth anniversary of

⁹⁵⁴ *Novorossiiskii iunarmeiskii Post No. 1: 35 let*, Novorossiisk: Munitsipal'noe obrazovanie gorod-geroi Novorossiisk, 2010, p. 1.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5; and Deputy Director of the Maritime Academy (29/03/2011).

⁹⁵⁶ Heads of Schools No. 6 and 19, and the Bekar School.

⁹⁵⁷ F4A

⁹⁵⁸ M1A.

⁹⁵⁹ Vitalii Lesik (07/05/2010) and M1A.

⁹⁶⁰ Interview with Vitalii Lesik.

Victory Day.⁹⁶¹ Praising Lesik for his *vospitanie* of *Postovtsy*, the poem sites him at the centre of Heroes' Square. Although he is an integral part of Post No. 1, the local authorities recently felt the need to install two deputies to work alongside Lesik, to ensure provision for succession and the continuity of this tradition which places the young generation at the heart of the mnemonic identity of the town.⁹⁶²

Not all the activities for children are organized under the auspices of the school or family, however. Those without families live in social institutions which are also included in the official memory campaign. Children from an orphanage near Myskhako are taken with veterans on trips to war monuments, including the old cruiser 'Mikhail Kutuzov' moored in Novorossiisk's harbour.⁹⁶³ Furthermore, coachloads of children from sanatoria in Gelendzhik are taken to visit the main Malaia zemlia monument on the sea shore,⁹⁶⁴ while orienteering tours for teenagers from other regions take groups of hikers to sites of memorial interest in the rugged hinterland of Malaia zemlia.⁹⁶⁵

Monumental tourism is nothing new: trips for children to famous war sites were led by the Red Pathfinders, an organization founded by the Komsomol and the army in 1965. According to Tumarkin, these children sometimes took part in search activities, collecting military artefacts, while occasionally finding soldiers' remains.⁹⁶⁶ Children seem to be interested still in this type of search work, organized in Myskhako by School No. 27. The teenage searchers themselves sometimes take part in the re-interments, marching alongside the coffins and giving a final rifle salute. This participation is

⁹⁶¹ 'Post odin na ploshchadi geroev', in *Iubileinyi sbornik*, ed. Galina V. Utiugina, Novorossiisk: Poeticheskii klub "Dakti!", 2010, p. 19.

⁹⁶² Deputy Mayor Aleinikova (02/04/2011).

⁹⁶³ According to social worker F3K and the Head of the Veterans' Council in Myskhako.

⁹⁶⁴ From personal observation.

⁹⁶⁵ M6G.

⁹⁶⁶ Tumarkin, *The Living and The Dead*, 1994, pp. 152-153. Search work began in a coordinated fashion in 1960, pp. 14-15.

apparently voluntary, as testified by a short film made by local schoolchildren of one such ceremony in 2008.⁹⁶⁷

If the state, according to the Bekar School syllabus for patriotism, wishes to combat disaffection amongst youth, it is clearly successful judging by the actions of the pupils of School No. 27. The attitude they display to fallen soldiers in their amateur videofilm appears very different from that of the young men in the opening scenes of the film 'We are from the Future', whose cynicism about human remains was highlighted by their portrayal as neo-fascists. An element of extreme right-wing nationalism in Russia has surfaced in the last two decades particularly among young people, sometimes skinheads, epitomized by the *Pamiat'* (Memory) group with its black shirts typical of a neo-fascist, often anti-Semitic ideology.⁹⁶⁸

Although some respondents pointed to the growth of neo-fascism in major cities,⁹⁶⁹ my research in Novorossiisk uncovered a little but no overwhelming evidence of disaffection in regard to war memory on the part of young people.⁹⁷⁰ This may partly be due to the efforts of families, the town council and educational institutions, but also to a wider state campaign to mobilize youth in the cause of nationalism. For example, the pro-Kremlin nationalist youth movement, *Nashi* (Our People), was formed in 2005 to encourage patriotism, probably by no coincidence in the same year that the St George ribbon movement was first deployed and the year following the Orange

⁹⁶⁷ Film made by pupils of School No. 27, c. 2010. On patriotic youth clubs in other towns, see Marlene Laruelle, 'Patriotic Youth Clubs in Russia: Professional Niches, Cultural Capital and Narratives of Social Engagement', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 67, 2015, pp. 8-27.

⁹⁶⁸ Andrew Wilson, *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005, pp. 19-21.

⁹⁶⁹ F4A, M3B, M3C, M3D and M7B.

⁹⁷⁰ F2E, F3B, M2H, M5F, F7C, M7B and F8C. However, M2G, F3D and F3I stated that, although disaffection may exist elsewhere, there could be no dissent or disrespect for memory in Novorossiisk, while M4B, a veteran of Afghanistan, declared that 'people like that' could only exist 'on another planet'. F6D and F7B felt that, if young people were not interested in the war, it was simply the result of poor teaching, shifting the responsibility for any apathy towards memory on the part of the young people onto the education system, while M7D blamed the parents.

Revolution in Ukraine⁹⁷¹ If veterans are exploited by the state for their political capital, then the younger student generation appears to be used strategically to drum the rest of the population into the desired quasi-military order, a tactic sometimes attributed to *Nashi* members. Furthermore the summer camp for young people aged from eighteen to thirty organized annually at Lake Seliger by Rosmolodezh, the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs, promotes both patriotism and service in the armed forces in what appears to be a training camp for the leaders of tomorrow. Originally intended for thousands of *Nashi* activists, since 2012 it has been open to all, with visits from élite regiments and its own eternal flame.⁹⁷² The military-patriotic work linking young people and the armed forces that was prevalent in the Komsomol in the latter stages of the Soviet Union continues today.

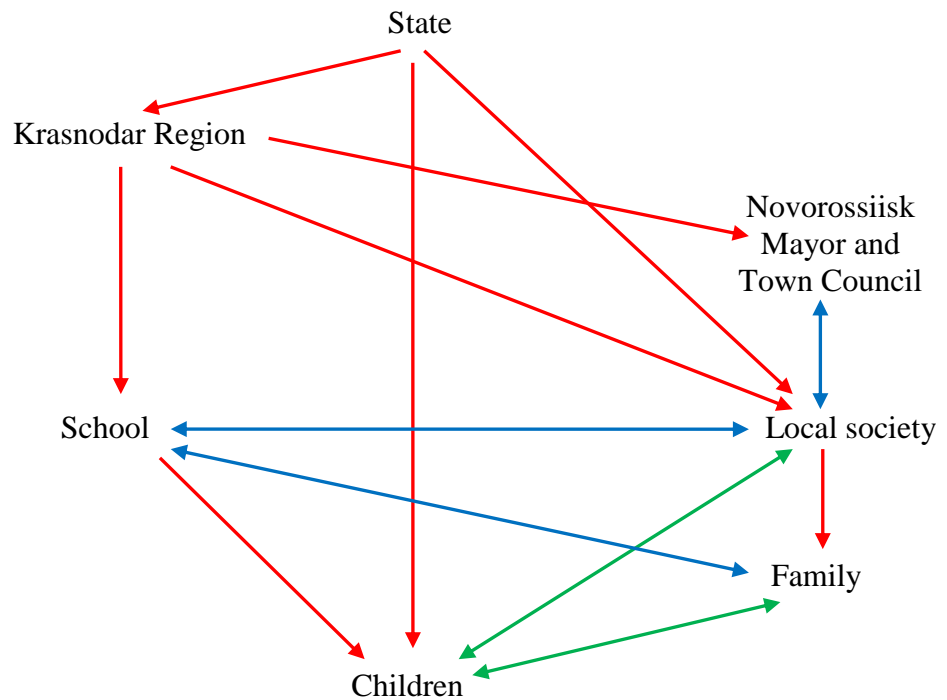
Despite some evidence of local disaffection, Councillor Andrievskii is optimistically convinced that, with the continuing conservative emphasis on *vospitanie* of the young citizens of Novorossiisk, the upcoming generation will continue the memory tradition. In general my observations and responses from interviewees support the attitude that Novorossiisk has a special identity with respect to war memory in comparison with other regional centres, which will probably override any potential disaffection among its young for years to come.

⁹⁷¹ On *Nashi*, see Mijnsen, 'The Victory Myth and Russia's Identity', 2010; and Ivo Mijnsen, *The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia I: Back To Our Future! History, Modernity, And Patriotism According To Nashi, 2005-2013*, Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2014. Radical restructuring of *Nashi* was reported in 2012: Ol'ga Kuz'menkova and Ekaterina Vinokurova, "'Nashikh" zakryvaiut', *Gazeta.ru*, 06/04/2012, <http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2012/04/06_a_4151693.shtml> [accessed 16/10/2014].

⁹⁷² <<http://www.forumseliger.ru>> [accessed 16/10/2014].

5.5 Conclusion

My research indicates that the cross-generational propagation of war memory to the young depends on the mutual reinforcement of a complex and closed social network. My hierarchical diagram of the influence of the various agencies involved indicates the driving force of the state in its cultivation of the new war cult under the Putin régime, which feeds down directly via the mass media and indirectly via the regional and town authorities to the younger generation.



Red lines indicate propagation by traditional top-down transmission routes

Blue lines show mutual influence

Green lines show reverse propagation from the younger generation to their elders

My research reveals a mixture of top-down and bottom-up mechanisms for memory propagation, where the state, school and family play the most important roles in socialization of the young. Young people are subjected to a concerted mnemonic campaign which is successful in most cases, although resisted by some. The most ubiquitous means of transmission is the school, the nexus for other multiple influences, where propagation is most effective when it fosters the proactivity of students of all ages, and joins with the family to render lessons on local history more personal and geographically relevant for pupils. Attempts by some educational institutions to digitize memory appear also to make it more appealing to young people. Furthermore, my evidence suggests that the most effective methods of cross-generational transmission of memory are those which reduce the temporal and spatial distance between older and younger generations with the vividness of film or war reconstructions.

The genetic terminology applied to remembrance today points to the action of a traditional, familial bottom-up force within the top-down state war cult, serving to complicate the mechanism of memory construction. This dynamic also reinforces the state narrative, if leading to the mnemonic stasis typical of an identity built on past tribal exploits, a cult of ancestors and traditional moral characteristics. With a renewed emphasis on *vospitanie* under the Putin régime, the youngest and the oldest generations are increasingly united in often contrived social meetings - a forum for the transmission of memory under the conditions of a new war cult that aims to revive the traditional moral values of the Brezhnev era. This includes the cultivation of an attitude which regards military service and patriotic courage in a positive light, where making war (successfully) is valued. Parents may even learn aspects of the war myth from their children through the largely unplanned mechanism of reverse propagation, a further example of the key role of young people in the transmission of memory dating from the

founders of Beskozyrka. This not only reinforces the traditional propagation mechanism, but may increasingly result in future mnemonic stagnation.

My interviews suggest that many citizens of Novorossiisk are avid consumers of television and newspaper revelations of 'the truth' about the war period, revealing a change in transmission mechanism from the oral propagation of the post-war years and the state-sponsored narrative of the Brezhnev and Putin war cults. Although access to information is changing, respondents indicate a continuing reliance on informal family discussions, although eye-witness testimony is now scarcely viable. For the moment both the state and the family remain guardians of memory, while the local authority takes responsibility for the custody of the many artefacts which will replace direct oral propagation in the future.

Conclusions: Looking back to the future

Идут туристы, гости вереницей,
Здесь каждый шаг историей храним.
Они пришли
В наш город поклониться
За все, за все, что выстрадано им.
[...]
Земля Малая. Брожу по местам,
Где окопы покрылись травой,
Где смертельный когда-то хлестал
Дождь осколков, порывисто воя.⁹⁷³

The relatively few Western tourists visiting Novorossiisk are introduced to a town that seems to some to be 'stuck in a Soviet time warp'.⁹⁷⁴ Disembarking from their cruise ships for a few hours, visitors are whisked around the Valley of Death, the monument cruiser 'Mikhail Kutuzov' and the Malaia zemlia memorial complex.⁹⁷⁵ Even ordinary Russians far from Novorossiisk see life in the Hero-City portrayed as revolving around the iconic Malaia zemlia monument in key scenes from the recent popular film 'Marafon' (The Marathon).⁹⁷⁶

To today's visitor the myth of Malaia zemlia is conveyed by the main monuments, where a brief summary from a tour guide is still powerful enough to reduce tourists to tears.⁹⁷⁷ This is an eminently potent and marketable myth, both to outsiders and residents, with its unambiguous heroes and successful outcome. Memory is carefully filtered however: tourists are not shown the outlying monument to

⁹⁷³ "Tourists walk, guests file past /Here we preserve history with every step. /They have come to our town to pay respect /For everything, for everything that it suffered. //Malaia zemlia. I wander around the places, /Where trenches have been covered with grass, /Where a deadly rain of shrapnel once lashed down /Howling fitfully." ('Novorossiiskaia poema', by Nikolai Tatarkin, *Gorod u moria*, Krasnodar: Sovetskaia Kuban', 2008, pp. 14-16.)

⁹⁷⁴ Simon Richmond, *Russia, China*: Lonely Planet, 2012, p. 414.

⁹⁷⁵ 'Inostrannye turisty spliasali pod "dubinushku"', *NR*, 20/09/2012, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/6594>> [accessed 14/10/2014]; *Voyages of Discovery*, <http://www.voyagesofdiscovery.co.uk/excursion_calendar.php?port_id=18474&cruise_id=18561&date_port=2012-10-24> [accessed 09/10/2012]; *Sea Dream Yacht Club*, <<http://www.seadream.com/voyages/11322>> [accessed 14/10/2014].

⁹⁷⁶ Karen Oganessian, 'Marafon', Russia: 2013.

⁹⁷⁷ Telephone interview with Cruise Manager at 'Voyages of Discovery' (06/11/2012).

The Unvanquished to pay their respects to those Jewish civilians executed shortly after the town was occupied and who now appear to be suffering from agreed collective amnesia. Guides may point out the bas-reliefs of the heroes inside the Malaia zemlia monument, but Brezhnev is not singled out for mention; visitors learn nothing about his minor part in the war or his major role when in power in promulgating the war myth nationwide. The older generation across the country may still recall with derision Brezhnev's infamous war memoirs, but in this respect Novorossiisk has taken ownership of its identity from the man who did so much to formulate it. With Brezhnev virtually removed from the myth, a Heimat-like convergence in local and national remembrance as proposed by Alon Confino has been achieved, whereby there is an overlapping of national and local symbolism and interpretation.⁹⁷⁸

With this new sense of ownership of their town's identity, many citizens of Novorossiisk feel a responsibility for propagation of a myth which is apparently not only good for the tourist trade and the town's regional prestige, but also for the *vospitanie* of the younger generation. In comparison with war memory in the West it is perhaps surprising that so many young people buy into the myth. However, Russia has seen a campaign of patriotism in the twenty-first century, with a focus through the school curriculum on the younger generation who will, in the future, bear the responsibility for remembrance. Today's myth is a powerful social construction, disseminated thanks to a strong commitment to memory on the part of the local authority, with a leading role played by the Mayor who both shapes and responds to local opinion.

Locally, the myth of Malaia zemlia that was founded under Stalinism and propagated under Communism during the Brezhnev régime remains strong under Putin. Virtually every living participant may be dead, and many of the post-war generation

⁹⁷⁸ See Chapter 1.3.2.

too, but the myth lives on successfully. This longevity is due to the undeniably positive narrative and proactive attempts to rejuvenate commemorative rituals. The sheer resonance of the myth with generations of citizens of Novorossiisk is clear from my research. Much may be made of the legendary February weather, but, alongside reconstructions on the actual site of the landings, the cold helps to engender a temporal proximity to the landing troops, promoting cross-generational empathy amongst current residents. Russian communities, in common with other traditional societies, have always been particularly fond of their canon of myths, legends and folk-tales, which is evident in Novorossiisk. Although there is a recent rapprochement with the objective history valued in the West, the subjective myth of Malaia zemlia retains its own attached legends: young Vitia is still remembered and Brezhnev on his evening stroll stands on his granite plinth, imbuing the myth with the emotional popular appeal lacking in the history books.

Despite an element of legend, however, the myth of Malaia zemlia is based largely on undisputable fact, supported by increasing quantities of historical minutiae. Novorossiisk is successfully forging a relationship with its Soviet history, which is effective for the town by virtue of its largely unchallengeable nature. Thanks to its local significance and the unique Beskozyrka ritual, citizens seem content to adopt the myth and proud of their cultural and military heritage. In this respect, Novorossiisk represents an extreme case, where the desire for continued local war memory coincides with the national position on the continuation of memory, assuring the maintenance of the Hero-City's own special identity and status.

The official myth today consists of a simple and generalized narrative about the landings with most of the historical detail provided by history classes in local institutes of higher education. Information about collaboration and punishment battalions is now more widely available, if still only discussed on the sidelines, as some in the town start

to appreciate the more unsavoury aspects of its history. The recent inclusion of Cossacks in the outward display of the war myth grates with some residents: tourists may attend a Cossack circus extravaganza and pass Cossacks on sentry duty at the Eternal Flame, but do not hear the whispers about their alleged collaboration with the enemy. These rumours have, however, become more insistent with the recent conflict in Ukraine, as louder allegations of Soviet collaboration have been voiced. The myth that was first widely disseminated during the Brezhnev régime was inclusive of all ethnicities, intended to unify the whole country. The same aim is apparent under Putin, although now the emphasis is largely on the Russian people rather than the entire Soviet Union. Since 2014 pro-government Ukrainian citizens have been depicted in a more negative light in the Russian state-controlled media, which are now promoting some division in the once unifying national war myth.

My study represents an original contribution to scholarship on the sociology of myth-making and remembrance. My research into the mechanism of construction and dynamics of propagation of this local war myth has revealed the distinctiveness of mythology in the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia, based on a myth-making tradition dating from the war against Napoleon in Tsarist Russia and further honed in the aftermath of the October Revolution. Just as there is an historical continuity on *Ulitsa Novorossiiskoi respubliki*, linking the monuments to the town's nineteenth-century founder via the Revolution to Brezhnev's visit to confer the town with its Hero-City status, so the current identity of Novorossiisk depends on a temporal continuity from 1943 to today. This connection is not only evident in the monumental landscape of the town, but is also claimed within the moral and genetic character of its citizens.

In general, this study of the local dimension in remembrance of the war has demonstrated a substantial coherence between the war narrative as disseminated from

above and supported through collective memory from below. However, my research has revealed the agency of construction and propagation of memory in Novorossiisk to be less clear-cut than Hobsbawm or Tumarkin would suggest, indicative of a complex relationship between the state and the individual citizen. Tumarkin sees only the 'vulgarity and gigantism' of state-sponsored memorial complexes such as the Malaia zemlia monument at Stanichka.⁹⁷⁹



The Malaia zemlia memorial⁹⁸⁰

However, commemoration of the Malaia zemlia campaign is not totally dominated by the state. Individual citizens of Novorossiisk may live in the shadow of the Brezhnev-era monument, but individuals are also depicted in the faces of troops on its sides; in addition they are remembered through the single *beskozyrka* floating on the waves just off the shore, and by locally significant monuments that commemorate the

⁹⁷⁹Tumarkin, 'Story of a War Memorial', 1993, p. 126.

⁹⁸⁰ Photograph by author (02/04/2004).

war dead on a smaller, more human scale. Furthermore, I have found some scope for individual and group proactivity in commemorative ritual and monumental memory, especially but not exclusively on the periphery of official memorial practices - grassroots memorial activity even more surprising in view of the top-down mnemonic environments of both war cults.

This thesis also makes a valuable contribution to the political history of the Brezhnev era by its close examination of the relationship between the General Secretary and the citizens of his Hero-City. The war cult of the Brezhnev régime may have been centred on the persona of the General Secretary in the case of *Malaia zemlia*, but in the end was manipulated for the political purposes of the régime behind its ailing leader. With his loss of physical and mental capacity, Brezhnev became less credible in his position to the Soviet people, rendering a once popular war cult derisory after the publication of his memoirs. After Brezhnev's death his war cult imploded, its long-term impact fatally compromised by governmental over-exploitation.

The war cult of the Putin era is not centred on the alleged exploits of one man, nor is Putin as frail as the elderly Brezhnev in his final years. Both these facts render the contemporary war cult potentially more enduring than that of the Brezhnev era, particularly as the recent conflict in Ukraine has triggered an increase in rhetoric referring to the Great Patriotic War in the Russian media. However, the approach to the past through an emphasis on military victory by means of the people's heroic sacrifice seems identical today to that in the Soviet Union at the height of Communism, while retaining much of the Soviet symbolism, albeit without the formal constraints of Socialist Realism. Building on some popular nostalgia for the Soviet past, President Putin has reclaimed some aspects of Soviet history. The war cult of the twenty-first century is disseminated through schools and ceremonies to a public widely, if not completely, united by its simple message, which still seems relevant to the régime:

deception and attempts at collaboration by the invading enemy from the West, defeated thanks to the sacrificial but eventually victorious struggle of the united people.

It is not possible to predict the future of the war myth in Novorossiisk precisely, but my research has uncovered sufficient evidence to make some informed speculation. There is no reason to suppose that popular opinion will alter tack with a sudden wish to forget the local history evident in museums and libraries and on the streets of the Hero-City. Beskozyrka is successfully continuing after the death of Konstantin Podyma, the town has made plans for the replacement of Captain Lesik on Heroes' Square and Mayor Siniagovskii seems secure in his position of influence as a member of the majority United Russia party. The seventieth anniversary of the end of the war in 2015 may mark a watershed, however; it has been named the 'year of the veteran' in some places in Russia, probably the recognition of a culmination in the direct participation of veterans in commemorative events.⁹⁸¹ The end of direct transmission of war memory in Novorossiisk will conclude a tradition of inter-generational meetings, but this may equally result in fewer bored pupils as students are allowed to research local history independently. Even as the war myth gradually evolves into local history, it retains its relevance and utility for Novorossiisk: as long as it guarantees regional prestige and a stream of tourists, it will surely be supported by the local authorities and town council.

Propagation of the myth is not merely a local initiative and it is doubtful if remembrance would be so popular if maintained in its own bubble outside the national mnemonic environment generated under the 'managed democracy' of the Putin government. The state's war myth has been increasingly deployed since the turn of the century as a metaphor for national cohesion and, more recently, to imbue self-confidence amongst Russians increasingly criticized by the West. Similarly,

⁹⁸¹ For example, "Tuleev ob"iavil "Godom veteranov - godom Velikoi Pobedy" 2015 god', AIF, 29/04/2014, <<http://www.aif.ru/society/history/1159965>> [accessed 06/09/2014].

political authoritarianism has been gradually ramped up by a government looking to forestall any potential internal revolution, such as those occurring in neighbouring Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004 and 2014). The strong element of state control and centralization under the guise of a democratic society may not be evident or even matter to the ordinary resident of Novorossiisk, who takes it for granted and sees only the local result of the national war cult which has helped to fuel the popularity of the myth of Malaia zemlia.

The main proponent of the national meta-narrative of the war is the President and the longevity of the current war cult may depend on the length of his tenure. The recent conflict with Ukraine and the perceived growing threat from the West has resulted in an inflation of nationalistic rhetoric. Vladimir Putin has developed an even tighter emotional hold on Russia with an increasingly powerful narrative of patriotism and militarism, both referring back to war victory.⁹⁸² Since the annexation of Crimea Putin has personally promised to build up trade in the Novorossiisk area, including a new bridge across the Kerch' Straits and the formation of a new transport hub linking the two Hero-Cities of Novorossiisk and Sevastopol', with the development of a more modern transport network behind Novorossiisk.⁹⁸³ In conjunction with the growing naval base in Novorossiisk, this would boost the local economy considerably and probably stimulate not only the maintenance of monuments but also the budget devoted to remembrance.

For the moment, though, the Russian economy continues to struggle as a result of Western sanctions and a weak rouble. This disruption may exacerbate the unsustainability of a national economy facing lower oil prices, and the local economy

⁹⁸² See, for example, Putin's state of the nation address to parliament, 'Ezhegodnoe poslanie Prezidenta RF Vladimira Putina Federal'nomu Sobraniuu', *Pervyi kanal*, 04/12/2014, <<http://www.1tv.ru/news/polit/273180>> [accessed 04/12/2014].

⁹⁸³ Tat'iana Staroverova, 'V Novorossiiske glava gosudarstva skorrektiroval plany portokivov', *NR*, 26/09/2014, <<http://www.novorab.ru/ArticleSection/Details/12606>> [accessed 20/10/2014].

will no doubt suffer as the national embargo on some imports reduces the flow of goods through the port of Novorossiisk. The consequences may be similar to those of the 1990s, when everyday financial concerns and decreasing official budgets displaced commemoration of the war from the political agenda nationwide. If state policies and President Putin become too unpopular, both he and his war cult may themselves be consigned to history. Whatever happens in the short to medium term, this thesis has demonstrated that the myth of Malaia zemlia is strong and stable enough to live on in Novorossiisk in the longer term as it mutates into local history, while the shadows of Brezhnev and the Brezhnev era monuments linger in the background.

Appendix A: Some concluding observations from a cross-section of contemporary citizens of Novorossiisk

'Do you know, [...] I have travelled a lot in the world, but nowhere have I come across a more patriotic town than our Novorossiisk.' (Konstantin Podyma)⁹⁸⁴

'I am proud of Novorossiisk and don't want to leave it. It has a splendid role in the history of the Great Patriotic War. People gave their lives for Novorossiisk and for our opportunity to live here. We, the children, are grateful.' (F1A)

'People in Moscow don't know where Novorossiisk is, even today, so they don't know what happened here 65 years ago; maybe they don't want to know. Perhaps it wasn't as big a battle as Stalingrad, but it played a key role. Most people remember that Brezhnev fought here and that it's a Hero-City. It was strategic and significant.' (M1A)

'This is an unusual town; it is important because it was defended by lots of people. Lots of heroes were here.' (M1B)

'I feel pride; and responsibility here, and the memory of those who helped our generation. Pride in those who gave their blood for the town. They gave *us* life. We like the rituals and parades on special days; this reminds us to be grateful.' (M2D)

'Malaia zemlia has become well known in the town. It is part of the town's organism, it's a natural matter of fact, it's like asking us how important it is to have feet.' (F3A)

'We know that Novorossiisk is a special town, compared with Krasnodar; Malaia zemlia is part of the town when we have celebrations.' (F3D)

'There is a bigger sense of patriotism here, in a Hero-City. The whole country suffered, but there is a special attitude to Hero-Cities. Here it is underlined by remembrance events more than in other places. It's a super town, and it is especially good to look across from the Maritime Academy to the Malaia zemlia monument.' (F3F)

'Novorossiisk is a very significant place. I lived elsewhere, but now I like living in a Hero-City.' (F3G)

'I am not from around here, but now I associate myself with this town, and feel really proud to live in a Hero-City. There is no other Hero-City nearby; even Krasnodar, which is twice as big, isn't a Hero-City. Now I call it my own and I like it more and more as the years pass.' (M3A)

'You walk on land soaked in blood.' (M3D)

'I like life in a Hero-City. I like its history. I think everything, monuments, nature, sea, and its history, are all linked with its mighty power. I want to transmit this to the next generation.' (M3F)

⁹⁸⁴ 'Mify - ne rify!', 16/02/2011.

'Living in a Hero-City has little significance for life today, but I feel very proud of past events.' (F4A)

'Living here brings responsibility and pride.' (F4E)

'I like this town, with its historic past, and feel a sense of pride.' (F4F)

'You have to think about what took place here, to know about it, to be sorry for the people.' (F4I)

'This may be a war city, but the people are ordinary. Novorossiisk is just one of many. Leningrad, Stalingrad and Moscow are genuine Hero-Cities. But of course Malaia zemlia is part of my everyday life.' (M4A)

'I was born in the former Soviet Union and I have always known that Novorossiisk was a Hero-City since my childhood. The attitude of people may have changed; it's not really in the press so much now. But now I just feel respect for the town which does not depend on the fact that it's a Hero-City; you don't need to live here to feel respect for the fallen.' (M4B)

'This is a living place and this one place is special because this little bit of land was held. I am very proud and my son, when he was little, when we went to relatives, to other places in Russia, he always told people he lived in a Hero-City.' (F5A)

'I got married and came here in my youth, and have a feeling of pride, but I may feel the same about any other town if I lived there. We live on the exact spot where the battles took place. On the anniversary of the landings, three-quarters of the people come to honour the heroes; everyone comes: civil servants, children, residents, old people, come, and it's really cold, but people come. They talk a lot about it then. It's better to talk than to forget.' (F5B)

'Friends from some way away come to Novorossiisk, as this is a centre where memory is concentrated.' (F5D)

'I feel a responsibility, living here, as if I am the visiting card of the town. I am very proud of the local heroes and the monuments.' (F5E)

'I have lived here for fourteen years. This is an unusual town, not simple or ordinary. Everything reminds you of the war years. There is respect for the heroes, to whom the monuments are dedicated. Your heart beats, on the streets, and especially on Malaia zemlia, where people go to relax; it's attractive, and life goes on, but memory of the past is important. But I won't swim in the sea, because the ground is sacred; we are reminded of how much blood was shed. It is a responsibility for our children, to keep the town and its streets clean and to respect memory, look after the monuments and influence personal behaviour. Malaia zemlia is part of my everyday life, as you come across all these places all the time in our town.' (F5G)

'I feel pride in my town, where there was a big battle.' (F5H)

'We take memory and death so seriously, more than any other town.' (F5M)

'I have always lived here in Novorossiisk and feel a sense of responsibility. This is my personal view; it may be a small town, but this is a Hero-City. It was a real battle, lots of metal dropped on everyone, 1,250 kilograms per square metre, the beach-head was held, they defended the strategic gateway to the Caucasus, and stopped the Germans before they took the oil. That's the reasons it's a Hero-City. But Novorossiisk was so small, it did not get the historic recognition it deserved.' (M5F)

'I like the monuments but it's not important that this is a Hero-City.' (F6A)

'I don't really feel a sense of responsibility for memory here.' (F6D)

'Of course I feel a responsibility for memory, it's my own town, so we try to maintain memory, to teach our children, as best we can. But maybe Malaia zemlia isn't part of everyday life.' (6FE)

'I am proud of my Hero-City.' (M6A)

'I have a sense of respect and honour and some responsibility. The town was made a Hero-City after the victory, and each inhabitant has a feeling of responsibility and pride. It may be a small town, but it saw important events.' (F7A)

'Maybe this isn't a real Hero-City because the population was not involved in the defence and the fighting.' (M7B)

Appendix B: Notes on sources and methodology

This is a multi-disciplinary thesis with historical, cultural and sociological dimensions. It therefore employs a mixed-mode qualitative methodology, relying in particular upon a literary analysis of war memoirs; a sustained overview of the press in Novorossiisk from 1943 to the present; attendance at rituals of commemoration; observation of monuments and battle sites; the detailed examination of current educational practices; and extended personal interviews.

Most memoirs were borrowed from the main Gor'kii Library in Novorossiisk, while others were given by individuals and the library in Myskhako. Many newspapers were accessed online, while past copies of local newspapers, notably Novorossiiskii rabochii and Novorossiiskie vesti, were found in the main Novorossiisk library. Copies of Znamia rodiny and other documents from the war and post-war years were consulted in the archives of the Novorossiisk Museum. A few items were found in the Russian State Archive for Literature and the Arts in Moscow.

Research interviews in Novorossiisk were authorized by the University College London Ethics Committee.⁹⁸⁵ Field research and interviews were conducted in Novorossiisk in May 2010, March-April 2011 and February 2013. Discussions with four subjects were continued in England and email exchanges were conducted with ten. In total, 124 residents of Novorossiisk ranging in age from eighteen to ninety-three were interviewed for an average of an hour: some very extensive, in-depth meetings with experts were balanced by a few shorter interviews with less forthcoming subjects. Discussion lasted from thirty minutes to three hours, taking place in the subject's workplace, at home or on neutral territory, for example in the Bekar School or the

⁹⁸⁵ Project Number 2748/001; Data Protection Registration Number Z6364106/2010/10/41, section 19, research: social research.

Myskhako town hall. A list of thirteen preliminary questions (at Appendix D) was used to help structure the conversations as the basis for extended discussions. This guided interview was modified flexibly during interviews to allow for the free flow of conversation. In the case of experts, questions were tailored in order to obtain more specific information. All discussions were conducted in Russian.⁹⁸⁶

Access to a wide range of interviewees of various ages and ethnicities was obtained through the good offices of the Bekar School, where parents and grandparents of pupils were invited to private meetings in a classroom in 2011. The letter of invitation and the agreement pro forma are detailed at Appendix D.⁹⁸⁷ One advantage of this approach was easy access to a useful number of subjects. However, following the Ethics Committee advice to provide in the letter of invitation an example of questions to be asked during the interview, in addition to general information about my research, prospective interviewees were put off at first, fearing that they would appear ignorant about the detailed history of the war. Only once the first ten or so interviewees reported back to their friends that the experience was more interesting than daunting did a steady flow of subjects materialize as the interview network expanded.

Access to expert interviewees and significant post-holders in the town was gained thanks to my professional network, with interviews mainly held in their places of work. A further large tranche of interviewees was introduced by key colleagues. Finally, many elderly interviewees were accessed thanks to the Veterans' Council in Myskhako and all were interviewed either at the Veterans' Council, in their homes or in a public place of their choice. All interviewees were offered the chance to have a friend alongside them, which was usually not accepted, although in the case of older, potentially vulnerable volunteers, I insisted that a member of the Veterans' Council or a relation was present.

⁹⁸⁶ My interview methodology and experience was similar to, but not modelled on that used by Petersson: Petersson, *National Self-Images and Regional Identities in Russia*, 2001.

⁹⁸⁷ In view of the suspicion in Russia over the signing of documents, some respondents agreed verbally to the interview, but declined to formalize their agreement with a signature.

Light refreshments were offered to all those attending my place of work, and I was invariably offered hospitality in the homes or offices of interviewees, which helped the conversation to flow more naturally.

Although most interviewees seemed very enthusiastic to talk to me, I was equally concerned to protect them. No juveniles were interviewed and precautions were taken to protect older subjects from potentially distressing memories. It was always stressed at the beginning of the interview that respondents were able to stop if they found the conversation difficult. In practice, I found that women were more than happy to talk to a woman interviewer without any self-consciousness, whilst four men, who were rather hesitant about the experience at first, soon overcame their initial lack of confidence. I conducted risk assessments for my own safety before my field-trips but encountered no personal problems. Although one older woman initially accused me of being a spy, she agreed after two hours' conversation that I was, after all, 'one of ours'.⁹⁸⁸ Although I explained carefully to respondents the nature of my research, I had to deal sensitively with one man who felt wrongly that I was trying to prove that the myth of Malaia zemlia was not based on fact, but was merely a legend.⁹⁸⁹ In only one case did I terminate the interview prematurely when a relatively young woman became distressed at the thought that young people today may fail to respect the memory of the war dead.⁹⁹⁰ Several subjects, both men and women, returned to me days after our initial meeting with further information that they thought would be of interest.

My gradual integration into this parochial community improved as I was able to interview many respondents on several occasions over the years and build up a more meaningful and trusting relationship. On occasions it appeared that some responses

⁹⁸⁸ F7E.

⁹⁸⁹ M4E.

⁹⁹⁰ F3G.

were rehearsed and that perhaps interviewees were telling me what I wanted to hear.⁹⁹¹ Over time I was able to establish if these responses stayed the same or if more was forthcoming.

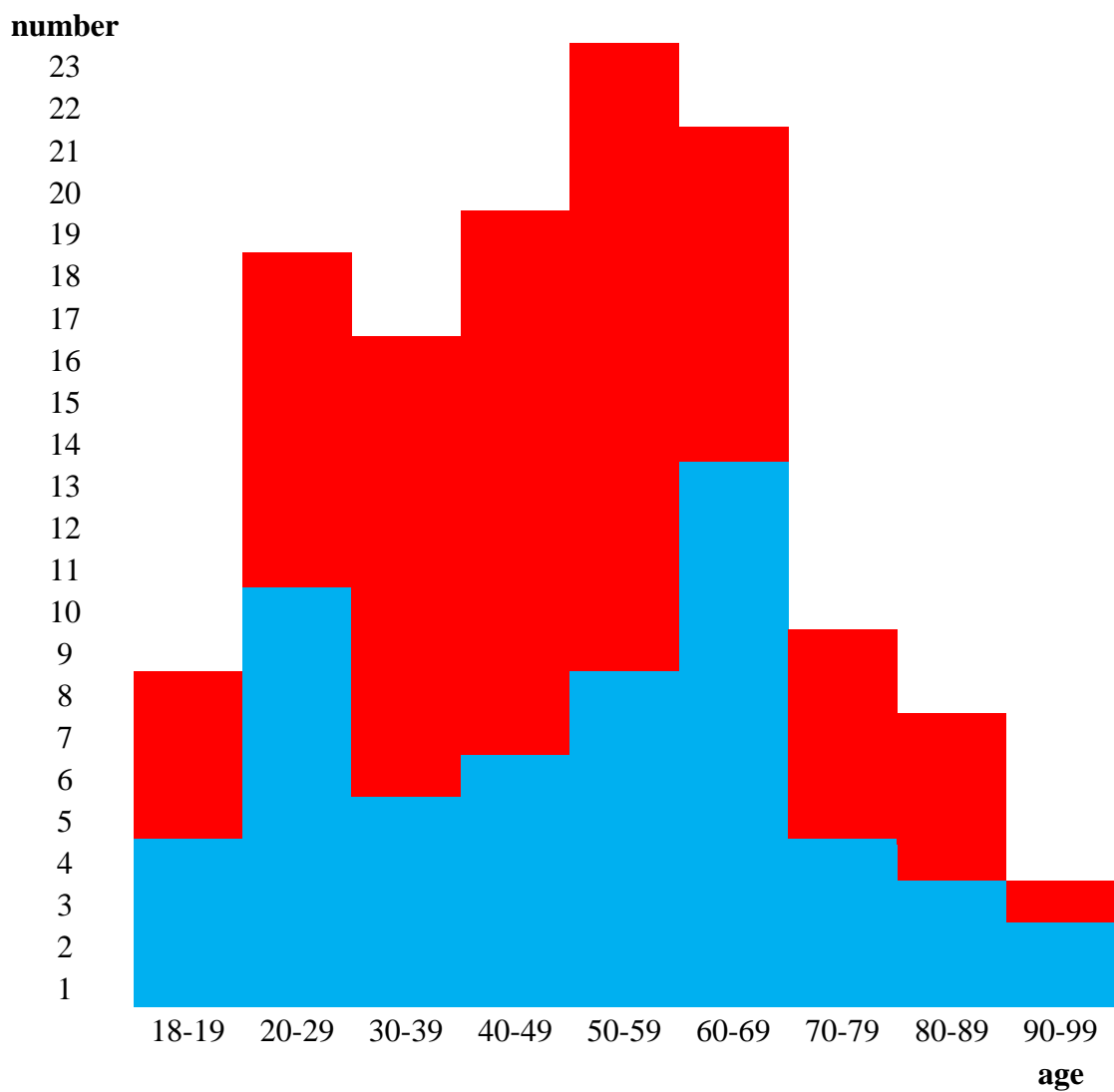
Confidentiality of response was guaranteed, although some experts agreed to waive this right. Some agreed to their name being mentioned if they were speaking in an official capacity, but requested that they remain anonymous in connection with any personal opinion expressed during the interview. This points to some possible tension between official and private opinion. The position of respondents is only included where relevant. Anonymous interviewees in Novorossiisk are identified using the coded identity:

'F (female) or M (male)/first digit of age on date of first interview/identifying letter'. For example, F4D is a female in her forties. A full list of anonymous coded identities and the dates of their interviews is detailed at Appendix C.

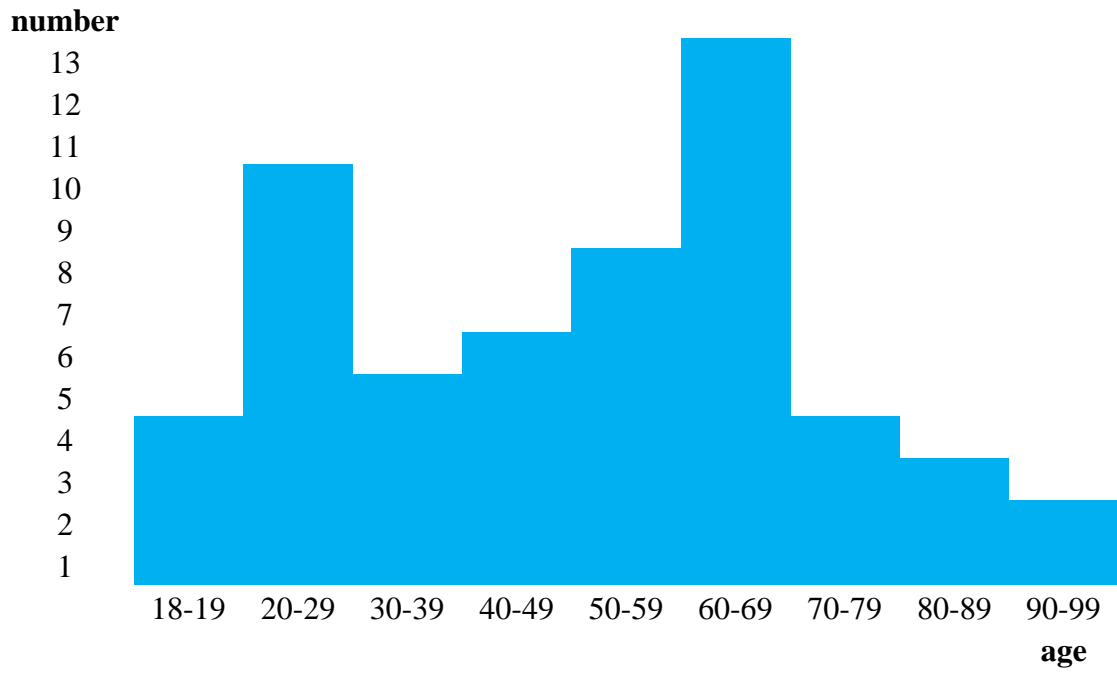
One disadvantage of using a network based around a local school could be that interviewees may have a common social environment. In fact, this was not a serious problem, as subjects had a wide range of backgrounds and many more interviewees were sought from other sources. The main disadvantage was that my sample included substantially more females than males, possibly because fewer men of working age were available for interview during working hours. This may also reflect both natural demographics and the premature death of men who saw wartime service. Of the 124 interviewees, fifty-five were male and sixty-nine female, a ratio of 4:5, with males comprising 44.4% of the total sample, compared with 55.6% for females. The age distribution of interviewees is shown in the bar charts below, where red indicates female and blue male respondents.

⁹⁹¹ For example, F6D, F6H, M6M, F7B, F7C, F7D, F8A, F8C and F8D.

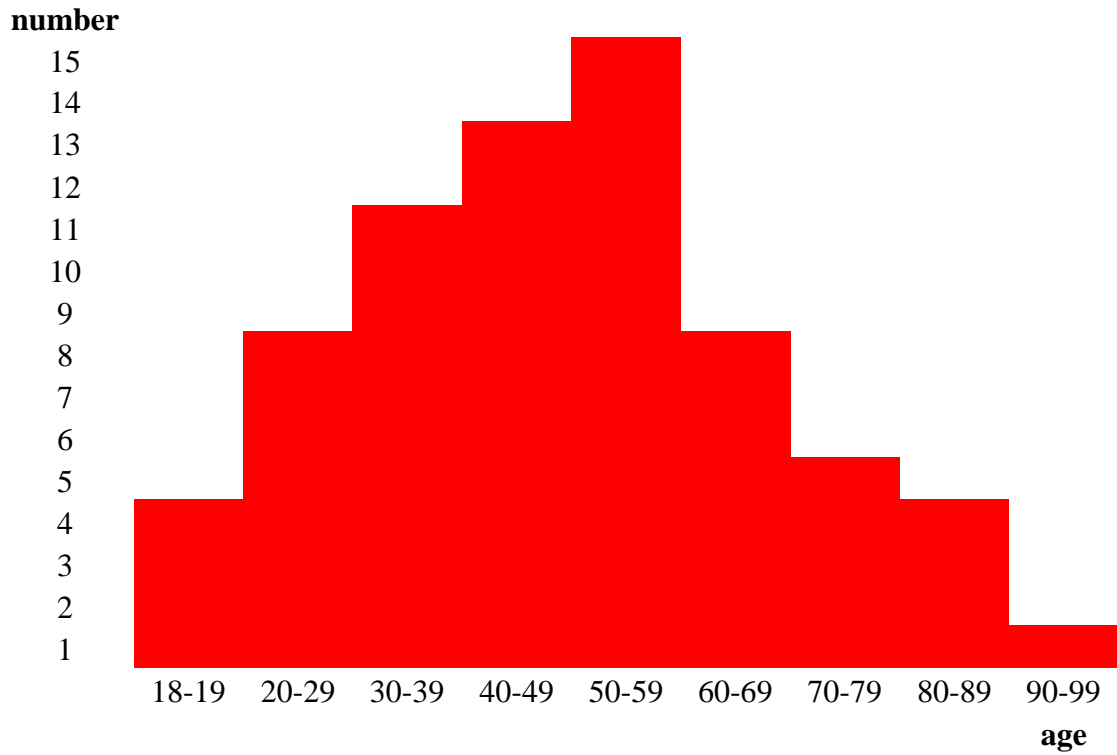
Age distribution of interviewees



Male sample



Female sample



Few young people under the age of twenty were interviewed, as ethical considerations prevented the direct questioning of children under the age of eighteen. It must be stressed that, in many cases, the exact age of subjects was not known exactly such that the coded identity sometimes reflects a best guess at the first digit of the person's age. Based on these inaccurate statistics, there is a modal age range of 50-59, with lower estimated mean and median age ranges.

Interviewees comprised people from various backgrounds, including teachers and lecturers, students in higher education, military personnel, historians, librarians, architects, town councillors, journalists, divers, lawyers, shopkeepers, economists, business people, housewives and pensioners. In the list of individual interviewees at Appendix C socioeconomic class has been based on the National Readership Survey categories commonly used in market research, with an expansion of group E (the unemployed) to distinguish between students (E1), housewives (E2), and retired persons (E3), and with the previous class, where known, included in brackets. No jobseekers of working age or persons under the age of eighteen were interviewed. In all cases, however, the respondent's perceptions and subjective discourse on memory were more important than their social background.

Socioeconomic classifications employed

A	higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations
B	intermediate managerial, administrative and professional occupations
C1	supervisory or clerical and junior managerial, administrative and professional occupations
C2	skilled manual occupations
D	semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations
E1	students
E2	housewives
E3	retired persons

In addition to the interviews in Novorossiisk, I interviewed briefly and on an ad hoc basis thirty-four subjects from places in Russia far removed from Novorossiisk in order to compare their understanding of Malaia zemlia with the attitude in Novorossiisk.

However much I have delved into the mind and memory of Novorossiisk over the years, I remain conscious that there remains a wealth of untapped resources for future research. I have built up working relationships with several community leaders and have been granted privileged access to much material, but have not been able to visit the regional archives in Krasnodar. Further research is necessary to uncover the local Communist Party documents relating to Brezhnev's visit to Novorossiisk and the development of the Beskozyrka ritual. In Moscow my time in the state archives was limited and the treasure trove of documents relating to Beskozyrka awaits research in Podyma's archive in the Russian State Archive for Socio-Political History (RGASPI). My personal academic interest lies in the hundreds of letters written by troops on Malaia zemlia and held in the Novorossiisk museum archives.⁹⁹² From this albeit censored source the very first mention of 'Malaia zemlia' could be established and perhaps the veracity of some of the snapshots of memory featuring in later memoirs.

⁹⁹² See footnote 113.

Appendix C: List of Interviewees

Subject	Socioeconomic class	Date interviewed
F1A	E1	13/05/2010
F1B	E1	31/03/2011
F1C	E1	31/03/2011
F1D	E1	03/04/2012
M1A	E1	14/05/2010
M1B	E1	07/05/2010
M1C	E1	31/03/2011
M1D	E1	31/03/2011
F2A	E1	14/05/2010
F2B	E1	31/03/2011
F2C	E1	31/03/2011
F2D	C1	18/03/2011
F2E	C1	19/03/2011
F2F	C1	23/03/2011
F2G	E1	06/02/2013
F2H	E1	06/02/2013
M2A	E1	10/05/2010
M2B	E1	31/03/2011
M2C	E1	31/03/2011
M2D	E1	31/03/2011
M2E	E1	31/03/2011
M2F	C1	31/03/2011

Subject	Socioeconomic class	Date interviewed
M2G	C1	18/03/2011
M2H	C1	19/03/2011
M2I	E1	06/02/2013
M2J	E1	06/02/2013
F3A	C1	06/05/2010 and 10/05/2010
F3B	C1	09/05/2010
F3C	C1	15/03/2011
F3D	D	15/03/2011
F3E	E1	16/03/2011
F3F	D	16/03/2011
F3G	C1	18/03/2011
F3H	C1	18/03/2011
F3I	E1	18/03/2011
F3J	C1	25/03/2011
F3K	C1	19, 23 and 29/03/2011
M3A	B	10/05/2010 and 9/2/2013
M3B	C2	22/03/2011
M3C	C2	22/03/2011
M3D	C2	22/03/2011
M3E	B	16/03/2011
F4A	B	09/05/2010 and 8/2/2013
F4B	B	14/05/2010
F4C	C1	15/05/2010, 17/03/2011 and 01/04/2011

Subject	Socioeconomic class	Date interviewed
F4D	C1	15/05/2010
F4E	E1	14/05/2010
F4F	E1	18/03/2011
F4G	D	15/03/2011
F4H	E1	16/03/2011
F4I	D	17/03/2011
F4J	C1	25/03/2011
F4K	C1	06/02/2013
F4L	A	04/02/2013 and 05/02/2013
F4M	C1	03/02/2013
M4A	B	15/05/2010
M4B	C2	17/03/2011
M4C	A	29/03/2011
M4D	C2	08/02/2013
M4E	C2	09/05/2010 and 29/03/2011
M4F	B	07/02/2013
F5A	B	13/05/2010
F5B	C1	14/05/2010
F5C	A	12/05/2010
F5D	A	06/05/2010
F5E	A	12/05/2010
F5F	C1	21/03/2011
F5G	C1	15/03/2011

Subject	Socioeconomic class	Date interviewed
F5H	C1	16/03/2011
F5I	C1	18/03/2011
F5J	B	23/03/2011
F5K	C1	23/03/2011
F5L	C1	25/03/2011
F5M	B	01/04/2011
F5N	A	02/04/2011
F5P	B	email correspondence only
F5Q	B	16/03/2014
M5A	C1	18/03/2011
M5B	B	18/03/2011
M5C	A	09/05/2010 and 23/03/2011
M5D	B	23/03/2011
M5E	B	26/03/2011
M5F	A	29/03/2011
M5G	D	24/03/2011
M5H	B	16/05/2010
F6A	E3(D)	15/05/2010
F6B	B	01/04/2011
F6C	E3(C1)	14/05/2010
F6D	E3(D)	09/05/2010 and 29/03/2011
F6E	C2	15/03/2011
F6F	E3(D)	15/03/2011

Subject	Socioeconomic class	Date interviewed
F6G	C1	14/01/2012
F6H	C1	05/02/2013
M6A	E3(D)	10/05/2010
M6B	B	14/03/2011
M6C	B	31/03/2011
M6D	B	24/03/2011
M6E	B	24/03/2011
M6F	B	22/03/2011
M6G	C1	21/03/2011
M6H	E3	09/05/2010
M6I	C2	22/04/2011
M6J	A	06/02/2013
M6K	B	03/02/2013
M6L	A	03/02/2013
M6M	B	05/02/2013
F7A	A	13/05/2010 and 26/03/2011
F7B	C1	08/05/2010, 19/03/2011 and 08/02/2013
F7C	E3(D)	13/05/2010 and 19/03/2011
F7D	E3(D)	09/05/2010
F7E	E3	05/02/2013
M7A	E3(C2)	16/03/2011
M7B	E3(A)	21/03/2011
M7C	E3(C1)	21/03/2011

Subject	Socioeconomic class	Date interviewed
M7D	E3(A)	22/03/2011
F8A	E3(C1)	10/05/2010 and 08/02/2013
F8B	E3(D)	10/05/2010 and 19/03/2011
F8C	E3(B)	05/05/2010
F8D	E3(C1)	01/04/2011
M8A	E3(D)	10/05/2010
M8B	E3(C1)	19/03/2011
M8C	E3(B)	03/02/2013
F9A	E3	12/04/2011
M9A	E3(A)	07/05/2010
M9B	E3(B)	03/02/2013

Appendix D

Interview questions and documentation

Points covered in conversations with interviewees

The following leading questions, posed in Russian, were used as the basis for extended discussions with participants.

1. What does it mean to you to live in a Hero-City?
2. Does this involve any responsibility on your part, in your opinion?
3. Why are the defenders of Malaia zemlia considered to be heroes?
4. What memoirs about Malaia zemlia do you think are the most significant?
5. What do people think about the links between Brezhnev and Malaia zemlia?
6. Why do we remember Malaia zemlia, and what can we learn from this commemoration?
7. Have the remembrance rituals changed at all over the years?
8. Does anybody simply want to forget it?
9. What is the significance of war monuments today in Novorossiisk?
10. What is the role of the family, schools, teachers, the media, the local authorities, the town council and the local museum in forming people's attitude to Malaia zemlia?
11. Is it important to remember the campaign?
12. Is Malaia zemlia part of your everyday life?
13. Is anyone disaffected with remembering the war and Malaia zemlia?

Letter of invitation to potential interviewees

Информационное письмо и приглашение на собеседование для проведения исследовательского проекта

Вам вручат копию этого информационного письма

Название проекта: **Память о Малой Земле**

Данное исследование одобрено Комитетом по Этике Лондонского Университета
(University College London)

(Идентификационный номер проекта 2748/001)

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Приглашаем принять участие в этом проекте

Детали исследования:

Данный исследовательский проект для докторской диссертации изучит отношение жителей города Новороссийска к местной военной истории и ее героям, а также отношение людей и их участие в памятных датах и акциях, посвященных Великой Отечественной Войне в прошлом и настоящем. Если Вы согласны принять участие в данном исследовании, Вас пригласят на собеседование, которое может продлиться от одного до двух часов. Во время нашей беседы Вас будут задавать вопросы о жизни в городе-герое со множеством памятников и мест, напоминающих о военном прошлом.

Работа будет опубликована в Англии, однако она не будет содержать Ваше имя, поскольку Вы будете идентифицироваться под номером участника, и Ваши взгляды будут оставаться анонимными. Записи нашего разговора будут надежно храниться и будут уничтожены в конце проекта.

Вы не обязаны участвовать в данном проекте. Если Вы согласитесь принять участие, Вы можете пригласить кого-нибудь присутствовать при Вашем разговоре (родственника, друга, члена Совета Ветеранов).

Если во время собеседования у Вас возникнет желание прекратить разговор, Вы можете сделать это в любое время, не указывая причин. Также Вы можете попросить нас уничтожить все записи нашего разговора до публикации этого исследования в 2015 году.

Если Вы согласны принять участие в этом проекте, Вы можете оставить себе данный документ.

Вы можете обсудить эту информацию с другими и задать нам интересующие Вас вопросы, если Вам что-то непонятно или нужна дополнительная информация.

Вся информация будет собрана и храниться в соответствии с Законом Соединенного Королевства о защите данных от 1998 года.

Formal consent to interview

Форма согласия на участие в исследовательском проекте

Пожалуйста, заполните данную форму после того, как вы прочтете Информационное письмо и/или прослушаете устное объяснение о данном исследовании.

Название проекта: **Память о Малой Земле**

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Спасибо за Ваш интерес к этому исследованию. Перед тем, как вы согласитесь принять участие, человек, организующий данное исследование должен разъяснить Вам суть проекта.

Если у Вас возникли какие-либо вопросы относительно проекта или собеседования, пожалуйста, задайте вопросы исследователю до того, как Вы решите принять участие. Вам выдадут копию Формы согласия, которую Вы можете оставить себе.

Заявление Участника

Я.....

- ознакомился с вышеуказанной информацией и понимаю, что включает данное исследование.
- понимаю, что, если я в любое время решу, что больше не хочу принимать участие в проекте, я могу известить об этом исследователей и прекратить участие в проекте немедленно.
- даю согласие на обработку моей информации для целей проекта.
- понимаю, что такая информация относится к строго конфиденциальной и будет обработана в соответствии с положениями Закона Соединенного Королевства о защите данных от 1998 года.
- согласен, что мне даны разъяснения о данном проекте и готов принять участие в исследовании.

Подпись:.....

Дата:.....

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