

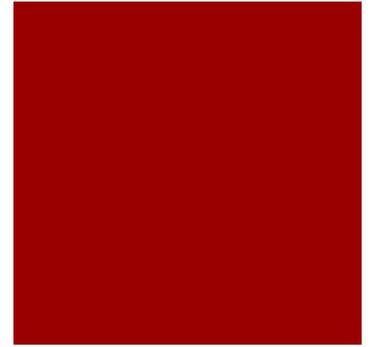


# Russia 1985-2015: a journey through the recent past

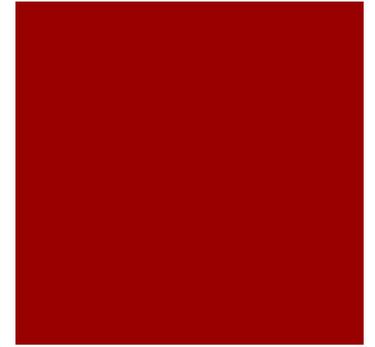
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# An introduction

- History and memories are intimately linked with politics and everyday life. The interpretations of the past, their images, play a role in defining and shaping identities, policies, and form the political and social agenda today.

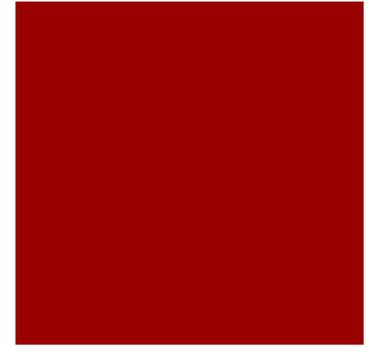


# How could we use history?



# Contemporaneity

- Current editions of the Oxford English Dictionary give four major meanings. They are all relational, turning on prepositions, on being placed “to,” “from,” “at,” or “during” time. There is the strong sense of “Belonging to the same time, age, or period” (1.a.), the coincidental, but also entangled sense of “Having existed or lived from the same date, equal in age, coeval” (2), and the mostly adventitious “Occurring at the same moment of time, or during the same period; occupying the same definite period, contemporaneous, simultaneous” (3). In each of these three meanings there is a distinctive sense of presentness, of being in the present, of beings that are present to each other, and to the time that they happen to be in while also being aware that they can live their lives in no other (this does not of course exclude imaginative projection to other times, including the sense--much favored in fictional and televisual dramatizations--of being a contemporary to those living in those times).



# Contemporary Russia

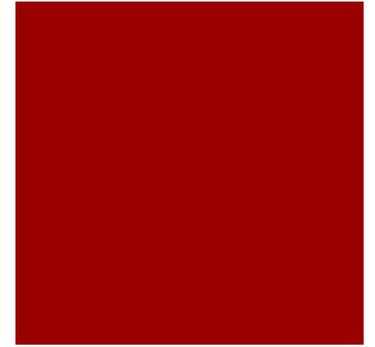
- Contemporaneity is used, as category, to describe the Post-Soviet Russia, so the last 26 years of social, cultural, political, economic life. Why 1991? Because the Soviet order, and the Perestroika, were quite different from the society emerged during the 1990s. The (re)birth of private economic sector, the change toward a multiparty system, but at the same time a growing high inflation and the end of “social security” and “welfare”, with the closing of factories and other workplaces.



# Changes



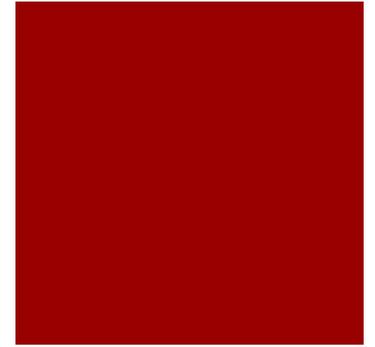
# Memories of 1990s



- Remembering the past is always a difficult challenge: the human brain is selective, and we are really selective when we are recollecting our memories. Traumas, happy events, are usually more present, and one historical event can be interpreted, if only using memories, in different keys. So, for historians the challenge in how past can be interpreted, used and told, is always the point.

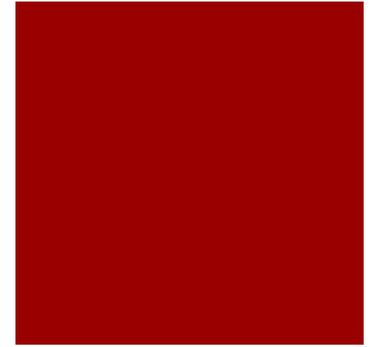
# Recollecting the 90s

- Recollections of Russian 90s are not only traumatic ones; as we analyzed in a little research with our students, 1990s are seen in a more complex way: MMM, high inflation, but at the same time business, music, trips. Remembrance is always not a negative or a positive only one.



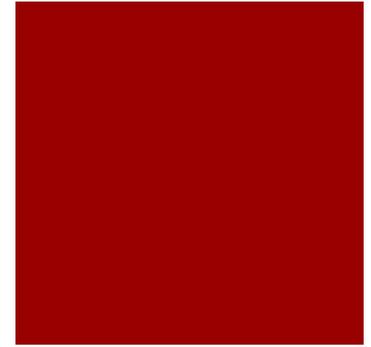
# Working in class, working on memories

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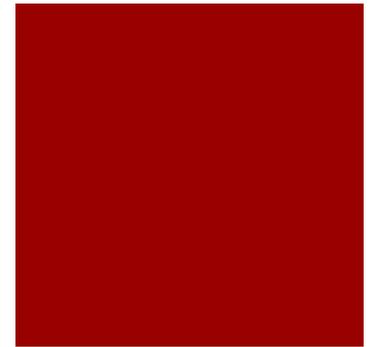


# Remembering...

- *It was impossible to find anything in shops even in Moscow. There were unless bull-calves in tomato sauce and salt, on it all. People left to support the White House, established tents in the territory as then there were no barriers, youth spent nights there. Women and old women from adjoining houses and areas brought food and tea in thermal pots to feed the gathering people. The GKCHP wasn't supported. After a failure of GKCHP republics wanted to gain not only economic independence, but also administrative. Economically the center couldn't offer anything. Therefore 3 largest republics signed the Belavezha Accords, actually recognizing the collapse of the USSR. (Darya Shedyakova)*



# Economics and perceptions of history

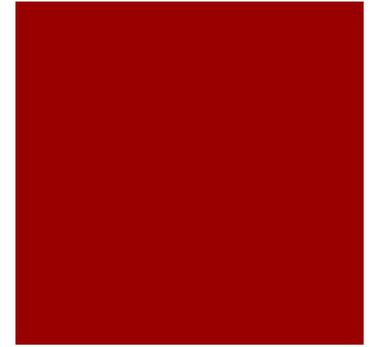


# 1998 default

- Of course, the 1998 default is a divide in Contemporary Russia – the fall of ruble and bankruptcies are, today, always present as a ghost in discussions about the world economic crisis. Is history linked to economy? Our answer is yes, and the bond is not a unilateral one. Economy is conditioning everyday lives, so it means politics, culture and so on; but perceptions and recollections of the past have a great role in forging our decisions today.

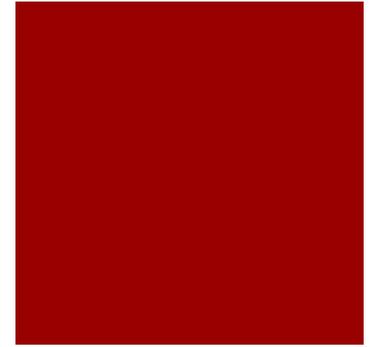


# For a history of Russian Oil and Gas

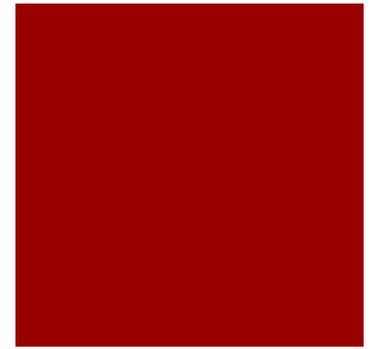


# Advantage or...?

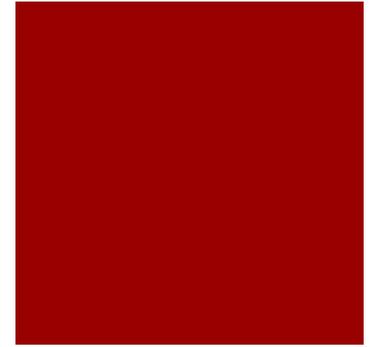
- Oil and gas, for Russia, are pleasure and pain: pleasure, because the enormous reserves are a very good point for developing a competitive economy; pain, because depending only from them is a risk, as last crisis demonstrated. The rush for oil is a historical event, and deep conditioning our past and present; Russia, maybe for the first time in her long history, is now a deeply integrated oil and gas power in the world market.



# Russian (Soviet) gas pipeline in Italy, 1973

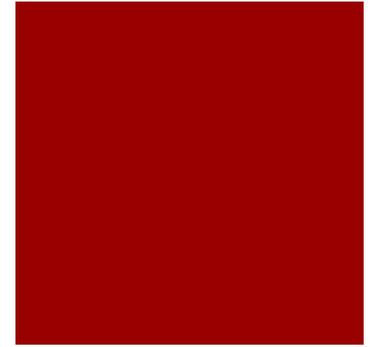


# Which history for Russia?



# Clash, unity or debates?

- When we are discussing past, we are already trying to reshape and to present a form, which can be more attractive for us. The long history of Russia, her millennial heritage from Rus' to us, has many paths, figures and events, that are matter of discussions, polemics and so on. How can we build a confrontation, and avoid a clash of memories?





Any questions?

