

**Vladimir Zemtsov**

## **MEMORY, KILLING THE PAST**

(Summary)

This paper is devoted to the problem of correlation of historical memory and the politics of history as an example of commemorative events dedicated to the events of Patriotic War of 1812 and the foreign campaigns of the Russian troops in 1813–1814. The author concludes that for over 200 years Russian authorities have actively used these anniversaries for implementation, especially narrowly defined national interests. Authorities were interested in preserving the historical memory of those elements of the past, only to use it for purely utilitarian purposes. “Living Memory”, more consistently reflected historical reality, subjected to serial “dismemberment” of its “unwanted elements” – “forgetting”, and the remaining segments of it – the procedure of processing and design of these “new past”. This destruction of genuine historical memory confronted critically oriented historiography, appeared together with elements of civil society, which aims to “return” the past, to see it in all its complexities and contradictions. Systematic attempts of authorities made over 200 years, to monopolize the memory of events 1812–1814 with a view to “reformat” and the actual destruction, failed. Under the influence of the challenges of time and critical trends in historiography authorities were forced to make concessions, not only in their assessment of the past, but sometimes to be engage in dialogue with those who are trying to keep the past alive.