

New Evidence Supports Validity of Soviet War Legend, Russian Culture Minister Claims

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Russia's culture minister has claimed that newly discovered archival evidence proves the authenticity of a World War II-era battle that historians have repeatedly questioned as a Soviet war myth.

According to Soviet legend, 28 Red Army soldiers heroically destroyed over a dozen German tanks and scores of enemy soldiers during the Battle of Moscow in Nov. 1941. Named "Panfilov's 28" after the general who commanded them, their story entered the Soviet canon as an example of self-sacrifice and bravery and was repopularized in Russia by a 2016 action war film [sponsored](#) by the Culture Ministry. Historians questioned the validity of the story since the opening of state archives in the 1990s, while some researchers have [denounced](#) it as a myth that was fabricated by the Soviet authorities.

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“We can now put an end to this story once and for all,” Russia’s Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky wrote in a letter [published](#) by the state-run Rossiyskaya Gazeta newspaper on Sunday.

In the letter, Medinsky claimed that archival documents discovered by Russia’s Military Historical Society proved that the battle involving the Panfilov’s 28 actually took place.

“Russia is a country of heroes. Our historical fate has identified a special Russian type of endurance. Its highest manifestation is sacrifice,” he added in the letter.

Medinsky, who is known for his outspoken conservative views, was himself the subject of controversy last year when a state education commission [ruled](#) to strip him of his PhD in history over allegations of plagiarism, before later changing its decision.

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