

Aldo Papone Conference 2007
**“Historic Preservation:
Who Benefits?”**

Vorontsovo
A New Life of the Old Estate



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Introduction

Our case study is dedicated to the past, present and future of a little-known estate Vorontsovo in the southwest of Moscow and based on the project “Vorontsovo – our Home» that we developed together with other students of our school.

Initially the project was focused on exploring the origins and history of the former estate located in the neighborhood. We also wanted to learn what people know and what they would like to know about its historical and natural features and if they are satisfied with what they can see and do there. This background information was of great importance for our case study. It helped us generate ideas of how the 18th century estate could be revived and transformed into a popular destination inviting for leisure, recreation and “heritage” tourism.

Working on the case we searched the pages of history and literature to feel familiarity with those who owned, built and visited the estate. We examined its landmarks - semi-ruined and declined over decades and currently under restoration. We tried to recreate the beauty, romance and tragedy of social and cultural phenomenon of ‘Russkaya Usadba’ (Russia Country Estate), destroyed by Bolsheviks and now, an age after, being brought back to life.

We compiled and analyzed facts related to restoration, preservation and popularization of Vorontsovo estate paying close attention to possible environmental, economic, social, and cultural aftermaths. We addressed a variety of factors affecting survival and future of this remarkable heritage site and discussed the pros and cons of it becoming a part of ambitious upcoming tourism project - "The Wreath of the Russian Country Estates."

We suggested ideas related to activities that may be attract for visitors and considered the possible consequences for the environment and historic significance of the estate ensemble.

Last, but not least, we had a chance to participate in the estate revival with a small, but noticeable impact on its restoration and promotion. We realized how civilized maintenance of historic heritage could influence and improve the life of the community in which we live and study.

Our case study spans a time from the distant past to the present drawing on various sources of information including library and web research, written sources including a famous novel “War and Peace” by Leo Tolstoy, numerous publications featuring debates around Moscow heritage preservation/restoration projects, individual accounts of visits to the “Vorontsovo” estate, interviewing visitors, survey findings, and our own impressions and experiences.

Our research let the historic landmark gradually unravel its secrets, its beauty and its cultural significance deserving of praise and of preservation. We certainly enjoyed this experience and appreciated the importance of Russia’s historic heritage. We learned that each of us could actually do something to protect and preserve it. We also think that with only 35 % of listed sites in Russia in satisfactory conditions we will be able to apply and share gained knowledge with other people concerned of preservation of our national treasures.



Acknowledgements

We owe thanks to many people for the realization of this project.

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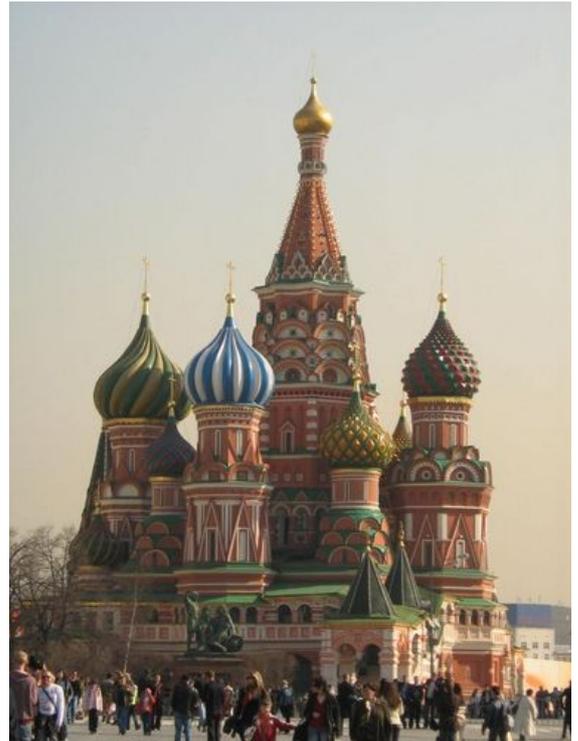
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Heritage Tourism in Russia

The very word Russia conjures up many images in the modern mind: its vastness, its huge natural wealth, and a long history shrouded in mystery. Huge tomes have been written on colorful personalities, architectural styles, and historical epochs. Perhaps, of most interest to today's tourists is Russia's long history and the amazing diversity of its historic and cultural heritage. Our ancestors have left to us priceless treasures with a behest to preserve and augment the achievements of generations of known and unknown Russians who united, developed and defended our country through ages.

Russia has much to offer the 'heritage' tourist: ancient Russian towns, places of religious antiquity, unrivalled selection of historic landmarks, wonderful



parklands and architecture masterpieces. "Heritage" tourism is tried and tested in Russia, it holds great potential for enhancing public appreciation and providing insight to the nation's historic narrative. And it is a fact that it continues to attract increasing numbers of devotees to Russia's rich heritage.



'Russkaya Usadba" – Russian Country Estate



'Russkaya Usadba' (Russian country estate) is a living structure implying the nature and architecture, great poetry and economic practicability, the splendor of capital and a quite comfort.

Russian country estates of the 18th-19th century are regarded as an outstanding realm of national heritage, an important feature of Russia's pre-revolutionary secular past and a unique phenomenon of our culture.



The Golden Age of Russian Country Estate

From the reign of Peter the Great Russia's country estates were fulcrums of economic and cultural development, oases of splendor and artistic achievements, and enclaves where newly acquired



habits competed with age-old traditions in a vast, sparsely settled and authoritarian land. The nobility owned legions of serfs whose labor created a unique world and passed it to the next generations.

Throughout the golden age of the country estate (1750-1860) its sights, sounds and realities influenced Russia's political, economic and social development and inspired much of its great art, literature and music. Russian estate life was inseparable from the bright characters, dramatic events and the names of many state figures, military leaders, scholars, architects and artists who contributed to the glory of

Russia. The estate lifestyle inspired many literary giants whose works reflected the spirit of real, albeit luxurious, but cosy and comfortable homes where owners and guests promenaded at their ease along the shaded alleys, fell in love, and mused about life's ironies over endless rounds of tea.

Russian aristocrats employed prominent native, Italian, French and English architects who planned and built grand manors, terraced parks, cascade ponds and wondrous alleys. Beauty of surrounding scenery was in harmony with marvelous architecture and provided the setting for many literary and artistic masterpieces. The grandest estates had ballrooms and formal gardens and were homes for countless treasures and artistic masterpieces. The most famous include Arkhangelskoye, ancestral home of the Yusupovs, one of whose scions killed Rasputin, Ostankino, built by Count Sheremetyev for the serf actress he loved, and Kuskovo – another Sheremetyev family seat.

On some estates their owners had talented serfs trained as craftsmen and artists, and together with guests enjoyed concerts and plays performed by serf musicians and actors. By the late 19th nineteenth century, the estate life in Russia rivaled the urban cultural life as gathering places for writers, intellectuals, and artists. The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 altered the dynamics of the estate life, but its cultural significance remained strong to the end of the old regime.



Time of Trials



The Russian estate lifestyle chronicled in the art, literature and memoirs that it produced and in which it was portrayed was destroyed after the 1917 revolution. Only fractions of its physical remains and evidences lived through the Soviet era. Several grandest palatial estates and homesteads of famous Russian writers and artists were ranked among the state-protected heritage landmarks, carefully preserved and rewarded hundreds of thousands visitors with historic and artistic riches of the past.

A great number of old aristocratic estates were severely deteriorated and long since fallen into “romantic ruins.” Some were beyond saving and lost forever. Some were losing its shape and evidence and transforming into legends. Some were cruelly disturbed by interventions, alternations and uncivilized maintenance that affected their integrity and beauty. Some were turning into parklands full of radiant calm and still distinctive but gradually missing remains of a long-gone lifestyle.

Over seven decades of neglect the world of Russia’s country estate and its evidences were clearly on the verge of vanishing despite experts’ and activists’ concerns and appeals to preserve those sites that still existed and restore those desolated and already partially lost.



Южный корпус служб

Restoration Boom

Though swept away, the concept of Russkaya usadba was deeply embedded in the consciousness of Russians. In past decade the unprecedented interest to estate life and culture has taken hold. Public attention, media publications, heritage surveys and campaigns have helped raise awareness of the endangered historic sites and landmarks and promoted the notion of stately homes, palaces, manors and surrounding sceneries as national icons. Government funding, corporate sponsorship and private capital investment targeted on saving what remained of devastated estates before it was too late accelerated the cult of estate life as well as the boom in restoration.



A variety of factors come into play in Russian country estate survival and preservation, such as: privatization, restitution, taxation, legislation, actions of government and non-government organizations, tourism, and others. Much has been done in recent years. The number of neglected estates waking up and brought back to life has been growing. The restoration boom continues and injects new life and pace into old Russian country estates preserving their historic significance and making them inviting to visitors.



Tsaritsyno Gets a Face Lift

When after decades of neglect a historic site is to be transformed into a public resource there is a danger of developing questionable restoration projects such as a recent work on the Tsaritsyno estate, an 18th century ensemble built under Catherine the Great but never finished until recently Moscow authorities decided to “complete” the ruins, using a lot of concrete and "slapdash" restoration methods.



The grand palace along with several estate buildings, grotesque-style bridges, a grotto and two ponds were “finished” and “improved” to serve as venues of concerts, art exhibitions and all kinds of festive occasions. The controversial Tsaritsino project has sparked a public debate about the appropriate goals and priorities of historic restoration. The battle line was drawn over a critical question: to what degree should a historic site be "improved" to attract and entertain visitors.

While supporters admire luxurious exteriors and interiors of the ensemble and marvel at how the ruined estate has blossomed into spectacular landmark available for public entertainment, critics express their indignation about the dubious aesthetic value of the complex, considering the palace, designed by a famous Russian architect Matvei Kazakov, to be forever buried under a “sham” replica.

Ditto for the vast Tsaritsyno park: some are rejoiced at its tidiness, whereas others say that it has been forever lost to the residents of Moscow. The controversy comes amid Russian media reports that more than 3,000 trees and 200,000 shrubs have been removed from the 60-hectare site, meaning the park has lost almost 25 percent of its trees under a program intended to turn the area into a place for public entertainment. Environmentalists say the landscaping is illegal and that the damage done to plant and animal life is irreversible. One group of people who also have been greatly upset by the changes that have occurred in Tsaritsyno park is outdoors sport enthusiasts. The park is now off limits to cyclists, roller skaters, and scooter riders; in winter the same will now apply to skiers and toboggan riders, that is, many thousands of children, among others.



Preservationists argue that Tsaritsyno project robbed the city of its precious heritage and most picturesque beauty and claim it caused financial loss, since any copy is worth only a fraction of the original. Indeed there is a strong doubt whether the work done on Tsaritsyno can actually be called restoration and whether money should be have been spent on its reconstruction while thousands of Moscow’s authentic historic buildings are in dire need of conservation and maintenance.

Heritage at Risk

Unfortunately, Tsaritsyno is not an isolated example. Constantly increasing budgets indicate that everyone involved wants to make money out of it. In many cases restoration of historic sites is focused on ways to exploit them commercially, thus goals of satisfying visitors or tenants and gaining profit supplant concerns for sensitive conversion and historic authenticity.

Although Russia has strict preservation laws many of current and upcoming restoration projects clearly fail to adhere the framework of existing norms and are fueled by incompetence, greed and corruption. Destruction of historic buildings, demolition and subsequent re-building, poor development, detriment of physical historic and cultural artifacts, replacement of authentic objects with “novodel”- replicas of the originals - is what has happened and is happening on a large scale to numerous historic landmarks affected by restoration boom.

Hope that those in charge are waking up to the necessity of preservation of heritage objects and regulation of heritage zones is encouraged by certain positive trends. Major upcoming tourism projects in Moscow are focused on rehabilitation of old estates and emphasize repair or alternation which make possible a contemporary use of historic sites while preserving those portions and features which are significant to historic, architectural, and cultural values. This is certainly very good news, however many of Moscow authentic complexes and ensembles, especially in the historic downtown, are still at risk – this time of becoming ersatz landmarks, which make a mockery of their great past.



A Modern Twist on the 'Usadba' Concept

A notion that 'usadby cult' could be interpreted as a manifestation of growing tendency of affluent Russians to affect the trappings of a bygone aristocracy is measurably justified. A notion that new Russia's aristocracy and new wealth can play a significant role in the revival and rise of the country estate is doubtful.



Russia's oligarchs, mini-oligarchs and wannabe oligarchs want to return to their 'roots', no matter that those roots rarely show any hint of true gentility. They want to create origins and restore a long-gone lifestyle. New legislation allows the government to sell historic properties, but potential buyers worry about the maze of bureaucracy, ownership revokes and fear that what happened in 1917 could happen again. Russia's 'rich and famous' consider that it is easier to build a new 'usadba' than to buy an old one and invest in its restoration.

The "21st century Russian estate" with gothic gates, coats of arms on the façades, bas-reliefs and mosaics, marble staircases and silk-draped parlours expresses imitation rather than revival, a passing fashion, rather than a lasting way of life, and, with rare exceptions, is mediocre copy of the 'Russkaya usadba'.



Vorontsovo Country Estate

Vorontsovo is one of few hundred original estates once surrounding Moscow that has survived to date. Once erected on the outskirts of Moscow, it was swallowed by a giant city in the mid of the 20th century and over years has in many ways become the most significant and symbolic landmark in the Obruchev district on the southwest of Moscow.

For several generations pleasant and vast parkland that remained of the former estate has been a favorite place for living nearby people to spend time outdoors. They came to relax, to feel the charm and magic of the old park, and to enjoy its beauty and fresh air. Few semi-ruined buildings inspired thoughts about people who inhabited them, about past life, once cut off. The old park was popular among the locals only, who may have or have not told their friends of their happy find. For all its sweetness it was never a conclusion that once Vorontsovo would become anything like a place meant to attract, amuse and entertain. However, this is exactly what is happening now.



Recollection of the Past

The name Vorontsovo first appeared in the 14th century when the original village was given to boyarin Fedor Voronets (died in 1371). The property belonged to his heirs until the late 15th century when Moscow Prince Ivan III (1439-1505) became the owner of Vorontsovo. Around 1519 his son and heir Prince Vassily III (1479-1533) seated here. Hence the very first manor that should be erected in Vorontsovo by this time was associated with Rurikovichi – the first dynasty of Moscow rulers.



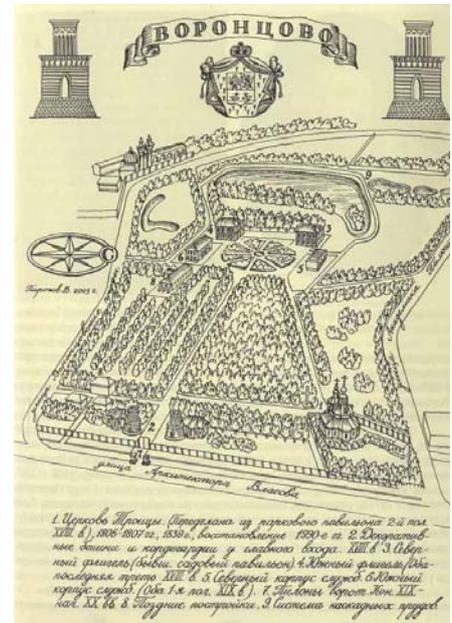
Over time Vorontsovo has lost its status of a tsar estate and declined to an ordinary village. At the beginning of the 17th century, known as the “Time of Troubles” Vorontsovo was totally destroyed by fire and desolated, as many other lands around Moscow. Under the first tsar Romanov, Mikhail Fedorovich, the former Rurikovichi’s property was given to boyarin Boris Alexandrovich Repnin (died in 1670). Since that time and until the early 19th century Vorontsovo has been home to Repnins family.

Prince Ivan Borisovich Repnin (1617-1697) who served at tsar Alexey Mikhailovich Romanov’s court built a new village on Vorontsovo land. Later on his son and heir, Prince Nikita Ivanovich Repnin (1668 - 1726), Field Marshal and a hero of the Poltava battle, built here in 1709 a suburban family residence. All buildings, including the mansion were made of wood. Rich as Croesus, Prince Petr Ivanovich Repnin (1719 - 1778) accomplished the estate ensemble through huge investments. In the middle of the 18th century Vorontsovo had an axial shape with a big square pond, regular garden and three parkways leading from the Old Kaluga Road to the manor. Vorontsovo was used exclusively for leisure and entertainment of Repnins’ family and has got its second name – Bespechnoye (The Easygoing).

Repnins were rich landowners with thousands of serfs. One of them was the most popular Russian portraitist of his time, Fedor Rokotov (1735(?)-1808). Born into serfdom on Vorontsovo estate, Rokotov was freed early in his life and in the mid-1750-s moved to St. Petersburg. In 1760 he was admitted to the recently founded Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. There he studied and in 1765 became a full member of the academy, but chose to move to Moscow where he worked as a free artist from his own studio with assistants and pupils. One of the best-known works by Rokotov is the full-length coronation portrait of Catherine the Great. It was made a year later Catherine, born Sophie Augusta Frederica, a German princess staged a successful coup, dislodging her unpopular husband Peter III and installing herself on the throne. Widely disseminated through numerous copies and engravings, Rokotov’s portrait became one of the first images affirming Catherine new status. Rokotov’s portrait gives a glimpse of the absolute monarch who popularized the French Enlightenment in Russia and yet ruled in a ruthless autocratic way.

Next owner of Vorontsovo was Prince Nikolai Vassilyevich Repnin (1734 - 1801) – a famous diplomat and military officer who served Catherine the Great by greatly increasing Russia's influence over Poland before that country was partitioned. He later distinguished himself in Russia's wars against the Turks. Under Nikolai Repnin Vorontsovo was reconstructed. A new wooden manor replaced the old one and was decorated by a well-known Italian designer Vanzini, who also designed a famous Ostankino palatial estate near Moscow. The manor and two outbuildings – on the left and on the right were built in classicist style.

In 1770-1780 the neo-gothic entrance gate ensemble with guard-posts was erected at the central parkway. A magnificent gate was almost certainly the work of Vassily Bazhenov, a famous architect of the late 18th century, and one of the founders of Russian classicism. Empress Catherine the Great regularly snubbed Bazhenov, who was believed to be a member of Mason Lodge, she frequently suspended his work and refused to use the buildings he designed featuring Masonic symbols in its decorations. Nikolai Repnin whose connections with Mason Lodge were also discovered by the Empress, was exiled to serve as general-governor of Riga and Revel. Today Bazhenov's creation – Vorontsovo gothic gate is regarded as an icon of Moscow southwest pictured on its coat of arms.



After Nikolai Repnin's death his daughter Alexandra, who married into another princely Russian family – Volkonski, inherited Vorontsovo. Her elder son – Nikolai Grigoryevich Volkonski under the Empress decree inherited a title of Prince Repnin to preserve the family name of Repnin tracing its history to the 16th century.

Alexandra Volkonskaya turned Vorontsovo into a fashionable summer holiday village, quite popular among the Moscow nobility. Most likely the rebuilding of a small park pavilion in the north of the estate into the Life-giving Trinity Church consecrated in 1807 was intended for summer lodgers' use. About this time the estate has got its third name – Vorontsovo-Troitskoye featuring the church name.

In May 1812 Princess Volkonskaya let her property for construction of a 'strategic weapon' meant to defeat Napoleon army in the Battle of Moscow. Engineer Leppich constructed a high-rise air balloon to gunfire enemy's army in Vorontsovo. This episode is mentioned in Leo Tolstoy's "War and Peace". One of main characters, Pierre Bezukhov who remained in Moscow approached by the French army, "... to distract his thoughts drove that day to the village of Vorontsovo to see the great balloon Leppich was constructing to destroy the foe, and trial balloon that was to go up next day. The balloon was not yet ready, but Pierre learned what the Emperor had written to Count Rostopchin¹:

– As soon as Leppich is ready, get together a crew of reliable and intelligent men for his car and send a courier to General Kutuzov to let him know. I have informed him of the matter. Please impress upon Leppich to be very careful where he descends for the first time, that he may not make a mistake and fall into the enemy's hands. It is essential for him to combine his movements with those of the commander in chief."

The endeavor to defend Moscow from air was not successful – the great balloon was not finished on time, however the episode affected Vorontsovo's fate. After Napoleon army entered Moscow on September 15, 1812, a great fire broke out next morning, and raged across the city with the firestorm still growing. Napoleon made a connection between secret activities in Vorontsovo and terrible fire and ordered to burn the estate to ashes.

¹ The Governor General of Moscow

The fire of Moscow in 1812 arose many opinions and arguments about the causes of its origin. The fire started when the French Army entered Moscow. At night the Russian army retreating the city had burnt depots with ammunition, food and forage – it could be the origin.

On the other hand from the very first day Moscow was announced to be a French army's trophy and was given to soldiers for plunder. And it's a fact that the soldiers not only took what they liked, but also burnt what they could not take away.

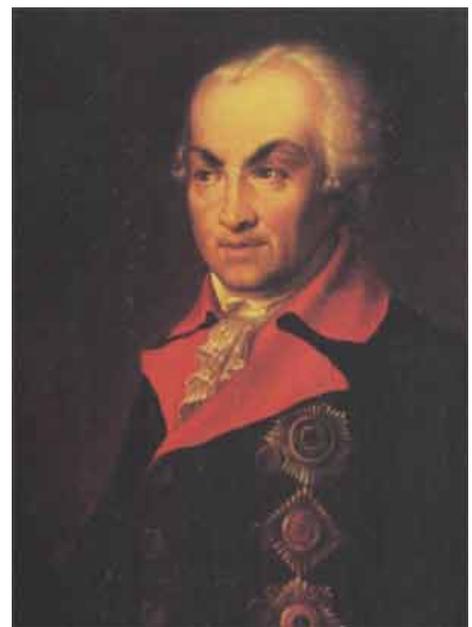
The best explanation of the tragedy so far belongs to Leo Tolstoy, who wrote in his War and Peace:

"The French attributed the Fire of Moscow au patriotisme feroce de Rostopchine, the Russians to the barbarity of the French. In reality, however, it was not, and could not be, possible to explain the burning of Moscow by making any individual, or any group of people, responsible for it... Deserted Moscow had to burn as inevitably as a heap of shavings has to burn on which sparks continually fall for several days. A town built of wood, where scarcely a day passes without conflagrations when the house owners are in residence and a police force is present, cannot help burning when its inhabitants have left it and it is occupied by soldiers who smoke pipes, make campfires of the Senate chairs in the Senate Square, and cook themselves meals twice a day...

'However tempting it might be for the French to blame Rostopchin's ferocity and for Russians to blame the scoundrel Bonaparte, or later on to place an heroic torch in the hands of their own people, it is impossible not to see that there could be no such direct cause of the fire, for Moscow had to burn as every village, factory, or house must burn which is left by its owners and in which strangers are allowed to live and cook their porridge. Moscow was burned by its inhabitants, it is true, but by those who had abandoned it and not by those who remained in it. Moscow when occupied by the enemy did not remain intact like Berlin, Vienna, and other towns, simply because its inhabitants abandoned it and did not welcome the French with bread and salt, nor bring them the keys of the city.'

The great balloon constructed in Vorontsovo to defend Moscow was commemorated on the coat of arms of Obruchev district of Moscow's southwest where Vorontsovo is located in our days. The coat of arms officially approved in July 1997 features a golden eagle holding a letter 'O' in its claws. As follows from the official description, the eagle reflects the endeavor to fire gun the French army in 1812.

34 days after capturing Moscow, on October 18, Napoleon ordered to leave it. The damage caused to Vorontsovo estate by the French army invasion was devastating. Apart from Princess Volokonskya's property, most treasures of Repnins family kept in Vorontsovo were lost forever. Among other losses were unique family archives including autographs by outstanding French philosophers Voltaire and Diderot. It is believed that Vorontsovo owner's younger son, Sergey Grigoryevich Volkonski (1788-1865), - a Prince, a Major General, and future member of the secret society of Decembrists saved few fragments of the archives moving them to his brother Nickolai Repnin's estate Yagotino. The Trinity church was destroyed. The French army also burnt down villages surrounding Vorontosovo, and Princess Volkonskaya built a new village to accommodate homeless people. The comprehensive rebuilding of the estate ensemble took place using brick in preference to the previous structures in wood, but mansion burned to smoulder by French army



had never being reconstructed again, and the estate owners and guests occupied the outbuilding since then. After reconstruction the park got landscape patterns and picturesque configuration of the cascaded ponds.

Princess Zinaida Volkonskaya (1790-1862), nee Beloselskaya-Belozerskaya married to Nikita Volkonski, spent the summer of 1825 in Vorontsovo. Princess Zinaida was known for her salon, where famous artists and writers gathered to listen to Pushkin, Baratynski and Vyazemski reading their poems. Princess Maria Volkonskaya, the wife of Decembrist Sergey Volkonsky, stayed with Zinaida Volkonskaya on her way to Siberia after her husband was arrested, exiled and sentenced to 20 years hard labor in Nerchinks mines after the rebellion against autocracy and serfdom on December 14, 1825 (hence the name) was crushed.

After Princess Alexandra Volkonskaya's death in 1834 Vorontsovo was inherited by her grandson, prince Vassili Nikolaevich Repnin (1806-1880). Part of the property belonged to his uncle famous Decembrist Sergey Volkonsky but Prince Vassily refused to return the property when Volkonsky received pardon. In 1837 Vorontsovo estate was sold to a high rank state official Sergey Mukhanov (1762-1842) whose daughters served as maids of honor at the court. In 1838 under Mukhanov the Trinity church was expanded.

In 1867 Vorontsovo got a new owner – Grigory Sushkin a merchant, known by his wealth and philanthropy. In 1890's Sushkin sold Vorontsovo to a prominent manufacturer Carl Til (1860-1903). Judging by old photos in private archives of his English scion, George Worledge, Til family used to spend summer holidays in Vorontsovo. All premises unused by family and servants were let to summer lodgers. Several lodging cottages were built on the territory of the estate, as well as a cycling ground, racetrack and a diary. Thus Vorontsovo became a popular summer holiday village once again with regular horse carriage service commuting lodgers from Moscow downtown to Vorontsovo and backwards.



Next Vorontsovo's owner in the late 19th – early 20th century was a wealthy peasant Alexey Vakhrushev, who was also a churchwarden at Trinity church. In 1911 Vakhrushev sold the estate to a lawyer Evgeny Grunbaum for 250 thousands rubles. Grunbaum enlarged the household part of the estate with barnyard, icehouse, larder, cellar, kitchen, greenhouse, office, and barracks. Besides there were 14 dwelling houses, a stable, two cart houses, three kitchens, laundry, sauna, poultry, three wooden lodges, smithy and 26 wooden sheds. Grunbaum himself occupied the south wing of the outbuilding and lent for rent all other estate structures. On the threshold of the 1917 revolution Vorontsovo – once a seat of Russian tsars and aristocratic homestead lost its gentile flavor and has become a well-organized and economically effective property.

Soviet era



1917 Revolution was devastating for Vorontsovo. Some buildings were robbed and burnt. Other were destroyed or damaged. In 1920-s when it was decided to use the site as a sovkhos (state-owned farm), it turned out that all furniture and equipment have vanished.

By 1948, when Vorontsovo estate architecture and park remains were granted a status of state-protected historic monument, only few buildings have survived and only five of nine were of historic and cultural merit. The Trinity church was destroyed. Bazhenov's gothic gate ensemble was also seriously damaged. Regular garden declined. Only 3 out of 10 cascade ponds remained. The landscape park was greatly damaged by massive trees logging back

in 1921 (up to 500 trees have been logged then by local peasants).

Since the mid 1960-s Vorontsovo park has lost its magnificent mountain-ash trees alleys and famous orchards. Changes caused by massive residential housing and development of road networks damaged the plant and animal life of Vorontsovo park.

In 1970-s the territory of the estate westwards from the ponds was built up with residential quarters (Novatorov Street), and the eastern part of the estate was turned into a city park. The estate ensemble seemed abandoned, falling to ruin again.



Restoration of the Estate Ensemble

Restoration works began in Vorontsovo years ago. In 1960-s estate park and architecture ensemble was announced a state-protected architecture and landscape heritage object. During the 1960-s-1980-s fragmented restoration dealt with some elements of the facades, but did not affect the main structures of deteriorating buildings. During 1963 many household structures of the early 20th century were demolished.

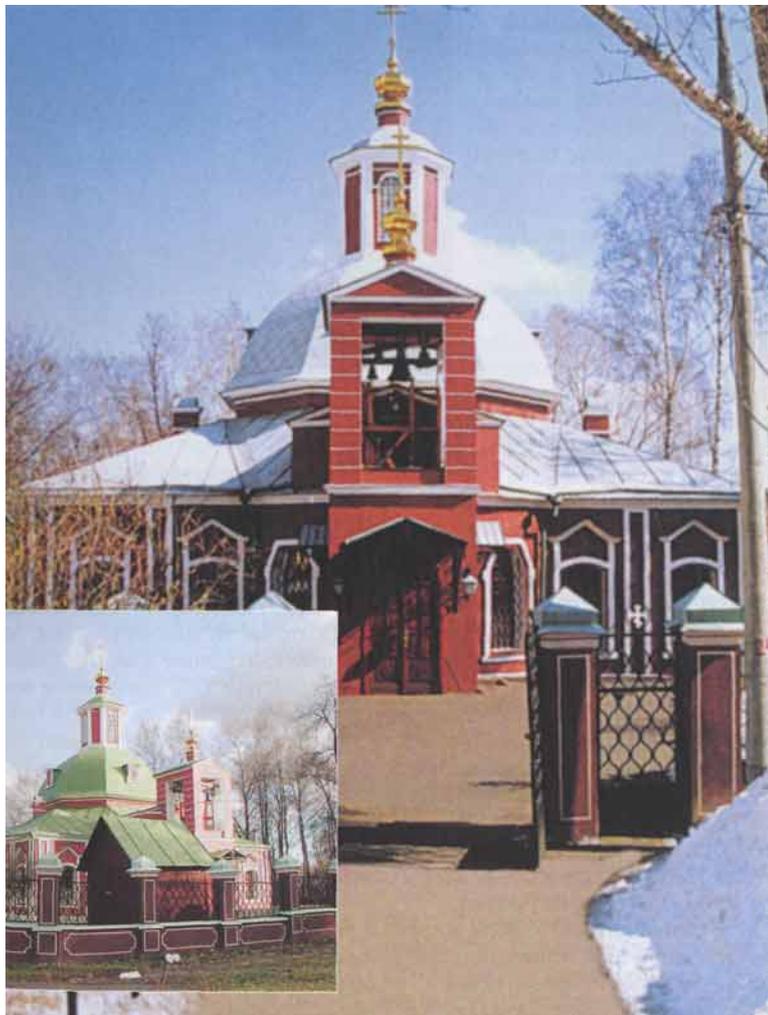
By the time of early 1990-s, despite some preservation efforts in 1970-s-1980-s, the estate ensemble was in emergency condition. Joinery of doors and windows, as well as many architectural details were missing in the result of negligent treatment and numerous reconstructions, which distorted the image of the estate original structures. The brickwork stratified and threatened to collapse, rotten wooden constructions and roofs required immediate restoration. However renovation of the Trinity church and restoration of the gate columns only took place in the early 1990-s. Because of active but unorganized commercial activities, typical for that time, Vorontsovo resembled a chaotic marketplace.

In the late 1990-s towers of the estate gate ensemble, which by that time has already been featured on the coat of arms of the Moscow southwest, were restored, as well as guardhouses. A real estate agency was placed in one of them. Like many other estates Vorontsovo was in an abysmal conditions and needed to have millions of rubles spent on it to restore it to its former glory.



The Trinity Church

The Life-Giving Trinity church of Vorontsovo is a rare example of a secular building transformed into a place of worship. It was not clear how the octahedral park pavilion built under Prince Nikolai Vassilyevich Repnin, was used before it was re-built in early 19th century. Its rotunda shape layout prompt experts to suppose some Masonic influence, which may be true, since Prince Nikolai Vassilyevich was a Mason of a high rank. In 1938 Trinity church was closed. The interior attire was destroyed, the bell tower demolished. A toy factory was placed here soon after Vorontsovo became a Moscow district. After the factory was closed in 1976, the building was unoccupied and has been declining for almost two decades. Only in the late 1990-s the Trinity church of Vorontsovo was re-created. The lost bell tower and one wall were rebuilt. None of the works related to reconstruction of the church were consistent with original construction and did not allow restoring the historical layout and retaining important exterior and interior features. The modern church building has lost its historic heritage value.



Recreation Spot for Nearby Residents

For a number of years Vorontsovo estate enjoyed the image of a favorite recreation spot for many people living nearby. Walking around the old park visitors felt its charm and magic. They saw few semi-ruined buildings, cascade ponds and alleys reminding of the life within the estate walls in 18th-19th centuries and sometimes thought about people who inhabited the place, of which they knew so little. Fresh air, long walks along the alleys, a playground with combination of swings, climbing frames and roundabouts, rather outdated, but nevertheless popular, family picnics and few outdoors activities –was all Vorontsovo could offer to people living nearby who valued it as recreation spot, but for all its sweetness never thought about it as a place meant to attract, amuse, educate and entertain.



Meanwhile the area around Vorontsovo was turning into a rapidly growing residential zone - very popular with Muscovites and in high demand since mid-1990-s. The increasing flows of people were coming to use and enjoy Vorontsovo, but brought with them problems that badly affected the old park. Erosion, pollution, crowding and noise were destroying unique natural feature of Vorontsovo - a century-old oak forest and damaging the plant and animal life of park. Preservation and environment activists were alarmed and tried to raise awareness of the endangered area and warned that without

comprehensive preservation further growth of visitors will most likely result in irreversible damage. During these years preservation activities in Vorontsovo parkland were to a great degree of a volunteer nature. Local activists were cleaning out the territory and educated visitors about conservation zones. On the threshold of Millennium Vorontsovo, like many other Russia's estates and historic sites, was in an abysmal conditions and needed to have millions of rubles spent on it to restore it to its former glory.



Paving the Way for a New Life



At the very beginning of the 21st century Moscow's southwest saw rapid changes. The emergence of residential buildings as well as of prime office properties was to proceed largely in accordance with the town-planning program for up to 2020. Gazprom built its impressive headquarters and a residential compound. RAO UES moved to southwest where it had rented the Neftyanoi Dom complex. The well-developed road network and several major avenues ensured quick access to downtown Moscow, as well as to the recently

renovated Vnukovo airport. Construction of new freeways was underway. Moscow's southwest has been developing into a busy and fashionable area. These changes could not have not affected Vorontsovo - in many ways a most significant landmark of the southwest Moscow.



A Full-Scale Restoration



A full-scale restoration of Vorontsovo estate ensemble started in compliance with the decision that has been reached by Moscow Government in 2002. Vorontsovo architectural and park ensemble should have been completely restored in order to accommodate here a preserved heritage landmark and facilities for visitors' attraction. Restoration works has been carried since 2003.

Vorontsovo park has become a beehive of activity. Restoration started with the estate gate ensemble, two outbuildings and stables –

all composed symmetrically along the central alley of aged elms and lime-trees that starts at Vorontsovo gate. All outside organizations previously accommodated at the estate buildings were removed. Half-demolished buildings were shrouded in scaffolding. Few structures have been already restored while the majority is still under restoration.

Restoration of Vorontsovo is managed with consideration of historic and cultural significance of the to stabilize and restore historic landmark in nearly original state. Re-creation of the lost details demolished over years will allow restore the original layout and render completeness of the estate ensemble.

Reconstruction plan also includes rehabilitation and landscaping of the park and cascade ponds, road pavement, putting in order grass-plots, protection of conservation zones. Large-scale restoration and landscaping of the park



Simultaneously with restoration, the estate is adjusted for the needs of visitors. Apart from its historic riches and magnificent landscape of the former estate, to attract and satisfy visitors Vorontsovo will be offering facilities and services for public entertainment including souvenir shops, cafes, visitor center and guide services, as well as a convenient drive and parking zone for those who would like to come to Vorontsovo from other Moscow districts and areas.

Before long visitors will see striking changes: restored buildings will be opened for public. Current plans include development of necessary conditions for the revival of Vorontsovo estate in its various forms – as a museum, cultural, historic, leisure and tourism centre, and a venue for arts and crafts exhibitions, trade fairs, festivals and entertainments and outdoor activities.

In the summer and autumn of 2007 Vorontsovo hosted a number of events, such as flower festival and “The Tea Garden” trade-fair, where industry company presented their products – tea, bakery, confectionary, as well as several art and crafts exhibitions, like young artists' works display. These activities were quite popular among the local residents and attracted city officials, media and numerous visitors from other Moscow areas.

“Vorontsovo – Our Home”

Our project “Vorontsovo – our Home” suggested several ways of waking up the old estate through restoration and preservation of its historic and natural value and turning the heritage site into a popular tourism and leisure facility.

The range of activities included:

- Library and web research;
- Interviews with visitors;
- Correspondence with park management and district administration;
- Consultations with Moscow Heritage and Tourism Committees;
- Cleaning up the estate territory;
- A campaign targeted on replacement of service facility (café, toilets, souvenir shops) outside the estate grounds on the adjacent territory;
- Raising awareness of the historic significance of the estate;
- Guided tours for students and their parents;
- Production of souvenirs portraying the estate lifestyle for distribution at school based trade fair among students, parents and teachers;
- Contribution of funds raised to Vorontsovo restoration through the Trinity church foundation;
- Design activities to attract and entertain visitors;
- Evaluation of possible environmental, economic, social, artistic and technological aftermaths.

Based on our research and activities we were able to design and present a project featuring the leisure and tourism opportunities of Vorontsovo estate to management and Moscow southwest district administration.



Centre of Attraction

There has been no shortage of plans and ideas, however taking into consideration the unique character of Vorontsovo estate and requirements for preservation of its long-suffering historic and natural riches we regarded as the best opportunity a family-centred leisure and entertainment complex to grow up around the heritage site features. We considered the following factors as quite favorable for realization of our idea:

- Easy access for people living nearby and, thanks to a good transport network, for visitors from other areas of Moscow;
- Enough land available for public areas apart from conserved spots to offer a variety of leisure and recreation products and services friendly to conservation and preservation needs and standards. Alternations may include providing additional parking space beyond the estate walls;
- People living nearby know about, value and use the facility and as a rule welcome changes;
- The facility meet the needs of the community – Vorontsovo is a favorite place for many residents, and the flow of visitors is growing as entertainment and leisure facilities enliven the old estate;
- Natural features and landscape make the site a good location for recreation and various outdoor activities;
- A combination of historical features, events, and characters related to the site make it a good location for education and heritage tourism.

Our project was recognized and supported both by Vorontsovo management and southwest district administration.

In the near future we are planning to expand guided tours, with students-guides in the 18-19th century costumes familiarizing visitors with interesting details and events of life within the estate walls.

Another initiative coming soon is dancing classes re-creating the spirit of candle-lit ballrooms with dancers and musicians.

One more option was designed recently for outdoor playgrounds to be redesigned to meet more today's kids' interests. We made suggestions to the park management, and as soon as the new equipment will be installed, group of students will volunteer their time as supervisors to offer a range of play options.

Our long-term plans include projects for holiday play schemes, after-school clubs, and play sessions, with activities varying from arts and crafts to sports and outdoor pursuits, supported by local authorities and provided by local volunteer groups of students.



SWOT Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rich historic heritage; - Picturesque parkland; - Huge potential for leisure and recreation activities all year round; - Easy access; - Free admission; - Facilities available for cultural and business events, festivals etc. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of visitor information and signs; - Lack of promotion (web, media, booklets); - Lack of professional guided tours; - Lack of visitor services; - Lack of modern equipment at playgrounds; - Lack of heritage experience attractions; - Lack of outdoors sports facilities; - Lack of parking space.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing amount of the neighborhood residents interested in visiting the park; - Growing demand for spaces available for conferences, workshops, trade fairs etc. - Well-developed road network and major avenues ensure quick access to downtown Moscow; - Enough land available for development of new facilities and attractions; - Gaining profit through charged admission for particular events and space rent for events. - Profit reinvested in development of heritage tourism opportunities. 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment threat due to the growing flows of visitors; - Pollution due to location in a busy area, with traffic-jammed roads; - Noise due to construction of residential and business complexes around the estate; - Visitors' satisfaction may supplant concerns for estate ensemble integrity and authenticity.

Bright Future

Recently Vorontsovo estate was inaugurated as an attraction within heritage tourism “Wreath of Russian Estates” project. It definitely means recognition of the estate historic and cultural significance and confirmation of the high quality of restoration works. Project ranked as one of the top in Moscow includes visiting 11 former tsars, aristocratic and merchant country estates on the outskirts of Moscow estates in Kolomenskoye, Kuskovo, Kuzminki, Ostankino, Vorontsovo and few others. A retro-train will take tourists along the Moscow Circular railway to the station and modern coaches will bring them in just 10 minutes to the estates grounds. Moscow circular railway built in 1908 and boasting magnificent stations, warehouses, depots, which happen to be priceless specimens of the Moscow’s Art Nouveau architectural style of 1900-s is worth seeing by itself.

The rehabilitation project proposes to preserve function of the estate. Its major goal is to turn Moscow’s ‘usadby’ to a heritage experience attractions and to restore and revive the spirit of the ‘Russkaya Usadba’ lifestyle. Visitors will be taken in a “time car” back through the centuries of estate history. All settings will be recreated in accurate details, so that visitors’ experience will give them a chance to have a unique insight into the life within estate walls through interactive festivals, cultural events, balls and masquerades, fireworks.

Special emphasis on this project is placed on moving visitors’ multifunctional facilities beyond the conservation zones of the estates to the adjacent areas. The idea to build

It is estimated that project implementation would demand 882,4 mln. rur investment with a split 586,9 mln. rur out of Moscow budget and 295,5 mln. rur through private investment.

Some trial tours have been taken. If project is to be successful and visitors’ attendance increases, all heritage sites included in the Wreath of Russian Estates” could derive substantial revenue, which could be reinvested in further rehabilitation. This would result in increased attendance yielding more income and more efforts on preservation of the estates could be accomplished.



Will success spoil Vorontsovo?

We are cautious in our forecasts.

A variety of factors will influence the old estate's fate. Several years ago Vorontsovo saw the first signs of the changes to come with a purpose to turn the ruins into a working museum and heritage centre. Soon afterwards visitors learned about a variety of new projects launched.

The sheer volume of restoration works accomplished in Vorontsovo in the past few years impresses many local people. Other people complain that that old estate has been vulgarized with leisure service facilities and is losing its unique features, or have concerns related to preservation issues related to increasing number of visitors.

With "Wreath of Estates" ambitious project coming in the near future, the new life of the old estate may yet more radically change its flow.

We rely on Vorontsovo tried ability to keep up with changing times and believe in civilized use of historic site as a leisure and entertainment facility through innovative and socially significant projects enhancing public appreciation of heritage preservation.

Yet chances are we'll lament the price it's paid for popularity. The need to intensify awareness-building efforts and ensure a greater involvement of general public and authorities at all levels in the preservation of the historic heritage is obvious. Today's visitors are offered no context or information to understand the historic and cultural significance of heritage objects. Without history input, operation of a "heritage tourism" facility may be regarded as mere entertainment. Besides the difficulties of preservation of historic sites located in the cities, surrounded by growing urban areas that should meet modern life standards should not be underestimated.



Conclusion

Our historic sites and landmarks can touch all of us through giving us a wide range of experiences. Heritage treasures reflect their time and immediate environments and can speak to us directly and offer a chance to connect with our past, present and future.

Every person, every community group and every nation could benefit from having an access to unforgettable beauty and cultural richness of the historic heritage. The present moment for opening out its treasures is very welcome.



Through participation in Aldo Papone case study we learned a lot and realized how preservation and maintenance of unique qualities of historic heritage can influence and improve the life of the community in which we live and study.

Russkaya Usad'ba (Russian Country Estate) – is an integral and fascinating part of the rich historic, cultural and artistic heritage of Russia. Built by the social elite of their day, with consideration of special relationships between house, garden and ancillary buildings and its setting in the parkland by cascade ponds with trees overlooking the waters, these historic landmarks contain some of the best architecture and landscape designs we possess.

We are proud of our modest role in the Vorontsovo estate revival and waking to a new life. We look forward to future developments in Vorontsovo estate and the increased access to heritage riches. We look forward to future developments and hope to see how past, present and future coexist in harmony. We wish the old estate a long and happy new life.

