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Samarkand and its cultural heritage: perceptions and persistence of the Russian colonial construction of monuments

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Samarkand and its cultural heritage: perceptions and persistence of the Russian colonial construction of monuments

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This article is concerned with the creation, by the Russian colonial administration, Russian researchers and photographers/artists, of a corpus of ‘historical monuments’ of Samarkand in the first decades after the conquest of the city. It uses travelogues, administrative reports, memoirs, the periodical press and artistic productions to determine the mechanism of selection of representative monuments, defined as the ‘cultural heritage’ of Russian Turkestan and, indirectly, of the Russian Empire. The internal logic of ‘patrimonialization’, initiated from above and ideologically engaged, becomes more obvious when it is juxtaposed against native understandings of the significance of monuments, European practices, and the political projects of the Russian Empire.

Keywords: Turkestan; Samarkand; colonial patrimonialization; cultural heritage; restoration; memory; Tamerlane (Timur)

Introduction

Beginning with the account of Marco Polo, Samarkand was transformed into a mythologized city in the European imagination. Although it appeared on maps, little was known about it in concrete terms (Gorshenina 2008). Connected with ‘world history’ through the military campaigns of Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, it also symbolized for the Occident ‘the riches of the Orient’, materialized in the form of architectural monuments. From the moment of the Russian conquest of Central Asia in the 1860s, these regularly attracted the attention of artists, photographers, travellers and scholars. These buildings, the majority of which were defined as ‘Timurid’ by European observers, were at the epicentre of the construction of the ‘cultural heritage’ of the tsarist Empire. Conforming to the logic of the construction of collective memory¹ on the basis of a ‘memorial object’, they were gradually transformed from mere buildings without any definition into ‘historical monuments’, theoretically called upon to be the cultural identifier of the Nation or Empire.

This process of ‘patrimonialization’ in a ‘colonial situation’ (Balandier 1951) is discussed in the present article as an ideologically engaged sociocultural, legal and political process, in the course of which individual, consciously selected material objects, areas and practices are endowed with lustrous significance and called upon to symbolize special moments of the past, understood to be key during the construction of imperial/national identity. Such an interpretation warrants their transformation into a ‘patrimony’ worthy of protection and support (restoration). Such an assessment is necessarily based on values and representations, which can vary according to the historical period, and is the result of a construction at once social, political and economic. We can say that the patrimony exists only through a process of ‘patrimonialization’. Thus, the

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focus is not on the ‘memorial object’ itself but on the process by which this object is transformed into an ‘object of patrimony’ with a specific symbolic value, which must necessarily be preserved for the future and must establish a link with some historical period within a society. The term – patrimonialization – has been widely used since the 1990s in Francophone studies for all kinds of patrimonies – material, immaterial, cultural and geographical – but it is still rare in publications in English.

The process of patrimonialization can be divided into several stages, from the ‘rediscovery’ of monuments by European/Russian travellers, and their appreciation or rejection of them as ‘ruins’, to visual/literary recording, or scientific studies. However, these stages are not fixed in linear time and may overlap. Without touching on all aspects of this multi-faceted process, which has continued in the post-Soviet space until the present time, this research will concentrate on the situation in Samarkand from the 1860s through the 1880s.²

The basis of the analysis is the differentiated understanding of the terms ‘monuments’ and ‘historical monuments’, which was first noted in the works of Viennese historian Alois Riegl (1858–1901), in particular in his book *Der moderne Denkmalkultus: sein Wesen und seine Entstehung* (*The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Origin*, 1903). According to his observations, ‘by a monument, in the most ancient and correct sense of the term, one implies a work created by the hand of man and erected with the precise goal of conserving always present and alive in the conscience of future generations the memory of this action or this intention (or of combinations of one or the other)’ (35);³ on the other hand, ‘historical monuments’ has to be interpreted as a ‘subjective invention of the modern onlooker, changing according to the will of his favour’ (40).⁴ At present these two readings have a tendency to be merged into one term, *patrimoine* or ‘patrimony’ (Choay 1992, 22; 2009, III–IV), which, however, has a meaning closer to ‘historical monuments’.

The question of the construction of cultural heritage – patrimonialization – is inextricably connected with the concept of *lieux de mémoire* (locations of memory) formulated by Pierre Nora (1989), in which ‘historical monuments’ appear as only one component, something which has been widely explored in western literature by André Chastel (Babelon and Chastel 1980; Chastel 1986), Françoise Choay (1992, 2009), Krzysztof Pomian (1987), Dominique Poulot (2007), George W. Stocking (2010), Charles S. Maier (1988), Kerwin Lee Klein (2000) and John Randall Gillis (2004).

However, this problem has not yet been analysed in relation to the imperial period of the Russian state, still less in Central Asia, although the theme of memorialization in relation to the Soviet and post-Soviet periods has been outlined in the works of some researchers (e.g. Oushakine 2011; Blacker, Etkind, and Fedor 2013).⁵

The process of creating cultural heritage in colonial Turkestan differed from the patrimonialization that occurred in Western Europe, where it was first invented almost 100 years before the Russian conquest of Central Asia. Beginning from the French Revolution of 1789, the construction of collective memory in a series of Western countries was directed towards the glorification of the Motherland (see e.g. the analysis of this situation in France by Babelon and Chastel 1980; Poulot 2007).

In Central Asia, local monuments had no correlation, for residents of the Russian metropolis, with the symbols that would have expressed their own national history. Despite theories of the ‘Aryan’ or ‘Turanian’ ancestry of ethnic Russians (Laruelle 2005), they embodied the memory of Asian ‘Others’. Their transformation into ‘historical monuments’ of the Russian Empire occurred in a colonial context, which compels one to seek analogies not in the patrimonializations that unfolded in Europe but in those produced by Western powers in territories outside of Europe. A series of studies devoted to patrimonialization in colonial Egypt (e.g. Volait 2009), Algeria (e.g. Oulebsir 2004), Jordan (e.g. Maffi 2004), and India (e.g. Guha-Thakurta 2010; Rajgopal and

Desai 2012) makes it possible to draw comparisons. According to these studies, the colonial situation gives different characterizations to a space where different identities and cultural practices exist together, collide, stratify and are imitated, repelling the policy of domination either through a strategy of appropriation or through non-acceptance and opposition (Turgeon 2003, 23–24).

Taking into account that the invention of ‘cultural heritage’ in Samarkand in the tsarist period occurred not within the framework of discussions between ‘Self’ and ‘Self’, in accordance with the scenario of the European metropoles, but in mutual relations with the ‘Other’, reproducing the general mechanisms of colonial patrimonializations, the analysis of this process implies the following questions. Why and how were traces of the past of the ‘Other’ turned into objects of ‘immortalization’ for representatives of the Russian metropole? What were the goals – ideological, geopolitical, cultural – of this colonial patrimonialization, and which identity – imperial, national, or sub-national – was this cultural heritage supposed to support? Who were the people active in this process – travellers, Russian settlers (including the Russian intellectual elite of Turkestan), the colonial administration, state, and intellectual elites of the metropole; or ‘native’, Central Asian actors? What were the criteria of patrimonialization (antiquity, aesthetic qualities, ‘authenticity’, economic benefit) and their paths from fixation in texts and representations to protection and popularization? And finally, what were the transformations, both physically and on the level of representation, of these very ‘memorial objects’ on the local and/or world level, and what were the consequences of this phenomenon of patrimonialization? These questions remove the centre of discussion from Europe to Central Asia, and introduce the history of the construction of ‘cultural heritage’ in Samarkand into a broader problematic, analysing the interaction between power and the construction of classifications and cultural categories.

The article begins with a sketch of native practices in relation to monuments that existed in Turkestan before the Russian conquest. Subsequently, the analysis is concentrated on the first stages of the elaboration of literary clichés in evaluations of ‘Timurid’ buildings by the earliest Russian and European travellers. The primary focus, however, is on the first restoration works conducted under the first governor-general of Turkestan, Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman (1818–1882), and on an analysis of their politico-ideological rationale. The conclusion discusses the stability of the ‘cultural heritage’ created by the colonial administration, with the participation of native elites, assimilated later by independent Uzbekistan.

The ‘monuments’ of Central Asia before the appearance in the region of the European concept of ‘cultural heritage’

An attempt to reconstruct the native understanding of ‘cultural heritage’ before the transfer of this concept to Central Asia meets with a series of obstacles. Firstly, this Western European concept, which appeared in the Europe of the new era and was formulated differently in various countries,⁶ was imported to Turkestan after its seizure by Russia, whose bureaucrats were inspired by the Afro-Asian experience of their French and British contemporaries.⁷

Secondly, among the native Central Asian sources concerning monuments before the Timurid period of the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries, the basic descriptions of the ‘antiquities’ of Samarkand such as, in particular, the *Qandiya* of the eleventh century and the *Samariya* of the twelfth (which were revised and updated in the 1840s) constitute very scanty evidence (Viatkin 1898, 1907a). They are almost exclusively concentrated on descriptions of religious buildings⁸ and, significantly, have a quite different viewpoint, being concerned with creating a local religious geography that can be related to the Islamization of the region, the wider Muslim world and Islamic eschatology. At the same time, the understanding of the ideological significance of architecture, common to all empires, was not foreign to the native elites of Turkestan. In the nineteenth century in particular, the indigenous residents presented Samarkand to travellers with pride as a

city which had no equal anywhere in the world (Kostenko 1869, 149). Modern Uzbek propaganda has associated this ancient pride in the city to the words supposedly spoken by Tamerlane and inscribed on the portal of the Ak-Saray Palace in Shahr-i Sabz: ‘If you doubt our power, look at our monuments.’⁹

Besides this lack of interest in patrimony, captivation by ‘ruins’ – one of the stages of patrimonialization – was absent in Central Asia, both in the form of romantic exaltation characteristic for Europe, and in the form typical of the Middle East, where Roman ruins were taken by the new Muslim elites as a symbol of the ‘birth of authentic faith and the defeat of paganism’ (Dakhlia 1998, 178–184; Maffi 2004, 102–104; Oulebsir 2004, 15).

The basic explanation of this situation is that the pre-Islamic past of Central Asia – with very rare exceptions – was practically invisible for its Muslim population. The Afrasiab Plateau, lying to the north of Samarkand – the main witness of the Hellenistic epoch – was neglected and overgrown with grass, and even from afar could not be compared with the Roman ‘ruins’ of the eastern provinces of the ancient empire. Unfired brick – the basic building material in Turkestan – was not very durable, and thus by the mid-nineteenth century the only visible ‘antiquities’ were Muslim buildings, which according to the testimony of the first Western and Russian travellers ‘were dated no earlier than the epoch of Tamerlane’ (Khanikov 1869, 271, 273). Badly preserved, it was these Islamic rather than pre-Islamic structures which were perceived by the native population as ‘monuments’. In modern times, the inhabitants of Samarkand, like the other Muslim sedentary peoples of the Turkestani oases, had developed a completely different attitude towards ‘ruins’. In cases of more or less good preservation, they used these architectural constructions directly in accordance with their functional purpose (see the *Samariya* of Abu Tahir Khwaja Samarqandi, in Viatkin 1898). In the opposite case, when old buildings had to be destroyed, individual parts, most often wooden or stone, could find a place in new constructions, retaining during this process a sacral meaning instead of acquiring a commemorative one.

Alongside this, in Central Asia as in most of the Muslim world, *waqf*¹⁰ endowments were the basis for the support and management of all public buildings of a religious character. The terms of most *waqfnamas*, which reflected the will of the original donors of the *waqf*, required the allocation of income for the maintenance and renovation of buildings. If this was not fulfilled, there were provisions to withhold the salaries of those who managed the *waqf* until the necessary restoration work had been completed (see for example the obituary of Chor Bakr, in Babajanov and Szuppe 2002, 118–120).

Exclusively limited to the religious function, the maintenance of monuments did not correspond to the modern understanding of ‘the protection of cultural heritage’. The renovation (*maramat*) that the *waqf* documents required was often transformed into reconstruction, over the course of which aesthetics and accuracy were not taken into consideration (criticism of rough restorations in the ‘Asiatic taste’ was a commonplace in European travelogues: Maev 1872, 286). ‘Restoration’ could take a radical form, up to and including the complete destruction of the building and its replacement by an entirely new structure. In this case it could still include individual ‘old’ details, such as elements of architectural construction or internal decoration. Such relations with ‘material memory’ were often supplemented by forgetting the precise dates of construction of monuments or the location of structures that had disappeared.¹¹ For example, oral tradition placed the observatory of Ulughbek in the courtyard of the madrasa bearing his name in the Registan, until the discovery of its actual location outside the modern city. This discovery was the result of a study by Vasilii L. Viatkin (1869–1932) of *waqf* documents, in particular a document from 1546 regarding the mausoleum at the grave of Khwaja Ahrar, which led him in 1908–1909 to undertake archaeological excavations to the north of Afrasiab, in the region of Naqsh-i Jahan (Kostenko 1869, 149; Vambéry 1873, 275 [Jan 2004]; Viatkin 1912, 99–109; Chekhovich 1974, doc. 17).

In pre-colonial Turkestan, the lack of any experience of constructing collective memory in accordance with the principles of the modern Western conception of ‘cultural heritage’ becomes still more evident when comparing it with Ottoman Turkey (Maffi 2004, 104–108) and Iran. The national elites of these countries attempted, from the mid-nineteenth century, to assimilate European practices, translating them into local idioms representing a non-European path of modernization such as, for example, during the creation of detailed photographic images of their domains for international exhibitions. These countries would also host on their soil several foreign archaeological missions whose activity involved reflections on the protection of monuments (e.g. Charles Texier, in Bogaz Köy, Turkey, in 1834).

The perception of monuments before the capture of Samarkand by Russian troops: the birth of a cliché

Despite the episodic trade involvement of Turkestan with Russia and, indirectly, with Europe from the sixteenth century on, and closer contacts from the eighteenth century, the image of Samarkand in the mental maps of the West remained, as before, mainly defined by the descriptions of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo (d. 1412), whom the Castilian king Henry III had sent in 1403–1406 to the court of Tamerlane (Clavijo 2005 [1928]). Although he spent practically all his stay in the summer palaces of the large gardens around the city, Clavijo sketched out an image of Samarkand through the descriptions of some of the important monuments built by Tamerlane, such as the Gur-i Amir (144) and Bibi-Khanym (147), with a panorama of the city:

Among these orchards outside Samarcand are found the most noble and beautiful houses, and here Timur has his many palaces and pleasure grounds. Round and about the great men of the government also here have their estates and country houses, each standing within its orchard: and so numerous are these gardens and vineyards surrounding Samarcand that a traveller who approaches the city sees only a great mountainous height of trees and the houses embowered among them remain invisible. ... The richness and abundance of this great capital and its district is such as is indeed a wonder to behold: and it is for this reason that it bears the name of Samarcand: for this name would be more exactly written Semiz-kent, two words which signify ‘Rich-Town’. ... Further this land of Samarcand is not alone rich in food stuffs but also in manufactures, such as factories of silk ... , also crapes, taffetas and the stuffs ... , which are all produced here in great numbers. (149–150)

This beautiful image was reinforced by the mention that

trade has always been fostered by Timur with the view of making his capital the noblest of cities: and during all his conquests wheresoever he came he carried off the best men of the population to people Samarcand, bringing thither together the master-craftsmen of all nations. (150)

Thanks to the wide diffusion of the Clavijo narrative after 1582, the view of the city among Europeans was marked by its report of Tamerlane’s power and riches, which became the starting-point for a myth of ‘golden Samarkand’, warmly welcoming western travellers.

This explains why, disregarding more recent predecessors (Maslova 1955), Russian orientalist Nikolai Khanykov (1822–1878) called himself the first European after Clavijo to have been able to reach Samarkand (Khanykov 1869, 263), when he approached the city in August 1841 at the head of an expedition with naturalist Alexander Lehmann (1814–1842), engineer Bogoslovskii and topographer Yakovlev. Twenty years later, Arminius Vambéry (1832–1913), a Hungarian orientalist, on arrival to Samarkand also drew a direct parallel between himself and Clavijo (Vambéry 1873, 270 [Jan 2004]).

Later, their descriptions (including the publications of Alexander Lehmann, 1852) were transformed into a literary matrix combined with a series of standardized visual documents. These productions covered the whole course of the second half of the nineteenth century in the form of journals, newspapers, and books for popular reading, from individual chapters up to individual

episodes of the narrative, and through translations into most European languages. Supplemented by excerpts from the works of Oriental authors (especially in Vambéry) and, to a lesser extent, information from classical sources, these works relied mainly on the observations of Clavijo, who was perceived as the predecessor of all Europeans in Samarkand, and formed the initial standpoint for the later selection of those architectural structures called upon to be ‘historical monuments’. This period of patrimonialization can be defined as a ‘rediscovery’ of Samarkand; it was however tarnished by a paternalistic approach, which caused a negative re-evaluation of the ‘ruins’ of the city and a preselection of ‘historical monuments’ which established some featured clichés.

Though they were all experts in Oriental languages, the members of Khanykov’s expedition (which declared itself to be a European expedition) and Vambéry (who travelled disguised as a dervish) were accompanied in Samarkand by native residents. However, the latter remained outside the frame of the basic narrative. Beyond brief mentions of their names (Khanykov 1843, 264; Vambéry 1873, 270 [Jan 2004]), these authors limit their portraits of local people to rare notes about the ‘prosaic nature of their souls’ and about their attempts, stemming from ‘ignorance’, to distort the ‘veracity of the historical narrative’ (Khanykov 1843, V, 264). The role of the inhabitants of Samarkand in the creation of a circle of monuments considered ‘worth visiting’ remains unclear, although it seems evident that they led travellers first and foremost to the greatest Timurid monuments. Further, the extremely laconic nature of the descriptions of the Central Asians who accompanied these travellers does not allow the setting up (as in Algeria) of an opposition between the ‘half-mythological’ narratives of the Samarqandis and the ‘academic’ formulations of the travellers (Blais 2007, 70–85).

The first nineteenth-century descriptions of Samarkand do not diverge from the general Western view of the Orient, perceived as belonging exclusively to the past.

The enormous ruins surrounding the walls of present-day Samarkand clearly said that its glory had passed; nonetheless, even in this moribund form, the city, from a distance, is quite alluring. Several domes, covered in azure tiles, several tall, slight minarets and the bright greenery of its gardens, sharply appearing on the cloudless blue of the sky, the quiet ruling around us, all gave this picture a sort of solemn beauty. (Khanykov 1868, 197)

However, delight with the city disappeared as the travellers came nearer. ‘The disappointment is so great and so bitter when it is a case of a city like Samarkand, to which the approaches are so difficult’ (Vambéry 1873, 270 [Jan 2004]). The gaze of the travellers recorded mainly dust, dirt, narrow, winding side-streets, and the poor condition of buildings (278 [Jan 2004]). The definition of Samarkand as a ‘ruined’ city also appears in later local sources (while it is entirely absent in Clavijo), but without the observations relating to the usual European normative ‘great past – decadent present’.¹²

This past grandeur, undermined by present decadence, provoked paternalist evaluations. According to the first travellers, the modern generation of Turkestanis were unable to create anything new. Further, because of their ‘backwardness’, the complete destruction of the last vestiges of Samarkand’s ‘ancient heritage’ was imminent:

If you have not renounced the hope of revelling in the sight of the most celebrated of the cities of Central Asia, Tamerlane’s capital, long renowned in the Orient, you will be bitterly disappointed. Samarkand was, at one time, famed for its mosques, palaces and madrasas. But now, from this epoch of past glory, there remains only a weak memory! The magnificent tiled buildings are collapsing each year because of time, earthquakes, ignorance, and the apathy of the Central Asians. The collapsed parts of the walls of ancient buildings are not restored, although bricks with magnificent tiled mosaics are scattered around right there, on the street, or in the courtyard of the madrasa, but simply smeared with clay. These grey, earthen patches unpleasantly catch the eye of everyone who is not infected with Asiatic indifference towards the splendid remains of Antiquity. (Maev 1872, 283; see also Khanykov 1843, 101; Radlov 1880, 22–23, 29)

This paternalist point of view was shared by all travellers, including scholarly orientalists. Thus, Vasilii V. Radlov (1837–1918), at that time a professor at the Barnaul Mining Institute, who was in Samarkand in 1868, at the moment of its occupation by a Russian army, and who conducted a series of scholarly studies under its protection (Radlov 1868), wrote:

Monuments of the architecture [of Samarkand] have been preserved from a better past in a half-destroyed form; they, with their ruins and bits of trash, proudly and reproachfully look out at the throng of traders surrounding them, who have not succeeded in preserving these places, illuminated by their memories, in a more respectable way. (Radlov 1880, 22–23)

The often encountered practice by religious ‘monument protectors’ of selling parts of the architectural facing was evaluated by Western travellers as a manifestation of the ‘irresponsibility’ and ‘greed’ of the native population. At the same time, despite the protests of Russian scholars, their own role as the initiators of this process remained outside the Western critique of ‘vandalism’, because their collections were ‘gathered in the name of science,’ as can be seen from Vambéry’s discussion of

a mosaic of baked earth of which the composition and colouring seemed to me of an incomparable beauty; it is so well-cemented that I had to take incredible pains to detach the stem of a flower, and I could only extract intact the central portion with three leaves folded over each other. Although the work of destruction is pursued with ardour ... the population of Samarkand will need at least two or three centuries more before they can make these monuments, miserably ravaged by the pickaxes of vandals, disappear altogether. (Vambéry 1873, 276 [Jan 2004]; for similar discussions see Ujfaly-Bourdon 1880, 121–122, 130, 180, 210, 316)

These descriptions situated Samarkand in a space outside time, transforming the Timurid period into a ‘golden age’, which was simultaneously the baseline of a ‘stagnating civilization’ and the model through which the entire region was seen. Doubting the artistic value and authenticity of the relics used by Muslim theologians, the first travellers did not tire of admiring the ‘Timurid’ monuments, which were perceived as ‘evident traces of ancient splendour’ (Vambéry 1873, 271 [Jan 2004]). All that seemed ‘beautiful’ (‘ancient’ did not figure as a basic, defining criterion), despite caveats about ‘Asiatic splendour’ (Khanykov 1843, 103), was defined as connected with the epoch of Tamerlane – ‘Timurid’ – the quintessence of which became the ‘blue mosaic’. Along with this, the adjective ‘Timurid’ acquired very blurred chronological limits. Thus, Khanykov (1843, 102), apparently repeating the *topos* of his time, writes about the ‘Timurid’ madrasas of the Registan (the most ancient of which, the madrasa of Ulughbek, was built by Tamerlane’s grandson in 1417–1420, whereas the madrasas of Shir-Dor and Tillia-Kari are properly dated to 1636 and 1646–1660). ‘Timurid’, reflecting in part local practices of relating the most significant of the surviving monuments to the name of Tamerlane, obtained the status of a cultural ideal, occupying a central place in a developing repertoire of ‘cultural values’ that was opposed to the ‘repulsive’ modern city (Kostenko 1869, 147).

Samarkand becomes a ‘Russian city’

The capture of Samarkand in May 1868 by Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman had not been agreed in advance by the War Ministry, nor by the tsar, who initially wanted the city handed back to Bukhara; but it was quickly sanctioned as a *fait accompli*, and the officers who had taken part in the campaign were rewarded (Miliutin 2006, 58–60, 72–73). The Russian press represented it as just retribution for the sufferings borne by Russian cities during the Tatar-Mongol invasion (Maev 1872, 287; Khoroshkhin 1876, 284; Sunderland 2004, 106–107), describing in an approving tone, in particular, the three-day burning of the bazaar and part of the old city arranged by the Turkestan governor-general as punishment for the ‘treacherous mutiny’ when some of the inhabitants, together with forces from Shahrисабз and Dahbid, attacked the Russian garrison in the

citadel in June 1868.¹³ Apart from this, destruction of the city did not enter into the plans of the colonial administration, in the actions of which we can identify two contradictory tendencies.¹⁴ On the one hand, in its first actions we can detect a wish to ‘modernize’ ‘old Bukhara’, inculcating ‘Russian civic-mindedness’ (*grazhdansvennost'*) and ‘a new, more rational life, free of the errors of Islam’ (Kostenko 1869, 149). The organization on the ashes of the old bazaar at the Registan of a new ‘Russian’ market was one of the examples of such a ‘civilizing approach’. Using the same rhetoric as Baron Haussmann, who ‘destroyed in the name of hygiene, of circulation, and even of aesthetics, entire swathes of the urban fabric of Paris’ (Choay 1992, 135), the new ‘Russian’ bazaar, ‘more spacious and clean’, was presented as unconditionally superior to the old one (Maev 1872, 283). Such an evaluation of the modernizing efforts of Samarkand’s new administration soon formed a *topos*:

In a few years the rich Zaravshan *okrug* took on a completely different look; it broke free from the yoke of Asiatic stagnation and began to live a new, tranquil, and happy life. Now one cannot recognize the city of Samarkand; in it, most of all, the beneficial influence of the new administration was reflected: little by little, winding alleyways are replaced by straight, broad streets and shady boulevards, the number of strong and proper buildings increases with each year, large bazaars are freed from the mould and dirt which ruled in them before. (Stremoukhov 1879)¹⁵

On the other hand, the geopolitical as well as the symbolic significance of Samarkand for East¹⁶ and West¹⁷ alike were not forgotten when tsarist administrators began to undertake measures to ‘save’ individual ‘monuments’ of Samarkand. Striving to consolidate Russia’s status as an ‘enlightened power’, and also in imitation of the practices of colonial patrimonialization of other European countries, they began restoration work *in situ*, simultaneously exporting individual works to the metropolis under the pretence of preserving ‘the greatest creations of Central Asian genius’.

The role of colonial bureaucrats in establishing a balance between ‘destroy’ and ‘preserve’ at this early stage was decisive. Their good will, according to V.V. Bartol’d (1869–1930), was the only guarantee of support of the monuments, since, in contrast to the Caucasus, in Russian Turkestan local educated society (both native and colonial) was at first insufficiently influential (Bartol’d 1977a, 529).

The discourse of ‘preserving monuments’ which were in a ‘deplorable condition’ very quickly became a component of Kaufman’s official rhetoric and initiated patrimonializing practices in Turkestan. Deeply believing in Russia’s ‘civilizing mission’ in Central Asia, Kaufman had already introduced the European model of colonial patrimonialization in Turkestan in the 1870s,¹⁸ compelling Russia’s administrative elites to accept his vision of this process as contributing to the strengthening of Russian influence in Asia.

Measures undertaken by Kaufman, and his motives

Concern about Muslim monuments did not contradict the general policy of Kaufman’s administration with respect to Islam, defined as ‘non-interference’ (*ignorirovanie*). Thus, Kaufman’s cabinet left concern about the preservation of the main mass of Islamic structures – according to Russian statistics, there were 58 madrasas and mosques in Samarkand in 1873 (Virskii 1876) – to the discretion of the *waqf* administrators (*mutawallis*). The status of *waqf* was recognized by the Russian authorities, in part because of ‘fear of rousing dissatisfaction in the fanatical part of the population’, and in part because ‘the government’s view of the future regulation of *waqf* properties has not yet been established so positively as to permit a firm and systematic restructuring of *waqfs* at once’ (Kaufman 1885, 247 [citation]; Pianciola and Sartori 2007). The Turkestan administration itself, always very constrained in its resources and not wishing to attract unnecessary criticism for ‘squandering money’ given its chronic budget deficit,¹⁹ was

able to allot only meagre funds for the maintenance of those monuments that it judged the most crucial. Kaufman tried to compensate for the expenses borne by the treasury by expropriating *waqf* properties and instituting annual deductions from *waqf* income.²⁰ From his point of view, these measures were justified.

Necessary for restricting the abuses of *mutawallis*, who appropriated for themselves personally all the *waqf* sums not spent according to their direct purpose, the measure was strictly in agreement with the spirit of *waqf* documents; and the remainder of *waqf* income entering the Treasury (about three thousand roubles), if only partially, compensated for the Treasury's expenses, borne for the necessary maintenance and restoration of the splendid ancient monuments that adorn Tamerlane's historic capital. (1885, 247)

Such a selective and small-scale policy did not trouble Russian intellectuals in Turkestan and the metropole. In accordance with the romantic ideals of the epoch that they shared, 'ruins' added 'virtue' to all ancient monuments and underscored the importance of the region's historical past (Ivanov n.d., 123).

In accordance with the symbolic ranking of Central Asian cities, the first restorations began in the fall of 1869 in Samarkand – not in Tashkent, the capital of the new Turkestan governor-generalship, where such works began only in 1885 (Nil'sen 1988, 16–17).²¹ Just as logical, from the point of view of a particular predilection for the 'Timurid', was the choice of the first monuments to be restored. As Kaufman himself wrote,

The indifference of the descendants of the pious builders of these monuments to their maintenance compelled me, at Treasury expense, to restore the famous tomb of Tamerlane – Gur-Emir [Gur-i Amir] – to make arrangements for cleaning up the square surrounding the half-destroyed Bibi-Khanym mosque, the best of the monuments of Islamic architecture in Central Asia, and for keeping clean certain madrasas of the Samarkand Registan, the main square of the native city. (1885, 248)

In accordance with its symbolic importance, the work, for which 3,019 rubles were allotted (Ivanov n.d., 123) began at the Gur-i Amir. Under the leadership of Captain Bogaevskii, in 1870 rubbish was cleared away, the floor was relaid, the walls were plastered, Tamerlane's cenotaph was once more enclosed with a wall of white marble (made with the participation of Bukharan craftsmen), and a short wall and portal were constructed around the building. The façade was not touched, because of prohibitive cost (Maev 1872, 286–287). In 1871 the work was continued by engineer Z.Z. Zhizhemskii, who united the Gur-i Amir with the citadel by means of a wide road and later, in the 1880s, laid out a small park in front of the burial vault (Nil'sen 1988, 16).

The second object of Kaufman's restorations was the Bibi-Khanym mosque, the condition of which was evaluated by all visitors to Samarkand as appalling (Khanykov 1843, 103; Khoroshkhin 1876, 235; Radlov 1880, 28–29; Dobson 1890, 218–219). The work undertaken had a very superficial character. Having cleansed the mosque of stabling and rubbish, Russian soldiers built a fence around the building, which was to divide the Bibi-Khanym from the bazaar and along which were set up 'rows of shops under awnings with columns in the Russian style' (Golos 1877, 15).

More extensive work was done on the Shah-i Zinda. After total reconstruction of the large entrance staircase, almost all the mausoleums of the complex underwent renovation of their walls and domes to one degree or another, with the use of plaster and brick both from old buildings and of the European type. Extensive clearing of rubbish led to a lowering of the ground level and the necessity of building small staircases in front of the entrance to practically every mausoleum (Nil'sen 1988, 16).

The same sort of work affected the madrasas of the Registan, the square of which was freed from bazaar stalls and enclosed with grating. As Vasilii V. Radlov (1880, 27) wrote, 'Now only, when "unbelievers" have occupied these places, will the most wonderful place in Samarkand be honoured as it should.'

Being closely connected with broader programs of urban improvement (in particular, the building of new roads), work on monuments was very far from today's concept of 'cultural heritage'. However, this period of patrimonialization can be considered the first – although rudimentary – attempt to safeguard these monuments. Completed by Russian military engineers and soldiers, with the episodic participation of Central Asian craftsmen (*ustads*), it had a superficial character, presupposing only the tidying-up of the surrounding territory, strengthening structures with the help of scaffolding or plaster, and restoration or renovation of crumbling components with the use of old building materials or European-style bricks. There was no talk whatsoever of preserving the original appearance of the building; distortion of the form of pylons or the surfaces of arches was done just as often as reinforcement, with slaked lime covering mosaic surfaces and the addition of new structures, erected with the use of European brick. Such an approach conformed to a pan-European vision defined by the ideas of French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879), who believed that 'to restore an edifice is not to maintain, repair or rebuild it, it is to re-establish it to a state of completeness which could never have existed at any given moment' (Foucart 1986, 622).

Archaeology became another area of realization of programmes of colonial patrimonialization. Afrasiab, the old settlement of the 'fire-worshippers' (Maev 1872, 282), was chosen as the first research field. This enormous plateau north of modern Samarkand lacked visible buildings of any sort on the surface, and was covered 'with trash, rocks, tall grass, and sparse trees'. However, it was perceived as the most enigmatic place in the city, able to shed light on the ancient pages of its history if scholarly excavations were carried out (Khanykov 1868, 205; Khanikov 1869, 269, 271; Maev 1872, 282). Regular discoveries of gold and silver coins at the settlement spurred the colonial administration to publish circulars forbidding 'predatory excavations', as well as the initiation of the first official archaeological work, begun soon after the construction of the Samarkand-Tashkent road in 1873 (Khoroshkhin 1876, 186; Bartol'd 1977b, 525; Gorshechina 1999).

Following a familiar script, the colonial administration also undertook a series of photographs of both 'untouched antiquities' ('ruins') and the results of its 'restoration work'. By Kaufman's order, and under the leadership of Aleksandr L. Kun (1840–1888), and with the collaboration of Nikolai V. Bogaevskii, the immense *Turkestan Album*, in four volumes, was prepared for the Moscow Polytechnic Exhibition of 1872 (*Turkestanskii al'bom*; Dikovitskaya 2007, 99–121; Gorshenina 2007, 321–337; Fitz Gibbon n.d., 9, 11–16; Sonntag 2007). Samarkand was allotted a dominant place in this project: in the two 'archaeological' volumes, consisting of 317 photographs and 40 watercolours, grouped on 154 folios, 'the antiquities of Samarkand' were absent on no more than 20 pages. Side by side with city panoramas, the Samarkand monuments, with rare exceptions those described as 'Timurid', were presented from various overviews down to the smallest details in layouts, delineation of mosaics, and photographs/watercolours of individual elements.

The goals of creating such photographs coincided with those that were the basis for the construction of the Turkestan pavilion at the Moscow Polytechnical Exhibition of 1872, built in the form of a full-size replica of Shir-Dor madrasa. The blue mosaic of this Registan madrasa was reproduced in oil paint over many square metres, but in an ideally restored form. It was reminiscent, in its realism, of the work of the official painter of the conquest of Turkestan, Vasiliy V. Vereshchagin (1842–1904), who participated in the capture of Samarkand as an ensign (*praporshchik*) (Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 2010, 74–91). Such a glossy image was supposed to underline the importance of the cultural heritage obtained by Russia on the battlefield. It also reflected the desire of the colonial administration to preserve it for its descendants, at the same time 'modernizing' other aspects of Central Asian life and, indirectly, subordinating the symbolic

meaning of Samarkand's Islamic architecture to the political programmes of the Russian Empire (Gorshenina, 2009b, 155–166).

Having defined the circle of monuments worthy of attention, the *Turkestan Album* also provided the template for their future representation. The later albums, created on the level of state orders (in particular, for various exhibitions) in the course of scholarly expeditions and private journeys, and also in a private context, reproduced the same iconographic scheme, underlining the opposition between the 'old' and the 'modern,' between 'our own' and 'the other's' (Naumkin 1992; Gorshenina 2000; Dikovitskaya 2007; Fitz Gibbon n.d.).

Postcards, the issue of which from Central Asia and Russia to Europe took on a mass character in the 1890s (Golender 2002), used clichés that were already well developed and in which the 'Timurid antiquities' of Samarkand had an important place. This stage of patrimonialization could be defined as a visual recording and demonstration document.

A note by Vsevolod V. Krestovskii (1840–1895), at that time serving as the senior bureaucrat for special orders under Kaufman, speaks of the 'naturalness' of 'Timurid' Samarkand in the mental maps of residents of the Russian Empire.

Samarkand still awaits its study and description, and these worthy tasks should belong, without a doubt, to Russian scholars. I will say only that when I saw nearby, in the light of day, all these remains of the ancient majesty of Tamerlane's capital, most of them, for example the Gur-i Amir, the Registan with its mosaic-patterned Ulugh-bek, Tilla-kari, and Shir-dar madrasas, and the Kok-tash gallery, seemed to me like old acquaintances, despite the fact that 15 years ago this same Samarkand seemed to the imagination to be something almost fantastic, improbable, as if it were enchanted for the whole civilized world because of its inaccessibility. (1887, 45)

Advertisements for tinned meat from the German Liebig's Extract of Meat Company completed the chain. Exotic Samarkand, represented in a 1907 series by the ruins of Bibi-Khanym, surrounded by people in Turkic costume, appears as 'the Orient in general', comparable with the colonies of the Western powers.

The ideological motives of Kaufman's patrimonializing policy and its goals

The lacunae of this early work in creating a 'cultural heritage' based on the monuments of Samarkand make it possible to analyse the preferences of the colonial administration. All that was not connected with 'antiquity' or with the Timurid epoch was not seen as significant. The majority of buildings and archaeological settlements remained marginal to the earliest restoration works and protective actions. Further, several buildings lost their *waqfs* during the spatial and economic colonial restructuring (in this case the 'loss' of *waqfs* led also to the loss of ancient ritual spaces which were overseen by religious figures). As a consequence, these buildings were no longer maintained by local efforts and were demolished by order of the Russian administration as extremely decayed and therefore dangerous. Veselovskii named among them 'the madrasa located opposite the entrance to the Shah-i Zinda mosque', 'the mosque at the grave of Khwaja Ahrar', and the 'gravesite of Nur al-Din Basir'²² with the mausoleum of Kutbi-Chahar-Dukhum, later demolished 'because of strategic consideration' during construction of the new citadel (Veselovskii 1904, VII; Nil'sen 1988, 17). In the same old citadel of Samarkand, where the Russian garrison and the first settlers were accommodated, later mosques were turned into military storehouses, the staff-quarters of the head of the Samarkand *okrug*, quarters for Russian troops and the chancery. The madrasa of 'Ali was turned into a prison,'²³ and the amir's palace into a hospital (Maev 1872, 284–285; Kaufman 1885, 247; Nil'sen 1988, 94).

The latter transformation did not provoke the protests of Russian intellectuals in Turkestan, and no lovers of 'antiques' nor self-appointed archaeologists saw it as vandalism (although several later examples of such protests are known, such as those of V.L. Viatkin), since this

structure did not belong to the ranks of ‘antiquities’ (Russian icons dated later than the eighteenth century were also considered uninteresting). Defined by Vambéry as a ‘vulgar building’, this amir’s palace, in the opinion of the editor of *Turkestanskie vedomosti*, Nikolai A. Maev (1835–1896), was unworthy of attention, despite the fact that residents of the city spoke of it as one of the ‘wonders of the world’ (Vambéry 1873, 272 [Jan 2004]; Maev 1872, 286). The only thing worthy of interest, from Maev’s point of view (shared in all publications about Samarkand at the time), was the Kok-tash or ‘green/blue stone’. Apparently first mentioned in native chronicles around 1716 (in the *Ubaidullah-nama* of Muhammad Amin Bukhari) in the context of enthronement, but without any connection with Tamerlane, it began from that time to be increasingly connected with his name within the framework of opposition to Bukhara and in Sufi circles. In the nineteenth century, in the travelogues of Western and Russian travellers, the Kok-Tash was transformed once and for all into the ‘legendary throne of Tamerlane’ (Sela 2007).²⁴ Strengthening its interpretation as a symbol of power in Turkestan, Kaufman not only left it untouched in the rebuilt palace but also ordered it to be surrounded with a special grating prepared by Russian soldiers (Maev 1872, 286–287). As the Ural Cossack Khoroshkhin, who accompanied him, testified, entering the amir’s palace after the capture of Samarkand, Kaufman indulged in victorious exclamations next to ‘the “green” stone from which the terrible Tamerlane had ruled half the world’ (Khoroshkhin 1876, 284–285).

Most likely, alongside general discussions about the ‘beauty’ of ‘blue’ (pseudo)-Timurid buildings and the ‘authenticity’ of the Kok-tash, the time and character of Tamerlane seemed important to the Turkestan governor-general from another point of view. Periodically deploying, in a manner advantageous for himself, an ambiguous discourse about the Turco-Aryan character of the Russians, Kaufman, judging by the restoration work he undertook, believed the character of Tamerlane to be important for Russian history. Reflecting an opinion common to many Russian settlers,²⁵ he strove in all his actions to represent the Russian Empire as the legitimate inheritor of Tamerlane’s mantle. This perception was repeated by George Dobson (1890, 30), a journalist for the *Times*, who wrote that the typical picture of Moscow, as well as all Russia, logically ‘culminated in the railway to Samarkand’. The significance of such a reading of history, at that moment, was strengthened by the fact that the memory of Tamerlane remained alive in nineteenth century Samarkand. According to Vambéry’s observations, ‘The inhabitants … speak of Tamerlane in the same terms as if the news of his death had only just arrived from Otrar’ (1873, 273 [Jan 2004]).²⁶

Particular interest in Afrasiab was based on the wish, common to all European empires (especially Britain’s), to establish a direct parallel between the imperialist colonization of the Orient and the Hellenic heritage of Alexander, permitting a ‘legitimate’ movement into the heart of Asia. A local tradition representing Samarkand as a city built by Alexander²⁷ added additional weight to such discourse (Oulebsir 2004, 20; Gorshenina 2012, 151).

The Russian soldier – that pioneer of civilization in Central Asia – with his heroic footsteps wipes off the dust that built up over the course of twenty-two centuries in the tracks of the Macedonian phalanx. The Russian general occupies the ancient, famous, and rich cities of the Orient and the name of the Russian Tsar is exalted where more than 2000 years ago resounded the name of another Alexander, who subjugated, by the strength of his genius, half of the historical world at that time. A famous rapprochement for Russian arms; a famous page in the history of its great deeds. (Anonymous *a* n.d., 153)
Carrying into the heart of Asia European influence and European civic-mindedness, we are carrying out a great mission, the first apostle of which was Alexander the Great, and expanding the borders of the civilized world. (Anonymous *b* n.d., 149)

The choice of the epochs of Alexander and Tamerlane as reference points for patrimonialization in Turkestan had obvious political significance for its authors. Alongside this, comparison of these two historical personages – as was common in local tradition – was officialized by the Russian

administration, which distinguished it from European visions of these episodes of history, beginning from Voltaire.²⁸ The choice of Samarkand as the first city for restoration work and the location of the first key objects of immortalization was directly connected with the political ambitions of the Russian Empire. According to the reckoning of government elites, such a policy of creating memorable places in Turkestan in a parallel reading of its history with Russian and ‘world histories’ was supposed to further the strengthening, for the tsarist empire, of the status of the inheritor of the two world powers that preceded it in the region: Classical and Islamic. The frequent comparison of Kaufman with Peter I in various publications of the time (Gorshenina 2009a, 2009b, 155) only strengthened the symbolic significance of these two predecessor empires in the context of the experience of Russian imperial construction, simultaneously legitimizing the scale of the Russian administration’s colonial work.

Alongside this wider motivation, the first attempts by the Russians to ‘save’ the monuments of Samarkand served certain specific goals. First, they were to underline the superiority of the ‘civilized’ Russians, who were more attentive to ‘ancient monuments’ than the ‘uneducated natives’. Second, it was presumed that such actions, engendering a feeling of gratitude for the concern displayed by the colonial administration, would make the native population more tolerant of the new power. Third, this superficial restoration work, just like natural and geological reconnaissance, was meant to transform public opinion in Saint Petersburg on the value of this region for Russia, refuting widespread prejudices about Turkestan as a poor colony. Demonstration of the material symbols of a brilliant past was seen as a guarantee of the wealth and high potential of the new lands in the future. Further, this policy, it was thought, could help the Russian Empire enter into the club of ‘great European nations’, presenting Russia as a truly ‘European country’, which successfully carried out a ‘civilizing mission’ in the heart of Asia.²⁹ Finally, it served personal goals as well. Kaufman dreamed of appearing before his contemporaries and descendants as an ‘enlightened’ politician and patron (MacKenzie 1967; Brower 2003; Gorshenina 2009b, 2011). Feeling himself obliged to answer the numerous inquiries of foreign scholars and travellers about the condition of Timurid monuments, which had become known worldwide by that time, Kaufman, having practically unrestricted freedom of action,³⁰ chose the same line of behaviour as ‘enlightened’ European representatives of colonial administration (Oulebsir 2004, 18, 95–96); ‘protection’ of the monuments of the ‘Other’ promised the strengthening of personal prestige.

The particularities of the character of the first governor-general of Turkestan played a significant role in determining the early patrimonializing policy in Central Asia, but it did not form a stable long-term strategy in relation to monuments. Thus, one of his successors, Baron Aleksandr B. Vrevskii (1834–1910; governor-general of Turkestan from 1889 to 1898) continued Kaufman’s policy of enlightened patronage, but in a severely pared-down form (for which he attracted the censure of Russian orientalists). For example, he proudly bore the title of honorary chairman of the Turkestan Circle of Amateurs of Archaeology (Lunin 1958; Laruelle 2009), for the support of which he annually disbursed 250 rubles – half of the budget of this amateur organization (Staviskii 1989, 6). Another governor-general of Turkestan (1909–1914), Aleksandr V. Samsonov (1859–1914), followed a diametrically opposed line in relation to Turkestan’s cultural monuments. He is supposed to have said of the Islamic heritage of the Registan square, during a visit to Samarkand, that ‘The quicker all of this is destroyed, the better it will be for the Russian state’ (Masson 1972, 20).

This phrase, in essence, expressed a whole direction in the higher political circles of the Russian Empire, about which Bartol’d wrote regretfully:

To study the culture of the natives [*inorodcheskaia*] and safeguard their monuments means to nullify the interests of Russian culture and the establishment of its power over all the area of the Empire. (1977a, 533)

The manifestation of this political direction was, for example, Samsonov's ban, under formal pretences, on the renovation of the eleventh- and twelfth-century mausoleums at Uzgend. As the Soviet archaeologist Boris Ya. Staviskii (1926–2006) correctly noted:

In the fate of monuments of Central Asian culture, the moods and tastes not only of the higher colonial authorities, but also their much less significant representatives, were reflected. Thus the bureaucrat who headed the Tashkent museum refused to store materials from N.P. Ostromov's (1887) excavations near Tashkent, considering them all 'trash, for the sake of which it is not worth wasting time on recording their arrivals on paper'; as a result these finds were taken away to Berlin. (1989, 6)

After Kaufman's death, Russian patrimonialization in Central Asia sharply declined. The Registan square was once more occupied by an 'Asiatic' bazaar; rules for guarding monuments were not enforced; subsidies for their maintenance were reduced; demolitions continued. Russian scholars and 'lovers of antiquity' in both the metropole and Turkestan could do nothing about the situation until the interference of a Swedish architect, Martin, who in an official appeal asked the Russian government 'in the name of science' to resume maintenance of the monuments. As often occurred in Russian history (Bartol'd 1977b, 543–545), a request from abroad received greater public resonance, spurring the Minister of Finance, Sergei Iu. Witte (1849–1915), to allocate a special budget for this goal in 1895 (Sadykova 1975, 33; Bartol'd 1977a, 530). In this context, on the local level, Governor-General Vrevskii revived, in 1897, the regulation 'Concerning measures against the malevolent damaging of monuments in Samarkand *oblast*' (Nil'sen 1988, 17).

In 1895–1896 and 1898–1899, the Imperial Archaeological Commission dispatched a special architectural commission from Saint Petersburg under the leadership of professional orientalist Nikolai I. Veselovskii (1848–1918).³¹ Though he was not a specialist in Central Asian architecture or archaeology, his competence undoubtedly exceeded the level of the military engineers of the 'first wave' of 'maintenance' of the monuments. This decision to dispatch to Turkestan a specialized scientific expedition, resting on the authority of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, had been preceded several years before by a project for the study of architectural monuments and the collection of written sources in Turkestan, prepared by Professor Aleksandr Kazem-bek (1802–1870) of Saint Petersburg University (Bartol'd 1977a, 525). The effective organization of such an expedition was quite late in comparison with the countries of the Near East, where such specialized expeditions were already working in the 1870s (Oulebsir 2004, 19). The fundamental goal of the expedition, as distinct from Kaufman's measures, was not clearing buildings of trash, nor including them in a new urbanizing context, or even, as might have been expected, the development of restoration projects, but the detailed 'academic' recording and study of monuments, reinforced by the study of native sources.³² The reason for this was that members of the commission, contemplating the seriously decayed condition of the Samarkand monuments, decided that

the further maintenance of these structures became a very difficult matter, and in part simply impossible, and to preserve a memory about them for posterity was possible only in sketches and drawings. (Viatkin 1907b, 57)

Despite this practical reasoning, this stage of patrimonialization can be considered that of the earliest scientific studies of these monuments.

In complete agreement with the cultural-historical ideal that had already been formed, Veselovskii's expedition was to concentrate on the study of Samarkand's Timurid monuments, such as the Bibi-Khanym, Gur-i Amir, and Shah-i Zinda. The goal of the work, for which money was received directly from the Tsaritsa Aleksandra Fedorovna according to the proposal of Finance Minister S. Iu. Witte, was the publication of a complete monographic description under the general name of *The Mosques of Samarkand*. This project, whose name expresses the characteristic confusion of that time over the terminology of Islamic structures, included photographs,

drawings and blueprints, with commentaries in Russian and French (Viatkin 1907b). However, only one volume, devoted to the Gur-i Amir, was luxuriously published in 1905 (Veselovskii 1905), at the same time as the measurements of Bibi-Khanym of 1895–1896 by Nikolai N. Shcherbina-Kramarenko (1863–1913) found almost no resonance, and documentation of Shah-i Zinda was left untouched for decades in the Academy of Arts.

However, independent of the general results, the expedition reinforced the status of standard ‘cultural-historical monuments’ for these Timurid buildings of Samarkand. This official acknowledgement brought with it a ‘scientific’ proposal for the restoration of Bibi-khanym, which Veselovskii, having prepared it during the course of the expedition’s work, presented for consideration after the earthquake of 5 September 1897 (Lunin 1974, 131).

The original ‘Timurid’ list of monuments of cultural heritage was expanded after the appointment of Vasilii L. Viatkin in April 1903 as custodian of the monuments of Samarkand. For the first time he plotted them on a general plan, although the first proposal about compiling such a list on an all-Turkestan scale, suggested in 1895, belongs to Sergei M. Gramenitskii (1859–1919) (Lunin 1974, 140).

Finally, this European approach to cultural monuments, brought in during the course of Russian colonization, was adopted by native elites, who participated in the realization of the Turkestani project of patrimonialization. For example, Abubekr A. Divaev (1855–1933),³³ Davletshin³⁴ and Sherali Lapin (Lapin 1896a, 51–71, 1896b, 85–95) joined Russian researchers in publishing fragments of the epigraphic decor of monuments with translations, or, as in the case of Khudaibergen Devanov (1879–1940) in Khiva, took their own photographs.

The process of ‘adaptation’ by Turkestani natives to this Euro-Russian imperial construction of cultural heritage also affected the field of archaeological and numismatic collections. Before the Russian conquest, according to Soviet Russian Iranologist Alexander A. Semenov (1873–1953), the native residents ‘had not been infected with treasure-hunting’ for antiques (1957, 145). Their traditional collections included ancient manuscripts, Persian miniatures, *girikhs* (stencils of architectural ornaments) and Chinese porcelain, but the collections of artisanal objects, traditionally manufactured by family clans and guilds, should also be mentioned, as should the treasures of the Central Asian khans.³⁵ In general, however, Turkestanis seem to have had little interest in antiques as such before the Russian conquest. During his archaeological missions, N.I. Veselovskii noted that ‘some natives (merchants or *zargars*) still continue as before to make collections in the hope of fobbing them off on one of the Russians’ (*Zapiski* 1886, 112). This critical point of view was shared by Countess Praskov’ia S. Uvarova (1840–1924), president of the Moscow’s Archaeological Society. In 1891, one year after the trip she made to Turkestan, she wrote that the native inhabitants ‘collect antiques out of curiosity, sometimes trading in them, but usually just storing them, being unable to appreciate them properly and having no real interest in them’ (1891, vol. 10, 15).

Despite these rather dismissive Russian views, a true taste for collecting developed gradually among the local elite, including members of the aristocracy and the Amir of Bukhara himself, as well as religious leaders and numerous representatives of the merchant class such as Mirza Abdullah Bukhari, Akram Palvan Askarov and Mirza Barat Mullah Kasymov (for more information on native collectors, see Chabrov 1957; Lunin 1963; Gorshenina 2004, 81–83). These collectors were often engaged in collecting antiquities for Russian museums, but also presented their own collections in exhibitions and made donations to the Russian scientific institutions. Many Turkestani collectors, who either visited Russia themselves (such as Mirza Bukhari) or were employed as correspondents by the Russian Imperial Archaeological Commission, followed the advice of Russian experts. (Akram Palvan Askarov and Mirza Bukhari were on good terms with N.I. Veselovskii.) The presence of people interested in history and archaeology in the European sense is illustrated by the fact that the Turkestan Circle of Amateurs of Archaeology (founded by Russian officials and intellectuals in 1895) included a number of Turkestani

members before 1917.³⁶ Local documents bear witness to the fact that they discussed historical problems and took part in the construction of the imperial identity of the region.

Conclusion

This analysis of the construction of the ‘cultural heritage’ of Samarkand under the aegis of the first governor-general of Turkestan, K.P. von Kaufman, made it possible to define in general terms the intentions and initial ideas of those who participated in the selection of the architectural structures that in the 1920s were classified once and for all as ‘cultural-historical monuments’. The glorification of Samarkand’s monuments, connected with its Hellenistic and Timurid periods, was intended to reinforce colonial power, which attempted to present the Russian Empire as the lawful inheritor of both previous empires.

Amalgamating the fragmentary information of ancient and Eastern authors with the observations of the first European and Russian travellers and the experience of colonial patrimonializations of other imperial powers, the colonial administration developed a ‘cultural ideal’, which was to conform to the requirements of the state and intellectual elites of Saint Petersburg, Russian intellectuals in Turkestan, and native religious and intellectual actors, in the heterogeneous space of empire. Accordingly, its character was to be all-imperial. This assumed that, alongside everything else, within the framework of the programme to ‘strengthen civic-mindedness’ (that is, loyalty in relation to the new power), native residents were to accept this imported ideal. This acceptance of an ‘other’ cultural model in Turkestan was not the exclusive product of violence but rather the result of the adaptation of this model and the participation of native elites in its construction. This process took place on the level of the traditional craftsmen, who participated in the restorations, as well as on the level of intellectuals, who published translations of architectural epigraphy or made collections of ‘antiquities’, and of collectors, who gathered and sold their objects to various museums (Gorshenina 2004, 81–83).

Later, in the Soviet period, and especially after independence, the place of ‘cultural-historical monuments’, the list of which was significantly expanded, was revisited according to officially sanctioned ethnonationalism. The political instrumentalization of the ‘historical monuments’ of Samarkand grew especially resonant in the framework of the programme of the *Jadids*, the authors of a Europeanized national project. Having become prominent Soviet leaders, they initiated the move of the capital of newly created Uzbekistan to this city between 1925 and 1931.

This process continues actively today as well, in the context of forcing all of society to recognize a single symbolic repertoire, with which – ideally – each citizen should associate himself. The concept of ‘cultural heritage’ continues to undergo modifications in the space of the cultural polyphony of modern Central Asia, where selective readings of the past, the construction of new traditions, and attempts to obtain worldwide recognition and strengthen legitimacy against the backdrop of globalization intersect, bringing with them the commercialization and Disneyfication of cultural heritage (Paskaleva 2013). The deconstruction of the mechanism of the original selection of monuments makes it possible to better understand the concept of the ‘cultural heritage’ of modern Central Asia, where the colonial heritage not only remains misunderstood, but is not even defined as such.

Translated by Ian Campbell

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Notes

1. The understanding of ‘collective memory’ was first formulated by Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945) between 1925 and 1945. See, e.g., Halbwachs (1925); Marcel and Mucchielli (1999).
2. More details on patrimonialization in a colonial situation in Central Asia will be given in my habilitation thesis, which will be defended in 2015.
3. Citations are from the French translation (Riegl 1984).
4. It is notable that the first use, by Aubin-Louis Millin (1759–1818), of the term ‘historical monuments’ can be dated to 1790 (Chastel 1986, 424).
5. See also the Memory at War project in the Department of Slavonic Studies at the University of Cambridge, UK (<http://www.memoryatwar.org/>).
6. On different readings of the term in the Francophone and Anglophone traditions, see Jadé (2009, 29–32).
7. For the most relevant examples of interactions between colonial Occidental and Russian elites and ‘exchange of colonial experience’, see the invention of the image of Russian Turkestan in the national and international exhibitions of the 1860s–1870s, especially through V.V. Vereshchagin (1842–1904) and A.P. Fedchenko (1844–1873), in Gorshenina (2009b). On the creation of the *Turkestanskii sbornik* (Turkestan Collection) by V.I. Mezhov (1830–1894), see Gorshenina (2007, 2011). On the discussions of the building of the Transcaspian Railway, see Gorshenina (2013). About these ‘exchanges’ in the Caucasus, see also Bobrovnikov 2010.
8. See the detailed description of mazars (like the complex of Shah-i Zinda, holy for its Sufi shrines), mosques, and madrasas which occupies the majority of Abu Tahir Khwaja Samarcandi’s *Samariya* (Viatkin 1898, 73–122).
9. Castilian ambassador Roy Gonzalez de Clavijo (2005 [1928], 109–111, 144, 149) stressed that Timur constantly embellished his capital to reinforce the greatness of his state, but his very detailed narrative relating to the Ak-Saray Palace (e.g., ‘We saw indeed here so many apartments and separate chambers, all of which were adorned in tile work of blue and gold with many other colors, that it would take long to describe them here, and all was so marvelously wrought that even the craftsmen of Paris, who are so noted for their skill, would hold that which is done here to be of very fine workmanship’) does not mention this inscription. Some of Timur’s chroniclers, such as Niżām-al-Din ’Alī Shāmi (d. before 814/1411–12) expressed this idea without quoting the formula. This epigraphic slogan is also absent from the detailed study of the Ak-Saray by Masson and Pugachenkova (1953). In a later work, Pugachenkova (1976, 104 [quotation]) mentions it as once existing but no longer preserved; she does not give a reference. It seems that her work is the unique support for the existence of this saying, but most authors present this statement as established fact. For a recent mention independent of Uzbek works or travel guides, see Marozzi (2006 [2004], 33).
10. *Waqf*, one of the key elements of Islamic law, relies upon various types of donations (most often land) and is inalienable property, given by its owners for religious or charitable needs to the religious community under defined conditions; income from the use of *waqf* property, free of taxes, was directed towards the material maintenance of Muslim religious institutions.
11. Thus, Khoroshkhin (1876, 193) wrote about the impossibility of learning, from the Muslims who had invited him, the precise dates of construction of the madrasas of the Registan, which were approximately dated as built 200–500 years prior. According to N. Khanykov (1843, 5), attempts to define precise dates ran up against the absence of official documents or their inaccessibility for foreigners, and also against the scarcity of information in private documents.
12. See in particular the observation of Abu Tahir Khwaja Samarcandi, author of the *Samariya*: ‘Samarkand is an ancient city, located in the fifth climate, and is at the edge of the civilized world. Hostile tribes settled around Samarkand; therefore this city is a place subject to changes, and is now in ruins. The signs which the author of *Qandiya* indicates for identification of the mazars of this city are now lost, and gravestones have disappeared from the mazars’ (Viatkin 1898, 63).
13. Cf. the description of V.V. Radlov (1880, 23), who visited Samarkand immediately after its capture by Russian troops: ‘When I entered Samarkand, the bazaar was mostly a heap of ashes and rubbish, over which stood great pillars of smoke; the streets were covered with a thick layer of clay dust, half an arshin, from destroyed buildings: with each step the horse made, a cloud of dust arose, filling our

eyes, mouths, and noses, such that it was hard to breathe or see anything. The population, particularly the learned class, after its treachery, fearing Russian revenge, had scattered, and even the intact part of the bazaar was, on market days, almost completely empty.' See also the more journalistic description of I.L. (n.d., 193), Morrison (2008, 21–24), and Azim Malikov's contribution to this issue.

14. A parallel with this situation can be seen in the history of the destruction of the Red Fort in Delhi in 1857, after which it was restored by the same British colonial administration.
15. The building of 'new European cities' immediately next to the traditional centres was one of the fundamental rules of the urbanistic program of modernization of the Russian administration in Turkestan (Beylié 1889, 120–121; Dobson 1890, 207–208; Nil'sen 1988; Sahadeo 2007, 5–8, 22–78; Morrison 2008, 21–28).
16. As an example of the strength of the symbolic significance of Samarkand, we remind the reader of an episode which was said to have preceded the capture of the city by the Russian army. The Amir of Bukhara, Sayyid Muzaffar (1819–1885, r. 1860–1885), who claimed he would prefer to lose his life rather than Samarkand, was more than certain that the Russian 'unbelievers' would never be able to occupy this city. The smallest hint of such a turn of events brought him to uncontrollable fits of rage; thus, on 1 May 1868, on the eve of the decisive battle at Chupan-Ata, the amir ordered the punishment of a dervish for foretelling the defeat of the Bukharan army, citing a dream in which the two minarets of Ulughbek's madrassas at the Registan allegedly collapsed (Bogdanov 1872, 429).
17. 'Samarkand is the Moscow of Central Asia' (Krestovskii 1887, 46).
18. According to Nabila Oulebsir (2004, 14, 19), although the first attempts to create an inventory of 'monuments' were undertaken in Algeria by the French architects Amable Ravoisié (between 1840–1842) and Charles Texier (beginning in 1846), the attempt at patrimonialization began to bring clear results only in the 1880s.
19. For the first 12 years of the Turkestan governor-generalship (1868–1879), over the course of which the main 'restoration' work was undertaken, the budget deficit was 67,123,204 roubles, with an income of 32,423,391 roubles and expenses of 99,546,595 roubles. The lion's share of the latter went to the support of the army and the maintenance of external borders (Kaufman 1885, 372, 377).
20. Already in 1868, with the occupation of the Samarkand citadel, all *waqfs* of mosques located on its territory 'went over to the Treasury's disposal, not rousing any signs of open dissatisfaction'. After this followed the sequestration of the *waqfs* of Samarkand clergy on the territory of still-independent Bukhara in favour of the amir, who was forced to renounce his own *waqfs* on the territory of Samarkand occupied by Russian troops. This act spurred Kaufman to take a decision about levying the income 'of *waqfs* abolished by Muzaffar-khan, about 10,000 rubles annually, to the Treasury'. Alongside this, the *nachal'nik* of the Zarafshan *okrug*, general Aleksandr K. Abramov (1836–86), received, in 1871, the right to 'assign to the Treasury the remains of *waqf* income of various Muslim institutions, formed as a consequence of the reduction of expenditures of such institutions for various reasons, like for example the reduction of the number of students or teachers [circa 3000 roubles]'. Also, in 1873, a question was decided with '7000 *desiatinas* of inhabited *waqf* properties', located 'on the right bank of the Amu, within the present-day Amu-Darya *otdel*', 'belonging to the Khivan institutions of the left bank'. Despite the protests of the Khivan khan, Kaufman sequestered them in the Turkestan Treasury (Kaufman 1885, 247–249).
21. 'O raskhodakh po restavrirovaniyu mecheti Gur-Emira, stoishchey nad grobnitseiu Timura, v Samar-kande, 27 aprelia 1870–7 ianvaria 1871. Kantseliariia general-gubernatora. Otdelenie khoziaistvennoe', Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Respublikni Uzbekistan/O'zbek Respublikasi Markaziy Davlat Arxiv'i, fond I-1, opis' 20, delo 2892.
22. Local residents refused to participate in the destruction of the mazar, which was blown up on the second attempt in 1880, after a general layout of the building was taken and *fotofiksatsii* (pictures) were done; Russian soldiers and Cossacks collected, at the site of the explosion, 43 cubic metres of brick suitable for new building. On the former site of the mazar, an artillery powder magazine was built; the remains of the saint were moved to a new burial vault at Afrasiab (Veselovskii 1904, VII–VIII).
23. Kaufman (1885, 247) also writes of the organization of a 'temporary prison for the natives' in one of the madrasas 'outside the city'.
24. It is tempting to imagine that this transformation also occurred to English travellers, who were well informed of the history of the Stone of Scone (or Stone of Destiny), used for the coronation of the monarchs of Scotland and, from 1296 until 1953, of the monarchs of England, Great Britain and the United Kingdom.
25. See in particular the perception of Timur's significance for Russian history in the introduction to a description of Timurid Samarkand by a certain O.S. (1873, 31), which reflected the general moods of

Turkestan society and, it would seem, the ideology of Kaufman's administration: 'Present-day Samarkand attracts the traveller's attention most of all by the heaps of ruins lying among green gardens. Looking at them, your thoughts involuntarily turn to that far time, when it was the capital of an enormous kingdom. The brightest time of its existence relates to the reign of Timur, and in its ruins even now lives the memory of the great khan, as the most renowned of its rulers and the builder of its best adornments. For us, Russians, this connection with Timur gives him a special, exclusive significance because of the importance that Timur has for our history.' I.M. Slutskii (1909), a specialist in cotton cultivation, echoes these sentiments: 'Among the torches of truth, science, and moral principles, which lit up the whole world and came from the Orient, Tamerlane – the collector of the breadbasket of knowledge, the creator of the architecture which even now astonishes us in Samarkand, the tolerant owner of half of Asia, under the aegis of whom lived peacefully and harmoniously Christians, idol-worshippers, and Muslims, the patron of trade and industry, under whom in Samarkand gathered merchants from Peking, India, Genoa, Venice, the dread of brigands and robbers, who made the roads safe in all territories under his power, the creator of the only library of its type, the patron of architects, scholars, poets, industry, and peaceful citizens'.

26. The analysis of A. Erkinov (2008), which defines literary and musical activities in Khiva of that time as a 'Timurid mannerism', also speaks of the particular veneration of the memory of Tamerlane.
27. In particular, see mentions of this in the *Baburnama* of Zahir ud-din Muhammad Babur (ca. 1529), *Ubaidullah-nama* of Muhammad Amin Bukhari (ca. 1716), and *Samariya* of Abu-Tahir Khwaja (ca. 1830) (Viatkin 1896, 81; Viatkin 1896, 65–66, 129; Veselovskii 1904, 3–4; Sela 2007, 31).
28. For Voltaire, in his *Essai sur les mœurs* (chs. 60 and 88), Alexander's 'universalism' could not be compared with the exclusively destructive potential of Chingis Khan or Tamerlane, together with which, in *Histoire de Russie*, he set up a direct parallel between Alexander and Peter I (Briant 2012, 39–40).
29. For analysis of the discussion of the applicability of Said's theory of Orientalism to the Russian colonial experience, see Gorshenina (2009a); Morrison (2009); Tolz (2011); Bornet and Gorshenina (2014).
30. See in particular the observations of the traveller, prince Joseph Lubomirski (1874, 3): 'Too distant from Saint Petersburg, and not yet sufficiently firmly annexed to the empire, Turkestan is not considered to be Russian soil by the Government of the Tsar. The Governor-General in Tashkent rules the province according to his personal ideas, or according to local needs, without taking into consideration the laws of the empire, and without any administrative or budgetary responsibility.'
31. The expedition consisted of B. Basin, I. Dzaniev, S. Dudin, P. Pokryshkin, S. Merzhnevskii, Fridolin, N. Shcherbina-Kramarenko and A. Shchusev.
32. At the very beginning of the commission's work, in 1895, Veselovskii was able to obtain the manuscript of Abu Tahir Khwaja Samarqandi's *Samariya*, concerning the city's antiquities (Veselovskii 1904, III), a Russian translation of which was published by Viatkin in 1898; the original version of the text was published in 1904, with Veselovskii's commentary.
33. He was the author of many ethnographical publications, e.g. *Turkestanskii Sbornik*, Vols. 566, 567, 568, 569.
34. To him belongs, in particular, the publication of the epigraphic documents of the mausoleum of Khwaja Ahmad Yasavi and 'the gates of Timur' (I thank B. Babajanov for this information).
35. See e.g. the description of the treasury of the Khivan khan by American journalist Januarius MacGahan (1844–?) in 1873. He reproduces exactly the image of the cave of Ali-Baba where, among numerous magnificent carpets, one came across heaps of arms ('knights' gloves with lilies', richly decorated oriental guns, 'Khorasan steel arms, Persian sabres and thick Afghani daggers in precious sheaths, decorated with precious stones'), together with the remarkable collection – 'over 1000 objects' – of Chinese and Russian porcelain stored in the harem (1874, 270–271).
36. These were Arif-Khwaja Arifkhojinov, Colonel Jura-bek, Muhyi al-din-Khwaja, Hakim Khwaja Ishanov, the brothers Sayyid Kari and Sayyid Karim Seid Azimbaev, Kutlu-Haidar Arslanov, Abdul-Qasym Khan Baktykhan, Bek-Quli Bek Jakkubekov, Allah-Quli Bek Jurabekov, A.A. Divaev, Ishan-Khwaja Mahmudkhojin, Mirza 'Abdullah Issamuhammadov, Mullah 'Alim 'Abd al-Qasymov and Mullah Mujadut Akhtajamov. See the list of members at the end of each volume of *Protokoly Turkestanskogo kruzhka liubitelei arkheologii* (1896–1917).

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