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Putin Injects State History Curriculum With a Dose of Crimea

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Russian President Vladimir Putin stands with military personnel during a ceremony marking Victory day in Sevastopol, Crimea.

President Vladimir Putin ordered the inclusion of a section on Crimea in the unified educational curriculum that all history textbooks will be required to conform to in public schools nationwide starting in September 2015.

Putin, whose father served with the Black Sea fleet in Sevastopol, wants Russian schoolchildren to be armed with "information about the role of Crimea, including the city of Sevastopol, in the history of the Russian empire, the USSR and modern Russia."

The order was posted on the Kremlin's official website with a note that it must be completed by Aug. 15.

Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula in March after its citizens voted in favor of independence from Ukraine during a referendum. The move launched one of the worst crises in relations between Russia and the West since the end of Cold War.

Initially, Putin sought the development by February 2013 of a state textbook that would reconcile polarized opinions about Russia's past and offer a cohesive but moderate narrative of the country's development. Putin wanted the book to be devoid of "internal contradictions and ambiguities."

The initiative later evolved from one of drafting a new textbook to one of promulgating concepts and guidelines to which all new history textbooks would be required to conform. Some analysts have criticized the effort as politically motivated.

See also:

Putin Says State History Textbooks Will Not Impose Ideology

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