

Pozharskii's Grave and the Search for the Russian Nation in the Nineteenth Century

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On February 23, 1852, the Russian archaeologist Aleksei Sergeevich Uvarov exhumed the body of Prince Dmitrii Mikhailovich Pozharskii, who had defeated the Poles in Moscow in 1612 and helped end the Time of Troubles stretching from the death of Fedor Ivanovich, the last direct heir of Ivan the Terrible, in 1598 to the election of the first Romanov tsar in 1613. On that winter's day, the archaeologist, who was the son of Sergei Semenovitch Uvarov, Nicholas I's minister of education, was present at the gravesite. It was located inside the massive walls of the Savior Monastery of St. Euthymius (*Spaso-Evfimiev monastery*) in Suzdal', which was also a political prison. Pozharskii's body was in an unmarked grave. Uvarov accounted for the missing grave marker by stating that, according to the monastery archive, white grave-stones showing the burial place of the Pozharskiis and Khovanskiis had been used for repairs around the monastery.¹ In addition, the grave in question was located to the right of Prince Fedor Dmitrievich, Pozharskii's son, whose grave was to the right of the graves of his own children. Uvarov argued that this was proof that the body was Pozharskii's.² In 2008, new digs carried out by the Academy of Sciences confirmed Uvarov's conclusions and found that his dig had been conducted professionally.³

Like an excavation, this article will uncover the many layers of Pozharskii's image during the nineteenth century, focusing particularly on three narratives: the dynastic Pozharskii, where the Romanovs sought to limit his role to simply that of a forerunner of the first Romanov tsar, the nationalist Pozharskii, who was reimagined almost as a saint of the nation, and the regionalist Pozharskii, who was a heroic predecessor of the *zemstvo* and the self-directed action of

1. According to the monastery historian L. Sakharov, the grave markers were removed and the tented roof in stone over the grave destroyed by Archimandrite Efrem in 1765 and 1766 while in a rage about the secularization of the monastery's lands. Leonid I. Sakharov, *Istoricheskoe opisanie Suzdal'skogo pervoklassnogo Spaso-Evfimieva monastyria* (Vladimir, 1878), 10.

2. Aleksei Sergeevich Uvarov, ed., *Sbornik melkikh trudov: Izd. ko dnu 25-letia so dnia konchiny*, vol. 4: *Materialy dlia biografii i stat' i po teoreticheskim voprosam* (Moscow, 1910), 27–28.

3. Leonid Andreevich Beliaev, *Rodovaia usypal'nitsa kniazei Pozharskikh i Khovanskikh v Spaso-Evfimievom monastyre Suzdalia: 150 let izuchenia* (Moscow, 2013).

the Russian people. Contemplation of Pozharskii led to very different answers to some of the most important questions of Russian history, such as the role of the people in government and the origin of the Romanov dynasty. Debates over Pozharskii were debates over the meaning of the Russian state itself, with different proponents arguing that it was autocratic, nationalist, or characterized by regional self-government. All these debates drew upon Pozharskii for their vision of what Russia was and should be.

Before turning to the ways in which Pozharskii was commemorated, it is crucial to face certain aspects of the historical record that were uncomfortable for these three sides. The Romanovs' commemoration of 1612 had to erase a primal act of treason by their family. Ivan Romanov, the uncle of the future tsar Michael Romanov, was part of the collaborationist Council of Seven, who were Russian boyars working closely with the occupying Polish forces in Moscow. The Council remained in the besieged Kremlin with the Poles, including Michael and Ivan Romanov. On October 26, Pozharskii allowed them to leave despite calls from the Cossacks in his militia for their deaths. When they filed out of the Kremlin they were met by derision from the Cossacks. On October 27, the Polish garrison there surrendered without conditions and Pozharskii and his men gained control of the fortress.⁴

The praiseworthy aspects of Pozharskii and Kuz'ma Minin were in contrast to, rather than in support of, the Romanovs. Unlike Ivan and Michael Romanov, Pozharskii himself had showed an inflexible resistance to the Poles, which, in addition to his military successes, was what had convinced the townsmen of Nizhnii Novgorod to ask him to accept the position of military leader of the second national militia, which was formed in Nizhnii Novgorod in 1611 with Pozharskii in charge militarily and Minin financially. Minin's financial acumen and Pozharskii's use of representatives from "the whole land" helped build a strong militia.

There were aspects to the historical record that the nationalists found awkward as well. In order to end the Swedish intervention in Novgorod, Pozharskii declared his support for Prince Karl Filip, the son of the Swedish king, Karl IX. Although this was not a problem in an early modern context, it was difficult to incorporate into a narrative about the emergence of a Russian nation. After peace was restored, Pozharskii took part in the election of the new tsar. Even though the Cossacks had insisted that Ivan Romanov leave Moscow, the Romanovs prevailed on the Cossacks to support Michael Romanov. Some historians say that Pozharskii continued to support the candidacy of Karl Filip; the Cossacks did besiege Pozharskii's house and accused him of plotting to install a foreign tsar.⁵ In the end, the support of the Cossacks, who were intent on having a tsar from Russia, meant that Michael Romanov became tsar. Pozharskii was made a boyar the day of Michael's coronation and received a series of middle-ranking positions until his death in 1642.⁶ According to

4. Chester S. L. Dunning, *Russia's First Civil War: The Time of Troubles and the Founding of the Romanov Dynasty* (University Park, Penn., 2001), 438–39.

5. *Ibid.*, 441.

6. This narrative is mainly drawn from Dunning, *Russia's First Civil War*, as well as Maureen Perrie, *Pretenders and Popular Monarchism in Early Modern Russia: The False Tsars of the Time of Troubles* (Cambridge, Eng., 1995); Sergei Fedorovich Platonov, *The*

folklore, Pozharskii was also offered the crown himself but turned it down, solidifying his place as a folk hero.⁷ While the regionalists' version of the story was less at odds with the historical record, it did downplay Pozharskii's acceptance of an autocratic ruler after the election took place.

Historians have long written about the Time of Troubles. Earlier Russian works tended to focus on politics and economics.⁸ More recent western works, such as those of Chester Dunning and Isaiah Gruber, have dealt with religion and other new topics.⁹ In Russian-language historiography, Pozharskii to some extent has been marooned in nationalist historiography, although there are also important new scholarly works as well.¹⁰ Other histories deal with the cultural aspects of how Russians reimagined the Time of Troubles as a whole during the nineteenth century.¹¹ An archaeological survey of Pozharskii's grave has also been published.¹² However, there has not yet been a work that focuses specifically on the image of Pozharskii during the nineteenth century.

The Dynastic Image of Pozharskii: Rival, not Hero

By the mid-nineteenth century, Pozharskii's image had evolved for more than 200 years. This overview does not seek to provide a full history of Pozharskii's image but rather focuses on themes that came to fruition in the nineteenth century. The Romanovs' dynastic narrative made sure that Pozharskii would not be seen as an alternate source of authority. In 1672, Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich (r. 1645–1676) ordered the creation of a manuscript on the election of Michael

Time of Troubles: A Historical Study of the Internal Crises and Social Struggle in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Muscovy, trans. John T. Alexander (Lawrence, 1970); Vasilii Osipovich Kliuchevsky, *A Course in Russian History: The Seventeenth Century* (Chicago, 1968); G. Edward Orchard, "The Election of Michael Romanov," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 67, no. 3 (July 1989): 378–402; and Ivan Zabelin, *Minin i Pozharskii* (Moscow, 1883).

7. Andrei Zorin, *By Fables Alone: Literature and State Ideology in Late-Eighteenth–Early-Nineteenth-Century Russia*, trans. Marcus C. Levitt with Nicole Monnier and Daniel Schlaflly (Boston, 2014), 178–79.

8. Russell Martin, "The Encounter between Personal Commitment and Scholarly Curiosity: A Reappreciation of Sergei Fedorovich Platonov's *Ocherki po istorii smuty*," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 15, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 837–52.

9. Dunning, *Russia's First Civil War*; Isaiah Gruber, *Orthodox Russia in Crisis: Church and Nation in the Time of Troubles* (DeKalb, 2012); Maureen Perrie, "Recent Western Historiography of the Time of Troubles in Russia," *Vestnik SPBGU. Istoriiia* 63, no. 1 (January 2018): 244–61.

10. Iurii Anatol'evich Ivanov, "Kniaz' Pozharskii: Vchera, segodnia, zavtra (Istoriograficheskii etiud)," *Pozharskii iubileinyi al'manakh: Vypusk no. 2 "K 10-letiiu iavleniia v grade Iuzhe ikony Presviatoi Bogoroditsy Neopalimaia kupina"* (2007): 5–11; A. A. Selin, "Smutnoe vremia v istoriografii poslednikh let," in A. I. Filiushkin, *Smutnoe vremia v Rossii: Konflikt i diakog kul'tur* (St. Petersburg, 2012).

11. Elena Vishlenkova, "Picturing the Russian National Past in the Early 19th Century," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 60, no. 4 (2012): 489–509; *ibid.*, *Vizual'noe narodovedenie imperii, ili "uvidet' russkogo dano ne kazhdomu"*, (Moscow, 2011); Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1995–2000); Zorin, *By Fables*.

12. Beliaev, *Rodovaia usypal'nitsa*.

Romanov.¹³ Alexis, the father of Peter the Great, sought to legitimize his power “principally in terms of dynastic descent, divine right, and devotion to *starina* (tradition or the old way of life.)”¹⁴ While the first Romanov tsar, Michael, had in his coronation ignored the break in the succession, presenting himself as the descendent of an unbroken line since St. Vladimir, Alexis developed a more elaborate historical version of Michael’s election.¹⁵ At his command, Russia’s Foreign Affairs Office (*Posol’skii Prikaz*) created a sumptuous manuscript, finished in 1673, that wove together many sources about the election and created a series of new illustrations emphasizing Alexis’s theme of the “unity of the elite.”¹⁶ One particularly telling illustration shows Pozharskii on his knees before Metropolitan Filaret, Alexis Mikhailovich’s grandfather. This was a powerful visual message that Pozharskii submitted to the choice of the Romanovs (Figure 1). This would have been especially important given the folklore about his refusal of the crown. The image also echoed the Palm Sunday procession instituted by Alexis, which suggested the Christ-like aspect of the tsar.¹⁷ Pozharskii thus brought to mind the spectators who knelt before Christ during his entry into Jerusalem.

Under Catherine the Great, Pozharskii’s image was shown, not as kneeling, but rather as reclining due to a wound; both sought to downplay any possible rivalry with the Romanovs. In 1764, Mikhail Vasilievich Lomonosov included a scene from Pozharskii’s life in a list of state-approved subjects, namely, a moment in battle against the Poles in which Pozharskii had already been wounded and pulled himself up to urge on his soldiers.¹⁸ This scene became a touchstone, as it recognized his deeds while also undercutting his status as an alternative to the Romanov dynasty. The folktales about his refusal of the throne, plus his military heroism, might have led the people to make dangerous comparisons with the Romanovs. Showing Pozharskii kneeling or reclining meant he was not standing or striding in a heroic way and thus was not easily seen as a rival to the ruling house.

On the other hand, the famous monument to Minin and Pozharskii by Ivan Martos that now stands in Red Square was fundamentally a nationalist creation that had to be tempered by the dynastic fear of Pozharskii as a rival. The first person to call for such a monument was the Nizhnii Novgorod poet Nikolai Il’inskii, whose poem addressed Minin as “you friend of the fatherland.”¹⁹ This connected Minin to the nation directly, without the intermediary presence of the dynasty, which would be a continuing problem for the Romanovs. The statue emerged from the circle around the conservative

13. A. L. Bamalov, I. A. Voromnikova, eds. *Kniga ob izbranii na prevysochaishii prestol velikogo Rossiiskogo tsarstviiia velikogo gosudaria tsaria i velikogo kniazia Mikhailla Fedorovicha, vseia Velikaiia Rossii samoderzhtsa: Iz sobraniia Muzeev Moskovskogo Kremliia: Issledovaniia, kommentarii, tekst* (Moscow, 2012), 23.

14. Cynthia Whittaker, *Russian Monarchy: Eighteenth-Century Rulers and Writers in Political Dialogue* (DeKalb, 2003), 31.

15. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, 1:32.

16. *Ibid.*, 37; Batalov, *Kniga*, 33.

17. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, 1:37.

18. Mikhail Lomonosov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 6 (Moscow, 1952), 373.

19. Valerii Shamshurin, *Minin i Pozharskii—Spasiteli Otechestva* (Moscow, 1997), 190.



Figure 1. NYPL Digital Collections, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-8323-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99> (Pervaia vstrecha mitropolita rostovskago i iaroslavskago Filareta, po puti v Moskvu iz plena, pod Mozhaiskom. Chleny pochetnoi vstrechi arkhiepiskop riazanskii i muromskii Iosif, na kolenakh kniaz' Pozharskii i kniaz' Volkonskii) in *Kniga ob izbranii na tsarstvo Velikogo Gosudaria*. (Moscow, 1856).

Russian nationalist Aleksandr Semenovich Shishkov.²⁰ In 1804, Martos, who was associated with the Academy of Arts and the Shishkov circle, presented an early model of the statue that was quite different from the final version, as Pozharskii was upright and vigorous and wore a helmet thought to be of the time of Aleksandr Nevskii.²¹ The helmet disappeared from Pozharskii's head in the second version of the statue, perhaps due to the fear that it might be seen by the peasants as a crown.²² In addition, rather than an active Pozharskii, the completed version showed him reclining, as in the Lomonosov version.

20. Zorin, *By Fables*, 157.

21. N. V. Timofeeva et al., "Issledovanie pamiatnika Mininu i Pozharskomu," *Khudozhestvennoe nasledie* 13 (1990): first page of plates; Zorin, *By Fables*, 158; Richard Wortman, "Solntsev, Olenin, and the Development of a Russian National Aesthetic," in Cynthia H. Whittaker, ed., *Visualizing Russia: Fedor Solntsev and Crafting a National Past* (Leiden, Netherlands, 2010), 17–40.

22. Zorin, *By Fables*, 178–79.

Even though Pozharskii was shown as less active than Minin, the statue still held some potentially subversive ideas. Martos began work on the statue in late 1811, and he continued to model the monument during 1812 in the otherwise-empty Academy of Arts. On February 20, 1818, Alexander I and civil and ecclesiastical leaders participated in the consecration of the monument in Red Square.²³ The inscription “To Citizen Minin and Prince Pozharskii from a grateful Russia. 1818” invoked both the old meaning of citizen as an enrolled resident of a town and the active meaning of citizenship made known by the French Revolution.²⁴ Alexander I began his reign with the hope that he could implement the Enlightenment values of his education, which helps to explain why this troubling word was allowed to remain.

Pozharskii remained a troublesome figure to Nicholas I, who was deeply influenced by Nikolai Karamzin’s narrative of Russian history. Karamzin was Nicholas’ closest advisor in the first weeks of his rule; he wrote Nicholas’ accession manifesto and the emperor had hoped to appoint him as a minister but was unable to as a result of Karamzin’s ill health.²⁵ In Karamzin’s *History of the Russian State*, Pozharskii is mentioned in the introduction as the most important example of a Russian patriot; Karamzin states that “the title ‘Russian’ holds for us a particular delight; my heart beats more strongly for Pozharskii than for Themistocles or for Scipio.”²⁶ It is telling that these classical generals fought for democratic Athens and the Roman Republic, respectively, as this suggests the continuing tension between Karamzin’s earlier cosmopolitan and his later conservative views noted by several commentators.²⁷ In the body of the text, however, Karamzin portrays Pozharskii simply as a good-hearted warrior, not as a political figure. It would be difficult to understand, based on the text alone, why the historian chose Pozharskii as the exemplar of Russian patriotism. Because the *History* ended in 1611, the election of Michael Romanov was not covered.²⁸ In “On Love for the Fatherland and National Pride” (1802), Karamzin merely commended Pozharskii for answering Minin’s call despite his wounds, while heaping praise on Minin as an example of sacrifice for the fatherland.²⁹

Nicholas’ similar preference for Minin over Pozharskii was visible in his discussion with Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin in 1828, around the time when he was reshaping Pushkin’s work into *Boris Godunov*, which one scholar says should be seen as the tsar’s version of the play rather

23. Albert J. Schmidt, *The Architecture and Planning of Classical Moscow: A Cultural History* (Philadelphia, 1989), 156–58.

24. Aleksandr Ivanov Kupriianov, *Gorodskaiia kul'tura russkoi provintsii: Konets XVIII—pervaia polovina XIX veka* (Moscow, 2007), 384.

25. W. Bruce Lincoln, *Nicholas I: Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russias* (Bloomington, 1989), 86–87.

26. Gary M. Hamburg, *Russia's Path toward Enlightenment: Faith, Politics, and Reason, 1500–1801* (New Haven, 2016), 718.

27. Hamburg, *Russia's Path*; Derek Offord, “Nation-Building and Nationalism in Karamzin’s *History of the Russian State*,” *Journal of Russian History and Historiography* 3 (January 2010): 1–50.

28. Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin, *Istoriia gosudarstva Rossiiskogo*, vol. 12.

29. Nikolai Karamzin, “O liubvi k otechestvu i narodnoi gordosti,” http://az.lib.ru/k/karamzin_n_m/text_0330.shtml (accessed March 31, 2023).

than Pushkin's.³⁰ Pushkin's chronicler Aleksandra Osipovna Smirnova-Rosset noted how Nicholas I had told Pushkin sometime around 1828 that Karamzin was wrong to approve of Godunov's strengthening of serfdom, as the emperor felt that this harmed Russian agriculture. Nicholas considered that "the English squire is useful but here he has been replaced by the third estate. His Majesty also spoke of the former Russian bourgeoisie (*rusaskaia burzhuziia*). He is very much delighted with Minin, much more so than with Pozharskii, who was more a fire-eater (*voiaka*) than anything else."³¹ Nicholas was influenced by Adam Smith and added his own economic interpretation in addition to Karamzin's preference for Minin over Pozharskii, presenting Minin as part of a more economically productive group than Pozharskii.³² Nicholas oversaw what has been called the era of small reforms, during which time he sought to stimulate the Russian economy by drawing upon merchants and townspeople like Minin.³³

From Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich to Emperor Nicholas I, the Romanovs attempted to keep Pozharskii at a distance. Rather than a hero, he was a rival who had to be commemorated, but only very carefully. He could be shown as a sort of John the Baptist figure for the first Romanov tsar, but he could not be allowed to be shown as a robust hero capable of independent action. While the dynastic view of Pozharskii was skeptical, the national approach was rapturous.

Finding Nationality: Writing Pozharskii into the Russian Orthodox Nation

Pozharskii was central to new understandings of Russian nationality (*narodnost'*). Pozharskii, for his role in defending Orthodoxy and nationality from the Poles, became a symbol of the Russian nation. First, we will trace the emergence of the concept of a nationality anchored by Orthodoxy and then show how it reshaped the literary image of Pozharskii to be both national and sacred. Problematically for the Romanovs, writers often drew connections between Orthodoxy and nationality, bypassing the dynasty.

Because "nationality" as a term emerged in battle with Poland, Orthodoxy was always a central part of its meaning. While the term *narod* (the people) had come to designate a sense of ethnicity by the late seventeenth century, it was only in 1819 that the new term "nationality" was coined.³⁴ In November 1819, Prince Petr Andreevich Viazemskii wrote to his friend Aleksandr

30. Chester Dunning, "The Tsar's Red Pencil: Nicholas I and Censorship of Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*," *Slavic and East European Journal* 54, no. 2 (June 2010): 238–54.

31. Kirill Koval'dzhi, ed., *Zapiski A. O. Smirnovoi, urozhdennoi Rosset s 1825 po 1845 gg.* (Moscow, 1999), 95.

32. On Adam Smith's influence on Nicholas, see Susan Smith-Peter, *Imagining Russian Regions: Subnational Identity and Civil Society in Nineteenth Century Russia* (Leiden, Netherlands, 2018).

33. Smith-Peter, *Imagining Russian Regions*.

34. Nathaniel Knight, "Ethnicity, Nationality and the Masses: *Narodnost'* and Modernity in Imperial Russia," in David Hoffmann and Yanni Kotsonis, eds., *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge, Practices* (New York, 2000), 41–64, here 43.

Ivanovich Turgenev, praising his own verses as having a Russian flavor that was unusual: “In my opinion these verses are my own monstrosity. There is a Russian tint there that is lacking in almost all of our verse. . . it’s not. . . a matter of elegance of movement, but of the *narodnost’* of certain of our native gestures. Why not translate ‘nationalité’ as *narodnost’*? The Poles talk about *narodowość!*”³⁵ Viazemskii spent several years in Poland around this time and encouraged Polish national aspirations, even writing in his diary that he often supported Poles over Russians.³⁶

Viazemskii’s proposal saw a developing Polish nationality, not as a threat, but as a way to stimulate the parallel growth of a conscious Russian nation as strong as Poland’s. Just a month before coining *narodnost’*, he was present when his brother-in-law, Karamzin, wrote his virulently anti-Polish “Opinion on Poland,” which presented Poland as the essential enemy of the Russian tsar and state and argued against the restoration of Poland to its historical borders.³⁷ Viazemskii saw the Poles as an inspiration, not a danger. More broadly, in the first decades of the use of “nationality,” it was a way for Russians and Poles to work together to develop their sense of nationhood.³⁸

In 1832, Minister of Education Sergei Uvarov formulated the triad “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality” as a way to guide the goals of Russian education. Before going forward, it is useful to confront the idea of “Official Nationality,” which was coined by the literary historian Aleksandr Nikolaevich Pypin in 1875. For Pypin, the term united all those whose views of *narodnost’* he saw as official: Nicholas I, Uvarov, and the conservative historian Mikhail Petrovich Pogodin, among others, whom he contrasted to the more progressive public.³⁹ This framing has influenced scholarship on the topic, including the work of Nicholas Riasanovsky, who kept much of Pypin’s approach, but did note a difference between dynastic nationalists such as Nicholas I and nationalists like Pogodin.⁴⁰ Cynthia Whittaker provided a different take on the topic in her intellectual biography of Uvarov, which is supported by a group of Russian historians; they all see Uvarov as an intellectual with his own views, separate from those of the emperor and Pogodin, and influenced by European thought.⁴¹ Maksim Shevchenko and Alexei Miller both argue

35. *Ibid.*, 50.

36. J. Laurence Black, “Nicholas Karamzin’s ‘Opinion’ on Poland: 1819,” *The International History Review* 3, no. 1 (January 1981): 1-19, here 12.

37. *Ibid.*, 1.

38. David B. Saunders, “Historians and Concepts of Nationality in Early Nineteenth-Century Russia,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 60, no. 1 (January 1982): 44–62, here 61.

39. Maksim Mikhailovich Shevchenko, “Poniatie ‘teoriiia ofitsial’noi narodnosti’ i izuchenie vnutrennei politiki imperatora Nikolaia I,” *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta*. 8. *Istoriia*, no. 4 (2002): 89–104.

40. Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825–1855* (Berkeley, 1959).

41. Cynthia Whittaker, *The Origins of Modern Russian Education: An Intellectual Biography of Count Sergei Uvarov, 1786–1855* (DeKalb, 1984); Alexei Miller, *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism: Essays in the Methodology of Historical Research* (Budapest, 2008), 139–59; Shevchenko, “Poniatie;” Zorin, *By Fables*, 325–58.

that the term “Official Nationality” obscures more than it illuminates, and so this article will refer to “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality” as Uvarov’s triad or just the Triad, in order to distinguish it from its application more broadly by the regime.⁴²

Uvarov was influenced by and was well-known in broader European scholarly circles and his Triad was a synthesis of many current European ideas, as well as Russian ones, which he sought to make a source of stability, not revolution.⁴³ His approach to Orthodoxy and autocracy was pragmatic. His writing on nationality was deliberately vague to attract as wide a response as possible.⁴⁴ Uvarov’s triad arose in the aftermath of the Polish uprising of 1830–31, which resulted in Nicholas revoking the existence of the Kingdom of Poland, until then a part of the Russian Empire, and dividing it into provinces. Echoing Viazemskii, Uvarov saw the growth of Russian nationality as parallel with Poland’s, but, unlike Viazemskii, as something that should replace it.⁴⁵

Pozharskii was an avatar of nationality, so a search for the location of his grave emerged in the 1830s and 1840s, even though his connections with the dynasty were problematic. Nizhnii Novgorod province and the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery (*Lavra*) were proposed as possible sites of Pozharskii’s burial place, but they lacked the wealth of evidence for his burial location that the Savior Monastery in Suzdal’ had, particularly the number of goods donated by Pozharskii himself for the remembrance of his soul.⁴⁶ It was common for a noble family to choose a particular monastery for its burial vault. The geographer Konstantin Ivanovich Arsen’ev, one of the tutors of the tsarevich, Alexander Nikolaevich, traveled through Russia at the behest of Nicholas I in 1833, collecting information for statistical purposes. Arsen’ev, in a manuscript of his traveler’s notes, claimed Suzdal’’s Savior Monastery as Pozharskii’s final resting place based on his review of the evidence.⁴⁷ These notes formed a guidebook for Alexander’s travels which provided historical and economic information about all the towns on the tsarevich’s path.

Local authors in Vladimir Province, where Suzdal’ is located, also claimed the location of Pozharskii’s grave for their province, using language that sacralized him. An article on the Savior Monastery appeared in the *Vladimir Provincial Newspaper* in 1838, the first year it was published and one year after the tsarevich’s visit. The author, N. Gersevanov, wrote that “the first object of worship (*sviatynia*) are the remains of the Savior of Russia, Prince Pozharskii.”⁴⁸ This article connected Pozharskii and, through him, Suzdal’, to Uvarov’s triad. As a new redeemer, Pozharskii saved Russian nationality by defeating the Poles and ensuring the continuation of Orthodoxy.

For the Slavophile Ivan Vasil’evich Kireevskii, writing in the same period, Minin and Pozharskii were the leading example of how, during the Time of

42. Miller, *Romanov Empire*; Shevchenko, “Poniatie.”

43. Zorin, *By Fables*; Whittaker, *Origins of Modern Russian*.

44. Miller, *Romanov Empire*, 141–42.

45. *Ibid.*, 151.

46. Uvarov, *Sbornik melkikh trudov*, 41.

47. Mikhail Pogodin, “Issledovanie o meste pogrebeniia Kn. D. M. Pozharskago,” *Moskvitianin*, no. 19 (1852), otd. III: 39.

48. *Vladimirskiiia Gubernskiiia Vedomosti* (hereafter VGV), 1838, no. 37.

Troubles, “Russians for the first time thought of Russia.” In Kireevskii’s outline for a novel described in “Tsaritsyn Nights,” he imagined a Russian who would join Minin and Pozharskii’s militia and whose growing understanding of Russia would be cut short by death in battle.⁴⁹ Rather than serving as forerunners of the first Romanov tsar, Minin and Pozharskii led Russians to self-awareness of their nationality.

Nicholas had his doubts about Pozharskii, but this was not enough to prevent the mobilization of his image during the run up to the Crimean War, when Pozharskii suddenly became highly relevant as a symbol of resistance to Catholicism. In 1850, the Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael Nikolaevich visited Suzdal’ in Vladimir province. Prior to their visit, they had been given a copy of the 1838 article mentioned earlier.⁵⁰ To the Grand Dukes’ surprise, no one could show them the site of Pozharskii’s grave during their visit. The monks showed them a place where there was said to have been a stone marker indicating the Pozharskii family vault, but there was no longer a marker of any kind. The Grand Dukes were reportedly shocked by this and made a donation for a monument. They suggested that the following be on the pedestal: “The place, according to legend, of the Pozharskii family vault.”⁵¹

Before the monument could be raised, the monastery authorities needed to find an author who would champion its importance at the national level, which they ironically found among the prisoners held within their walls. The Savior Monastery served as one of the main prisons in the empire for religious dissidents and was the place of imprisonment for Ioasaf, born V. S. Gaponov (1803–1861), a priest and monk whose writings shifted from a focus on the local to a celebration of the monastery’s importance to the nation.

Ioasaf was a priest’s son who graduated from the Kyiv Ecclesiastical Academy; his career as a teacher and inspector at various seminaries had been going well until, in 1845, he was charged for “indecent behavior,” which included reading a sermon different from the one that had been approved, occasionally wearing secular clothes, not always returning to the seminary each night, and eating meat with strangers in laypeople’s houses.⁵² On October 23, 1845, he was put in a cell alongside the other monks in the Savior Monastery and was allowed to give the liturgy, but was also placed under surveillance.⁵³ Ioasaf carried out a vigorous program of petition writing to the Synod and other officials, asking for permission to make money on his writings in order to support his children and elderly mother.⁵⁴

49. Ivan Vasil’evich and Piotr Vasil’evich Kireevskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii: v 4 tomakh* (Kaluga, 2006), 2: 227.

50. Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (hereafter GARF), fond (f.) 649 (Mikhail Nikolaevich, Velikii kniaz’), opis’ (op.) 1, delo (d.) 770, list (ll.) 60b-70b (Dokumenty o g. Suzdale Vladimirskoi gubernii); VGV, 1838, no. 37.

51. Uvarov, *Sbornik melkikh trudov*, 26–27.

52. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov (hereafter RGADA), f. 1203 (Spaso-Evfimiev monastyr’), op. 1, viaz. 302, d. 14 (O priselke v bratstvo byvshego professora Tverskoi seminarii Ioasafa Gaponova).

53. RGADA, f. 1203, op. 1, viaz. 302, d. 14.

54. RGADA, f. 1203, op. 1, viaz. 303, d. 1 (O vozobnovlenii proizvodstva magisterskogo oklada ieromonakhu Ioasafu Gaponovu).

In his earlier work, Ioasaf had argued for the purely local importance of the Archbishop of Suzdal', Arensios, the ranking Orthodox clergyman in the Kremlin when it was besieged by the Poles, who then imprisoned him. He wrote an important historical account of the Time of Troubles and was named Archbishop of Suzdal' in 1615, where he died in 1625.⁵⁵ In 1849, Ioasaf asked, "Are many aware of Archbishop Arsenios of Elasson as the herald of the salvation of Russia? . . . On December 25, only the Suzdalians have the good fortune to stand in the side chapel of the cathedral dedicated to the memory of 1812; as they listen to the holy liturgy in remembrance of the events of this year, they recall 1612, which in its disasters for Russia much resembles 1812; they also remember Arsenios by looking at that place where his mortal remains now rest."⁵⁶ For Ioasaf, the residents of Suzdal' were uniquely connected to the great national events of 1612 and 1812 through their local identity. Note that Pozharskii, as a secular person, was not mentioned.

A funeral service for Pozharskii in Suzdal' used language strongly reminiscent of the ideas of the Triad and kept this sense of local pride. This suggests that the church hierarchy was interested in the monastery becoming a place of pilgrimage for a new saint of the nation. Justin, Archbishop of Vladimir and Suzdal', in his sermon at Pozharskii's commemorative service on February 24, 1852 organized by the monastery, addressed the congregation: "our forefathers 250 years before us, in the midst of troubles and social disorders that had overtaken Russia, found themselves in extreme danger of losing their Orthodoxy, of seeing a foreigner (*inoplemennik*) and a foreign religion (*inoverets*) on the famous Russian throne, and even of losing their own nationality (*narodnost'*). If Russia escaped these dangers, this was due to the blessed plan of God. Among the courageous defenders of the fatherland and the church, Prince Pozharskii occupied the most visible, and, one may say, the first place, as our native tales show."⁵⁷

After this funeral service, Ioasaf's writing linked the monastery and Suzdal' to the nation's fate. While Justin had emphasized Pozharskii's role in preparing for the election of the dynasty, Ioasaf focused on Orthodoxy and nationality, not autocracy. Ioasaf wrote several articles and a monograph about Pozharskii and his contemporary, Arsenios, the Archbishop of Elasson.⁵⁸ Written for a wide audience, these pieces argued that Arsenios had played as important a role in the defeat of the Poles as had Pozharskii himself. On October 21, 1612, Arsenios had a vision of St. Sergius of Radonezh,

55. K. T. Iusupova, "Zhizneopisanie i trudy Arseniia Elassonskogo," *Kafedra vizantiiskoi i novogrecheskoi filologii: Nauchno-teoreticheskii zhurnal*, no. 1–2 (3) (2018): 168–77.

56. VGV, 1849, no. 10.

57. K. N. Tikhonravov, "Mogila kniazia Dmitriia Mikhailovicha Pozharskogo v Suzdal'skom Spaso-Evfimievskom monastyre," *Trudy Vladimirskaia uchenoi arkhivnoi kommissii* 12 (1910): 22–23. On shifting views towards Catholicism, see Paul W. Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths: Toleration and the Fate of Religious Freedom in Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 2014).

58. See Ph. A. Demetracopoulos, "On Arsenios, Archbishop of Elasson," *Byzantinoslavica* 42 (1981): 145–53; George-Julius Papadopoulos and Claudia Jensen, "'A Confusion of Glory': Orthodox Visitors as Sources for Muscovite Musical Practice (Late 16th–mid 17th Century)," *Intersections* 26, no. 1 (2005): 3–33.

who prophesied that Moscow would soon be liberated from the Poles.⁵⁹ The next day, on October 22, according to Ioasaf, the Russian warriors “took up their weapons, jumped on their horses, and as one struck the enemy and the town of Moscow, despite the most desperate resistance from the enemy, was taken.”⁶⁰ This is now celebrated on November 4 (new style) as the Day of National Unity. Although October 22 is the day of the Kazan icon of the Mother of God, an icon closely linked with the dynasty, Pozharskii’s forces only took control of Kitai Gorod, near the Kremlin, but not yet the Kremlin itself.

Ioasaf’s later writings on Pozharskii emphasized the joint activity of nation and church but said little about the dynasty. In his 1854 monograph *Prince Dmitrii Mikhailovich Pozharskii and Arsenios, Archbishop of Suzdal’*, Ioasaf described Aleksandr Uvarov’s discovery of Pozharskii’s grave and compared the deeds of Pozharskii and Arsenios: “Two famous men,” Ioasaf wrote, “armed by the will of God for the deliverance of our Fatherland from the yoke of foreign tribes, after their deeds rest with the dead in the ancient town of Suzdal’, one in a holy dwelling place among his family, the other in God’s temple, with the host of hierarchs of the Suzdal’ diocese.”⁶¹ Pozharskii was doubly sanctified—through his association with Arsenios and through his deeds in defense of the nation. The dynasty was troublingly absent from the narrative, however, as a prince and prelate were tools of God, not the tsar. As we have seen, this had been a pattern, both in nationalist treatments such as the original Martos monument, as well as in religious writings like Ioasaf’s. For the Romanovs, Pozharskii’s new status as a saint of the nation meant that they needed to counter it with a narrative that focused on the dynasty.

Embodying the Nation: Finding and Containing Pozharskii

Nationalists and clerical figures had brought about a reevaluation of Pozharskii that elevated him to a saint of the nation. While Pozharskii had become sacralized, his body had to be discovered, identified, and contained. In addition, the story of Michael Romanov’s election was full of danger to the dynasty if improperly told. Therefore, the commemoration of Pozharskii at the Savior Monastery erred on the side of containment rather than celebration.

The leading figures in this project were Aleksandr Uvarov and Pogodin, one of the elder Uvarov’s closest associates. Aleksandr Uvarov would become the founder of Russian archaeology, but in 1851, he was just 27 years old and a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. He had studied with Eduard Gerhard in Berlin, an archaeologist who followed the art historical methods of Johann Winkelmann in studying classical monuments and epigraphs.⁶² Uvarov’s first excavations, in Olbia, an ancient Greek town on the Black Sea now in Ukraine, followed this training and focused mainly on coins

59. A. Dmitrevskii, *Arkhiepiskop Elassonskii Arsenii i memuary ego iz russkoi istorii* (Kiev, 1899), 161.

60. Ioasaf, *Kniaz’ Dmitrii Mikhailovich Pozharskii i Arsenii Arkhiepiskop Suzdal’skii* (Vladimir, 1854), 3.

61. *Ibid.*, 8.

62. L. S. Klein, *Istoriia Rossiiskoi arkheologii: Ucheniia, shkoly i lichnosti* (St. Petersburg, 2014), 300.

and inscriptions.⁶³ He also had an interest in Russian antiquities, perhaps from the education he received at home from his father before attending university. In 1849, his father had resigned after a series of attacks by various bureaucrats and being informed that the emperor had lost faith in him. After this, the elder Uvarov was a broken man; when he died in 1855, only his son, daughter, and Pogodin accompanied his body to his grave.⁶⁴ This had a deep impact on his son.

Uvarov did not share his father's trust in the autocracy; all of his scholarly activity and publications were at a remove from the state. In 1864, he founded the Moscow Archaeological Society, which, as a voluntary association, gave him some independence from the state; he had already retired from state service. For Uvarov, Russian archaeology was "the science that is occupied with the study of ancient Russian life (*byt*) through monuments remaining from those peoples, from which Rus' first arose, and then the Russian state."⁶⁵ The state was at a safe distance from the object of archaeology, which was to study nationality before autocracy. At the opening conference of the Society in 1864, he placed archaeology within the study of nationality, stating that "when peace came to Europe [after the defeat of Napoleon], it called forth a feeling of nationality (*narodnost'*) that led to the study of everything native. . . Under the influence of the feeling of nationality, archaeological societies appeared in Europe."⁶⁶ Later, Uvarov wrote that the basic approach of archaeology should be the "cultural history of peoples" (*kul'turnaia istoriia narodov*). This focus on culture is still key to Russian archaeology today.⁶⁷

Uvarov's excavation, described earlier, located the place where Pozharskii was buried. Later in 1852, Nicholas I called for a subscription to be gathered all over Russia for the building of a monument over Pozharskii's grave. In 1852, in support of this effort, the Vladimir Ecclesiastical Consistory ordered the head of the monastery, Archimandrite Ioakim, to return the burial vault "to its original condition, and to erect a column with the inscription "Here lies Prince Dmitrii Mikhailovich Pozharskii."⁶⁸

The commission was ultimately given to Aleksei Maksimovich Gornostaev, a leading proponent of the Neo-Byzantine style. Gornostaev was among the first architects to travel in the former lands of the Byzantine Empire, sketching and surveying Byzantine architecture.⁶⁹ From 1843 until his death in 1862, he was the main architect for the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Neo-Byzantine style was dominant in church architecture in the second half of the nineteenth century, as it "articulated the ideal of the Orthodox monarchical state."⁷⁰ The Byzantine style was a way to differentiate Orthodoxy from the Gothic style

63. *Ibid.*, 301.

64. Whittaker, *Origins of Modern Russian*, 237, 243.

65. Uvarov, *Sbornik melkikh trudov*, 185.

66. Klein, *Istoriia Rossiiskoi arkheologii*, 308–9.

67. *Ibid.*, 323.

68. RGADA, f. 1203, op. 1, v. 310, n. 44 (O vosstanovlenii usypal'nitsy Kn. Pozharskikh), l. 5.

69. Iu. P. Savel'ev, "Vizantiiskii stil'" v arkhitekture Rossii: Vtoraia polovina XIX—nachalo XX veka (Moscow, 2005), 13.

70. Savel'ev, "Vizantiiskii stil'," 9; Wortman, "Alexei Olenin."

associated with Catholicism and Protestantism, and its spread also benefited from pan-Slav interest in the Balkans and the study of the architecture of the Crimea and Caucasus. Gornostaev designed the mausoleum in this style; the lower walls showed influence from Georgian and Armenian architecture. The monument to Pozharskii and the main cathedral in Helsinki were the last projects of his life. He died in 1862 before the completion of either. Orders of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to Gornostaev in 1858 specified that he should build a burial vault on the foundation of the earlier mausoleum “in the style of our old architecture contemporary with the death of Prince Pozharskii. In the interior of the vault, at the very site of the grave, place a simple stone grave-stone, covered with a shroud or pall, with an embroidered cross.”⁷¹ On the eastern side, he was to place a lectern for the memorial service for Pozharskii as well as an iconostasis of all the icons donated by Pozharskii during his life as well as display cases for other donated items. On the other walls were to be metal plaques with a “short narrative of the services of Prince Pozharskii.”⁷²

The monument, which Gornostaev had sketched out before his death in 1862, was built using the 75,000 rubles Russians donated between 1851 and 1857. In 1858, building began on the monument.⁷³ The Imperial Academy of Arts, which had been given jurisdiction over “monuments of patriotic glory” in 1802, oversaw the building of the monument and shouldered the monetary responsibility for its upkeep, using the funds that had been collected.⁷⁴ The monument was located in the courtyard of the monastery above the family plot of the Pozharskiis and the Khovanskiis.

As with other buildings in this style, it had profuse ornamentation and Romanesque arches. (Figure 2) In contrast, the 1818 Red Square monument referred to classical models by showing Minin and Pozharskii in Roman clothing. The Suzdal’ monument to Pozharskii instead consciously placed itself within the Russian context of Pozharskii’s life. At the top was an icon of Christ in majesty, which was a symbol of divine power and judgment and echoed the use of the same icon in Minin’s banner. The entrance on the eastern facade had a heavy bronze door decorated with the figures of Minin and Pozharskii. Pozharskii, gazing far in the distance, had a war helmet on his head and a sword in his right hand. His coat of mail was decorated with the crucifixion and his left hand grasped Minin’s hand. Minin stood with a bare head, dressed in a plain caftan.

The effect of the door, however, was to create a sort of anti-Martos monument. Where the Red Square monument made Minin the active partner, the Suzdal’ monument made Pozharskii the warrior and Minin smaller and weaker. Certainly, this was a monument to Pozharskii, not Minin, but the overall effect of the doors was to deemphasize the popular aspect of the narrative. At the feet of both heroes were the scattered gifts of the Russian people: money, chains, crosses. This was to symbolize the gifts given in response to

71. RGADA, f. 1203, op. 1, v. 310, n. 44, l. 7.

72. *Ibid.*

73. *Suzdal’ i ego dostopamiatnosti* (Moscow, 1912), 72.

74. Rosalind P. Blakesley, *The Russian Canvas: Painting in Imperial Russia, 1757–1881* (New Haven, 2016), 55.

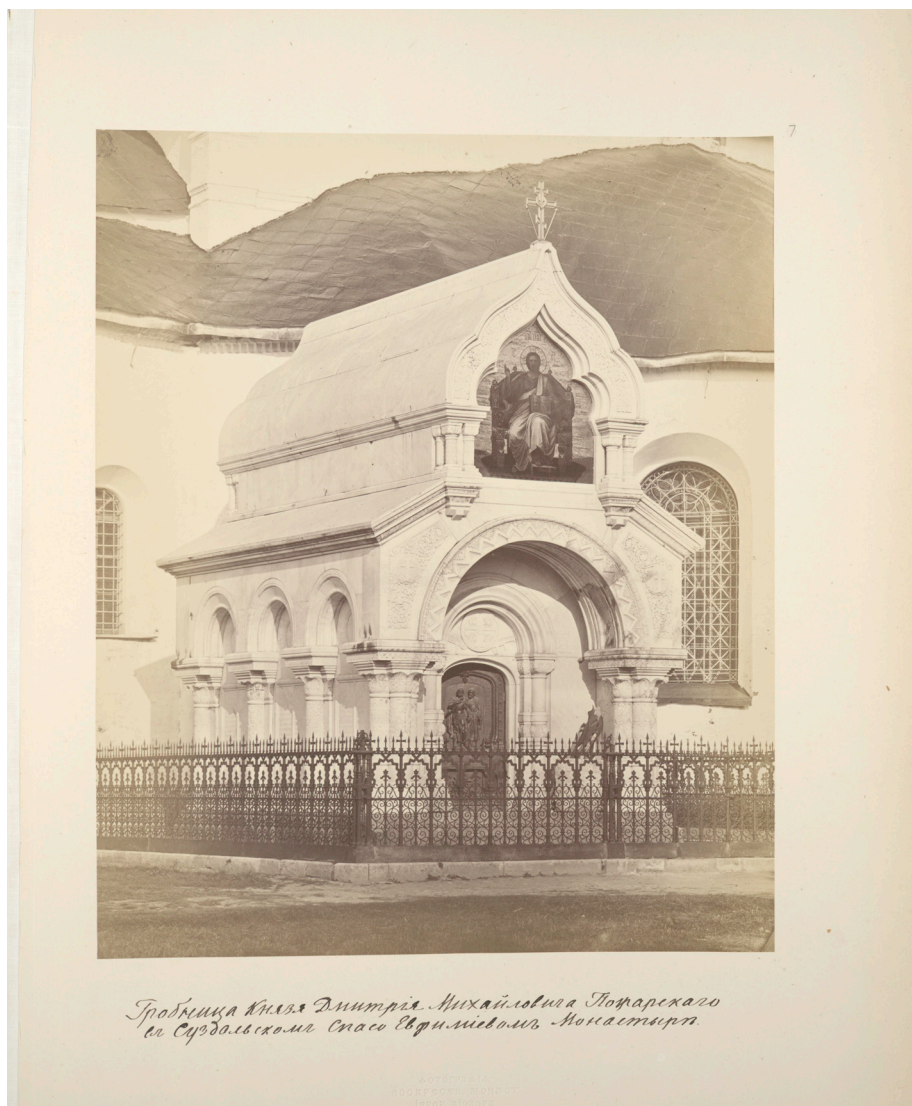


Figure 2. NYPL Digital Collections, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47d9-4565-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>, from *Suzdalskie monastiri : Spaso-Evfimievskii, Pokrivskii [sic], [Rispolozhenskii] Prepodobenskii: albom vidov i snimkov drevnostei i dostoprimechatel'nostei, khраниashchikhsia v ikh riznitsakh* (Unpublished photograph album)

Minin's famous speech calling for the defense of Moscow against the Poles; nearby was inscribed: "to help the Moscow government, we will give our lives, sell our possessions and sacrifice our wives and children." The other panel showed a Pozharskii in the Lomonosov mold, as the hero of the battle of Sretensk, suffering from a terrible wound, supported by two warriors. An adjacent oval contained, in decorative ligature script, Pozharskii's famous

statement, “Take courage and fortify our people and our cities and God will bring about good right before our eyes.” The pediment on the front side was inscribed, “To boyar Prince Dmitrii Mikhailovich from a grateful posterity.”⁷⁵

In 1863, the Academy of Arts asked Pogodin for information on Pozharskii to be inscribed on the walls of the mausoleum. Pogodin found that the moment was “very relevant,” as it was the year of the Polish Rebellion of 1863, known there as the January Insurrection, where more peasants fought for Poland than ever before.⁷⁶ The Russians were not able to completely quell it until 1864, so when Pogodin was choosing his texts, Russia was again in battle with Poland. At first, Pogodin provided a clear timeline of events; however, it emphasized the taking of Kitai Gorod on October 22, 1612 over other events, and mischaracterized the Russians, including Michael Romanov, in the Kremlin with the Poles as “prisoners” rather than collaborators. It also mentioned Pozharskii’s role in the election of Michael Romanov.⁷⁷

The Academy of Arts demanded that Pogodin take material from the chronicles only in Church Slavonic, making the story opaque to most visitors. Pogodin then chose a selection of texts from the chronicles that began and ended with the taking of Kitai Gorod on October 22. A confusing text about the siege of the Polish forces in the Kremlin that failed to mention the presence of Michael Romanov was included, but out of chronological order, so that the culmination of the story was October 22, the taking of Kitai Gorod, rather than the actual taking of the Kremlin.⁷⁸ Then the chronicle texts were inscribed on the walls of the monuments in Church Slavonic with many spelling errors.⁷⁹ The Academy of Arts required a far more obscurantist approach than Pogodin first provided, suggesting just how explosive 1612 was for the dynasty. In 1863, the Academy was riven by struggles between liberal and conservative factions, visible through public debates over the role of history painting in the hierarchy of arts.⁸⁰ It is likely that this decision was made by members from the conservative faction.

The work on the monument progressed in stops and starts. In 1865, Botta Frères, a company of sculptors based in St. Petersburg, completed the exterior of the monument, which was made from Carrara marble. In 1868, the interior was luxuriously finished with marble columns and a marble case enclosing a mosaic icon of the Kazan Mother of God.⁸¹ Little was done between then and 1871, when the new head of the monastery, Dosifei, came across the unfulfilled promise of the Academy of Arts in 1865 to send 1000 rubles and a candelabrum. Dosifei engaged in a vigorous but futile correspondence with the Academy to provide them, but only began getting results when he traveled to St. Petersburg

75. N. N. Ushakov, ed., *Sputnik po drevnemu Vladimiru i gorodam Vladimirskaia gubernii* (Vladimir, 1913), 196–97.

76. N. Barsukov, *Zhizn' i trudy M. P. Pogodina*, vol. 21 (St. Petersburg, 1907), 410; Patrice M. Dabrowski, *Poland: The First Thousand Years* (DeKalb, 2014), 335.

77. Barsukov, *Zhizn' i trudy*, 411–12.

78. *Ibid.*, 417–18.

79. Sakharov, *Istoricheskoe opisanie*, 63.

80. Blakesley, *The Russian Canvas*, 230–39.

81. L. Sakharov, “Suzdal'sko-Nizhegorodskoe torzhestvo nashikh dnei,” *Nizhegorodskii gubernskiiia vedomosti*, no. 21, May 22, 1885, 3.

in 1880 and contacted Grand Duke Vladimir Aleksandrovich, the president of the academy, who became the project's patron. By that time, the mausoleum was in such a ruinous state that it required 12,000 rubles for repair.⁸²

As one of Dosifei's many petitions described it, the fence was rusted, the marble suffered from unsightly stains inside and out, the northern side of the building was nearly black due to moisture and mold, the interior floor was buckling and overgrown, and the heavy door had fallen off its hinges to the point that it could not be closed and snow and rain drifted inside during all seasons.⁸³ In addition, the Academy did not provide the mosaic icons they had promised until June 1880, when they were finally delivered and installed before a large crowd of the people.⁸⁴ From 1867 to 1869, L. I. Sakharov was Dosifei's secretary and published, with the latter's financial backing, two books on the history of the monastery.⁸⁵ These works, plus the renovation and promotion of the mausoleum, were part of Dosifei's larger project to improve the status of the monastery, which had been promoted, soon after the first stage of completion of the mausoleum in 1865, to a monastery of the first rank. As Dosifei stated in a petition to Chief Procurator Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev in 1885, this was only on paper and without any increase in its budget or privileges.⁸⁶ In an unsuccessful petition to the Moscow Town Duma, Dosifei asked to build a copy of the mausoleum near the monument to Minin and Pozharskii in Red Square so that passersby could pray for the soul of Prince Pozharskii (and donate to the monastery where he was buried.)⁸⁷ The monument was consecrated only in 1885, likely due to the tireless advocacy of Dosifei, by which time similar architectural styles were dominant under Alexander III.

Several things are striking about the monument. The sense of the local invoked by Ioasaf in the Vladimir newspaper and elsewhere is noticeably absent. Unlike the Martos monument, Minin and Pozharskii are only part of the composition. A large part of the inscription focused on the election of the Romanovs, thus presenting Pozharskii's military victories as only a means to an end. Pozharskii was contained, not celebrated, even in his own monument. The events he took part in that touched upon the dynasty were too explosive for the Romanovs to allow to be told accurately.

At the same time, the inscription invoked a rather inclusive sense of the nation. The inscription stated that it was not simply the grandees but the whole Orthodox people that chose the Romanov dynasty. The nation was shown as primarily a religious group bound together by common faith. This group of Orthodox people was shown as the true actor in the drama of the election of the first Romanov, but this was a one-act play only. Others writing about the grave disagreed.

82. RGADA, f. 1203, op. 1, v. 310, n. 44, l. 124ob.

83. Sakharov, "Suzdal'sko-Nizhegorodskoe torzhestvo," 5.

84. Ibid.

85. Sakharov, *Istoricheskoe opisaniie Suzdal'skogo pervoklassnogo Spaso-Evfimieva monastyria* (Vladimir, 1870); Sakharov, *Istoricheskoe opisaniie* (Vladimir, 1878); A. V. Smirnov, *Urozhentsy i deiateli Vladimirskoi gubernii, poluchivshie izvestnost' na razlichnykh poprishchakh obshchestvennoi pol'zy*, vol. 4 (Vladimir, 1910), 220.

86. RGADA, f. 1203, op. 1, v. 310, n. 44, l. 136.

87. Ibid., ll. 20–22.

The Regional Narrative: Pozharskii as a Symbol of Self-government and Civil Society

The Nizhnii Novgorod author and zemstvo activist Aleksandr Serafimovich Gatsiskii used the moment of the consecration of the mausoleum in 1885 to argue that the Nizhnii Novgorod-Suzdal' region continued the tradition of an active populace and that the meaning of the Pozharskii narrative was less about the election of the Romanov tsar and more about the heroic, self-directed action of the Nizhnii Novgorod people. Alexander II established the zemstvo in European Russia in 1864 and gave it the power to tax and to oversee medical, infrastructural, educational, and other local needs. Gatsiskii's political work was closely linked to his voluminous historical writings, which provided a long history of and legitimation for the zemstvo's economic and political direction of local life.

In the mid-fourteenth century, Nizhnii Novgorod conquered Suzdal' in what Gatsiskii viewed as a "victory of work, industry, and commerce" and together they formed "Russia's true heartland."⁸⁸ Gatsiskii was assisted by Sakharov, the former secretary of the head of the monastery, Dosifei, who sought to raise its standing by completing and promoting the mausoleum. At this moment, the local self-government known as the zemstvo was undergoing the first stages of a counter-reform that would limit its powers, and Gatsiskii's narrative pushed back by providing it a glorious prehistory.

For Gatsiskii, celebrating the consecration of the mausoleum was part of his life's work of fostering a regional public that was aware of its own interests and prepared to defend them politically. In Nizhnii Novgorod, he was the leader, at various times, of every institution connected with regional identity: the zemstvo, provincial newspaper (*vedomosti*), statistical committee, and provincial archival commission. He was inspired by the populist historian Afanasii Prokov'evich Shchapov's idea of regionalism (*oblastnichestvo*), which argued that Russia's provinces were crucial to its national development.⁸⁹ He came to national prominence in 1876, when he carried out a polemic against Daniil Mordovtsev, who had presented an all-too-common portrayal of the provinces as needing the center's control; Gatsiskii, in contrast, argued that Russia was the provinces, and the provinces, and particularly the provincial press, were the future of Russia and would determine its level of development.⁹⁰

For Gatsiskii, the Time of Troubles was one of the two most crucial moments in all of Nizhnii Novgorod's history, the other being the moment of its founding. For him, the near destruction of Russian statehood during the Time of Troubles was averted only by the emergence of civil society in Nizhnii Novgorod, through the creation of the Nizhnii Novgorod militia. Gatsiskii wrote in 1885 that the era of the militia was "the most glorious epoch" in the region's history because the militia stood not for a name, as had earlier armies raised by pretenders, "but for an idea, for statehood (*gosudarstvennost'*) and

88. Catherine Evtuhov, *Portrait of a Russian Province: Economy, Society, and Civilization in Nineteenth-Century Nizhnii Novgorod* (Pittsburgh, 2011), 241.

89. *Ibid.*, 18.

90. *Ibid.*, 233; Anne Lounsbury, *Life is Elsewhere: Symbolic Geography in the Russian Provinces, 1800–1917* (Ithaca, 2019), 168–71.

for its historical life.”⁹¹ The question of Russia’s statehood, Gatsiskii wrote, was truly “to be or not to be”; if the “clean half” of the Russian people, as the historian Sergei Solov’ev put it and Gatsiskii echoed, had not stood up for the right of Russians to rule themselves, they would have been swallowed up by other peoples.⁹²

This statehood, furthermore, was not the expression of one man, but a collective act expressed through the deeds of many people; this especially included Pozharskii, whose grave Gatsiskii called “the ancient ark of Russian Northeast civil society (*grazhdanstvennost’*) beloved by everyone who loves his fatherland” that bound “together seven honored Northeast historical points: Nizhnii Novgorod, Vladimir, Suzdal’, Rostov, Kostroma, Iaroslavl’, and Moscow.”⁹³ Pozharskii and the militia were connected with all these cities, culminating with the defeat of the Poles in Moscow in 1612. Like the Ark of the Covenant, Pozharskii’s grave contained within it, in Gatsiskii’s narrative, the laws that should govern the people. Gatsiskii was not alone in this view. In his memoirs, the liberal Slavophile Aleksandr Ivanovich Koshelev also linked attempts at self-governance to Minin and Pozharskii, comparing them to the Southern Society of Decembrists, who sought the creation of a constitutional monarchy.⁹⁴

Gatsiskii was responding to a sharp change in political discourse taking place in 1884 and the early part of 1885, when the liberal ideals of the 1860s were challenged by proponents of a conservative counter-reform of the *zemstvo*. History was the ground of debate, with one conservative writing with distaste in January 1885 that the Time of Troubles saw the emergence of new mixed social groups, or “the liberals of the seventeenth century, who upheld the principles of personal freedom and personal accomplishment and set them against the principle of the estates.”⁹⁵ Only rigidly divided estates where each person knew his or her place could lead Russia back to the correct historical path, he argued. Gatsiskii’s narrative rejected this entirely. Minin and Pozharskii could not be divided but rather were one expression of a unified civil society, without which the state would have no real power. He even proposed that a model of Minin’s grave monument be built by Pozharskii’s and a model of Pozharskii’s mausoleum be placed near Minin’s grave.⁹⁶ He mentioned several times that among those who voted for the first Romanov tsar were delegates to the *zemskii sobor*, or Assembly of the Land.⁹⁷ The election of Michael Romanov thus legitimized the *zemstvo* as much as it did the autocracy. The subtext of his writing called for a continuation of the active role

91. A. Gatsiskii, “Suzdal’sko-Nizhegorodskoe torzhestvo nashikh dnei,” *Nizhegorodskii gubernskii vedomosti*, no. 20, May 15, 1885, 2.

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Ibid.*

94. T. F. Pirozhkova, ed., *Zapiski Aleksandra Ivanovicha Kosheleva (1812–1883 gody)* (Moscow, 2002), 17.

95. Francis Wcislo, *Reforming Rural Russia: State, Local Society, and National Politics, 1855–1914* (Princeton, 1990), 99.

96. Gatsiskii, “Suzdal’sko-Nizhegorodskoe torzhestvo,” 2.

97. *Ibid.*

of many estates in the governing of the state, particularly at the regional level, a process that would cease in 1917.

The mausoleum did not long survive the revolution. In 1923, the monastery once again became a political prison. In 1933, the mausoleum was destroyed, and the marble was meant to be used for the grandiose and never-built Palace of the Soviets on the site of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. Oral histories say that the marble instead was used for offices in the infamous Lubianka prison or for the Dzerzhinskii metro station.⁹⁸ During World War II, the prison held Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus and other high ranking Nazi officers captured at Stalingrad and elsewhere.⁹⁹ On November 4, 2009, then-president Dmitrii Medvedev took part in a ceremony opening a new mausoleum, which was rebuilt as an exact copy of the one that had been destroyed, saying that “this will give us a reason to say that we are a truly united nation.”¹⁰⁰ This was part of efforts to promote the new Day of National Unity, the meaning of which had provoked confusion among many Russians, as it replaced the commemoration of the revolution as well as Boris El'tsin's vague Day of Agreement and Reconciliation.¹⁰¹ Pozharskii is once again at the heart of the state's myth of its renewal and reestablishment.

In conclusion, several themes run through this story. One is the danger of commemoration for the dynasty, along with the impossibility of preventing it. The Romanovs had a deeply problematic origin story, particularly when compared to Pozharskii's charismatic heroism. We see that October 22, 1612 has been used as a means of distraction for centuries to divert attention away from the presence of the Romanovs as collaborators with the Poles when the Kremlin was taken. Their response was to minimize Pozharskii where possible and, once nationalism had practically sanctified him, to contain him within a highly selective retelling of the election of the first Romanov.

Another theme is the continuing importance of the regions. The Martos monument began as a demand from Nizhnii Novgorod, not Moscow, and Nizhnii Novgorod, in the person of Gatsiskii, revalued Pozharskii's grave from a narrative about the origin of the dynasty to one about the necessity of the self-directed action of the Russian people as the very core of the state. Even Suzdal' had a local narrative in which their town was reimagined as a sacred site of the nation. If we ignore the local, we silence those voices that spoke back to the state.

The role of the people is another important theme. Retelling the election of Michael Romanov inevitably involved some recognition of the role of the people in the origin of the dynasty. The Romanovs sought to make this a one-act play, but Gatsiskii drew upon it as the main source of legitimation for the continuing role of the people in self-government via the *zemstvo*.

98. Maria Evgen'evna Rodina, *D. M. Pozharskii: Vechnaia pamiat' i trava zabvenii* (Vladimir, 2007), 15.

99. S. P. Gordeev, *Spaso-Efimiev monastyr' v Suzdale* (Moscow, 2006), 27.

100. “Dmitrii Medvedev otkryl mavzolei Pozharskogo v Suzdale (Vladimirskaiia oblast’),” *regnum*, at <https://regnum.ru/news/1221644.html> (accessed March 31, 2023).

101. Marielle Wijermars, *Memory Politics in Contemporary Russia: Television, Cinema and the State* (London, 2019), 122–63.

A dead body can spark a lively discussion, and when the body is Pozharskii's, the stakes can be as high as the meaning of the Russian nation. Through their stories of the grave, a wide range of authors put forward their ideas about what Russia was and what it should be: an autocracy, a unified nation, or a place where self-government flourished. Each of these narratives drew inspiration from Pozharskii's final resting place, which even now has provided substance for a new national myth.

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