CITY-BUILDERS VS. CITY-DEFENDERS:
REDEVELOPMENT, HERITAGE PRESERVATION,
AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN MOSCOW

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Executive Summary

This paper is drawn from a larger study of post-Soviet Moscow focusing on redevelopment projects that have caused material changes to which Muscovites have taken issue, as well as reforms of the capital’s governance regime ensuing from these controversies. The main types of controversy with which the larger study is concerned arise from “creative destruction” in the capital’s historic center; mandatory re-location of hundreds of thousands of residents; infill construction in neighborhood open spaces; and the spatial changes brought on by automobilization.
Introduction

Men do not desire self-government for its own sake. They desire it for the sake of results. That is why the impulse at self-government is always the strongest as a protest against bad conditions.—Walter Lippmann (Lippmann, 1997)

This paper is drawn from a larger study of post-Soviet Moscow focusing on redevelopment projects that have caused material changes to which Muscovites have taken issue, as well as reforms of the capital’s governance regime ensuing from these controversies. The main types of controversy with which the larger study is concerned arise from “creative destruction” in the capital’s historic center; mandatory re-location of hundreds of thousands of residents; infill construction in neighborhood open spaces; and the spatial changes brought on by automobilization.

The current paper concerns the relationship between the “city-builders” led by former Mayor Yurii Luzhkov and “city-defenders” concerned to preserve the capital’s architectural heritage. The “meat” of the paper is sandwiched between an account of the first twelve years of Mayor Luzhkov’s redevelopment program and a summary of changes in the heritage-preservation governance regime following Luzhkov’s departure. The main focus is on three controversial projects from the 2004-2005 period that catalyzed the formation of new types of “city-defender” associations. That moment now appears as a watershed in the heritage-preservation movement, which contributed to major changes in the capital’s governance regime.

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2 “City-building” (gradostroitel’stvo) is the term most often used for redevelopment; the media frequently call heritage-preservation activists “city-defenders” (gradozashchitniki).
Historical and Conceptual Background

Actual Transition

After the disintegration of the USSR, there was the expectation, which was expressed in the concept of “transition,” that Russia would become a “normal” country (Shleifer & Treisman, 2004). Russians were called on to embrace democracy, pluralism, multiculturalism, environmentalism, feminism, and the rule of law, among other imports. For a while many people thought the “transition” was well underway, but no longer.

It is time to stop looking at Russia as if it were in the middle of an incomplete transition. There was a transition in Russia, but it did not go where many Western scholars had hoped (Evans, 2011, p. 49).

Perhaps it was unrealistic to expect most Russians to dedicate themselves to abstract ideals, especially when they had just discarded the phantasmal ideology of “advanced socialism” (Yurchak, 2006). Moreover, many of the new “democrats” were seen by the public as liars and thieves (Fish, 2005, p. 132). When problems arose, people tried to deal with them as they always had, by making use of their circles of friends and acquaintances to handle matters informally and inconspicuously (Clément, 2008, pp. 69-73). Because of the Soviet and “democratic” legacies, open political involvement has been distasteful to most Russians. These reasons are cited by many observers for what Marc Morjé Howard calls the “weakness of civil society” in the post-communist countries (Bashkirova, 2001; Fish, 2005; Hedlund, 2008; Howard, 2003; Ledeneva, 2006; Rimskii, 2008).

Perhaps it was unrealistic to expect Russians, when the “transition” turned into a “permanent crisis” (Shevchenko, 2009), to place such ideals as “civil society” and “democracy” ahead of personal and household survival. And for those who made ends meet, the siren’s song
of consumerism could hardly be ignored (Chebankova, 2011). Perhaps a shift in focus from what is not happening to what is can enhance understanding of the actual trajectory of change. Personal networks proved inadequate to cope with the problems arising from urban redevelopment, especially in Moscow where “city-building” has proceeded most rapidly and extensively. Peoples’ lives have been turned upside down in this process and, however “unnatural” it may feel, many have found they must take a public stand (Clément, 2008, pp. 75-76). Muscovites have begun associating with strangers in order to deal with common issues—tangible issues, rather than ideals. They have made connections which they have reproduced and sometimes expanded, calling them “initiative groups” and “social movements.” With few exceptions (Clément, 2008; Evans, 2012), these citizens’ groups have been overlooked in the West.

Far from being the passive subjects of authoritarianism, ordinary Russians are associating with strangers, working out practices of opposition, learning from comparable struggles in other places and times, and making use of current communications technology to maintain solidarity and attract support. Most still shun the politics of parties and full-time politicians. Nevertheless, thousands of ordinary people have been publicly resisting the authority of the local state by opposing construction projects (Evans, 2012) and other aspects of urban development that affect the places in which they live and the spaces they use and traverse. By opposing specific projects affecting places where they live, people are affecting the city-building process and changing themselves by developing new capabilities and nurturing new expectations. This paper argues

3 “Obshchestvennye” conventionally is translated as “social,” but the term “obschestvennye dvizhenii” could be translated as “public movements,” i.e., “movements by and for the public.”

4 The groups in question are not called “non-governmental organizations,” which are considered by most Muscovites, as well as the Kremlin, to be foreign agencies.
that they are making themselves into citizens and building civil society, even though their goals, initially at least, have been much more modest, such as saving the local playground, for example.

The sort of politics in which the most Muscovites take part is not about an abstract conception of Democracy. Rather their struggles seem better described by the phrase “the right to the city” (Harvey, 2008; Mitchell, 2003; Pertsov & Matveeva, 2013; Sassen, 2003), which has had wide currency in urban studies in recent years. However, it appears the fledgling citizens of Moscow have not been inspired primarily by scholarly discourse but by material changes in their neighborhoods and the city as a whole (Chebankova, 2013).

From the summer of 1992 until autumn 2010 Yurii Luzhkov served as mayor of Moscow. His main aim, at least of those that were publicized, was to turn the former Soviet capital into a “civilized,” “comfortable” “global city.” Little vacant space remained for green-field development because the city was locked into an antagonistic relationship with Moscow Oblast’, which surrounded the capital. “Brown-field” development—i.e., conversion of Moscow’s spacious industrial zones—remained largely on the “drawing board” due to property-rights conflicts and the mismatch between the high cost of redevelopment and the low prestige of most industrial sites. Therefore, “creative destruction” in the historic center, the most accessible and prestigious district, was an attractive option. And since the Moscow government was led and staffed largely by people who learned how get things done under the Soviet system, it is not surprising that “city-building” was from the beginning a top-down process, with little public involvement in planning or decision-making. However, unlike the Soviet government, Luzhkov’s governance regime also enriched its insiders. For example, the mayor’s wife, Elena Baturnina, became a multi-billionaire (dollars) in the Moscow construction business.
There was great demand for offices, retail space, and luxury housing in the center, but the pre-existing structures lacked necessary amenities. Developers sought large profits and Luzhkov’s “machine” prodigiously guzzled revenue. The most common “solution” under Luzhkov was to completely gut old buildings, leaving just the historic façade standing, and to completely replace everything else. In more than a few cases, historic structures were completely torn down in order to free up sites for new development. In spite of Russians’ reputation for political passivity and fatalism, many Muscovites took action to curtail the destruction and preserve the city’s historic architecture. Although victories were few while Luzhkov ruled over the capital, the situation has changed significantly since his ouster in the fall of 2010. The current administration of Sergei Sobianin has taken a different approach to city-building and heritage-preservation, especially in the historic center, although controversies still arise.

Approach to the Topic

Recently I have been influenced significantly by the work of Bruno Latour, the leading proponent of Actor Network Theory. I consider myself more a kindred spirit than a practitioner of ANT for a number of reasons, which only can be touched on here. Latour as a sociologist is attempting to “reassemble” sociology, while I am a geographer. But I agree with several of his most fundamental observations. Specifically, I find that social scientists who began their studies of Russia with pre-conceived notion of Transition, or Democracy, Civil Society, etc., “simply confused what they should explain with the explanation.” As Latour put it: “They begin with society or other social aggregates, whereas one should end with them” (Latour, 2005, p.8).

Latour urges ANT practitioners—“sociologists of associations”—to begin by “mapping the controversies about group formation” (Latour, 2005, p.30). My approach in this paper, and the larger project, is to follow the controversies about place-making. I approach place not as a
thing but a process—places have to be made and re-made. Places consist not only of human beings and other life forms, but also inanimate things, as Latour emphasizes. Geography has been dealing with real-world combinations of what Latour calls “incommensurables” for quite a long time.5

In the case of heritage preservation, various incommensurables come into play. The specific physical qualities of buildings matter—the worse the deterioration and/or damage, the more restoration costs. Also, site factors matter such as hydrology and the specific geological structure beneath the surface. Relative location is important as well—proximity to the Kremlin and Red Square virtually guarantees a building’s prominence in the public eye. In addition to a specific physical location, a building may have a place in the collective “memoryscape” as well (Phillips and Reyes, 2011; Yoneyama, 1994). Design matters—it too is physical, but has cultural significance as well—whether a building is one of many or last of its kind is a significant distinction. And design is just one part of the story that can be told about an old building to encourage or discourage a sense of attachment among the public.

Fluctuations in economic processes strongly affects city-building. The effective governance regime and the formal political structure obviously play major parts. Also influential are the body of pertinent law and, more importantly in the Moscow case, the professionalism and independence of the judiciary, or lack thereof. As mentioned above, some old social “paths,” ways of associating and getting things done, may persist, but new opportunities also emerge, such as those provided by the Internet. And perhaps most difficult to gauge are the effects of the personal qualities individuals bring to place-making. All such incommensurable factors need to be attended to as well as the evidence allows.

5 I decline to consider non-living things as “actors,” which is a fundamental tenet of ANT. Latour argues that any thing that “makes a difference” is an actor, but I think this way of expressing this insight is unproductive and distracting.
In this paper I will not discuss theories about conservation or normative views on conservation practice directly. Just the question, “what is a building?,” can be a complex one, and the question, “what should be done with it?,” is still more complex and contentious (Tait & While, 2009). I try, as Latour writes, to “feed off controversies” (Latour, 2005, p. 22) Although this is not an ANT paper, I do follow this ANT rule-of-thumb in this regard: “…are the concepts of the actors allowed to be stronger than that of the analysts...?” (Latour, 2005, p. 30). What matters is how the officials, preservation activists, and the public perceive buildings and understand such concepts as “historic,” “monument,” “renovation,” and “preservation.”

In this paper, as in the larger project, I opt for a chronological approach covering the post-Soviet period from the beginning. As much as possible, this will be a “thought experiment” that tries to describe the controversies as they emerged and to resist the temptation to let hindsight streamline the account. At any given moment, there were multiple opportunities to make a difference in the course of affairs. The current situation was not inevitable; moreover, it is not a final “outcome,” but a moment in a dynamic complex of processes. To allow the possibility that something like civil society and democratic governance could emerge seems justified, as a hypothesis, by much of the discourse on cities, publics, and politics dating back to the ancient Greeks. Perhaps the “transition” expected by most Western experts was possible, but it was not the only potential path toward more democratic governance. Early in the last century, Walter Lippmann and John Dewey advanced the proposition that people organize themselves into publics in order to deal with problems that institutions fail to resolve (Marres, 2005). On the other hand, Russian history, the illiberal Putin regime, and contemporary cases elsewhere—e.g., Chinese cities--support an alternative hypothesis that Moscow’s governance could have become significantly more authoritarian than it is at the moment.
Precedents

Near the end of the Soviet period Moshe Lewin observed that “civil society is talking, gossiping, demanding, sulking, expressing its interests in many ways” (Lewin, 1988, p. 146). Not all Soviet specialists would agree that there was such a thing as a civil society. However, the heritage-preservation movement in the latter years of Soviet power was partly autonomous from the state, as well as partly embedded in it, and took the sort of independent, and even oppositional, actions that are typical of goal-oriented civil-society groups. If civil society was not fully fledged in the Gorbachev period, the heritage-preservation movement was laying the groundwork. And the preservationists of the glasnost’ period could draw on a legacy of heroic activism stretching back to early years of Stalin’s dictatorship.

In the Soviet period about half of Moscow’s historic buildings were destroyed (Tung, 2001, p. 155). In particular, Stalin and his lieutenants were proud to wage a war against the old city to make room for the new world they sought to create (Colton, 1995, p. 280). Brave individuals tried to save what they could, sometimes risking their lives. For example, in 1933 when the regime was preparing to destroy the iconic St. Basil’s cathedral on Red Square, Petr Baranovskii, the USSR’s preeminent restorer of heritage architecture, threatened to commit suicide. St. Basil’s was saved, but Baranovskii was sent to the Gulag and his restoration workshops were closed.

After his release the labor camp, Baranovskii resumed restoration work. In 1964 he inspired the formation of Rodina (“Motherland”) a youth club for fans of Russian art and buildings. Rodina spawned the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Landmarks (VOOPIK), which was officially sanctioned in 1966 by the government. By 1978 the Moscow branch had 650,000 members (Colton, 1995, pp. 406-407). Although formally
VOOPIK was a state organization, it differed from others insofar as it was truly voluntary and addressed issues that heretofore had hardly concerned the Communist leadership. Thus, in Michael Urban’s terms, VOOPIK may be seen as one of “the first embryonic forms of a civil society” in the USSR (Urban, 1997, p. 35).\(^6\) VOOPIK built up considerable influence and was in large part responsible for the diminished amount of heritage destruction in Moscow under Brezhnev (Colton, 1995, p. 559).

Mikhail Gorbachev opened the door for new types of “informal” associations, which proliferated rapidly in the late eighties, with perhaps 1500 in Moscow by fall, 1988 (Colton, 1995, p. 580). Flexible, and often fleeting, the new groups included some that opposed key development projects; by March, 1988 they had managed to halt 200 public-works projects in the capital (Colton, 1995, p. 592).

City-Builders vs. City-Defenders

Luzhkov Rules

Early in his tenure as Moscow’s mayor Yurii Luzhkov went to great lengths to distinguish himself from the “barbarians” who destroyed much of the historic center during Stalin’s reign. (Mikhailov, 2006, p. 11). But his approach was not to work out and follow an effective system for the preservation and upkeep of existing historic buildings. Instead, Luzhkov chose a more dramatic strategy, the complete reconstruction of prominent structures that had been demolished under the Soviets. Three “restorations” in particular stand out. Indeed, it would be all but impossible for a visitor to the capital not to see them: the Kazan’ Cathedral on

\(^{6}\) One might argue that the nature protection movement in the Soviet period was also a precursor of civil society, but the movement’s chronicler, Douglas R. Weiner, deems this view simplistic. However, it can be said of VOOPIK, as Weiner wrote about the nature protection, that at least it was “a surrogate for politics, as actual political discourse was prohibited and punished” (1999, 444). Both the nature and heritage protection movements showed that even in the USSR it was “possible for individuals to find a way to come together to protect and affirm values and visions radically at odds with those of the rulers” (1999, 443).
the edge of Red Square, the Voskresenskie Gates which link Red and Manezh squares, and the Cathedral of Christ the Redeemer.

Such “new old monuments,” in preservationist Konstantin Mikhailov words, “became a symbol not of ‘repentance’ for the vandalism of the recent past, but of the ambitious construction project of the new city leaders” (Mikhailov, 2006, p. 11). The mayor exhibited “a fondness for inserting representations of Russian heritage into the urban landscape,” but, as Kathleen Smith concludes, “Luzhkov’s ideal Moscow more closely resembled a historical theme park than a museum” (Smith, 2002, pp. 125-127). Moreover, the Moscow public was not consulted prior to these insertions.

Luzhkov’s high-handedness and questionable taste aroused much of the capital’s intelligentsia to defend the urban landscape from trivialization. Many considered the “Luzhkov style” tasteless and embarrassing (“Opros: nravitsia li moskvicham sovremennaia arkhitektura,” Opros, 2002). Yet opposition was largely ineffective. VOOPIIK attempted to attract media attention to the issues of heritage preservation while struggling to survive (Korolkov, 1997). Individual architects, professors, and other intelligentsia protested to officials directly and through the press. The most eminent among them, Aleksei Komech, sometimes persuaded Luzhkov to turn down “especially odious projects.” But these interactions constituted just the “semblance” of democratic discussion (Bezzakonie, 2004).

Luzhkov reigned as chief city-builder; developers competed with one another to win and maintain his favor. Virginie Coulloudon concluded that that City Hall maintained “absolute control over the capital’s economy” (Coulloudon, 2001, p. 96). But that control largely was exercised behind closed doors. Therefore, generally developers’ capacities for independent action were limited. But they could use the courts and hire private security personnel as means

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7 My translation from the Russian original.
of overcoming opposition. They also were not constrained from employing illegal means to advance their aims, such as arson (O’Flynn, 2004c). That genuine restoration of old buildings cost on average three times as much as replacing them with new ones was a powerful incentive (Golubchikov & Badyna, 2006, p. 204).

The 1998 economic crisis hit the Moscow construction sector hard, but recovery began in 2000. During the new century’s first decade the ancient capital endured a wave of destruction, in which hundreds of historic buildings disappeared or were replaced by *muliazhi* (“moulages”--replicas) (Binney, 2007, p.6; Mereu, 2004). Just in 2002 and 2003 property values in the capital climbed on average by 60%, led by the demand for space in the historic center. Muscovites increasingly resented the destruction of historic structures, and the media persistently kept such *skandaly* in the public view. Gradually citizens who opposed the destruction of Moscow’s architectural heritage coalesced into organizations capable of resisting redevelopment projects. Three cases in particular, which resulted in historic structures’ replacement with *muliazhi*, mobilized public opinion within Russia and attracted attention from abroad. One of them was the much loved *Manezh* which stood just on the north side of the Kremlin. The second, *Voentorg*, was located three blocks west of the Kremlin; it had been a department store specializing in military clothing and accessories. The third was the Hotel *Moskva*, which stood across from the northern entrance to Red Square. All three buildings were highly prominent in the cultural landscape as well as Muscovites’ memoriescape.

**Voentorg**

*Voentorg, The Central Military Department Store, was built before World War I by Sergei Zalessky. The building was closed due to disrepair in 1994. In March 2002 the city*

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8 Mereu, writing in April 2004, counted “400 historical buildings,” 60 of which were listed under Federal protection, demolished under Luzhkov. Binney claimed that hundreds of buildings “of historic and architectural importance” were destroyed just in the period 2004-2007 period.
resolved to demolish the main building along with three older structures on the site, including one dating back to the early 18th century (Kuz’minskii, 2002). Although Voentorg had been officially listed as a “newly identified object of cultural heritage,” that status was revoked, even though the city’s Main Administration for the Protection of Moscow’s Monuments had declared Voentorg “a fine example of a public building in the Art Noveau style” (Munro, 2003; Voznesensky & Muratov, 2007). Luzhkov’s order justified demolishing Voentorg because of “the important city-building significance of the preservation in Moscow’s historic center of the building of the former Central Military Department Store” (Voznesensky & Muratov, 2007). In other words, the mayor destroyed the building in order to save it (Mikhailov, 2007, p. 207). The city promised to reconstruct “the most important elements of the facade” (Munro, 2003).

The mayor bypassed the city’s architectural advisory committee. The committee’s chair was the city’s chief architect, Aleksandr Kuzmin, who announced on 13 August that the fate of Voentorg had not been decided. Then on 25 August demolition began, taking Kuzmin and the city-defenders by surprise. Kuzmin broke ranks for the first time and publicly opposed the destruction of Voentorg, adding his voice to others, such as Komech and the Director of Moscow’s Shchusev Architectural Museum, David Sarkisian (Moskva, 2007; O’Flynn, 2003b). Another member of the architectural committee, Konstantin Mikhailov, concluded that the mayor’s personal authorization of the project indicated that “very influential” people were involved behind the scenes (Mikhailov, 2007, p. 207).

At this time, the intelligentsia who sought to preserve the city’s cultural heritage were joined by a new generation of activists who deployed new means of struggle. In September “The Moscow That is No More” (Moskva Kotoroi Net—MKN) began using the Internet to attract a
wider circle of Muscovites to the defense of the city’s architectural heritage. MKN also conjured up a “cultural flash-mob,” which held a candlelight vigil at the construction site. For MKN Voentorg was “the last drop;” i.e., the last straw (Moskva, 2007, p. 167).

Nevertheless, the mayor prevailed. The muliazh is six times larger and bears scant resemblance to its predecessor. Komech called it “a monstrous project with many irregularities” (Cecil, 2004). If Voentorg had exemplified Moscow’s Art Nouveau, architecture historian and critic Grigorii Revzin deemed the muliazh “characteristic...of the Luzhkovian style.” The headline of his commentary, which was published in the influential newspaper Kommersant, read “Gravestone of Architecture” (Revzin, 2008).

The Hotel Moskva

The Hotel Moskva, the gray colossus that loomed over Manezh Sq. in front of Red Square, occupied a prominent place in Moscow’s memoryscape. In fact it is known worldwide because its image graces the Stolichnaya vodka label. It was a curious building in that its main facade, which faced Manezh Square to the west, seemed much different from the eastern end of the building, which looked toward Theater Square. It was widely believed that Stalin accidently approved two alternative designs for the building. Afraid to question the dictator’s ruling, the legend goes, his underlings combined the plans to turn two buildings into one. Actually, Stalin did play a crucial role in designing the building, but not by approving two different designs simultaneously. L. Savel’ev and O. Starpan designed the hotel in the Constructivist style, which dominated early Soviet architecture. Unfortunately for the architects, while the building was under construction in 1932, Stalin embraced Classicism. They tried to dress up their Constructivist structure in Classicist clothing, but Stalin was dissatisfied. The job was turned over to Aleksei Shchusev, who had designed Lenin’s mausoleum, and his embellishments met

9 http://kotoroy.net/
with the supreme architect’s approval (Ardaev, 2002; Zinov’eva, 2009, pp. 56-57). No expense was spared in its construction and, because Communist Party and Soviet government officials stayed there when attending functions in the capital, the hotel was lavishly appointed.

During the period of perestroika and the economic crisis of the early nineties, the Moskva grew shabby from lack of upkeep. Nevertheless, such a large site within a stone’s throw of Red Square could not be disregarded forever. Mayor Luzhkov pursued the project for fourteen years, mostly behind the scenes. But, a few details have come to light. In 1996 the city solicited tenders for the contract to rehabilitate the Moskva, but annulled the results. In 2001 a second tender was won by Decorum Corp., which was registered in the US but founded and controlled by a Russian businessman with a checkered past, Ashot Egiazarian (Egiazarian, 2013; Eiskov, 2002). The city entered into a partnership with Decorum to form DecMos, which was to undertake the project. In July 2002 it was announced that the Moskva was to be completely demolished and replaced with a massive *muliazh*, at a cost of about $300 million. Then a Russian billionaire took charge briefly but pulled out in 2003. In the end, the city ended up in control of the property, but $87.5 million of its investment had disappeared (Police, 2009).

Construction projects in Russia routinely cost more than in Europe, despite lower costs for materials, labor, electricity, and other factors. The reason for this is no mystery; embezzlement is the prime suspect. Viacheslav Glazychev, professor at the Moscow Architecture Institute, believes that the Moskva project was undertaken primarily in order to provide funds to steal, because otherwise, “there was no particular need to demolish the hotel” (Mel'nikov, 2010).

Arguing to the contrary, City Hall’s newspaper listed three reasons for demolishing the hotel: (1) because of the scarcity of parking spaces in the city’s center; (2) because of the low
levels of “comfort, cleanliness, and safety;” (3) because the facades needed repair and there was asbestos in the building. The city’s journalist drove his point home: “To keep such a monster in the center of the city would be stupid, to say the least” (Kornilov, 2002).

According to architectural expert Calder Loth, while the Moskva did need “extensive rehabilitation,” it was not structurally unsound: “The quality of the hotel’s materials, finishes and decorations was impeccable” (Loth, 2009, p. 78). The total final cost of the Moskva project has been estimated at nearly $1 billion (Mel'nikov, 2010), which surely would have been much more than enough for the most “extensive rehabilitation.” But rehabilitation instead of reconstruction would have meant forgoing underground parking, when City Hall expected that the hotel’s new garage would “finally solve the parking problem in the center of the city” (Kornilov, 2002).

When it was completed in 2012 the Moskva’s parking levels contained 770 spaces (V gostinitse, 2012). In the mid-00s the number of cars in Moscow increased by 500 to 740 vehicles daily (Metelitsa, 2006; Reznik, 2006) Moreover, if the parking levels accounted for one-third of the total cost of construction, as was estimated in 2002, each parking space cost over $400,000 (Eiskov, 2002).

Like an ineptly-written television script, the Moskva project veered from drama to comedy, from farce to horror story. One of the strangest moments was the “going-out-of-business sale,” which was conducted national-wide. The Moskva’s lavish furnishings included malachite columns, 25 pianos, and 250 paintings. Although valuable works of art were supposed to be placed in museums, most of the removable items—it took 200 pages just to list them—were given away to institutions and individuals from all over the country. Orphanages, for example, were prioritized to receive bed linen and kitchenware (O'Flynn, 2003c). This incident
appears to be the only time Moscow’s “heritage” was neither preserved nor destroyed, but recycled piecemeal.

Like Voentorg, the Moskva had been listed as a “newly identified object of cultural heritage,” but that status was revoked (O'Flynn, 2004c). Federal Culture Minister Mikhail Shvydkoi expressed reservations about the destruction and reconstruction of the Moskva, as he had in the case of Voentorg (Minister, 2002). Foreign specialists also condemned the project and the type of city-building it exemplified, but to no avail.

City Hall's plan to demolish the Moskva and build a replica on the same site is a denial of history, because a monument can only be a monument if it is the real thing. Anything else, no matter how perfect or expensively reconstructed, can be only an inferior copy. Only in exceptional cases should a monument be reconstructed, for example, if is destroyed by fire. Moscow has innumerable architectural monuments from all epochs; some are architectural masterpieces, while others have attained their significance from their history. They turn the city into a kaleidoscope of different forms and colors (Huber, 2003).

Manezh

Werner Huber’s comment unwittingly prefigured the fate of another heritage structure. The Manezh was constructed as the Imperial riding academy in the early 19th century, but was used for exhibitions beginning in 1831. The Manezh, Voentorg, and the Moskva were all significant and unique works of architecture, and important landmarks in the Moscow memoryscape, but the Manezh was incontestably beautiful. In contrast to the forbidding Kremlin wall behind it, the Manezh’s arched windows suggested openness and light. Originally
its ceiling was supported by unique larch beams, 45 meters long, which eliminated the need for columns and thus opened up an interior space that could accommodate an entire regiment.

The city had been mulling rebuilding the Manezh since 1998; its plan to insert two floors underground, one for “technical equipment” and the other for parking, was especially controversial. When Alexei Komech protested that the mayor’s idea to build a parking structure beneath the Manezh was illegal that Luzhkov offered his opinion of the rule of law.

Hmm...the law. Why is there law? Law—this is not dogma, law gives us the occasion to philosophize a bit (Bezzakonie, 2004).

No investors were found for the Manezh project until 2003 when the city accepted a $30 million tender from an Austrian firm. But the contract’s legality was contested by federal agencies. Unlike Voentorg and the Moskva, the Manezh was listed as a permanent, federally-protected monument (O’Flynn, 2004b). Legally, it could be renovated in the commonly understood sense of the word, but it could not be demolished and replaced.

On the night of 14 March 2004, shortly after Vladimir Putin’s electoral victory was announced, the Manezh erupted in flames. Firefighting crews struggled bravely against the conflagration--two firefighters died and another was seriously injured--but they were able only to keep the fire from spreading. The mayor was quick to blame the fire on an electrical short-circuit, while other officials later suggested a discarded cigarette butt or a firecracker as the cause. But experts with the FSB and the Ministry of Emergency Situations concluded that the fire was started by the discharge of a great amount of heat, probably from the ignition of highly flammable liquid or pyrotechnic substances (Diupin, 2004). Aleksei Klimenko claimed to have seen empty gasoline cans at the site when he came to inspect the damage the night of the fire (Levitov, 2004).
On March 22 the city announced plans for “restoration,” having found the Manezh’s foundation and walls to be in sufficiently good shape. According to the city’s architect, Aleksei Kuzmin, the building would retain its status as a monument, which addressed a major concern of preservationists. This outcome seemed to be the best preservationists could have wished, except for Luzhkov’s persistent determination to build a garage under the hall. Federal Culture Minister Mikhail Shvydkoi also appeared largely satisfied and offered 300 million rubles, about $10 million, to help with the project (O’Flynn, 2004b).

However, in May the city announced that the Manezh could not be restored after all—it would have to be completely rebuilt. Although the Austrian firm reportedly was prepared to undertake the restoration project despite the fire damage, the city annulled the deal. Activists worried that the decision meant the Manezh would no longer be under federal protection (Korchagina, 2004). In fact, a commission had been appointed in 2002 to determine under whose “protection” the Manezh belonged, but it had not resolved the matter. Nevertheless, work on the new Manezh began straight away. The question of formal jurisdiction remained unresolved, but the mayor was not deterred. The Culture Ministry did prevail with respect to the underground parking, but evidently little involvement in shaping the rest of the project—the first meeting between the city and ministry to discuss the project’s plan was held 23 September, nearly 5 months after construction began (Manezh, 2004). Evidently Luzhkov insisted on independence after he announced in June that the city would foot the entire bill. On his own authority, the mayor approved the insertion of an underground level, not for parking, but to double the space for exhibitions, which of course considerably boosted the Manezh’s revenue-generating capacity for its de facto sole owner, the city of Moscow (Syrov, 2004).
The new Manezh opened 18 April 2005 thanks to the extremely brisk pace of reconstruction, which troubled restoration experts considerably. Some aspects of the new Manezh recall its predecessor, but at heart it is a different building. No complaints were registered about its fire prevention system or central air conditioning, but other “improvements” were questionable. Preservationists especially disapproved of two new mezzanines containing a cafe and restaurant, which “looked as though they had come straight from a state-of-the-art airport terminal.” Perhaps the preservationists’ views were best expressed by David Sarkisian: "There’s no way you can call it restoration. It is anti-restoration" (City, 2005).

Whereas hundreds of historic buildings had been demolished, or “restored” beyond recognition, in the first twelve years of the Luzhkov administration, the widely-publicized loss of three highly prominent buildings in a short period provoked widespread outrage that led to the transformation of the preservation movement. It may also have shown Luzhkov that he was not invulnerable. Three newspapers reported in late April 2004 that Luzhkov was soon to be replaced, inter alia, because of Kremlin dissatisfaction with the destruction of the Moskva, Voentorg, and, especially, the Manezh (Mereu, 2004).

In mid-April Sarkisian had hosted a roundtable at the Shchusev Architectural Museum in April 2004 that produced a strident letter to President Putin. Along with committed preservationists, such as Aleksei Komech and Aleksei Klimenko, dozens of well-known cultural figures signed the letter, including the writer Tatyana Tolstaya. Denouncing the greed and corruption fueling the destruction of cultural heritage in Moscow, the letter called for the federal government to create and administer a comprehensive program to protect and preserve architectural monuments throughout the country (Ischezaet, 2004; O'Flynn, 2004a). Komech was later interviewed on the television station Rossiia; consequently Luzhkov filed suit both
against the station and the activist. Komech was convinced Luzhkov was infuriated by the open letter but could do nothing about it, so he lashed out at Komech instead (Ignat’eva, 2004; Ischezaet, 2004). The suit against Komech was so groundless that it could not succeed even in Luzhkov’s “home court,” but it did signify that Luzhkov viewed the law not just an invitation “to philosophize a bit,” but also as a weapon to use against his adversaries.

Proliferating Publics for Heritage Preservation

The battles around the Manezh, Moskva, and Voentorg were joined by a new generation of heritage activists. At that time, for example, the founders of MKN, IUlia Mezentseva and Adrian Krupchanskii, were in their mid-twenties. Krupchanskii explains MKN’s origin on his website (Krupchanskii, 2013):

The project was born in August 2003. It was just some people getting together who cared about the old city and thought about how to share their “love of ruins” with other people. We thought up a website that would not be just dry factual information, but have the living histories of Moscow buildings. So it’s like a virtual home for those who love Moscow, with articles arranged in the library, maps and old photographs lying in the study, and a forum located in the kitchen.

The MKN website offers photographs and short histories of hundreds of demolished buildings in Moscow. As Krupchanskii noted, the website hosts a forum, and also blogs. MKN has mutually-supportive relations with other web-based groups with overlapping interests, such as “Arkhi.ru,” which is the leading Russian architectural website, “Sovarkh,” a Moscow-based site devoted to Soviet-era architecture, and “Arkhitektura Moskovskogo Moderna,” which is dedicated to Moscow’s art-nouveau architecture.\(^\text{10}\) MKN has published a number of heritage-themed books, including a series that details the architectural losses in specific parts of the

center. Each book in the series starts at one landmark and ends at another to facilitate walking
tours. MKN also organizes guided walking tours of historic neighborhoods in the capital. And
the group tirelessly holds exhibitions in museums, art galleries, and other public places. In short,
while MKN struggles to protect and preserve specific historic buildings in the city, its broader
aim is to deepen the cultural basis of heritage preservation in Moscow.

Some of the activists themselves are journalists and other journalists have supported the
cause of preservation, especially since period when the Moskva, Manezh, and Voentorg were
lost. Konstantin Mikhailov, for example, launched the column “Careful, Moscow!” in Izvestiia
in 2003. The column was taken over by Rustam Rakhmatullin the following year and it ran until
2011 (Cecil, 2009a, p. 198). Mikhailov and Rakhmatullin, among others, later produced one of
the first books about the destruction of the capital’s historic architecture, A Chronicle of the
Destruction of Old Moscow: 1990-2006 (Khronika Unichtozheniia Staroi Moskvy: 1990-2006,
2006). In 2006, Alexander Mozhaev--an architectural historian, journalist, and MKN activist--
began conducting walking tours in the historic center of the capital and set up his own website,
Arkhnadzor (from arkhitekturnyi nadzor—“architectural supervision”). In 2009, Mozhaev
joined forces with Mikhailov and Rakhmatullin, among others, to turn Arkhnadzor into a
federation of MKN and other groups devoted to heritage conservation (Cecil, 2009a, p. 197).

MKN and Arkhnadzor are not political parties, nor are they affiliated with any of the
parties, yet they “do politics” very well. Those who participate in these groups learn about the
strengths, weaknesses and nuances of direct physical protests, leveraging the media, and
networking through the internet and social media—all vital skills for political activism in the
twenty-first century.
Although Arkhnadzor and MKN are not affiliated with any of the political parties, sometimes opposition parties have offered some support, especially the liberal party “Yabloko.” In spring 2004 Yabloko helped organized the Committee for the Protection of Muscovites at a meeting of thirty initiative groups, in an effort to coordinate the activities of 200 such groups that formed in defense of buildings and neighborhoods. Although the Committee’s main focus was on saving ordinary neighborhoods rather than historic buildings, sometimes the causes overlapped. The Committee’s executive secretary was Alexei Navalny, then just 28 years old (Cecil, 2007; Kazakov, 2004). By 2013 Navalny had become the most popular opposition figure in Russia and he ran a well-publicized, but ultimately unsuccessful, campaign to be elected mayor of Moscow.

The destruction of the Moskva, Voentorg and Manezh brought the casualties of Luzhkovian city-building to the attention of foreign architects and heritage activists. In May 2004, again at the Shchusev museum, the Moscow Architectural Preservation Society (MAPS) was formed by Guy Archer, a freelance journalist and head of the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia, Clementine Cecil, Moscow correspondent for The Times of London, and Kevin O’Flynn of The Moscow Times. From the beginning the group enjoyed the support of UNESCO and the World Monuments Fund, as well as Klimenko, Sarkisian, and other veterans of the heritage struggle in Moscow. Sarkisian was not alone in believing that “[b]ringing the discussion into an international arena is our only hope” (Levitov, 2004).

From the beginning the group intended to cultivate and use international contacts “to give Russian preservationists and Muscovites a greater international voice” (About, 2013). The Associated Press covered the group’s founding and sketched an overview of the heritage struggle in Moscow. Just by the end of 2005 articles about heritage destruction in Moscow had appeared
in *The Scotsman, The Globe and Mail* (Canada), *The Times* (UK), *Abitare* (Italy), *The Baltimore Sun, The New York Times, The Guardian* (UK), and *The Independent* (UK) (MAPS, 2013). In 2007 MAPS partnered with SAVE Europe’s Heritage to issue *Moscow Heritage at Crisis Point, 2004-2007*, a report in Russian and English which included short essays both by foreign and Russian experts and activists. Publication of the report was covered by a wide range of print and web-based newspapers and magazines, as well as radio stations in Russia. The Russian BBC World Service produced a video, which was downloadable from their website. The report was also picked up by the Associated Press, Agence France-Presse, Reuters, and Bloomberg news agencies (Cecil, 2009c). An updated and expanded edition appeared in 2009 (Harris, et al., 2009).

A complementary strategy to make international connections was the effort to collaborate with foreign heritage specialists and institutions. Professor Natal’ia Dushkina of the Moscow Architectural Institute, who participated in the founding of MAPS, has played a leading role in this regard. Dushkina has been invaluable, not just because of her many publications and her organizing skills, but also because she embodies Russian/Soviet architectural heritage. Her grandfather, Alexei Dushkin, was one of the Soviet Union’s greatest architects; he designed several iconic metro stations—including Ploshchad’ Revoliutsii and Novoslobodskaya—as well as Detskii Mir, the beloved “Children’s World,” which unfortunately did not escape Luzhkovian “restoration.” Dushkina served on the Executive Committee of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) from 1990-1996. In 2002 she contributed the report “Russia – 20th-Century Heritage” to *Heritage at Risk: ICOMOS World Report 2002/2003* (Dushkina, 2002). Subsequently, Dushkina co-founded the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on 20th-Century Heritage (Natal’ia, 2014).
In 2006 Dushkina was a key organizer of the ICOMOS annual conference, which was held in Moscow: “Heritage at Risk – Preservation of 20th-Century Architecture and World Heritage.” The editors of the 2006 ICOMOS report wrote that Dushkina “...and her network of colleagues from Moscow and all over the world became [the] heart and soul of the project” (Haspel & Petzet, 2007). The conference was hosted by the Shchusev Museum, the Moscow Union of Architects, and the Moscow Architectural Institute. Foreign supporters included the World Monuments Fund (WMF), the International Union of Architects (UIA), and the International Working Party for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement (DOCOMOMO International).

By the middle of the decade, civil-society opposition to the destruction of Moscow’s architectural heritage was diverse and multi-scalar. In time-honored fashion, respected experts and cultural figures, as well as venerable VOORPIK, continued to pressure officials to preserve the capital’s heritage. At the same time, new groups emerged, such as MKN and Arkhnadzor, consisting largely of younger people proficient in the use of electronic media. Both electronic and print media turned conflicts over Moscow’s historic buildings into public issues at the local, national, and global levels. Foreign specialists and international preservation institutions supported Moscow’s preservationists against Luzhkov’s regime, which was now widely seen as loutish and venal. It was widely understood that President Putin was dissatisfied with Luzhkov and at least one opposition party became involved in the heritage struggle. City Hall would face opposition to virtually every project that involved the destruction of a historic structure.

Yet Luzhkov held on as mayor until autumn of 2010 and, by and large, continued to prevail in most of the conflicts around historic architecture. Most but not all—for example, his plan to reconstruct the area around and under Pushkin Square led to an epic battle that forced the
mayor to hesitate, leaving the project on the drawing board until his successor canceled it. In a number of other cases, he changed plans in the face of resolute opposition.

The relations between City Hall and heritage activists remained distrustful and conflictive, with virtually no positive collaborative efforts. For over six years the forces for heritage preservation in the capital lost most of the battles, but they won the war by outlasting their antagonist. The turning point was spring of 2004 when new publics emerged in response to the destruction of Moscow’s cultural heritage, new publics that managed to form enduring institutions, as one of the founders of MAPS avers: “Since then [May 2004], the preservation movement has grown and galvanized in Moscow, becoming a crucial part of the grass-roots civil movement that is not afraid to stand up for its rights despite the political nature of the issue” (Cecil, 2009b).

**Heritage under Sobianin**

The removal of Luzhkov in October 2010 was not primarily due to the opposition of heritage activists to his city-building policies. However, the scandals surrounding certain key projects antagonized much of the intelligentsia, including journalists and well-known cultural figures. The poorly shrouded venality of Luzhkov’s regime, if barely tolerable as the “cost of doing business” in ordinary projects, provoked more outrage when Russia’s historical symbols were threatened. Moreover, heritage-preservation struggles were not occurring in isolation. All over the city people were angry about Luzhkovian city-building policies such as in-fill construction of enormous elite buildings in crowded neighborhoods.

Here space permits only an overview of the changes in architectural-heritage governance under Sobianin. Yet a cursory look at basic data on historic-building restoration indicates that substantial changes have taken place. Thanks to a boost in investment from City Hall and the
Kremlin, many more buildings have been restored or are undergoing restoration. When Sobianin took office in late 2010, 10 buildings were undergoing restoration. In 2012 100 buildings were restored, while in 2013 the figure was 146 restoration projects completed with another 332 underway (Meleshenko, 2014; V Moskve, 2013).

Heritage issues continue to arise and attitudes toward the city administration vary. Arkhnadzor emphasized the need for continual vigilance in a 2013 press release: “Several positive improvements have been realized, but the destruction of historical Moscow continues; the scale of losses is no less than in the 2000s” (Marat, 2013). Yet Irina Korobina, Sarkisian’s successor at the Shchusev Architectural Museum, believes “the Department of Cultural Heritage [Moskomnasledie] under the direction of Aleksandr Kirbovsky has...done a colossal job,” specifically with regard to instituting new regulations to protect the historic center, prosecuting legal infractions, and making procedures more transparent (d’Amora, 2013).

When Sobianin took over, he demoted some of Luzhkov’s people immediately, but he cautiously stretched out the process of replacing them over many months. The one exception was Valerii Shevchuk, head of Moskomnasledie, the city agency in charge of heritage preservation. Sobianin fired him just days after taking office (Zakharov, 2010). Korobina summed up preservationists’ view of Shevchuk’s Moskomnasledie.

They sold various permits for money. And the majority of the people who worked in the agencies for the preservation of heritage...had their own constructions firms (d’Amora, 2013).

The transformation of Moskomnasledie into a respectable professional agency is an important part of the story of ongoing relationship between city-builders and city-defenders in the Sobianin period. Kibovskii holds an advanced degree in history and had devoted his entire
professional career to heritage preservation. He holds the rank of Minister in the city
government and reports directly to the mayor (Kibovskii, 2013).

In April 2011 extensive functions were spelled out for Moskomnasledie, including not
only the duty to ensure compliance with all pertinent laws and regulations connected with
heritage preservation, but also giving the agency the power to stop any project endangering
“objects of cultural heritage” (Polozhenie, 2013). The revitalized agency appeared to take its
mandate seriously. In early May 2011 Moskomnasledie canceled all permits to tear down or
partially dismantle buildings in areas containing historic structures. All such permits would have
to be re-approved by the new committee. In this case, Moskomnasledie acted soon after
Arkhnadzor appealed to Mayor Sobianin after a brazenly illegal destruction of a historic building
(Petrova, 2011).

Moskomnasledie was not the only city agency dealing with heritage preservation and
destruction. In 1995 Luzhkov set up the Commission on Issues Concerning the Preservation of
Buildings in the Built-Up Districts of Moscow, which soon became known as the “demolition
commission” (Postanovlenie, 2011). Chaired by Luzhkov’s construction chief, Vladimir Resin,
the “demolition commission” heard 4000 cases in the Luzhkov period and ruled for destruction
of 3000 of them (Podolian, 2011). Although VOOPIK was represented on the “demolition
commission,” city officials and construction experts dominated (Postanovlenie, 2008;
Postanovlenie, 2011).

After Luzhkov’s downfall Resin, serving as Acting Mayor, tried to distance himself from
Luzhkov’s city-building polices. Inter alia, he invited Arkhnadzor’s Mikhailov to take part in the
“demolition commission” (IElsukova, 2010). That small, perhaps token, reform was superseded
by a more substantial reworking of the commission in October 2011. Mikhailov and a VOOPIK
representative continue to serve on the commission, along with substantially more civil-society representation than in the past. Among the latter are a well-known newspaper columnist, who specializes in the city’s historical geography, and a top executive from the independent radio station Ekho Moskvy (Podolian, 2011; Postanovlenie Pravitel'stva Moskvy ot 4 oktiabria № 475, 2011) --Postanovlenie, 2011. Therefore, the commission’s decisions cannot be kept secret from the public. Arkhnadzor releases detailed accounts of the meetings and the media also regularly provide coverage (Chetyre, 2013; Itogi, 2013).

In January 2011 the Sobianin administration polled Moscow web-users concerning their position on architectural heritage preservation in the capital. Seventy-seven per cent supported the idea of establishing “reserves” in the in the old districts of the city in order to “fully preserve old Moscow.” Less than 3% supported the destruction of old buildings in order to renew the city (Moskvichi, 2011). The survey was significant not only because of its results, but because it signaled that the new administration was taking public opinion seriously (Oprosy, 2013).

Moskomnasledie also set up a “hot line,” accessible around the clock, so that residents can report unauthorized destruction of heritage objects.

Moskomnasledie under Kibovskii rivals MKN and Arkhnadzor in its efforts to foster appreciation of Moscow’s material cultural heritage. The agency publishes a bimonthly journal, Moskovskoe Nasledie (“Moscow’s Heritage”), which is generously illustrated and offered free-of-charge at fifty locations in the center. Every edition can also be downloaded through Moskomnasledie’s website.11 The journal also runs a blog on Tumblr.12 In addition, Moskomnasledie published “The Moscow that Does Exist,” a large-format book with many color photographs that focuses on heritage structures that have been restored in the capital; it too can

12 http://mosnasledie.tumblr.com/.
be freely downloaded.\textsuperscript{13} Finally, the agency also organizes heritage-oriented exhibitions and walking tours.\textsuperscript{14}

However, controversies still emerge frequently. In September 2013 Arkhnadzor and MKN mounted an exhibit featuring 40 historic buildings that were demolished or under threat of destruction in the period 2010-2013 (Marat, 2013). Although the pace of destruction is slower than when Luzhkov ruled, and almost all the buildings were much less prominent than the Manezh, Moskva, or Voentorg, the activists have not lacked buildings to defend.

Very few cities can afford to preserve every old structure. City Hall attempted to address the problem of financing, as well as seeking investor and public support in January 2012 when it enacted a new program to attract private investors to rehabilitate selected old buildings in need of repair. The city offers leases for 49 years at the rate of one ruble per square meter annually. In return, the investor must renovate the building in accordance with regulations within five years. In December 2013 twenty historical monuments were being restored under the “one-ruble” program. In that year private investment in restoration grew from one to 5.5 billion rubles (V Moskve, 2013; Zenevich, 2013).

However, not all historic buildings are saved. Important in this regard are at least three other factors attributable to the legacy of the Luzhkov regime and the power exercised “from above” by those with connections to the Kremlin. First, in a number of cases historic structures were substantially or completely destroyed before Sobianin took office. Arkhnadzor released a memorandum describing the seven “most odious” projects which the new mayor should stop (Memorandum, 2010). In four cases, the Sobianin administration did in the end cancel the projects (Buranov, 2013; Dobrianskaia, 2013; Lyauv & Filatov, 2011; Reestr, 2013; Smirnov,
In two other cases, the historic buildings had largely been demolished during Luzhkov’s tenure (Belovskii, 2010; Memorandum, 2010; Usad’bu, 2010). Arkhnadzor demanded their “restoration,” but obviously such a cause has less resonance with City Hall and the public than preventing a genuinely historic structure’s destruction. The last “odious” project was the much beloved Detskii Mir, (“Children’s World”), department store. The store closed and some demolition work was carried out inside the building during Luzhkov’s tenure, but evidently it was while Sobianin’s people were reviewing the project near the end of 2011 that the contractor essentially gutted the interior. Arkhnadzor raised the alarm and Moskomnasledie intervened, initiating a well-publicized review involving independent experts and the Russian Architects’ Union. In the end, the project was substantially redrawn in order to restore the appearance of the original interior as much as possible. The city tried to depict the outcome as an exemplary success, but Arkhnadzor listed it as the number-one loss of cultural heritage of 2012 (Arkhnadzor, 2012; Zdanie, 2012).

The second factor is that the Sobianin administration evidently takes the legal system and existing contracts seriously, even though in the past they represented the “rule of Luzhkov,” rather than the “rule of law.” By the end of 2012 the city had reviewed 55 contracts and, according to Moskomnasledie’s Kibovskii, had managed in the majority of cases to get the developer to agree to maintain the dimensions of the previous building or at least to reduce the size of the new project. But the courts had ruled in favor of the developers in some twenty cases, including one of the most “odious” (Golubeva, 2012).

The third factor that has on occasion tipped the scales against preservation of historic buildings is Kremlin interest in a project. One such case was the construction of a hotel-studio complex in the Partriarshie Prudy neighborhood of central Moscow by the prominent film
director Nikita Mikhalkov, a personal friend of Putin (Bratersky, 2010). There also was Kremlin involvement in one of the projects Arkhnadzor labeled “most odious,” the expansion of the Helikon Opera ("Gelikon-opetu, 2011). A third example was the bitter controversy in 2013 over a house near the Kremlin that formerly belonged to Prince Volkonskii, the model for Tolstoy’s Prince Bolkonsky in War and Peace. Arkhnadzor struggled doggedly to prevent the addition of two floors to the structure, but its owners reportedly belong to Putin’s “close circle” (Aivazian, 2013; Reznik, 2013).

**Concluding Remarks**

In 2003 a citizen joined with neighbors to protest a development project that endangered the pond in the historic Patriarshie Prudy district, which was immortalized in Mikhail Bulgakov’s Master and Margarita. Her complaint was shared by many:

“I thought that our city government would listen to the voices of those who love the pond. Now I understand that we are absolutely nobody” (O’Flynn, 2003a).

Change was already underway at that time, although the Luzhkov regime resisted it stoutly. More Muscovites, including many young people, were taking up the cause, working out new means of struggle, consolidating their new associations and expanding their influence. As Clem Cecil noted, they were “becoming a crucial part of the grass-roots civil movement” (Clementine Cecil, 2009b).

Other types of initiative groups and citizens’ movements came into being to protect their homes and neighborhoods from Luzhkovian city-building or to engage with the (im-)mobility issues brought on by automobilization of the capital. They too demanded a say in the process of city-building and were rewarded, to an extent, when in 2007 Luzhkov announced that no new in-fill construction projects would be approved, while all that were underway would be halted and
reviewed. He also set up a “hotline” for citizens to lodge complaints about city-building projects. The following year Luzhkov established the practice of holding public hearings before any substantial projects were undertaken. In this way, Luzhkov set the stage for his successor’s systematic efforts to make the capital’s governance more inclusive, transparent, reasonable, and professional. But it seems fair to argue that the city-builder-in-chief would not have liberalized his approach in the slightest, had it not been for the dogged efforts of city-defenders, among whom the heritage-preservation activists have been the most prominent. All of those who took action made a difference in the ongoing (re-)making of the place that is Moscow. Many of them have also reshaped themselves, in the process, into people who can participate in the Russian capital’s evolving governance regime.


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