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State Museums of the Moscow Kremlin

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The Kremlin Colossus. The Ivan the Great bell tower in the urban landscape and the public perception (19th-early 20th centuries)

Tatiana Atamuratova

State Museums of the Moscow Kremlin

Abstract

The Ivan the Great Bell Tower of Kremlin in Moscow in the 19th century was one of the main sights of the city. This paper proposes to address its role in the urban image and public perception in the 19th-early 20th centuries and to use the analysis of texts of guidebooks and travel notes for this purpose. These sources allow to identify a certain synonymy of the names Moscow and Ivan the Great in the public perception. Its height and the location made it the main architectural landmark on the city skyline, a vertical city border and a kind of symbolic unit of measurement.

Il colosso del Cremlino. Il campanile di Ivan il Grande nel paesaggio urbano e la sua percezione collettiva (XIX sec.-inizi XX sec.)

Nell'Ottocento, il campanile di Ivan il Grande nel complesso del Cremlino fu uno dei principali siti di Mosca. Questo contributo si propone di studiare il suo ruolo nell'immagine della città e la sua percezione collettiva tra il XIX e gli inizi del XX secolo, utilizzando l'analisi dei testi delle guide e degli appunti di viaggio a tale scopo. Queste fonti consentono di identificare una certa sinonimia tra la città di Mosca e il nome di Ivan il Grande nel pensiero comune. La sua altezza e la sua collocazione lo hanno reso il principale punto di riferimento architettonico nel panorama urbano, un limite verticale della città e una sorta di simbolica unità di misura.

Keywords: Bell tower, Guidebooks, Urban Landscape.

Campanile, guide, paesaggio urbano.

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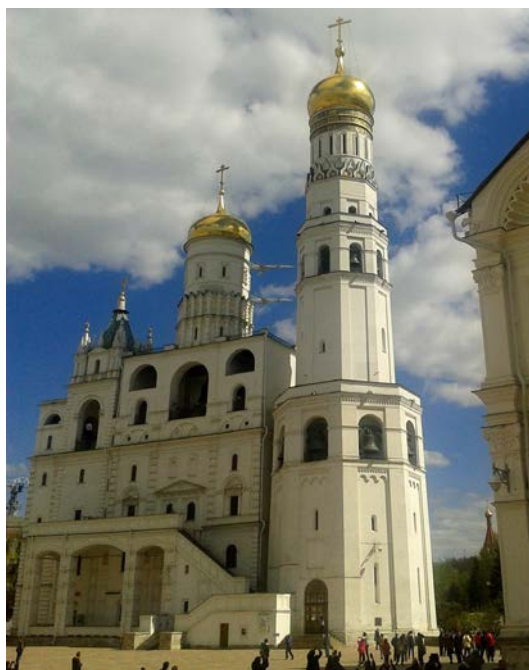
1 | Introduction

Every big city is willing to have its unique and recognizable symbol. Architectural landmarks often become such symbols. If their dominating position in an urban landscape is accompanied with historical associations, such monuments take roots in the city memory. Vulnerability of such urban landscape symbols is related not only to acts of nature, but also to political events. In the 19th century Moscow, the Ivan the Great Bell Tower of Kremlin, the oldest and the tallest bell tower, was such an urban symbol. Located in the Kremlin, the historic and political centre of the city, on Borovitsky Hill, the Ivan the Great Bell Tower buildings are a harmonious part of the Kremlin ensemble, which has evolved over several centuries.

The Bell Tower was constructed in 1505-1508 by Bon Fryazin, an Italian architect. It was a part of the huge project of Moscow Kremlin reconstruction during the last decades of the 15th and first decades of the 16th century. Italian artists invited by Russian rulers played a significant role in this project and in the development of Russian architecture of that period [Podyapolsky 2006, 261-292]. Bon Fryazin worked in Russia in the early 16th century. Presumably he was originally from Venice or belonged to the family of architects and sculptors Bons from Lombardy, worked in Venice [Lazarev 1978, 291; Podyapolsky 2006, 297, 301]. The nickname Fryazin is the old Russian name for people originally from southern Europe, mainly Italians. The bell tower built by Bon Fryazin in the Kremlin was an octagonal tower – Campanile typical for Italian Renaissance's architecture and has close analogues of composition and decor in the Venetian art [Petrov 2015; Batalov 2016]. The construction of this bell tower was continued in the early 17th century. One more arcade for bells was added, and the tower's height achieved 81

Fig. 1: The Ivan the Great Bell Tower (photo by the author).

Fig. 2: The Ivan the Great Bell Tower [Naidenov 1883, I].



meters. For a long time, it used to be the tallest building in Moscow. The main bell tower is adjoined by belfries. The first was begun in 1532 by Italian architect Petrok Maliy as the Church of the Resurrection of Christ and was completed in 1543-1552 after his departure from Moscow. Petrok or Peter Maly (Small or Young) worked in Russia in the 2nd quarter of the 16th century. Among his most famous buildings are the stone city walls of Kitai Gorod in Moscow [Podypolsky 1983]. The second belfry, the so-called Filaret's Annex, with a tented roof, was constructed in 1624 by Russian architect Bazhen Ogurtsov. In 1812, while retreating from Moscow, the Napoleon's Army blew up the Ivan the Great Bell Tower ensemble. However, the oldest and the tallest part of the bell tower survived. The Belfry and the Filaret's Annex were completely destroyed. They were restored in the original dimensions in 1814-1815.

Several historical and architectural academic studies have investigated the Ivan the Great Bell Tower ensemble. The history of this study is presented in the article by A.L. Batalov [Batalov 2015], in the fundamental publication dedicated to the Ivan the Great Bell Tower and the cathedral belfry, published by the Moscow Kremlin Museums in 2015 [*Svod pamyatnikov* 2015]. This paper proposes to address a previously unexplored topic of its role in the urban image and public perception in the 19th-early 20th centuries and to use the analysis of texts of guidebooks and travel notes for this purpose.

Guide books are an extremely interesting primary source, especially when studied in comparison. The carefully chosen texts of guide books contain summary information about the city, highlighting its main attractions. The study of travel guides is a way to understand the touristic attractiveness of certain places and their role in the city's representation. Guide books form certain images of cities and places and create a stereotype of their perception. The genre features repetitions and compilations, which result in consolidation and distribution of clichés.

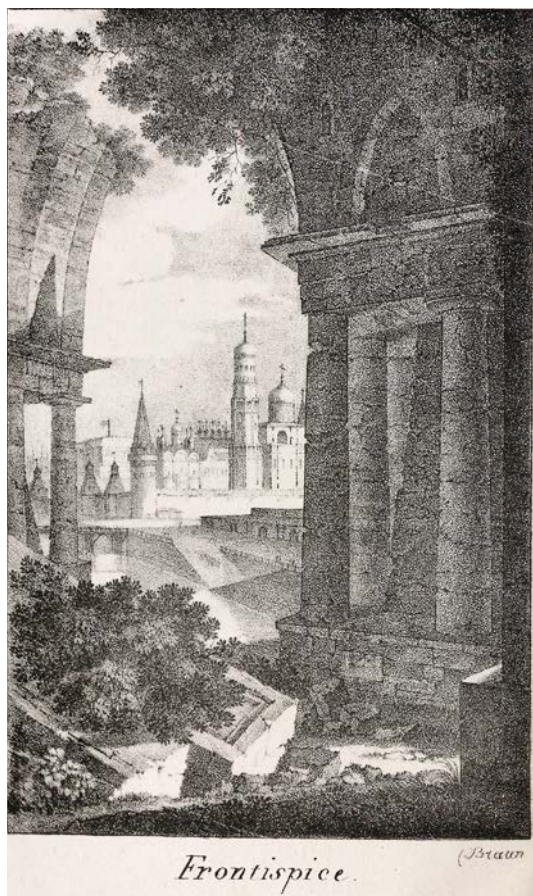


Fig. 3: Braun (engraver), view of the Kremlin with the Ivan the Great bell tower [Le Cointe de Laveau 1824, frontispiece].



Fig. 4: View of the Kremlin from the The Zamoskvoretskaya embankment [Naidenov 1884, I].

The travel notes in the description of the city often repeat the choice of guidebooks and use similar characteristics of the monuments.

The genre of guide books was actively developing during the 19th century. The growing number of travel destinations and the evolving mass tourism led to the growing popularity of guide books. This study has considered books published both in Russia and in Europe, including such major series as Murray's Handbooks, Baedeker and Guide Joanne, as well as non-serial issues. The chronological framework covers the period from the French invasion of Russia in 1812, when the bell tower was menaced by explosion, to the Russian Revolution of 1917, which radically changed the image of Moscow, the attitude to its sights and the way to represent the capital of the new Socialist state.

The city of Moscow and its sights in the 19th century were a center of attraction both for Russian and foreign travelers. For the former, it was a historic first capital city, and for the latter it was a city where the national life and ethnic character was most clearly seen. Unlike St. Petersburg, which had been the empire's capital since Peter the Great's time, Moscow was perceived as a historical and national city. At the same time, thanks to its central location, Moscow was the largest trade and industrial city of the empire. In the second half of the 19th century, Moscow

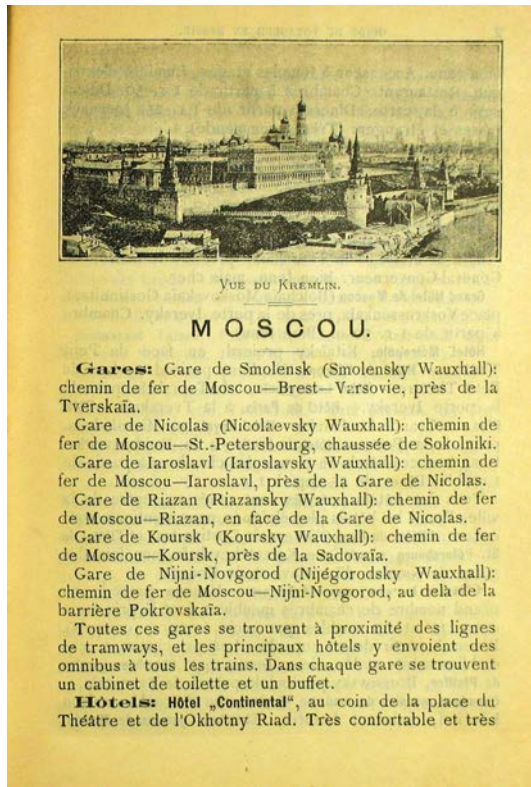


Fig. 5: Page of *Guide du voyageur en Russie* [Tastevin 1891].

also became the center of the Russian railroad network, which was an additional and irresistible reason for tourists and travelers to include it in their routes..

The first Moscow travel guides appeared at the turn of the 19th century. The genre changed considerably over the 19th century. From long descriptions of Moscow's history and landmarks, with minimal practical information for travellers, guide books evolved into brief city guides, with useful information, maps, plans, public transport itineraries etc.

Moscow changed drastically over the 19th – beginning of 20th centuries, and authors of guides and travel notes recorded these changes. From an early-19th-century city, with lots of wooden houses on narrow curved streets, which was often called a 'big village' by the authors, Moscow turned into a developed megacity by the eve of the 20th century, an industrial and financial centre, thanks to the country's economic and social development, which was particularly intensive during Emperor Alexander II's reforms. Moscow's rapid urban development in the early 20th century turned the old capital in an almost two-million city with a growing infrastructure. But for the contemporaries, it was essential that the modern city would preserve its historical identity as the 'gold-domed city', and the new signs of industrial growth would neighbour the signs of the 'good old times', symbols of Moscow's status of the first capital.

The Ivan the Great bell tower was one of the city's monuments symbolizing the historic first capital city, honorary and solemn title of the city of Moscow, which began to be used since the 18th century, after Peter the Great moved the capital of the Russian state from Moscow to St. Petersburg. It was the first among persistent Moscow associations, together with the Kremlin's walls and towers, the domes of churches and monasteries, as well as the sounds of ringing bells. The height of the city buildings in the 19th century provided an opportunity to see the Ivan the Great's golden dome from a long distance. The tower was one of the first landmarks to be seen by travellers as they were approaching Moscow [Shemyakin 1894, 99]. The audial environment in the city streets made its bells audible far away from the Kremlin. Le Cointe de Laveau in his 1824 guide book, translated into Russian by S. Glinka, wrote: 'The Ivan the Great Bell Tower dominates the city. A pious local, as he notices it from afar, takes off his hat and crosses himself' [Le Cointe de Laveau 1824, 39]. And even almost 90 years later, in the early 19th century, despite the city buildings got more storeys, a traveller who was approaching Moscow was looking for the renowned Ivan the Great dome. The landmark was still visible behind the new vertical lines of factory chimneys and the houses that were getting taller and taller. Remembering his journey to Moscow in 1911, priest N. Nikolaev mentioned that the proximity of a huge city was noticeable 50 kilometers away from Moscow: 'Factories and plants with their huge chimneys, roadways, traffic and excitement. [...] I see a huge tower far away: "It's Ivan the Great", my companion explains' [Nikolaev 1914, 571-572].

A vast majority of Moscow guide books, from long to the briefest ones, told their readers about the Kremlin bell tower. Most of the travellers coming to Moscow were willing to take a closer look at this 'Moscow Colossus', which was familiar to many of them since they were children, 'through stories and pictures' [Nikolaev 1914, 571-572]. The interest in the bell tower was largely determined by its location in the Kremlin, the city's historic, cultural, and religious centre. Due to the concentration of the historical landmarks, as well as relics of local and national importance, Kremlin was an inevitable and usually the first place to visit in Moscow. Since the political and administrative centre was located in St. Petersburg, the former residential city of the Russian tsars was associated primarily with history.



Fig. 6: View of the Kremlin with the Ivan the Great bell tower on the cover of the guidebook *Illustririvaniy putevoditel po Moskve* (Moscow 1911).

The bell tower's descriptions in guidebooks and travel notes included several key conceptual categories, which reflected the key aspects of this landmark's perception by the contemporaries. Let's take a closer look at them.

2 | The Ivan the Great bell tower as an architectural landmark

Content analysis of guide books and memoirs has revealed several words that were most often used to describe the bell tower: 'giant', 'colossus', and 'huge'.

The tower's height was believed to be its main attraction, providing it with a status of the 'Russian national pride' [Levitov 1882, 107; *Illustrirovanny putevoditel* 1914, 61-62]. Most of the guide book authors were willing not only to inform their readers on the exact height of the Ivan the Great pillar, but also the size of the dome and the height of the cross, emphasizing the importance of these vertical parts of the Kremlin Colossus.

Particular attention was paid at the cross that topped the tower. According to French writer François Ancelot, it was 'devoutly venerated' in Moscow [Ancelot 2001, 113]. François Ancelot, who came to Russia in 1826 to participate in the celebrations of Nikolai I's coronation, used de Laveau's guide, which was effectively the only Moscow guidebook in French at the moment. De Laveau informed his readers of the cross size -two sazhen and two arshins (Sazhen, an old Russian unit of length. 1 sazhen = 2.13 m. Arshin, an old Russian unit of length. 1 arshin = 0.7 m.), as well as its material (wood covered in gilded copper). Some of the travel guides also mentioned the inscription on the crossbar: 'Tsar of Glory' [Dolgorukov 1872, 122; *Illustrirovanny putevoditel* 1915, 62]. Such authors' attention to Ivan the Great's cross was no accident. After the 1812 war, its image had been mythologized in a certain way. The authors were retelling the story about Napoleon's failed attempt to take Ivan the Great's cross away to France. The details of such anecdotes varied, from the legend that Napoleon believed the cross to be made of pure gold, to ideas that someone had told the French emperor that 'when Russia loses the Ivan's cross, the country's days will be numbered' [*Moskva ili Istorichesky putevoditel* 1827-1831, P. 2, 42; *Illustrirovanny putevoditel* 1915, 62; *Moskva, ee svyatyni*, 102; Levitov 1882, 107]. In fact, Napoleon was really planning to bring the cross to Paris together with the other trophies, and ordered to remove it from the tower, but the cross fell and broke. The popularity of this story across various authors demonstrates Ivan the Great's cross importance as one of the key Moscow symbols.

The Kremlin bell tower dome also evoked a lot of associations. It was visible from a long distance and looked like a 'golden crown' [*Novy putevoditel* 1872, 19]. Ivan the Great's dome topped the multi-level and multi-coloured ensemble of Moscow domes, which was recorded by many memoir writers as one of the most vivid visual impressions from the city. 'I have never thought that such a city existed on Earth: green, red and golden domes and bell towers were everywhere. This gold and azure outshine everything I've dreamt of before' [Hamsun 1906, 12], Knut Hamsun wrote about Moscow. The numerous domes of Moscow churches and bell towers were a vivid illustration of such epithets as 'golden-domed Moscow' and 'first capital city'. Sergey Durylin, in his memoirs about pre-revolutionary Moscow, believed that the abundance of golden colour from its golden domes was what distinguished the city from the other Russian cities: 'The two highest architectural points dominating the city – Ivan the Great Bell Tower and Christ the Saviour Cathedral – were shining as 'golden crowns', joined by the third huge 'crown' in the outskirts – the golden dome of Simonov Monastery, which was even taller than Ivan the Great' [Durylin 2000, 169-170]. Such comparison of the two renowned Moscow bell towers is quite natural. Traditionally, Ivan the Great tower was used to measure building heights, in Moscow as



Колокольня Ивана Великого.

Fig. 7: The Ivan the Great Bell Tower. Photo from the guidebook *Vseobshij putevoditel i spravotchnik po Moskve i okrestnostam* (Moscow 1911).

well as in other cities. The Kremlin bell tower was perceived as a certain height standard, a psychological threshold, and the city's vertical border. And despite the fact this border was increasingly often violated as the city was growing higher and wider, the height of the Ivan the Great bell tower was remaining a symbolic unit of measure.

3 | The Ivan the Great bell tower as a historical monument

The Moscow travel guide authors often used research by renowned Russian historians, including N.M. Karamzin, I.M. Snegirev, and I.E. Zabelin. The guidebooks' stories about Moscow landmarks emphasized their historical importance, as well as their connections with important events in the Russian history and historical figures. The Ivan the Great bell tower was associated with two dramatic milestones: the Time of Troubles in the early 17th century, and the 1812 Patriotic War.

19th-century guidebooks associated the history of the bell tower's construction with Boris Godunov, based on an inscription below the top of the tower (only the second floor of the tower was completed during the reign of Boris Godunov). The guides usually emphasized that the bell tower construction was aimed at providing jobs for people flowing in Moscow during the famine and was performed by the public. Such 'public character' [Sivkov 1913, 74] of the construction provided the tower with a status of a true people's monument. Another reminder of the Time of Troubles was a legend about False Dmitry's plans to organize a catholic church 'in the rotunda' between the ground and the first floors of the tower, which was repeatedly cited in the guide books [*Moskva ili Istorichesky putevoditel* Part 2, 43-44; *Moskva i ee okrestnosti* 1882, 163. Dolgorukov 1872].

The guidebooks mentioned the not-so-distant events of the War on Napoleon even more often than the Time of Troubles. 1812 was memorialized everywhere across the Kremlin, but the bell tower remained its most vivid witness. The 1812 events contributed to the growing significance of the Kremlin bell tower. During the retreat, Napoleon attempted to blow up it as the most important monument of city. The blast destroyed the adjoined belfries, but the tower itself was extremely stable and suffered only a few cracks in the upper tier. The guide books told the readers about the retreating French army's attempt to blow up this essential Kremlin landmark, and about how the bell tower 'miraculously survived with all the bells' [*Istoricheskoe izvestie* 1848, 66], while the adjacent belfry and the Filaret's Annex were completely destroyed. The readers learned how fast Moscow was rebuilt and how the Kremlin and its bell tower were restored after the Napoleon's army was expelled. After the reconstruction of the Kremlin and Moscow, the Ivan the Great began to be perceived as a symbol of the revival of the city. The stability of the bell tower became associated with the stability of state power.

The skyward tower reminded of the overcome of the Time of Trouble and the victory in the War on Napoleon, as well as Moscow's restoration after that war. Its image was associated with the revival of the nation and was a visible embodiment of its achievements and victories.

The texts we studied interpreted the tower's name in various ways. Following the historians' opinions, the guide books authors suggested different versions, from the Church of Saint John Climacus, which was located on the ground floor of the tower (most of the authors) and the name of architect Ioann Vilie (but even Karamzin was against this version), to the name of Grand Duke Ivan Kalita, who built the first church with such dedication in the 14th century. Compilation publications tried to combine all the three versions in one: for example, an 1891 guide said that Ivan the Great bell tower was built by architect Vilie on the place where Ivan



Fig. 8: *The view of Moscow from the Ivan the Great Bell Tower* [Naidenov 1884, I].

Kalita had built the Church of Saint John Climacus. ‘Hence, the name of the bell tower’ [Vyshnegradsky 1891, 72–73], the author concluded.

Meanwhile, the public associated the name of the tower to its magnificence. ‘My friend, I visited the Ivan the Great, and it is worthy of such a name, it’s truly great! What a height, what a sound!’, wrote priest Gramenitsky to his friend Savva Tikhomirov, a synodic sacristan, ‘What a magnificent view our Mother Moscow is when you look at it from the Ivan the Great bell tower!’ [Savva 1898, 22].

4 | The Ivan the Great Bell Tower as a viewpoint

Indeed, at the turn of the 20th century, the Ivan the Great bell tower was one of the city’s most popular viewpoints, although there were other points with beautiful views (Poklonnaya Gora, Vorobiev Hills, and bell towers of several monasteries, such as Strastnoy and Simonov). Its height and location offered a view of the first capital at the range of 30 kilometers in fine weather, which made the Kremlin bell tower one of Moscow’s favorite tourist attractions [Putevoditel po Moskve 1913, 149]. A breathtaking bird’s-eye view offered an opportunity to get to know the city, connect to it emotionally, and remained in the contemporaries’ memory as the most impressive experience of Moscow.

Most of the Moscow travel guides’ authors recommended their readers to climb the Ivan the Great bell tower. They described the panorama with such epithets as ‘wonderful’, ‘magnificent’, ‘captivating’, and ‘splendid’. Many travellers in the 19th-early 20th centuries devoted some enthusiastic lines to it. Among the best-known are the words by the renowned Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov:

‘He who has never been on the top of Ivan the Great, who has never had a chance to take in the whole of our ancient capital at one glance from end to end, who has never admired its majestic panorama, stretching almost beyond the range of vision, he knows absolutely nothing about Moscow. For Moscow is not an ordinary city like thousands of others; Moscow is no silent pile of cold stones arranged symmetrically...not indeed! It has its own soul, its own life’ [Lermontov 1891, 435].

As one looked from the Ivan the Great bell tower, all the city’s downsides were unnoticeable, while its size and layout were visible. The radial-concentric plan of the Moscow streets vividly illustrated the old capital’s historical development and growth. The huge size of the historical capital, its ‘extension’ was what impressed the viewers the most. In addition to the city size, its bright and varied colours were impressive, and this distinguished Moscow from the colour range of most European cities, characterized by gray or darker colours.

Both Russian and foreign travellers were willing to get a bird’s-eye view of Moscow. Martha Wilmot from England enjoyed the view of Moscow in 1806 and remembered it as a city with monasteries and domes ‘which strike one as Asiatic beyond measure’ [Wilmot 1873, 1874-1875]. Ancelet, impressed by the view of shining spires and mosaics of multi-coloured roofs, described Moscow as a ‘gigantic amphitheater spreading out in all directions’ [Ancelet 2001, 113].

5 | Bells

As one climbed the bell tower, they could take a closer look at the Kremlin bells. The guidebook authors focused on historical importance, outstanding size and the total number of bells on the tower and belfries. Travel guides published in the first half of the 19th century included detailed descriptions of all bells and inscriptions on them. Later guides usually mentioned only the larg-

est bells on the Belfry and the Filaret's Annex: Bolshoy Uspensky weighing 4,000 poods (an old Russian unit of weight. 1 pood = 16.38 kg), Reut (2,000 poods), Voskresny (1,017 poods), and Budnichny (798 poods). Sometimes, the guides mentioned only the number of bells on various floors: 'There are six bells weighing from 200 to 450 poods on the ground floor of the tower. There are thirteen bells weighing from 40 to 200 poods on the first (middle) floor, including five *perebor* bells compiled by tones (Perebor is a type of ringing when each individual bell is struck once, from the smallest to the largest). There are ten bells weighing from 8 to 50 poods on the second floor. There are 29 bells on three floors. The total number of bells is 33' [Rudolf 1848-49, P. 1, 48], said an 1848 guide. The total number of bells mentioned in various years' guides varies from 30 to 34.

The history of the bells in 1812, which was a dramatic year for the Kremlin bell tower, was described in most detail. Most authors retold the story of the Bolshoy Uspensky bell, which was recast from the old Uspensky bell that broke during the belfry explosion and commemorated the expulsion of Napoleon's army from Russia. The Reut bell also attracted a lot of interest. It was known for its unusually thick edges, as well as for the fact that it survived after it fell in 1812, with only the bell's 'ears' broken. 'When the ears were repaired, the tone of the bell remained the same' [*Sputnik moskvicha* 1890, 36], said an 1890 guide book.

The historic bells of the Ivan the Great were represented in the guidebooks as one of the Kremlin's most significant attractions. The travellers were keen on looking at them closer and listening to their renowned sounds. Théophile Gautier was impressed by the sizes of the Kremlin bells: 'One of these bells weighs over 60,000 kilos', the writer remembered, 'while the big bell on Notre-Dame de Paris, of which Quasimodo was so proud, would look like a simple handbell as compared to this metal monster' [Gautier 1990, 245].

6 | Bell ringing

The bell tower's audial presence was one of the essential components in the life of the city. The visitors were specially coming to the Kremlin to listen to the bells ringing on the Ivan the Great tower. The Kremlin bell tower was perceived as Moscow's main bell tower, setting the pace to all the other bells ringing in the city. For example, the famous 19th-century Easter peals, which were described by many writers, started with the first bell strike on the Ivan the Great, which was eagerly awaited across the city and gave a start to the *blagovest* in all the other Moscow churches (Blagovest, an Russian orthodox bell ringing, using for notified that the divine service is about to begin in the church) [Iosif 1869, 31]. Before the 1917 revolution, there was a tradition to go to listen for Easter bells in the Kremlin: people came to the Cathedral Square from all over Moscow holding lighted candles. In the contemporaries' minds, the Moscow bells revived the image of Moscow as the first capital and historic city. These peals were one of the most impressive audial signs of the city.

The peal on the Ivan the Great bell tower also gave a start to ceremonial peals in Moscow on the days of coronation celebrations and royal visits. They were a traditional audial setting for such ceremonies. Its location in Kremlin, as well as its Moscow's biggest bells determined the Ivan the Great's special role as the city's main bell tower, which 'broadcast' the information on the key events and set the audial pace for celebrations.

Fig. 9: View of the Kremlin. Postcard. Late 19th - early 20th century.



7 | Conclusions: churches in the bell tower and the belfry

The Moscow guidebooks provided a lot of detail on the Kremlin cathedrals and churches, as well as the relics stored there. There were two churches in the Ivan the Great bell tower and the adjacent belfry: the Church of Saint John Climacus on the tower's ground floor, and the Church of Nikolai Gostunsky in the belfry. The latter stored an icon of St. Nicholas, carved on wood and venerated as one of the Kremlin's most important relics. Twice a year, processions were organized from the Uspensky Cathedral to the Nikolai Gostunsky Church [*Putevoditel po Moskve* 1913, 149; Kalugin 1877, 3; Strukov 1850, 17, 220, 225].

The analysis of the texts of guide books and memoirs of the 19th – early 20th centuries revealed that the Ivan the Great bell tower was one of Moscow's key symbols, which brought together expressive architectural forms, a meaningful name, and a lot of historical associations. In the public consciousness of that time, the concepts of 'Moscow' and 'Ivan the Great' were perceived as synonyms in a certain sense.

The changes in the Moscow's appearance that were taking place during the 19th and early 20th centuries didn't affect its main dominant – the Ivan the Great bell tower. While the city was growing higher, its audial environment, its pace and its borders were changing, but the Kremlin bell tower remained the city's main bell tower, *the* bell tower. In the era of evolving and developing tourism, the bell tower was one of the city's main attractions. It combined the functions of a historical monument, a church, and Moscow's most popular viewing point. The combination of Ivan the Great's symbolic importance and its accessibility as a historical landmark made it one of the most popular and most visited historical places in Moscow.

After the Revolution of 1917, new symbols of the socialist atheistic state replaced the Kremlin bell tower. Lots of churches and monasteries were destroyed in the city, including some in the Kremlin. Bell towers were the first to be demolished: their visibility in the urban space made them the most vulnerable. New high-rise buildings with spires, built in the 1940s-1950s, were aimed to replace the lost verticals of the bell towers. Fortunately, the Kremlin bell tower and cathedrals became part of the Kremlin Museum complex, which allowed the museum to insist on preserving not only the buildings, but also the icons stored in them as important art works. This was supported not only by ideology, but also by the fact that for several decades, the Kremlin was closed and effectively inaccessible (through 1955). The Kremlin towers, decorated with ruby stars, symbols of the Soviet state, in the 1930s, became the new symbols of the state power. Nevertheless, even today, as a lot of high-rise buildings have been built in Moscow, including the Europe's tallest skyscraper, the Ivan the Great bell tower is an integral part of some of the most memorable views of Moscow.

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