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CULTURAL ENTHUSIASTS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE STRATEGIES OF HERITAGE-MAKING IN THE LATE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

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Abstract

Cultural heritage preservation became one of the key topics of public discussion in the Late Russian Empire. These discussions led to the establishment of several initiatives for protecting Russian cultural heritage. This article demonstrates that such initiatives developed a variety of different strategies for heritage-making. Examples from the Society of the Protection and Preservation of the Monuments of Art and Antiquity in Russia and the Society of the Revival of Artistic Rus' show that several strategies of heritage-making focusing on cultural heritage preservation were developed simultaneously by different civil groups and helped cultivate the interest of the state authority in the subject, an interest which later became institutionalised under the Soviet regime.

Keywords

Cultural enthusiasts, heritage-making, the Late Russian Empire, cultural heritage

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1. Introduction

In his book *Iz proshlogo russkogo obschestva*, the historian of the revolutionary movement in Russia, Vasilii Bogucharskii (1904) described the feeling of being limited in action, which was experienced by the members of the Russian intelligentsia in the 19th century. A mood of hopelessness and the impossibility of finding their place and justification in society were also well described in Anton Chekhov's plays – a mood of ambitions, which could not find realisation in real life. The October Manifesto of 1905, officially “The Manifesto on the Improvement of the State Order”, following the first Russian Revolution in 1905, offered the possibility of more effective social actions than those which had previously been permitted. The new freedoms that came with it - freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and association – gave a stimulus to the development of civil society. The number of different voluntary associations grew (Bradley, 2009, 2017) and coincided with rapid industrial development, which provided civil initiatives with the necessary funding. According to Joseph Bradley, civil society in Russia provided opportunities to those outside authoritarian power institutions to enter the public arena, influence public opinion and seek cooperation with the authorities in issues that supported nationalism and patriotism (Bradley, 2017; Shevelenko, 2017).

The development of civil society in Russia prior to the revolution has become an established academic subject, although some researchers still question whether the concept of “civil society” can be easily applied to the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire. The problem of adapting this concept to Russian studies was discussed, for example, by Christopher Ely, who concluded that at least some of the ideas and institutions that constituted civil society in the West also came to form a fundamental part of Russia's political culture (Ely, 2009).

Despite the previously common view that most of the Russian population before the revolution were poor, illiterate and oppressed by the government, recent archival research has provided a picture of Russian society in which active participation in social life was widespread (Conroy, 1998; Bradley, 2009). Not only industry, but also ways of life and new ways of establishing communities were being modernised. In my article I use the following definition of civil society: “organizations and networks of cooperation that are created primarily by the initiative of citizens and draw at least in part on resources that are not granted by the state” (Conroy, 2006, p.11). According to Conroy, civil society in Russia proliferated in the second part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. It was represented by a group of people who “worked within the existing political and economic system to modify it rather than seeing to topple it by violent means” (Conroy, 2006, p.12). The October Manifesto provided a legal basis for this growing civil society. Although, according to Ely (2009, p.235), the Tsarist regime counteracted the given freedoms and slowed “the pace of change under the new prime minister Petr Stolypin” (1906–1911), the Manifesto stimulated a polyphony of social ideas.

The preservation of Russian cultural heritage became one of the spheres in which civil society played an active role and where cooperation with the authorities was possible since it was in line with official nationalism (Kelly and Smith, 1998). Cultural practitioners testified that the Russian government at the time was not able to effectively resolve problems regarding the preservation of old monuments. The legal mechanism did not exist, the funds were very limited and there was no state institution responsible for cultural heritage (Aliab'eva, 2013, p.5). Industrialisation and urban development led to the re-building and demolishing of old buildings, while provincial locations suffered from a lack of resources for preservation work. Certain members of society, sharing their understanding that material history was disappearing, came together and called for the preservation, reconstruction and documentation of cultural heritage. One of the main promoters of heritage preservation was the journal *Starye Gody*, which constantly published articles on the vandalisation of Russian cultural and historical monuments.

While the history of Russian culture has attracted many scholars, the strategies of heritage-making in the Late Russian Empire have not benefitted from considerable research. Nevertheless, some attention to cultural heritage-making was given in the framework of such historical studies as the history of restoration (Shchenkov, 2002), literature (Schönle, 2011), architecture (Lisovskii, 2000), law (Dediukhina, 1997) and national identity construction (Kelly and Shepherd, 1998; Franklin and Widdis, 2004).

My aim is to analyse the role of cultural enthusiasts and civil initiatives in the formation of Russian cultural heritage preservation discourse, institutions and practices. In doing so, I provide an account of the work of

non-governmental organisations: The Society of the Protection and Preservation of the Monuments of Art and Antiquity in Russia (henceforth referred to as the SPPMAA) and The Society of the Revival of Artistic Rus' (henceforth referred to as the SRAR) – two of the most active and established groups in this field that were both operating before 1917. Though their activities encompassed different ideologies, their shared interests in preserving Russian cultural heritage united them. They had a significant influence on the development of cultural heritage preservation discourse and the promotion of the concept of cultural heritage, as well as the development of a wide range of heritage-making practices.

This growing interest to the Russian cultural heritage coincided with the modernisation of society in different spheres of life – social, economic, ideological, artistic, and so on. In keeping with other European countries before World War I, this modernisation went hand in hand with the development of national and imperial discourses as a consequence of, and reaction to, globalism in the form of international industrialization. Russia closely monitored cultural heritage preservation ideas in Europe as developed, for example, by Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc and the *Arts and Crafts* movement. Proof that the Russian intelligentsia followed European trends in heritage study can be provided by reference to, for example, their shared interest in Italy, with a similar tradition of cultural journeys, so-called Grand Tours, being undertaken both by Europeans and Russians (Pemble, 1995; Turoma, 2004; Sokolova, 2018).

The Russian antique market researcher Maria Katagoshchina writes that as early as the 18th century the European antiquities market was well developed in Russia, and was influenced by European practices, although Russian antiquities continued to be a limited niche market and were predominantly objects of interest of old believers (Pivovarova, 2009; Katagoshchina, 2014). The broader concern about Russian cultural heritage was stimulated at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries as a result of growing scientific interest in Russian history, and was further supported by the patriotism which followed the war with Napoleon, as well as access to the old objects sold by families impoverished during the French invasion of Russia. Archaeological findings in the territory of the Russian Empire also inspired public interest in local cultural history (Katagoshchina, 2014; pp.51-59, 108-109).

In order to analyse the process of the formation of the discourse as well as the practices and institutions of heritage preservation, I use the term 'heritage-making', an established concept in heritage studies (Leturcq, 2009; Franquesa, 2013). In the example of contemporary Spain, Jaume Franquesa (2013, p.346) underlines that the concept of heritage "has become a hegemonic idiom helping to legitimize, but also resist, the gentrification and private appropriation of urban space in a global conjuncture dominated by neoliberal policies and voracious real estate pressures". Thus, heritage is understood not as an object but as a practice of 'heritage-making' – where different actors strive for legitimization through heritage-making practices.

I found the concept of 'heritage-making' to be useful for describing practices of heritage preservation in the Late Russian Empire because it helps describe the *process of heritisation*, or as Leturcq (2009) claimed, heritage-making is the process of invention or creation of cultural heritage. It is a complex set of activities involving different actors, objects and institutions, which leads to producing established heritage practices. The aim of this article is to demonstrate that different civil actors were energetic contributors to the heritage-making process in pre-revolutionary Russia, even if they had no decision-making roles in the official cultural institutions.

My research is situated within critical cultural policy studies. It is an academic discipline that analyses the power, information and financial distribution in the sphere of institutionalised culture. It usually questions top-down political decision-making, focusing on governance and administrative systems; national, local, global, gender, and other constructions of identities within cultural organizations; direct or indirect financial support of culture; whether legal systems favour culture production and dissemination, and so on. The study of cultural heritage as part of critical cultural policy studies was formed by such significant authors as Tony Bennett (1995, 2007), Rodney Harrison (2013), Karsten Schubert (2009), Andrea Fraser (2005), Daniel Sherman and Irit Rogoff (1994), Douglas Crimp (1993).

While the focus of critical cultural studies is on the role of the state or the market in the formation of cultural policy, it also highlights the roles of independent non-profit art and culture practitioners. For example, the importance of the participation of artists in cultural policy decision-making has been addressed by scholars

such as Paul Glinkowski (2012) and Jane Woddis (2005, 2014). The discussion of cultural actors and agencies in contemporary Russia has also been the subject of scholarly research (Turoma et al., 2018; Kuleva, 2018; Safonova et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, artists, art critics and other cultural producers are more often seen as passive beneficiaries of policies and funds, while the state is cast as a benefactor and an active decision-maker which distributes financial support in an organised manner in addition to formulating the rules of its distribution (Toepler and Zimmer, 1997; Zimmer, 1999; Bertelli et al., 2014; Schatteman and Bingle, 2017). Meanwhile, as I will demonstrate in the example of the Late Russian Empire, the authorities, in forming official cultural policy, are dependent on discourses, cultivated and driven by non-governmental cultural organizations and independent practitioners. Representatives of both the state and cultural communities formulate their ideas in shared discursive field and rely on each other in the formulation of key concepts and ideas. Thus, cultural policy is not just comprised of a number of top-down decisions, regulations and instructions, which authorities impose on citizens and cultural spheres. As the analysed material demonstrates, the development of cultural policy takes place as an interchange of ideas between different actors where civil society can play a discourse-defining role.

My case study, two non-governmental organizations – the SPPMAA and the SRAR – took an active part in the formation of cultural heritage preservation ideas and practices during the last decade of the Russian Empire. Despite both societies developing a discourse on heritage-making, they interpreted cultural heritage differently and proposed different ways of preserving it. These two societies developed a set of ideas that helped two different strategies of heritage-making to emerge and influenced two different attitudes to heritage preservation. Subsequently, both sets of ideas influenced the actual cultural policies that were adopted in Russia and the USSR. While the Soviet government adapted the more cosmopolitan ideas of the SPPMAA, the pre-revolutionary government expressed an interest in the implementation of the intemperate patriotic ideas of the SRAR.

I consider heritage-making to be both an intellectual project and a practical action, the important part of which is the defining of what is heritage, and what kind of attention and care it should be given. Both societies developed conceptual as well as practical aspects of heritage-making practice. The proposed regulations and practices of heritage preservation acted as mechanisms that transformed something old into a cultural heritage object, or, as one would have said at the time, a *cultural and historical monument*. Thus, through their heritage-making activities, both the SPPMAA and the SRAR defined and established the social value and meaning of heritage objects, which they wanted to protect as historical and cultural monuments.

This article initially provides a general overview of the strategies of the heritage-making of the SPPMAA and the SRAR and discusses their similarities and differences. The last part of the article problematises the meaning of the viewpoints of these societies as *potential* cultural policies. Finally, I summarise how civil society initiatives influenced the formation of official cultural policies.

2. Civil Society Initiatives in Heritage-Making

2.1. The Society of the Protection and Preservation of the Monuments of Art and Antiquity in Russia (1909–1917)

The group of enthusiasts that grew from the circles of the journals *Mir Iskusstva* and *Starye Gody* founded the Society of the Protection and Preservation of the Monuments of Art and Antiquity in Russia. The society, which existed from 1909 to 1917, was formed with the idea of not only educating society about the necessity of such preservation but also the responsibility of taking more direct action to preserve disappearing cultural monuments.

The society was founded at the same time as the draft of the act on monument protection was submitted by the interdepartmental commission of the Ministry of Interior Affairs to the Russian Parliament (Aliab'eva, 2013, p.34). This project was harshly criticised by the SPPMAA, as well as by other cultural organizations, such as the

Moscow Archaeological Society and the All-Russian Artists' Union. The main critique was directed towards the low budget that was envisaged for research and preservation work, and the idea of establishing a strictly centralised institution responsible for cultural heritage preservation – which would make it difficult to reach provincial Russia, and present a minimal possibility of participating in the preservation work in the framework of a newly established institution for artists and scholars. The draft was also criticised for the narrow definition of old monuments (only those objects which were created before 1725 were considered to be monuments); a focus on the cultural heritage of the Russian Orthodox church while Russia was a multi-confessional, multinational country; the absence of administrative procedures for registering historical objects; the absence of opportunities for urgent restoration; and very limited legal punishment for the destruction of valuable cultural and historical objects (*Ob'iasnitel'naia zapiska*, 1912).

The SPPMAA envisioned a much broader action plan for heritage protection and preservation than that outlined in this official proposal. In addition, it also contributed to discussions on the definition of a cultural heritage object from a time perspective. Before the SPPMAA, objects older than 150 or 100 years were considered to be antiquities (Dediukhina, pp.194, 205). The SPPMAA proposed to define monuments that were only older than 50 years as cultural heritage. Thus, the society made an important contribution to defining the concept of 'monuments' (*pamiatniki*). Prior to this, the widespread opinion was that only monuments produced before Peter I (dates of reign 1682 - 1725) were valuable and worthy of preservation. The SPPMAA insisted that even monuments that belonged to more recent times could be treated as cultural heritage.

Society members claimed that the first step of preservation was registration because it is first necessary to know what to preserve, what to prioritise and how much time and funding are needed for preservation work. The registration of cultural and historical monuments previously made by the state was inconsistent and lacked important information such as building plans and dimensions (Aliab'eva, 2013, p.88). The SPPMAA established the Commission of Registration of Monuments of Art and Antiquity. Thus, monuments previously unknown to scholars and the public were now registered and described.

The society significantly widened the list of objects for preservation by including household items, furniture, music manuscripts, environments such as parks, gardens, squares, courtyards, place names (*Ustav obschestva zaschity i sokhraneniia v Rossii pamiatnikov iskusstva i stariny*, 1910). The society's special interest was manor houses and their culture which, as the society pointed out, should be preserved in their unity as both architectural and art-historical monuments.

The SPPMAA introduced the restrictive concept of what the restoration of monuments should be: "Recognizing the need for the most careful repair, the society considers restoration, as restoration of the original image of the monument, undesirable and permissible only in very exceptional cases" (*Ustav obschestva zaschity*, 1910, §1). The society opposed any distortion of a monument. *Distortion* was defined in §1 of The Charter as "any change to the external or internal image of monuments..., not caused by extreme necessity".

§2 of the Charter defined the wide scope of the society's activities. To fulfil its aims, the society assumed responsibility for contacting local and national government to inform them about existing problems with cultural heritage preservation, collecting information on valuable cultural objects, donating objects to museums, realising preservation projects, opening branches of the society in different regions of Russia, producing publications and exhibitions, and cooperating with other societies in the matter of cultural heritage preservation. These activities were a significant complement to state measures in cultural heritage preservation and required a significant level of knowledge and dedication, which SPPMAA members could provide.

The society included leading Russian cultural specialists as well as high-ranking members of Russian society and the intelligentsia. The chair of the SPPMAA was Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich of Russia. One of his vice-chairs was Alexandre Benois, the founder of the *Mir Iskusstva* group and journal. The secretary was the prominent art historian, Nikolai Wrangel. SPPMAA members invested their time and resources on multiple projects, such as the restoration projects of Rozumovsky Palace in Baturyn and the Ferapontov Monastery (Aliab'eva, 2013, pp.78-79, 82-83). The members built a network of decision-makers in various state institutions and this assisted the society in securing success for some of its initiatives; for example, preventing a planned extensive property development in the historical centre of St. Petersburg, which would have inevitably destroyed much of the historic city's landscape.

The ideas of the SPPMAA were not totally new as similar types of regional organizations already existed. However, what was new about the SPPMAA was its understanding that preservation activities should be systematic and that this required the coordinated work of enthusiasts from all over Russia. Thus, as part of its activities, the SPPMAA contacted local organizations and helped them to become part of the society's network. It also proposed standardised methods of establishing best practice for heritage preservation. 21 branches of the society were opened across Russia. The society grew quickly and was self-financed. In 1909 it had 32 members, in 1914 it already had 694 members, with a slight reduction in 1916 – 581 members – due to the war (Aliab'eva, 2013, p.24). The society's members possessed significant administrative resources, even in smaller towns. Thus, the society had a stable base from which to create a functional structure for heritage preservation, even in provincial Russia. For example, according to Dina Tikhonova, the SPPMAA's Tula branch established almost all Tula museums, which still exist today (Tikhonova, 2014, pp.46-47).

The years before World War I were the most active period for the SPPMAA. The society had an intensive education programme and regularly attracted public attention to the monuments that needed preserving. It was also known that the Russian Orthodox Church was not very sensitive to the preservation of its own cultural heritage objects (Bilibin, 1904). Thus, the society took charge of educational work among the clergy. It was well connected to the Russian Museum and initiated several exhibitions there. During the war the focus of the society shifted to the preservation of cultural heritage in the context of war. This debate continued to influence public discussion, even after the end of the war, when the SPPMAA no longer existed. Nicholas Roerich, one of the SPPMAA's members, helped to popularise these ideas and became known globally for his Roerich Pact, The Treaty on the Protection of Artistic and Scientific Institutions and Historic Monuments, which became the basis for forming international standards of law for cultural heritage protection in the event of armed conflicts in the 20th century.

It is difficult to fully observe the results of the society's work because of the lack of existing archival material (Aliab'eva, 2013, p.13). What we know mainly originates from the society's annual reports and publications. Nevertheless, even these sources provide a picture of an active organization that was not only engaged with a wide range of activities but also sought to bring change to existent practices of heritage preservation.

In summary, it could be said that the SPPMAA defined a strategy of heritage-making in which the concept of heritage protection and preservation played a key role. The SPPMAA's interest was not limited to antiquities. The society accentuated the continuity of cultural history and heritage preservation, and the need to preserve monuments from more recent times. It promoted research and preservation of the information on historic monuments and was interested in cultural heritage preservation practices in Europe, taking western ideas as inspiration. The society also broadened the concept of an historical monument, including non-material heritage as well as landscapes and environments.

2.2. The Society of the Revival of Artistic Rus' (1915–1917)

Another civil society that aimed to preserve and promote Russian cultural heritage, and which was active during the last days of the Russian Empire, was the Society of the Revival of Artistic Rus' (1915–1917). Although several of the ideas of the SRAR were similar to the principles of the SPPMAA, there were also significant differences between the two societies' attitudes to heritage-making. The SRAR was created during the First World War and reflected an anti-western mood. While the SPPMAA supported the ideas that the best kind of preservation of historical monuments was conservation, and that every style belonged to its own time and that it should not, therefore, be recreated in contemporary conditions, the SRAR fostered the idea of *pastiche* – the creation of modern objects and buildings in the Old Russian style. SRAR's members believed that the old style could be revived and adapted to contemporary needs. Thus, the aim of SRAR, defined by its Charter was: "disseminating among the Russian people a wide acquaintance with ancient Russian creativity in all its manifestations and its further successive development in application to modern conditions" (*Ustav obschestva vozrozhdeniia khudozhestvennoi Rusi*, 1915, p.23).

As a positive example of adaptation of the old tradition in the framework of contemporary life, SRAR referred to the famous Ball in the Winter Palace in 1903, one of the last high society celebrations of the Russian Empire.

The ball was organised by the Imperial Family. Everyone was asked to wear a costume inspired by 17th century Russian style. Praised by the SRAR, this event was criticised by SPPMAA members, who would have preferred to have seen the funding, which had been spent on imitating Old Russia, used on the preservation of those historical monuments that still existed and which were collapsing into oblivion. Thus, one of the main differences between these two societies was their attitudes to authenticity – for the SPPMAA, authenticity was an unquestionable value, while for the SRAR, the authenticity of historical objects was less important than ensuring the existence of the old style in contemporary life.

SRAR members had a very close connection with the Royal Court. The society was personally supported by Nicholas II, whilst the head of the society was Prince Alexey Shirinsky-Shikhmatov. The member's list included the elite of Russian high society – bishops, aristocrats and famous artists such as Ivan Bilibin, Konstantin Makovsky, Viktor Vasnetsov, Mikhail Nesterov and Nicholas Roerich.

The anti-western mood of the SRAR was developed against the background of intensive anti-German propaganda, which was widespread in Russia during the First World War. Those nations that Russia had previously admired as examples of high culture and civilization demonstrated the impossibility of finding a peaceful solution to the European crisis. This was used in Russian propaganda as a sign of the decline of moral authority in these countries. Disappointment in the rationality and moral strength of Europe contributed to the development of the Russian nationalistic discourses and interest in Russia's own cultural traditions. The SRAR's Charter described this disappointment as follows:

Russian society, struck by the sudden moral savagery of those nations that are at war with us... began to involuntarily seek the sources of its spiritual strength in those, developed during centuries, historical everyday principles of ancient Russia, which could not be erased by two centuries of foreign imitations. Everyone turned their gaze to the interior of their country and, along with the instructions to use the natural resources of their native land, voices are heard, which remind us of our spiritual treasures, our forgotten ancient architectural and artistic art, historical shrines that are scattered over a wide landscape (*Ustav obschestva vrozozhdeniia khudozhestvennoi Rusi*, 1915, p.11).

Thus, in the SRAR's work, interest in Russian cultural heritage was closely associated with nationalistic military discourses. An anti-western patriotic agenda was integrated into the society's heritage-making practices. Drawing attention to Russian cultural heritage, the SRAR promulgated Russia's right to follow its own political and cultural path. The society's members saw the beginning of World War I as a trigger, which should result in the finding of Russia's own identity.

One of the society's most important interests was education and the promotion of information about Russian cultural heritage. The society described the unbalanced situation in relation to Russian history when educated Russians were more familiar with monuments in Europe than those of their own country. Trips within Russia with the aim of studying historical monuments were rare (*Ustav obschestva vrozozhdeniia khudozhestvennoi Rusi*, 1915, p.7). As a result, members of the SRAR concluded that the extent of the destruction of Russian monuments by Russians was no surprise. It was a result of a lack of knowledge and interest in Russian tradition, supported by Russians' westernised education (*Ustav obschestva vrozozhdeniia khudozhestvennoi Rusi*, 1915, p.6).

The SRAR accentuated media promotion of their ideas and wanted to reach a wide audience (*Ustav obschestva vrozozhdeniia khudozhestvennoi Rusi*, 1915, p.18). It aimed to disseminate information about Russian art, religion, and everyday life through its own publications and lectures, as well as financial support, which the members planned to award to like-minded projects and initiatives.

In general, the SRAR intended to use a variety of means available to disseminate information. The main target group was defined as being, at least to some extent, educated persons and studying youth. According to Adrian Prakhov, a member of the society as well as an art critic, archaeologist and art historian, priority should be given to personal acquaintance with original monuments. To reach a wider audience, the SRAR planned to organise study trips to cultural heritage sites (Shabarova, 2013, pp.327-328).

When acquaintance with original works was not possible, Prakhov recommended the use of light projections of photographs made in the manner that had been employed by Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky who was well known for his colourful pictures of his travels across Russia. Prakhov expressed concern about the limited number of teachers of the history of national art in Russia. According to him, the SRAR should aim to educate future teachers specialised in Russian culture (Shabarova, 2013, pp.165-166).

The special attention paid by members of the SRAR to younger people was influenced by their understanding that it was easier to shape the ideas of younger people than adults. The society wanted to make a list of all schools in which students studied artistic subjects – architecture, craft, and drawing – to organise competitions amongst students in which the latter would create contemporary objects on the basis of examples of Old Russian styles. The SRAR's interest in Russian history was not purely aesthetic; cultural education was seen as forming part of patriotic education (Shabarova, 2013, p.143).

The society paid special attention to the Russian language and considered it to be an important part of national cultural heritage. Their aim was to rid the Russian language of foreign words. The SRAR planned to introduce an award for teachers and pupils who demonstrated the successful practice of language purification. Like-minded citizens also could submit suggestions, i.e. which words of foreign origins could be changed into Russian analogues (*Obschestvo vozrozhdeniia*, 1915, pp.7-8).

Another method of popularising Russian culture, discussed by the SRAR, was cooperation with The Ministry of Railways. This was undertaken so as to ensure that the Russian style was used in construction projects belonging to the country's railway system. It was argued that a special architectural department should be created with architects or civil engineers who already worked in the neo-Russian style (Shabarova, 2013, p.181).

The most successful project driven by SRAR members was the creation of the Theodore Sovereign's Cathedral and Theodore Town, an office and living residence, built for the military and clergy in Tsarskoe Selo, next to the residence of the family of the Russian Emperor.

Yurii Loman, the son of Dmitrii Loman, an SRAR member, who had spent his childhood in Tsarskoe Selo and witnessed the construction of the cathedral and the town, wrote in his memoirs:

Using the religious-mystical mood of Nicholas II, and especially his wife Alexandra Feodorovna, my father and Prince A.A. Shirinsky-Shikhmatov, active members of one of the scientific societies for studying the history, archaeology, philology and ethnography of the countries of the Middle East, that is, Orthodox Palestinian society – put forward the idea of creating in the immediate vicinity of the palace a temple in the XVII century style. This was because of the absence of a regimental church for the consolidated military troops in Tsarskoye Selo (Shabarova, 2013, p.406).

The architect Vladimir Pokrovsky designed the cathedral in the neo-Russian style, inspired by the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Moscow. The interior paintings in the cathedral were made according to drafts by Viktor and Apollinary Vasnetsovs. Theodore Town was designed by the architect Stepan Krichinsky. In addition, the Warriors Hall (*Ratnaia palata*), designed by Semion Sidorchuk, was intended to function as a museum of the history of Russian troops. Construction of the pavilion began in 1913. When Russia entered the war, it became a museum dedicated to the ongoing military campaign.

From the beginning of the First World War, the town was adapted to the needs of a military hospital. To entertain wounded military personnel, concerts were organised in the Russian national spirit, featuring national singer Nadezhda Plevitskaia, ballet dancer Agrippina Vaganova, an ensemble of folk instruments led by Vasilii Andreev, as well as the Russian romance performer Yuri Morfessi. Sergei Yesenin and Nikolai Klyuev, representatives of the New Peasant Poets group, also read their poems (Shabarova, 2013, p.463).

The architecture of the cathedral and the town was intended to inspire patriotism and should have led to the consolidation of Russian society. The aim of the project was understood in the context of the war as a basis for future patriotic education of Russian citizens.

The plan of the cathedral and town was an eclectic interpretation of Russian architectural traditions. It included elements of Rostov's XVII century style; the style of earlier historic structures in Novgorod and Kostroma; some of the ideas were also taken from the Moscow Palace of Facets (Shabarova, 2013, p.27). The same mixed style was used for the abundant interior decoration, inspired by churches in Yaroslavl, Rostov, Uglich, Romanov-Borisoglebsk, Ferapontov Monastery, Chambers in Zaryadye, as well as fragments of Russian icons, applied art objects, book illustrations, embroideries, and textiles, amongst others. The theme used for frescos praised the royal authority in the tradition of the Minister of National Education Sergey Uvarov's doctrine of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality (Perrie, 1998). The Tsar was depicted in a glorified manner as the head of an Orthodox army (Shabarova, 2013, p.34).

Nicholas II visited the construction site on 12 February 1917, when the buildings were almost completed, and was satisfied with the outcome of the project. From the start, this building complex was planned as an inspiring example of the development of Russian art. The role of royal support for the preservation of Russian cultural heritage was emphasised by SRAR members and demonstrated, therefore, that this matter had started to become part of the official ideology. In summary, it could be said that the heritage-making strategy of the SRAR focused on patriotic education and the strengthening of authoritarian power.

3. Heritage-Making as a *Potential Cultural Policy*

The heritage-making strategies of both societies included ideas that could have become part of the official cultural policy of the Russian Empire if the destiny of Russia had not changed so dramatically in 1917. Thus, I would describe their strategies as 'potential cultural policies'.

Russia began a political transformation as a reaction to the Revolution in 1905 but there was still uncertainty about its direction, in the same way that there was uncertainty about the very basis upon which reformed society should be built. As Tatiana Khripachenko (2014) noted, several different concepts of Russian state sovereignty existed: based on the law, the people, and the monarchy, and all three concepts found support among different groups of citizens.

The SRAR's ideas were very compatible with the anti-western propaganda of 1914–1917. Thus, the ideas proposed by the SRAR could have influenced the development of a more nationalistic form of education and cultural policy in the years after the war if the Russian Empire had continued to exist.

As Nicholas II closely followed the activities of the SRAR and legitimised its projects, the SRAR's monarchist ideas could have been used by the government to restore and reinforce its authority after the war. The promotion of national cultural ideas could have become a helpful tool for the post-war nationalistic consolidation of Russian society.

George Gilbert (2016, p.1) described two possible ways of the development of Russian society:

Whether tsarist Russia was to become a state based on the rule of law and civil rights, or else a police state based on repression, was one question that especially vexed educated society. However, the autocracy did not altogether lack support; many groups rose up to defend it in the face of the revolutionary challenge.

If more liberal groups had been given greater influence in the government after the war, the SPPMAA's strategies could have been integrated into official cultural policies in the field of heritage preservation. The more open pro-western attitude of the SPPMAA would have been in tune with liberal discourses, as well as society's interest in local administrative initiatives, as they had claimed that cultural heritage preservation could not be properly organised from the centre alone. This cultural policy in the style of the SPPMAA would, however, have required a further decentralization of power.

Gilbert claimed that the right spectrum of Russian society before 1917 was broader and more nuanced than has previously been understood, although the variety of political forces, including the radical right as well as more traditional conservative groups, did not create a unified coalition. The SRAR was one example of representatives of traditional conservatism. The Revolution in 1917 put an end to the SRAR's work, the principles of which were in many ways opposite to the new ideology of the Soviet government.

The SPPMAA represented a group of cultured liberals. Their ideas flourished after 1905, when societal groups were given the opportunity to start forming civil platforms to promote their ideas. In respect of SPPMAA's activities, which targeted the preservation of Russian cultural heritage, the free market and civil society were pivotal. Nevertheless, the society was not in direct ideological opposition to Bolshevik ideas. Thus, it was easier for the Soviet government to adapt ideas on cultural heritage preservation, developed by the SPPMAA. They were well suited to the Soviet idea of cultural heritage as a national treasure (*narodnoe dostoianie*), as well as the principles of proletarian internationalism. The idea of cultural heritage preservation played a part in the attempt by the Soviet government to take control of the circulation of antiquities. The Soviet government widely capitalised on SPPMAA discourses and practices, not only by using the society's ideas but also its members' expertise. At the same time, the sphere of civil initiatives, which had stimulated the development of liberal cultural ideas before the revolution, had been either destroyed or monopolised by Soviet authorities (Il'in and Semenova, 2000; Vzdornov, 2006; Osokina, 2009, 2018, 2019).

It could be expected that SPPMAA members would be included in the cultural work of the new state, while SRAR members would be repressed. This is only partially true. History produced more complex stories. Here are some telling examples.

Petr Neradovsky, SPPMAA member and a custodian of the Russian museum since 1909, who was responsible for the exhibition of Russian icons and one of the first museum restoration studios in Russia, was allowed to stay in the museum after the Revolution and continued his work exhibiting and cataloguing. He became a member of many of the cultural committees that were established in the USSR and through so doing helped to develop Soviet institutions for cultural heritage preservation. However, this did not prevent him from being arrested on several occasions. He spent two periods in prison from 1933-1936 and 1938-1943, (Kyzlasova, 2012, pp.5-6). Nevertheless, after the Second World War he was able to continue his professional career working on the restoration of the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius.

Another example of an even more dramatic nature was the destiny of Petr Veiner, editor of *Starye Gody*, the journal that worked closely with the SPPMAA. Before 1917 he was one of the founders of the private Museum of Old Petersburg, which, after the Revolution, merged with the Petrograd City Museum. Veiner continued working with the City Museum collection, but from 1925-1929 he was exiled and, after his second arrest, he was executed in 1931.

Some members of the SPPMAA chose to emigrate directly following the Revolution, for example, Princess Maria Tenisheva, one of the most active collectors of Russian antiquities and a supporter of various pre-revolutionary cultural initiatives, such as the journal *Mir Iskusstva*. Other members, for example, Alexandre Benois, were involved in the work of preserving cultural and historical monuments and museum work. From 1918, he was the curator of the gallery of Old Masters in the Hermitage. He also worked for Petrograd city planning, focusing on the protection of heritage monuments. Nevertheless, he subsequently chose to immigrate to Europe. The example of other artists who were close to the *Mir Iskusstva* circle and who were also involved in museum work under the Soviet regime: Osip Braz, Georgy Vereisky, and Stepan Yaremich.

The new Soviet regime gave this pre-revolutionary generation of artists and art critics – those who had managed to develop and learn how to promote their ideas on the preservation of cultural heritage, as well as demonstrated their practical knowledge in organizing well-functioning institutions and projects – an opportunity to make their activities part of new official cultural policies. Many of them were inspired by this and stayed to support the new government.

Naturally, members of the SRAR experienced significant difficulty adapting to the new regime. Dmitrii Loman, who was also a Russian officer and nobleman and had a close relationship with Nicholas II, was executed

in 1918. Prince Shirinsky-Shikhmatov emigrated and continued his activities in Europe. Nevertheless, some members of the SRAR were drawn into the Soviet cultural system. For example, the artist, Mikhail Nesterov, who remained in the Soviet Union, continued working and even received state awards (Stalin Prize in 1941), although he still did not escape arrest in 1938. As a compromise, Nesterov was forced to abandon his religious paintings, for which he was famous, and concentrated on producing portraits of the new Soviet elite.

In general, during the first decade after 1917, the new Soviet authority searched for legitimization from the Russian intelligentsia through its symbolic capital that had been built before the Revolution. It was also in need of ideas and mechanisms to control the access to, and circulation of, valuable cultural heritage objects, which, at the time of the post-revolutionary societal crisis, became objects of exchange and speculation. The new government was able to adapt the ideas of the SPPMAA and develop the practice of heritage preservation that had emanated from pre-revolutionary civil societies. Later, once the new system had been established, the Soviet authorities could decide whether they wanted to get rid of the old specialists whom they had previously relied on. As a result, the people who had empowered this system became its victims (Kyzlasova, 1999, 2012; Roslavsky, 2004, 2015; Sandomirskaja, 2017). Nevertheless, to a large extent their ideas formed the basis of the subsequent cultural policies of the USSR. Thus, the non-profit liberal civil initiatives, which had emerged before the Revolution, significantly influenced the formation of Soviet cultural institutions.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this article was to demonstrate that the formation of heritage preservation practices in Russia was significantly associated with the work of private intellectual/artistic circles as part of the development of Russian civil society. These cultural enthusiasts became important actors in the formation of cultural policy discourses in the Late Russian Empire. The independent players in pre-revolutionary Russia became essential contributors to cultural heritage preservation. They succeeded in establishing practices that became a standard in the field of heritage-making. The examples of the SPPMAA and the SRAR demonstrated that they functioned as initiative groups for establishing the set of ideas which subsequently formed the basis of 20th century official cultural policies in which interest in the preservation of Russian cultural heritage was a core objective.

This article demonstrated that multiple non-governmental groups that treated the issue of cultural heritage preservation differently could exist simultaneously. The SRAR's ideas about Russian cultural heritage preservation were rooted in nationalist discourses. Due to its direct influence on the Tsar's family, the society was influential in the establishment and promotion of an official style inspired by Old Russian art, craft and architecture. In contrast, in its heritage-making activities, the SPPMAA demonstrated an interest in the liberal European practices of cultural heritage preservation and also sought an exchange between Russian and Western cultural lives.

After the 1917 Revolution, the SRAR's monarchist ideas could not survive (although some SRAR members found a place in the establishment of Soviet culture), while the ideas hitherto developed by the SPPMAA were widely instrumentalised by Soviet authorities in building new cultural institutions and practices. The intellectual circles around *Mir Iskusstva* and *Starye Gody* developed a profound knowledge of the marketing and display of Russian antiquities. This knowledge then became a valuable basis for the formation of Soviet cultural institutions. At the same time, the cultural actors who had helped form Soviet cultural policies in the sphere of cultural preservation could not continue to follow their liberal practices, which had helped to develop the pre-revolutionary heritage-making practices and ideas.

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