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Abstract

The existence of so many Russian war monuments outside Russia adds a new dimension to our understanding of the memorialization of the First World War, for such memorials were found not in Russia but in European countries where Russian emigres made lives for themselves after the 1917 Revolution. The construction of war monuments promised to be a good way to manage important aspects of the personal and public bereavement that Russian people faced in European diaspora in the interwar period. Emigres, moreover, also used war memorials as a means to signify their right to belong to a common European experience, and elites in countries like France, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia integrated Russia's war, through the emigres, into national commemorative practices. This article shows that transnational values like international friendship, wartime alliance, and solidarity across national and ethnic boundaries could be important parts of the commemorative culture of the war in nation-states across interwar Europe, even in Germany. Without these transnational features of First World War remembrance, which both encouraged the emigres to build war monuments and to some degree impeded their appearance in the Soviet Union, there may not have been Russian monuments to the war anywhere at all.

Keywords

commemoration, emigres, First World War, monuments, public, Russia

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Where are the public monuments for the almost two million Russians who died during the First World War? Not in Russia, for people in the Soviet Union, alone among the former combatant nations, had no official cemeteries, holidays or monuments to remember the war's heroes or its victims.¹ Instead, Russian memorials are found in European countries where Russian emigres made lives for themselves after the 1917 Revolution. In France, they appear near a military cemetery along the Marne and in small cities like Valenciennes. Some are located in the major urban cemeteries of Warsaw, Belgrade and Prague, while others pop up near Czech country towns, high in the Slovenian Alps and under the leafy trees of a quiet Orthodox cemetery in Berlin. Indeed, almost every physical monument used or created in the emigration had some formal link to the First World War. Why did the emigres, whose plight was caused by revolution and civil war after 1917, memorialize the war of 1914 with such intensity? The presence of First World War monuments, it turns out, promised to be a good way to manage important aspects of the personal and public bereavement that Russian people faced in European diaspora.

The story of Russian emigre war monuments shows that international values like friendship, wartime alliance and solidarity across national and ethnic boundaries could be important parts of the commemorative culture of nation-states in interwar Europe. At first glance it seems unlikely that emigres should have memorialized the war at all. As members of a transnational cultural community with no legally-recognized territory, they had no state, little money and no legal authority to shape public space around them. In Europe there were no Russian villages, towns or cities with grieving millions who sought personal consolation for lost kin, few sites of combat that involved Russian soldiers and no Russian commercial interests to profit from a local memory industry. Emigre public discourse, moreover, remained focused on internal disputes about the revolution and the Soviet Union, and most emigres spent their days facing the immediate difficulties of life in a foreign country. Yet despite these circumstances, memorials for Russian dead were built in great numbers in Europe, the United States of America and European overseas territories.² They existed because emigre leaders believed war monuments formed public connections inside their community and between emigres and local people, whose leaders sometimes used the Russian war experience to lend meaning

1 The Soviets did commemorate the war, albeit after their own fashion. See A.J. Cohen, 'Oh, That! Myth, Memory, and World War I in the Russian Emigration and the Soviet Union', *Slavic Review*, 62, 1 (Spring 2003), 70; K. Petrone, *The Great War In Russian Memory* (Bloomington, IN 2011).

2 First World War monuments and related memorial objects (military sites, churches, tablets, cemetery stones, sometimes also linked to the Civil War) built by Russian soldiers, emigres, or others appeared, for example, in France (Vanves, Omont, Soissons, Verdun), Belgium (Liège, Ixelles/Brussels), Germany (Berlin, Hainstadt/Baden), Tilsit, Danzig, Poland/Ukraine (Warsaw, Łódź, Poznań, Lviv, Snovichi), Denmark (Vordingborg), Yugoslavia (the Vršič pass, Belgrade, Goražde), Czechoslovakia (Prague, Užhorod, Milovice, Terezín/Theresienstadt, Jaroměř-Josefov, Bardejov, Šamorín), Latvia (Babīte, Rezekne, Assern), Estonia (Tallinn, Tartu, Ievve), Greece (Salonika), Egypt (Port Said), Tunisia (Bizerte), the USA (Seattle) and Malaysia (Penang). There were (and perhaps still are) uncounted smaller gravesite markers strewn along the former Eastern Front.

to national or local memorial projects. Russian war memory thus served both Russian and non-Russian interests.

The existence of so many Russian war monuments outside Russia adds a new dimension to our understanding of the remembrance of the First World War.³ Historians have long understood First World War monuments within a framework of nationalism, nation-building and political ideology, but the role of international war commemoration has not received much attention.⁴ In the 1970s, George Mosse suggested that war monuments were part of a broader culture of populist right-wing politics in Germany, a view that seemed credible in light of other work that linked war memory to aesthetic modernism, cultural pessimism and political illiberalism.⁵ Antoine Prost expanded the scope of the war monument's political valence to include democratic politics when he showed that French war memorials remained embedded in republican civic culture.⁶ Some have argued that First World War memorials should not be understood in narrowly political terms; Jay Winter, for example, suggests that they met a need for mourning in a population traumatized by an unprecedented large-scale war.⁷ Still, the nation remains the dominant frame for historical consciousness in modern war commemoration, even for expressions of individual or personal mourning.⁸ The presence of war memorials in the Russian emigration, though, suggests that the commemoration of the First World War had important political, cultural and personal meaning across state boundaries. Their story suggests that the study of transnational culture and experiences can help illuminate national practices.⁹

3 Note that I use *memorial* and *monument* interchangeably in this article, where *monument* refers to a public sculpture or structure built for a memorial or communicative purpose. Other objects such as historic buildings and literary works that can be described as monuments are usually not purpose-built for memory but have that function ascribed to them. In the emigration, the word *pamiatnik* was used for both *memorial* and *monument*.

4 S. Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914–1940* (Cambridge 2007), 6, 9. On the importance of the nation-state, see B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition (London 1996), 9–10; R. Koselleck, 'Einleitung', in R. Koselleck and M. Jeismann (eds), *Der politische Totenkult: Kriegerdenkmäler in der Moderne* (Munich 1994), 15–16; J. Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ 1992), 16, 108–9.

5 G.L. Mosse, 'National Cemeteries and National Revival: The Cult of the Fallen Soldiers in Germany', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 14, 1 (January 1979), 1–20.

6 A. Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace: Representations of France in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Oxford 2002), 38–9.

7 J. Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge 2000), 93–8.

8 P. Fritzsche, 'Review Article: The Case of Modern Memory', *Journal of Modern History*, 73 (March 2001), 117.

9 Jan Rieger points out some of the difficulties in separating transnational and national histories but argues that the two perspectives can complement each other. See J. Rieger, 'OXO: Or, the Challenges of Transnational History', *European History Quarterly*, 40, 4 (2010), 661–2. Note that I use *transnational* narrowly to refer to a non-nation-state-based approach that focuses on diasporas and migration and not to suggest the broader methodological or political meanings sometimes associated with the term. For more, see the commentary 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History', *The American Historical Review*, 115, 5 (December 2006), 1442–3. *Cultural internationalism* was part of a self-conscious movement to build ties across national boundaries; it is, according to Akira Iriye, 'the idea that world order

New public relationships were needed across Europe after 1914 because the war and its aftermath disturbed personal and public institutions on an unprecedented scale. New states in Europe needed to build institutions, while existing states came under increased political and economic pressures, and millions of people faced physical dislocation, personal grief and uncertain personal futures. Revolution and civil war in Russia created the conditions for the separation of some 2,000,000 people from Russian territory, and the emigration's leaders needed new public structures to replace the defunct imperial Russian political, administrative and legal systems. The First World War, in short, created a disrupted discursive field that called for 'monumental resolution'.¹⁰ And just as private bereavement exists when people lose connection to others who were close to them, public bereavement exists when people lose connections to the familiar media institutions, ideas and culture that used to link them to information outside their sphere of immediate knowledge and experience. International entities such as the Entente, for example, could be reimagined after the war in the practices of commemoration in states such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia that did not exist during the war.

The perceived ability of a monument's presence to resolve widespread public and private bereavement on multiple levels helps explain why First World War memorials were so common in interwar Europe. Monuments, in this view, are sites of memory within a larger communication system of public culture, that is, the material, institutional and cultural nexus that structures the real and imaginary space between individuals and the world outside immediate experience.¹¹ As sites of memory, memorials represent certain ideas to the public, but their physical presence in three dimensions also provides a direct experience that can connect people, though memory, contemplation or emotion, to absent experiences.¹² Through their presence, monuments can therefore evoke multiple political, social and personal meanings to bring people together both in immediate real space and across distant areas of the public sphere. In this sense, they can create new associations for personal and public connections that have been broken (unseen, overlooked or 'forgotten') between the past and the present or between the distant and the immediate. This function occurs along a spectrum; memorials to the dead can be designed for audiences of strangers (a statue in a public square), intimates (a photograph in a private living space) or combinations of intimate and public

can and should be defined through interactions at the cultural level across national boundaries'. A. Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, MD 1997), x.

10 D.J. Sherman, 'Art, Commerce, and the Production of Memory in France after World War I', in J.R. Gillis (ed.) *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, NJ 1994), 188. Sherman views this field mostly as a space for contestation.

11 Pierre Nora defines the concept of *site of memory* in 'General Introduction: Between Memory and History', in P. Nora and L.D. Kritzman (eds) *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 1, *Conflicts and Divisions* (New York, NY 1996), 7–8. On the importance of public institutions in mediating historical memory, see B.A. Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* (Maidenhead 2003), 19–22.

12 For more argumentative discussions about the concept of presence, see E. Runia, 'Presence', *History and Theory*, 45 (February 2006), 5–6; H.U. Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford, CA 2004).

(a cemetery stone visible to strangers and intimates).¹³ The language of alliance, friendship and shared history that surrounded many European First World War memorials shows that they were meant to bring people together both symbolically (through representation) and literally (through presence).¹⁴ Influential Russian emigres, for example, discovered that monuments might help to ameliorate the personal and institutional disjunctions that distanced them from each other, their homeland and their friends in host countries.

The Russian emigration makes an excellent case study because not only did emigres experience widespread public and private dislocations, many were determined to construct and maintain a new culture. Most faced various degrees of personal grief and homesickness, social alienation from local populations in foreign countries, sharp political divisions inside their community, and poverty and economic deprivation. The noted writer Ivan Bunin, for example, described how life in emigration had broken apart his personal and professional life: 'I lost all that was achieved by the work of my entire life in Russia, deprived here, abroad, of earnings due to the extreme poverty of Russian periodical publication'.¹⁵ A commentator in the conservative emigre newspaper *Vozrozhdenie* emphasized more broadly how the emigres no longer had familiar institutions to connect them to past and present: 'The Russian state (*gosudarstvennost'*) is destroyed, the bulwark and defense of the calm and normal development of Russian culture, the guarantee of life for the branches of the great Russian tribe historically cut off from their native place'.¹⁶ In response to this situation, influential emigre public figures created a new Russian public culture, that is, a new set of institutions and cultural practices to communicate with each other and with others, even as they upheld the traditions of the past in preparation for their return to a future non-Bolshevik Russia. By the end of the 1920s, the emigration had a new media landscape with authoritative newspapers (*Poslednie novosti* and *Vozrozhdenie*), national holiday (*Den' russkoi kul'tury*), hymn (*Kol' slaven*) and military organization (*Russkii Obshche-Voinskii Soiuz* or ROVS). Indeed, one could view this 'Russian Abroad' not so much as a group of people but as a new public defined by distinctive institutions, customs and audiences.¹⁷ A stateless community that crossed national boundaries, it exemplified the transnational.

13 For a more detailed continuum, see S. Tison, 'Traumatisme de guerre et commémorations. Comment Champenois et Sarthois sont-ils sortis de la guerre (1870–1940)?', *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 216 (2004), 22.

14 The act of building war memorials, for example, helped maintain British communities quite apart from their role in war commemoration. A. King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford 1998), 12–13.

15 Z. Sládek, et al. (eds), *Dokumenty k dějinám ruské a ukrajinské emigrace v Československé republice (1918–1939)* (Prague 1998), 28.

16 *Vozrozhdenie* (30 June 1928), 4.

17 C. Weiss, *Das Rußland zwischen den Zeilen: Die russische Emigrantenpresse im Frankreich der 1920er Jahre und ihre Bedeutung für die Genese der 'Zarubežnaja Rossija'* (Hamburg 2000), 263–7. Marc Raeff began the modern study of the Russian emigration with a focus on its existence as a cultural formation of the Russian intelligentsia. See his *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration 1919–1939* (New York, NY 1990), 10–11, 197. This Russian emigre culture was mostly

Emigre monuments represented Russian sites of memory to broad audiences inside the emigration, but they also needed to reach important people in host nations. Besides the many First World War memorials, emigres constructed memorials to tsar Nicholas II, who enjoyed status as a martyr and symbol of anti-communism in the largely monarchist emigration, in Brussels, Seattle and Harbin. The national poet Aleksandr Pushkin (d. 1837), a popular cult object in the emigration and the Soviet Union, received a public statue in Shanghai's French Concession in 1937. Such monuments were constructed by emigre committees that raised money from Russian donors, but most depended on large donations from interested non-Russians, and all needed approval for construction in public sites from local authorities. The organizers of an unsuccessful project to erect a memorial to Pushkin in Paris, for example, stated that lack of funds doomed the monument, but the emigre community in Paris was larger and wealthier than in Shanghai, and it had the support of important French writers, critics and politicians. The proposal probably failed due to resistance from French authorities; the Ministry of Fine Arts did not agree to the original site on the Boulevard Haussmann and offered a less prominent location next to a planned statue of Leonardo da Vinci in the Esplanade des Invalides.¹⁸ The statue seems to have met a fate similar to that of a contemporaneous idea to name a Parisian street after the Russian poet, a change that one French supporter suggested would be so easy as to require just 'good will' but still did not happen.¹⁹ The difference between success and failure in emigre monument building, in the end, depended on the existence of good will of those with legal power over public space.

Russian emigres, like others, built war monuments to connect the living to the dead. But with no power to control public space in foreign countries, they constructed war memorials in spaces where they had some influence, most often in Orthodox cemeteries or areas of general cemeteries reserved for the Orthodox. In Germany, for example, a memorial was erected in 1934 in the Orthodox cemetery in Berlin-Tegel on the initiative of Aleksei A. von Lampe, head of the ROVS section for Central Europe [See Figure 1].²⁰ In such matters, emigres needed to resolve conflicts between Orthodox Russian burial practices and the host country's

ethnically Russian and strongly Orthodox, for Russia's other ethnic groups tended to form institutionally discrete 'emigrations'. For other general treatments of the emigration, see L.K. Shkarenkov, *Agoniia beloi emigratsii* (Moscow 1986); J.E. Hassell, 'Russian Refugees in France and the United States between the World Wars', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 81, 7 (1991), 1-96; K. Schlögel (ed.), *Der große Exodus: Die russische Emigration und ihre Zentren, 1917 bis 1941* (Munich 1994); J. Glad, *Russia Abroad: Writers, History, Politics* (Washington, DC 1999); S.S. Ippolitov, *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia i Evropa: Nesostoiavshiiis al'ians* (Moscow 2004). There are several good older academic studies, especially those by Hans von Rimscha, and many new popular books on the subject in Russia.

18 *Shankhaiskaia zaria* (2 August 1936), 6.

19 *Poslednie novosti* (19 January 1937), 3.

20 Von Lampe spent RM997.15 from about 130 donors, including from what seems to be several dozen Germans. A fundraiser brought in RM84.10, and there were several individual gifts of RM20 to 50; most were small donations of RM 0.50 to RM. Bakhmeteff Archive (Columbia University), ROVS Papers, box 140.

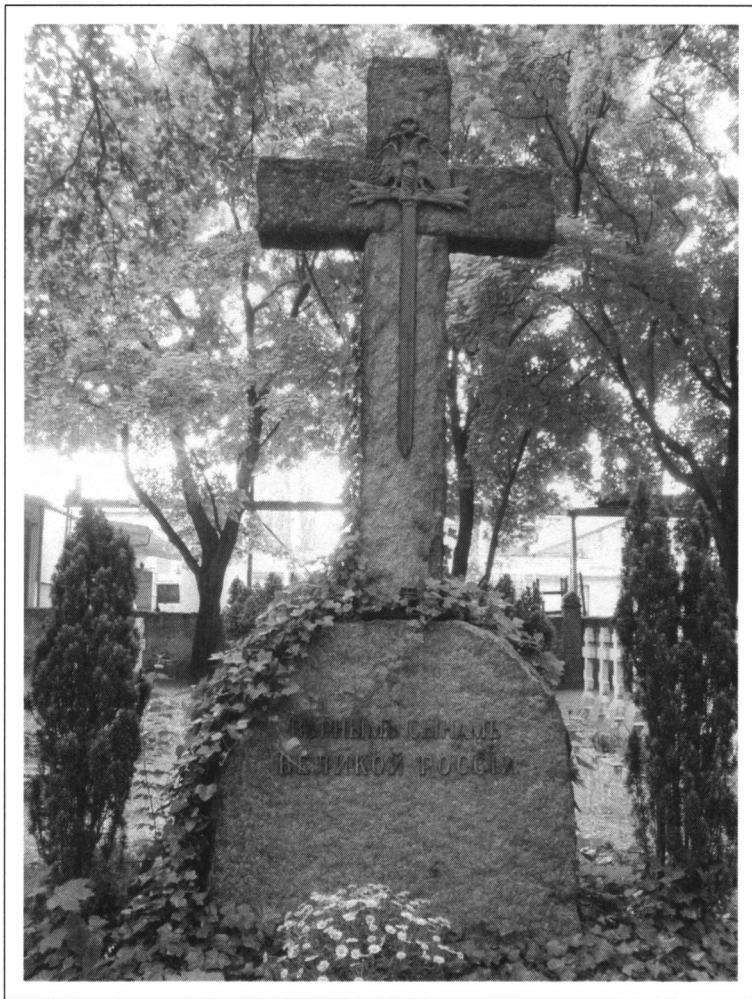


Figure 1. Russian monument. Tegel (Berlin). 2008. Author's photograph. Dedication: 'To the true sons of great Russia'.

laws and culture. The French state organized the fallen of the wartime Russian Expeditionary Force (REF), some 1000 soldiers, into a military cemetery near the villages of Mourmelon-le-Grand and St-Hilaire-le-Grand on the Marne in Champagne, but when emigres built a memorial chapel there in 1937, the legal precepts of French *laïcité* meant they had to build it on private land next to the cemetery [See Figure 2].²¹ In Czechoslovakia, a civic group called the Brotherhood

²¹ In early 1937, the committee to build the memorial chapel had taken in 50,849 French francs and spent 49,616.30. It was estimated that another 19,000 would be needed. *Poslednie novosti* (21 March 1937), 2.

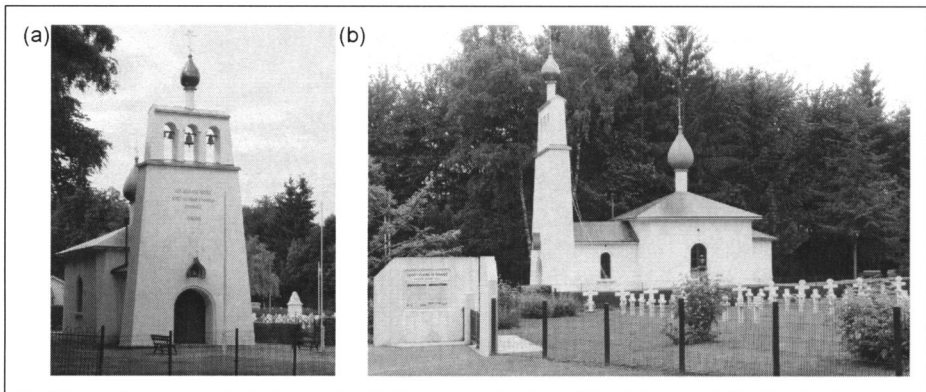


Figure 2. Russian memorial chapel. St-Hilaire-le-Grand (Marne, France). 2012. Author's photograph. The dedication reads: "To the Russian soldiers who died in battle in France 1916–1918".

for the Care of Orthodox Graves built an Orthodox church dedicated to First World War dead in Prague's Olšany cemetery in 1925 but needed a special arrangement from the city to use the land [See Figure 3].²² No major emigre monument, in fact, seems to have been built in Europe in a public space outside a religious space.

Inside emigre military communities, the memory of the First World War was seen to be an important means to maintain social and institutional cohesiveness.²³ For leaders in ROVS, the largest organization of former Russian soldiers, it was used to claim legitimacy among military emigres. Public relations were important because the organization had no legal authority or physical ability to enforce discipline, especially in places like Berlin and Belgrade where right-wing extremists challenged ROVS in the 1930s. General Barbovich, the chief of ROVS in Belgrade, for example, informed headquarters in Paris that he participated in public ceremonies to mark the twentieth anniversary of the war not for sentimental reasons but to weaken other emigre military groups. 'This celebration', he reported, 'arose not by my wish to mark the event at core but only out of tactical considerations, since I don't want to give the initiative into the hands of any kind of unimportant and hostile groups (to us)'.²⁴ Similarly, von Lampe organized the construction of the Berlin monument to unify the emigration around ROVS in competition with the extreme right for the attention of the emigre public. 'The dedication of the

22 The church cost 497,738.18 Czechoslovak crowns. Major donations came from 'unknown people' (300,000 crowns), the Kramář family (10,000), the Yugoslav government (30,000), the Czechoslovak Ministry of Culture (28,210) and the city of Prague (18,181). Large fundraising functions accounted for around 100,000, and about a dozen small donations of between 100 and 1000 crowns. 720 crowns came from donations of less than 100. Czech National Archive (NA), RUESO, karton 2, inv. č. 16.

23 Cohen, 'Oh, That!', 73–6.

24 Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 64. Significant caches of ROVS papers are also found in the Hoover Institution Archive in Stanford, California, and the Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF) in Moscow.



Figure 3. Orthodox church of the Dormition, Olšany Cemetery, Prague, Czech Republic. 2006. Wikimedia Commons. Dezidor. GNU FDL <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:GFDL>, CC-BY-SA 3.0, <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>.

monument was more than spectacular,' he wrote, measuring success in political terms: 'and the unity *around ROVS was greater*. The Russian organizations that *call themselves* Russian national socialists like Vonsiatskii acted 'all high and mighty' (*prosnobirovali*) toward us politically but behaved like riff raff'.²⁵ Both men viewed war commemoration as an instrument of political unity rather than an expression of grief.

²⁵ Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 62. Emphasis in original.

The power of war memory to overcome disruptions or absences in emigre public institutions was not limited to military culture, for it was also used to mobilize public support for war invalids and others who experienced economic and social dislocation. Liberal editorialists and public figures in the emigration, for example, adopted a language of honor and duty to link remembrance to material help of the Union of Russian Invalids. One appeal from emigre intellectuals shows how war charity was needed to forge social connections that no longer existed: ‘Russia can’t do anything. It’s our duty to act . . . It’s the duty of our honor, of Russian honor. Just don’t let them say: “they forgot their own”!’²⁶ In 1926 an editorial in the liberal newspaper *Poslednie novosti* noted that the separation of the wounded from sources of comfort needed to be resolved through the actions of their compatriots:

They gave the motherland that which is most precious: their strength and health. They sacrificed everything and, really, lost everything. . . What remains for them is only to remember their past sacrifice and live in a slow diminishment, ever more forgotten by those around them.²⁷

On the left, distrust for the politics of ROVS and the military did not preclude sympathy for wounded veterans and war victims, and reports of monuments and ceremonies in leftist and liberal newspapers emphasized these aspects of memorials. Mikhail Fedorov, the chair of the organizing committee for the memorial church near St-Hilaire, referred to the plan as a broad social initiative, a ‘national project (*delo*)’ initiated by a small veterans group that expanded to include ‘the heads of all the most powerful Russian organizations in Paris’.²⁸ In Prague, fundraising for a planned war monument to the ‘True Warrior of Russia’ (not realized) was said to contribute to the ‘unification of Russia Abroad, scattered across the globe’.²⁹

Emigre monuments played some role in addressing individual bereavement, but personal sorrow was more often made communal. REF veterans in France advocated a memorial to honor their comrades, but few other emigres had immediate losses that could be addressed at monuments. One newspaper columnist in 1929 did see a ‘thin woman in black’ weep and pray next to ‘the surviving Russian veterans of battle in Champagne’, but he seemed skeptical of her conviction that ‘in the mass grave lies her son, an officer of the first regiment, missing in action’.³⁰ Another found an ‘ordinary fellow’ (*batiushka*) weeping ‘loudly, uncontrollably’ under the hot sun and white stones at the cemetery in 1930.³¹ Newspaper writers more often gave emigres the public burden of taking up the

26 *Poslednie novosti* (21 May 1930), 2.

27 *Poslednie novosti*, (7 January 1926), 1.

28 Hoover Institution Archive, Emel’ianov Papers, box 12, folder 20.

29 *Nedelia* (Prague) (19 July 1929), 3.

30 *Poslednie novosti* (2 July 1929), 3.

31 *Vozrozhdenie* (9 July 1930), 3.

grief of distant compatriots who were cut off from their dead. 'Somewhere in remotest villages in the Urals or in Siberia', wrote a columnist about his visit to St-Hilaire:

are living old people, fathers and mothers of these soldiers, their children are growing up, and through their tears they remember that the bones of their sons and fathers lie in foreign lands, in far France, on foreign soil that they can never reach . . . Here is a piece of Russian sorrow.³²

Homesickness for Russia and previous lives could well up at memorial ceremonies. At the dedication of the Berlin monument, according to von Lampe, the:

old colonels, not to mention the ladies, could not hold back under the emotion of the moment (*pod'em*) and wept during the raising of the national and St. Andrew's flags during the *Kol' slaven* or the tipping of German and boy scout flags during the *Vechnaia pamiat'*.³³

The presence of emigre war monuments was conducive to the reconciliation of a community that was divided internally and severed from familiar institutions and surroundings. In imperial Russia, official public sculpture often represented power through grandiose style, the domination of physical space and institutional links to the state and church.³⁴ In the emigration, though, the state was gone, the church divided and the imperial regime controversial. Monument aesthetics emphasized qualities of personal intimacy, emotional presence and physical closeness rather than the dominance and authority common in many prewar Russian monuments. Shaped by these material constraints and the goals of emigre leaders, memorials came to include small dimensions and intimate spaces, a preference for neo-medieval design over Byzantine, Muscovite or neo-classical architecture, and the reinterpretation of foreign soil as Russian. They emphasized a simple, uncomplicated Russian Orthodoxy that contained direct appeals to personal emotion, maintained a participatory sensibility that ignored social or political distinctions, and remained centered in civil society, features that ran together in the pilgrimages that allowed emigre civic organizations to bring the public to monument sites. The sub-prefect of Valenciennes thus described the town's monument as 'so simple in its subject matter' but at the same time 'so imposing and grandiose'.³⁵

The attribution of Russianness to such monuments served to reduce the emigres' distance from their country by redefining foreign memorial sites as Russian land. In Orthodox tradition, connections between the living and dead are maintained

32 *Poslednie novosti* (8 July 1930), 3.

33 Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 62.

34 A.J. Cohen, 'Long Ago and Far Away: War Monuments, Public Relations, and the Memory of the Russo-Japanese War in Russia, 1907–14', *Russian Review*, 69, 3 (July 2010), 390–1.

35 *Le Petit Valenciennois*, 12 and 13 November 1927. From the Archives Municipales de Valenciennes.

through burial at one's native place, where the deceased would be close to his or her relations.³⁶ By creating physical sites of memory that recalled Russia, emigres could make a country that was distant in time and space 'present' and bridge the gap between themselves and the land they had lost. The separation to be overcome, however, was not to imperial Russia but to a Russia of rural villages and Orthodox people. This connection was strong enough that von Lampe, a Protestant, called the Orthodox cemetery 'a piece of Russia' in his fundraising letter for the Berlin monument.³⁷ The atmosphere during a religious service held at Russian gravesites near Verdun evoked southern Russia so much that a writer had to exclaim 'just like at home!' even as he knew the truth of distance: 'And in this exclamation there was so much love for native fields – and grief that the eye is not resting upon those fields'.³⁸ Next to the REF cemetery in Champagne, the recreation of a simple, rural and Orthodox Russia became even more elaborate. To conduct prayers for the fallen, the Orthodox Church and emigre veterans groups organized a hermitage (*skit*) complete with a few monks, fir trees and a farm as a 'corner of Russia, a monument of the Russian past'.³⁹ Pilgrimages to such memorial sites represented an attempt to close the physical distance between emigres and monuments and between emigres and Russia. In 1930 the Union of Officer Combatants of the French Front called for 'all Russian military organizations and all Russian people to unite in prayerful remembrance of our valorous fallen Russian warriors' on their pilgrimage to the REF cemetery.⁴⁰ Organized pilgrimages to the cemetery took place almost every year in the 1920s and 1930s, and pilgrimages also brought Russians to war memorials in Czechoslovakia in the 1920s.⁴¹

The form of these memorials emphasized a politically neutral Orthodox Christianity to minimize public controversy and maximize links to the idea of a rural, simple Russia. Memorial design focused on the cemetery, the *chasovnia* (chapel) and the *khram-pamiatnik* (memorial church) rather than the figurative sculpture common in late imperial Russia or the metonymy of European First World War monuments. The Orthodox disinclination toward figurative sculpture meant that simple crosses and grave markers dominated emigre memorials, while the design of church memorials evoked the style of parish churches in medieval Pskov and Novgorod [Figure 3]. This aesthetic was consciously chosen for its broad appeal and perceived political neutrality; it was not linked to the Romantic medievalism present in other countries' memorial culture.⁴² Emigre neo-medievalism avoided the classicism associated with the autocratic imperial Russian state and the Byzantinism

36 C. Merridale, 'Revolution among the Dead: Cemeteries in Twentieth-Century Russia', *Mortality*, 8, 2 (2003), 177–8.

37 Hoover Institution Archive, Mariia Dmitrievna Vrangeli' Collection, box 7, folder 7.

38 *Vozrozhdenie* (4 August 1928), 4.

39 *Vozrozhdenie* (12 June 1934), 3.

40 *Poslednie novosti* (23 June 1930), 3.

41 Extensive records of the Czech pilgrimages to Milovice, Terezin and Jaroměř-Josefov are in the NA RUESO collection.

42 For examples, see Goebel, *Medieval Memory*, 14, 187–207, 287–91; R. Robin, *Enclaves of America: The Rhetoric of American Political Architecture Abroad, 1900–1965* (Princeton, NJ 1992), 55.

that recalled supposedly non-Russian cultural influences in Muscovite architecture. Through it, memorials promoted the homeland over the state and the eternal over the transient. The decision for medieval Pskov-Novgorod design for the church in Prague, for example, was settled upon after some controversy as 'a return to a national, purer form of Russian church architecture'.⁴³ It was designed to remind emigres of 'far off, suffering Rus'.⁴⁴ In this way, the Orthodox land of old Rus, distant in time and space, could be made present in modern Central Europe.

First World War monuments thus helped emigres constitute the emigration as a set of public institutions with multiple individual and community functions in a non-Soviet Russian culture. Their presence was an attempt to overcome the bereavement of emigres from the homeland and from each other, and they helped to shape the Russian emigration as a quasi-national community; the committee to build the memorial church at the REF cemetery, for example, wanted it to be 'national, Orthodox and military'.⁴⁵ Individual grief, though, was not separate but integral to the general sense of loss in this community, as one columnist observed during a visit to Champagne: 'We lost everything – family, economic situation, personal happiness, the homeland... Are our sufferings good to anyone? In truth – we have nothing, we have lost everything. Weep, weep'.⁴⁶ First World War memorials, furthermore, communicated a shared experience to others in Europe, which gave emigres access to foreign audience and presence in public spaces in ways that Russo-centric sites of memory like Pushkin could not. The connection between war remembrance, institution-building inside the emigration and public recognition from those outside was made clear in a statement from a group of emigre intellectuals in 1930. 'Peoples honor heroes', they argued.

To the living: care, to the dead: memory. We in a foreign land do not have a tomb of an 'unknown soldier', but we do have thousands of suffering people. They are our honor and our justification (*opravdanie*) before the world. Their wounds and suffering are for Russia. They remained true to honor and obligation. That is our Russian passport.⁴⁷

The suggestion that war remembrance demonstrated public legitimacy to non-Russian audiences shows that such connections to host nation audiences were necessary for emigre war monuments to be built in the first place.

War commemorations were more than an expression of the nation; they were part of an international culture of commemoration that communicated a shared war experience. Anti-Bolshevism, national patriotism, Russian Orthodoxy and the poet Aleksandr Pushkin were major components in the culture of the Russian emigration, but they were not relevant (or even comprehensible) to elites or ordinary people in Europe. The world war, in contrast, was an experience shared across

43 S.P. Postnikov, *Russkie v Prage 1918–1928 gg.* (Prague 1928), 306–7.

44 *Nadezhda Nikolaevna Kramarzh* (Prague 1937), 7.

45 *Vozrozhdenie* (19 May 1928), 6.

46 *Vozrozhdenie* (9 July 1930), 3.

47 *Poslednie novosti*, 21 May 1930, 2.

almost all European states and populations, and war memory provided emigres with a means to create awareness and sympathy for their cause. The former White general Anton Denikin, for example, used it to appeal to the French public to help emigres overcome the difficulties of life in exile:

Russian war veterans have suffered for their country and, indeed, feel forgotten and abandoned. . . . It's our duty to help these unfortunates not just in remembrance of the former fraternity of arms, not just in remembrance of the sacrifices given by Russians for the common cause, but in the name of strict humanity.⁴⁸

This circumstance shaped the form and content of emigre memorials because monuments, unlike most forms of public memory, had to be present in physical space, and Russian people needed help from others in host nations to build them. The form and content of the material culture of the emigres was thus filtered through the remembrance needs of Europeans around them.

Emigres in France followed the lead of the French cult of war dead, and French people and institutions played a direct role in shaping sites of Russian war memory. By the mid-1920s, France was home to the largest number of emigres, who were tolerated, but not necessarily welcomed, in a country with historic ties to imperial Russia.⁴⁹ An editorial in the conservative newspaper *Figaro*, for example, had to remind readers of wartime ties in an appeal to mobilize support to ameliorate the plight of the 'completely dispossessed' emigres.⁵⁰ 'They were never anything but our friends', he observed in 1920. 'They fought for us, they left women and children in Paris whose misery was great, and . . . they have sought refuge with us because they no longer had safety in their country'. In France, formal ceremonies took place around thousands of local monuments, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and on Armistice Day as people and politicians sought to use the memory of the war to bolster the Third Republic, display the strength of France and come to terms with millions of war dead.⁵¹ The state also controlled the process of battlefield exhumation and the creation of cemeteries for the fallen of all nationalities on

48 *Le Figaro* (2 January 1933), 2.

49 On the emigration in France, see R.H. Johnston, *New Mecca, New Babylon: Paris and the Russian Exiles, 1920–1945* (Montreal 1988); M. Gorboff, *La Russie fantôme: L'émigration russe de 1920 à 1950* (Lausanne 1995); H. Menegaldo, *Les Russes à Paris 1919–1939* (Paris 1998); P. Grouix, *Russes de France. D'hier à aujourd'hui* (Monaco 2007).

50 *Le Figaro* (2 November 1920), 1.

51 These represent a melding of republican civic culture, conservative patriotic values, anti-war sentiment, and sadness in French war memorialization. See C. Theodosiou, 'Symbolic Narratives and the Legacy of the Great War: The Celebration of Armistice Day in France in the 1920s', *First World War Studies*, 1, 2 (2010), 186–7; R. Dalisson, 'La célébration du 11 Novembre ou l'enjeu de la mémoire combattante dans l'entre-deux-guerres (1918–1939)', *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 192 (1998), 20–1; A. Becker, 'Deuils privés, deuils collectifs: Comment transfigurer les morts de la Grande Guerre?', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 6, 2 (1998), 175; K.P. Gorman, 'The Return of the Dead: Christian Images of Resurrection and the Postwar Cult of Remembrance', *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society of French History*, 22 (1995), 74; J. Wardhaugh, 'Fighting for the Unknown Soldier: The Contested Territory of the French Nation in 1934–1938', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 15, 2 (2007), 198–9.

French soil, while local communes and citizens helped memorialize Russian soldiers who had died near their towns. The mayor of St-Hilaire thus was declared 'a new friend of the Russians' at the dedication of the memorial church near the REF military cemetery.⁵²

A presence in French civic rituals allowed emigres to join a new community based on their status as allies. Emigre newspapers noted the participation of emigre military units at various parades and demonstrations associated with Armistice Day. The delegation of representatives of ROVS, the Union of Invalids and the Union of Former Officer Combatants were, it was said, 'united with the delegation of French combatants' at the funeral of Marshal Foch, and a French passerby cried 'Long Live Russia!' during a wreath-laying ceremony by emigre military units, who 'had remained true allies to France', at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.⁵³ Emigre reporters noted the small things that signaled French recognition of them as allies, including the fact that the crosses of Russian fallen in Champagne were white, the color of the allies, while the Germans had black grave markers.⁵⁴ One noted that Russians could make connections between home and a foreign land on the Catholic Day of the Dead (All Souls' Day): 'Our home (*rodnyia*) graves have remained where Russia has remained. But walking around on this "Day of the Dead" in foreign Parisian cemeteries you feel that they are not so foreign'.⁵⁵ Metropolitan Evlogii made the wartime alliance one for all time when he spoke at the war monument in Valenciennes: 'Blood spilled on the soil of beautiful and glorious France is the best atmosphere to unite France forever with a Russia national and worthy'.⁵⁶

The link between war memory and French republican political culture was so strong that French memorial practices integrated a wide swath of emigres, including conservative monarchists and illiberal military groups, into French commemoration. The controversies that erupted over emigre military participation at Unknown Soldier ceremonies show the power of the war memory to validate the French establishment and to integrate outsiders. Soviet leaders recognized the quasi-governmental nature of such rituals, which *Temps* called 'an homage' by 'former allies and brothers-in-arms', when they sent an official protest to the French government in 1930.⁵⁷ French conservatives defended the emigres with references to wartime behavior. A writer in *Figaro*, for example, contrasted 'our loyal friends' and 'heroic allies' with the Bolsheviks, 'who betrayed us at Brest-Litovsk'.⁵⁸ Public tensions rose in 1932 after an emigre assassinated the French president, supposedly to prevent diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union. In their criticism of the emigres, French Communists recognized the link between the Third Republic and the emigres and used the one to discredit the other. 'The "democratic" France of the

52 *Poslednie novosti* (7 June 1938), 4.

53 *Poslednie novosti* (25 March 1929), 1; *Poslednie novosti* (7 September 1930), 1.

54 *Poslednie novosti* (8 July 1930), 3.

55 *Poslednie novosti* (2 November 1929), 3.

56 *Le Grand Echo* (8 November 1927). From the Archives Municipales de Valenciennes.

57 *Le Temps* (24 September 1930), 3.

58 *Le Figaro* (22 September 1930), 1.

Poincarés, Briands, Herriots and Blums has been the center of the activity of the Russian white guardists', wrote a reporter in *Humanité* in 1932, 'The monarchists and the "republicans", the democrats and the "socialists" (Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries), have found their chosen place to foment their criminal intrigues under the wing of the French imperialism'.⁵⁹ Henri Barbusse himself argued that emigre appearances at Unknown Soldier ceremonies proved that the government actively supported armed anti-Bolshevik insurrectionists.⁶⁰ Communists sought to break the connection between Russian emigres, the war and the patriotism of the French bourgeois republic because those links had become so obvious by the 1930s.

In Czechoslovakia, the memory of the war formed a nexus that combined state building with public philoslavism, a phenomenon with no counterpart in France.⁶¹ Although scholars have long discounted or ignored political Pan Slavism and Neoslavism as ineffective or moribund, a popular notion of Slavic solidarity was strong in some Slavic countries during the interwar period.⁶² Elites in new states like Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia needed material and ideological support to consolidate their legitimacy, and emigres were valued for their technical expertise.⁶³ The Russian Action of the Czechoslovak government, for example, started as an attempt to prepare Russian exiles for return to a future non-Bolshevik Russia, but the policy resulted in the emergence of Prague as an emigre center of scientific and university inquiry. Philoslavism could justify favorable treatment of the (sometimes unpopular) emigres to local audiences, and appeals to Slavic solidarity helped emigres argue for acceptance, assistance and sympathy.⁶⁴ It was a way for emigres and their supporters to build support for each other, especially in lands where a wartime alliance had existed or could be imagined. It is probably no coincidence that emigre commemoration of the war appears to have been more muted in Poland, a major Slavic state whose authorities viewed Russians as serious problems.⁶⁵

59 *L'Humanité* (18 May 1932), 1.

60 *L'Humanité* (12 July 1932), 3.

61 I use *philoslavism* to describe general cultural expressions of Slavic solidarity. *Pan Slavism*, *Neoslavism* and *Slavophilism* all have specific political or philosophical meanings that are misleading in this context.

62 H. Kohn, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology* (New York, NY 1960), 274–5. For examples of general philoslavism in the interwar period, see N.W. Sobe, 'Cultivating a "Slavic Modern": Yugoslav Beekeeping, Schooling and Travel in the 1920s and 1930s', *Paedagogica Historica*, 41, 1 and 2 (February 2005), 143–58; S. Terzić, 'About Eastern and Western Pan Slavism (in the XIX-th and the beginning of the XX-th century)', *Istorijski časopis*, LIII (2006), 317–32.

63 On the emigration in Czechoslovakia, see S. Tejchmanová, *Rusko v Československu: Bílá emigrace v ČSR 1917–1939* (Prague 1993); V. Veber, et al., *Ruská a ukrajinská emigrace v ČSR v letech 1918–1945*, 4 volumes (Prague 1993–6); E.P. Serapionova, *Rossiiskaia emigratsiia v Chekhoslovatskoi respublike (20–30-e gody)* (Moscow 1995); E. Chinyaeva, *Russians Outside Russia: The Emigré Community in Czechoslovakia 1918–1938* (Munich 2001); C. Andreyev and I. Savický, *Russia Abroad: Prague and the Russian Diaspora, 1918–1938* (New Haven, CT 2004).

64 See, for example, *Nedelia* (1 August 1929), 4; *Sovremennye zapiski* (Paris), XXXVI (1928), 509.

65 To better manage its relations with the Soviet Union, the Polish government put the political activities of the Russian emigration under some pressure in the interwar period, and the small Russian-speaking ethnic minority population in Poland generally felt threatened by cultural assimilation. Moreover, the Polish memory of the war itself was complex, and it did not include, necessarily, a

Slavic solidarity and the war came together in the emigration's memorial projects in Czechoslovakia. A 1930 visit to a Russian memorial in Terezín, 'planned by Russians', for example, turned into 'a Russian-Czech political demonstration in a manifestation of Slavic mutuality'.⁶⁶ The Prague memorial church was also conceived as 'an artistic memorial church to Russian and Slavic warriors who fell in the World War', and a 'symbol of Slavic mutuality (*vzaimnosti*) and Russian gratitude in the heart of the Czech land'.⁶⁷ Karel Kramář, a Czech nationalist politician who became leader of the National Democratic Party and the country's first prime minister (1918–19), hailed it as a 'monument of Slavic connections', a means to 'remind Russians not only about their former sufferings but also about their recognition on the side of the Slavs'.⁶⁸ The emigres had a great patron in Kramář, a prominent Russophile and Pan-Slav who, with his Russian spouse Nadezhda, provided monetary and political capital for the Prague church. Its existence in fact depended on the actions of Kramář, who arranged directly and indirectly for about four-fifths of the funding for the building and managed the project's legal relationships with local authorities.⁶⁹ Emigre groups, for their part, made shows of support at various Czech commemorations, including those surrounding the Zborov monument (1927) and the tenth anniversary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia (1928).

This linkage of old friends and imagined allies via cultural philoslavism and war memory served the interest of Czechs who wanted to weaken connections to Germany and Germans in the new state. Czech elites were anxious to emphasize the Czech role in the larger struggle for freedom against Germanism, a strategy that linked the Czech nation to the Allies.⁷⁰ The public prominence of the Czech Legion (formed in Russia to fight against the Germans) in the interwar years had its source in the need to create an anti-German Czech nation. The alliance between the Russian emigres and Karel Kramář thus went beyond his family and personal Russophilism; it represented an attempt to demonstrate an anti-Masaryk foreign and domestic policy. The political division between Masaryk and Beneš, who advocated alliance with the West, and Kramář, who promoted stronger Slavic ties (including a non-Bolshevik Russia), was bitter, but both sides wanted to strengthen Czechoslovakia by limiting German influence.⁷¹ During the 1930

charitable view of Russian participation in the conflict. See T. Schramm, 'Le mémoire polonaise de la première guerre mondiale', *Guerres mondiales and conflits contemporains*, 228 (2007), 61–2.

66 *Vozrozhdenie* (17 October 1930), 5.

67 NA, RUESO, karton 2, inv. č. 16, document 21, 1.

68 *Nadezhda Nikolaevna Kramarzh*, 7, 8.

69 E.P. Serapionova, *Karel Kramarzh i Rossiia. 1890-1937 gody* (Moscow 2006), 447.

70 N. Stegmann, 'Soldaten und Bürger: Selbstbilder tschechoslowakischer Legionäre in der Ersten Republik', *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift*, 61, 1 (2002), 46; N.M. Wingfield, 'The Battle of Zborov and the Politics of Commemoration in Czechoslovakia', *East European Politics and Societies*, 17, 4 (2003), 656–7; M. Zückert, 'Memory of War and Nation-State Integration: Czech and German Veterans in Czechoslovakia after 1918', *Central Europe*, 4, 2 (2006), 120–1.

71 See E. Beneš, *Deutschland und die Tschechoslowakei: Ein Beitrag zu einer historisch-politischen Diskussion* (Sangerhausen 2007), 167–9, 176; M. Winkler, *Karel Kramář (1860–1937): Selbstbild, Fremdwahrnehmungen und Modernisierungsverständnis eines tschechischen Politikers* (Munich 2002), 252–3.

pilgrimage to the Terezín memorial, emigre orators emphasized their interest in the fight against Bolsheviks while Czechs had another priority: the freedom of the Slavs.⁷²

While emigres could rely on some form of institutional or rhetorical friendship in France and Czechoslovakia, the situation in Germany was more complex. The country was a major center of the emigration in the early twenties, but the emigre population shrank dramatically after the Great Inflation, the onset of the Depression and the Nazi takeover. Russian emigres found little public support from the German state and people in the 1920s, and they became the object of internal and external political intrigue after 1933.⁷³ Locals sometimes honored the graves of Russian fallen, but the commemoration of an enemy's participation in the war was not important in mainstream German war memorialization.⁷⁴ Emigre monuments were completed mostly under the initiative of the emigre community. In Berlin, the Russian Orthodox cemetery in the suburb of Tegel hosted a dormitory and tobacco workshop for invalided Russian veterans, and small markers were set up for those who died of disease or war wounds. Aleksei von Lampe relied almost exclusively on the emigre community to fund 'his monument' there in 1934.⁷⁵ He did not expect German government representatives to attend the dedication: 'The war minister answered my *notification* about the ceremony only with thanks. Such is big politics. I didn't write to anyone else'.⁷⁶

Von Lampe was unable to find a suitable German audience for his Russian war memorial due to unstable conditions in German public discourse. The memory of the war was contested across political lines in Germany, and monument construction was fractured by local and regional interests.⁷⁷ Joint memorial ceremonies with German veterans' organizations and churches existed throughout the 1920s on the Protestant German Day of the Dead (*Totensonntag*), but, ironically, these veterans were by and large pacifists from Social Democratic and democratic milieus.⁷⁸ They hoped to further an anti-war agenda that did not meet with much response in the emigre community, especially from people in military organizations like ROVS who defined themselves as anti-Bolshevik warriors. Von Lampe wryly

72 *Vozrozhdenie* (17 October 1930), 5.

73 On the emigration in Germany, see H.-E. Volkmann, *Die russische Emigration in Deutschland 1919–1929* (Würzburg 1966); R.C. Williams, *Culture in Exile: Russian Émigrés in Germany, 1881–1941* (Ithaca, NY 1972); K. Schlögel (ed.), *Russische Emigration in Deutschland 1918 bis 1941: Leben im europäischen Bürgerkrieg* (Berlin 1995).

74 For local residents' care of war graves in East Prussia, see *Rul'* (16 September 1928), 8; Bakhmeteff Archive, Seifullin Papers.

75 Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 62.

76 Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 62. Emphasis in original.

77 C. Saehrendt, *Der Stellungskrieg der Denkmäler: Kriegerdenkmäler im Berlin der Zwischenkriegszeit (1919–1939)* (Bonn 2004), 156; B. Ziemann, 'Die deutsche Nation und ihr zentraler Erinnerungsort: Das "Nationaldenkmal für die Gefallenen im Weltkrieg" und die Idee des "Unbekannten Soldaten" 1914–1935', in H. Berding (ed.), *Krieg und Erinnerung* (Göttingen 2000), 67–8; S.A. Forner, 'War Commemoration and the Republic in Crisis: Weimar Germany and the Neue Wache', *Central European History*, 35, 4 (2002), 513–14.

78 In Berlin, veterans' organizations conducted occasional commemorations for Russian soldiers throughout the 1920s. See *Rul'* (23 November 1921), 5; (19 November 1926), 4; (27 November 1928), 3.

observed that it took an anti-Bolshevik Social Democrat at a joint war commemoration to argue that Germany should show more hospitality towards the emigres. For von Lampe, the contrast with the German right, whose newspapers urged the emigres to return home to certain death, could not be greater. 'Typical', he wrote, 'also in comparison to the attempts of German nationalists after Locarno to gravitate towards the Bolsheviks!'⁷⁹ Their attitude showed him that it was useless to try to convince mainstream German rightists, from his point-of-view the natural allies of the emigres, that Russians, whether emigre or Soviet, were not 'hopelessly hostile to Germany'.⁸⁰ In the end, he found no acceptable non-Russian friends for the monument; for him, the German left was distasteful, the extreme right unsavory and mainstream nationalists full of suspicion.

Von Lampe's negative reaction to emigre attempts to join different non-Russian public cultures shows how war memorials served to build public links between emigres and host nations. He believed that the emigres stood to lose sight of the larger anti-Soviet goal as they sought to incur favor through the adoption of the culture of others. 'In the pursuit of improving its position', he wrote to Mariia Wrangel in 1929,

the Russian emigration in several countries is forgetting its personality (*litso*) and is doing what in your work would be called 'a tactless emigration' – that tactlessness, in my opinion, includes . . . the *Russian* celebration of the ten year anniversary of the independence of Czechoslovakia, the participation in demonstrations at the grave of the Unknown Soldier in Paris, the appearance in the Russian flag [*sic*] of a group of Russians in Berlin at the time of the arrival of President Hindenburg, and so on.⁸¹

Von Lampe viewed himself as a representative of Russian national interests, and for him the tendency of the emigres to create public relations ties with different European states threatened the emigres' common struggle against the Soviet Union. He opposed the participation of emigre veterans at ceremonies in Paris because, while it may have helped emigres in France, it impeded his efforts in Germany to reach out to German conservatives who recalled the old Franco–Russian alliance.⁸² Von Lampe's discomfort shows how war memorials and war memory could be international (between nations), transnational (across national boundaries) and nationalist (focused on one nation) all at the same time. Underneath these various contexts, though, always lay the same function of the monument as a means to communicate nearness, closeness and friendship through physical presence.

⁷⁹ Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 44.

⁸⁰ Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 62.

⁸¹ Hoover Institution Archive, Mariia Dmitrievna Vrangeli' Collection, box 7, folder 7. Emphasis in original.

⁸² Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 14.

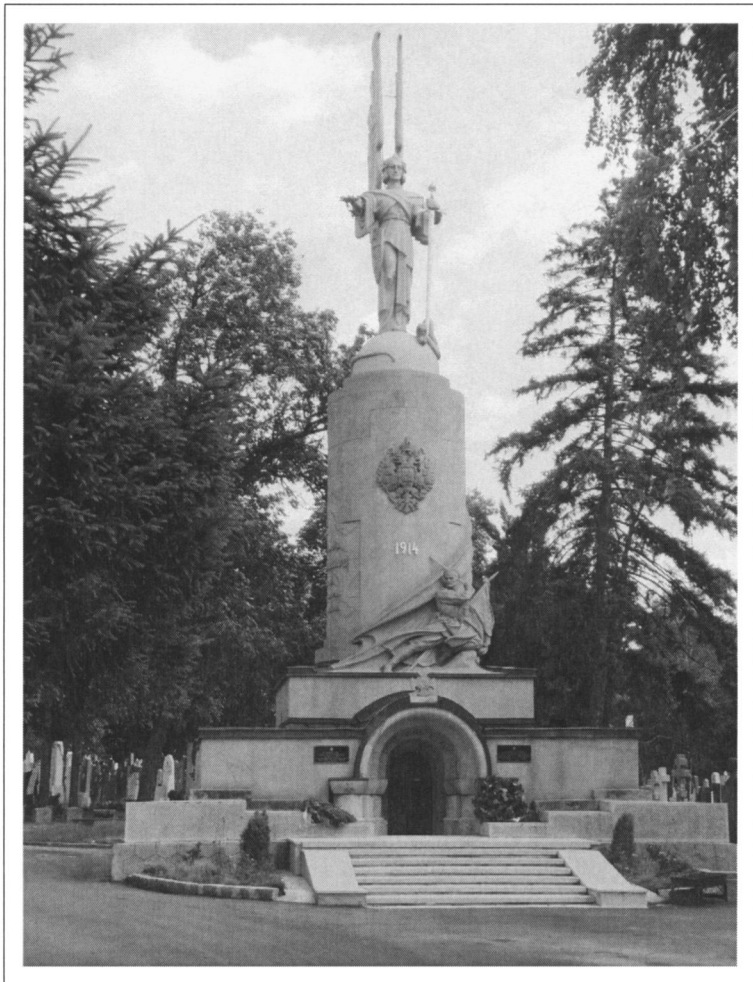


Figure 4. Russian monument. Novo Groblje cemetery, Belgrade. 2010. Author's photograph.

The many ways in which First World War monuments were built to form new public connections, where few or none existed before, can be seen in the case of Yugoslavia. In the 1930s, local emigre activists worked with Serbian politicians to bring the remains of Russian soldiers from distant places across Yugoslavia to an ossuary located in the Novo Groblje cemetery in Belgrade, where a large monument was built from 1934 to 1936 [See Figure 4].

Emigre, Yugoslav and foreign public figures would gather at the memorial on Armistice Day and August 1 to profess alliance and friendship, while Russians and Serbs used moments in its construction to celebrate a common war experience, religion and culture. The patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church expressed such connections during a speech at the monument's opening:

The Russians bore great sacrifices on our account wishing to defend Serbs at a time when powerful enemies attacked tiny Serbia from all sides. And the great Slavic soul of the Russians did not allow it to be looked upon with indifference that a fraternal Slavic people should perish.⁸³

The story of this monument's construction illuminates its public relations role as a potential unifier and gives insight into the qualities that successful war monuments were expected to have in the emigration.

The First World War was important for Serbian public figures in Yugoslavia, not least because it represented the new postwar state as the final step in creation of a greater Serbia. Serbia had been at the center of the events that led to the war, and Serbian people experienced massive casualties from combat, disease and material deprivation. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (formally renamed Yugoslavia in 1929) was a direct creation of the First World War, and its leaders faced several new problems; they had to administer a larger territory with the institutions of old Serbia, defend territorial gains from irredentists in neighboring states and explain their legitimacy to Yugoslavia's non-Serb population. In official remembrance, the First World War was combined with the Balkan Wars into the (Serbian) Wars of Liberation to emphasize the link between prewar Serbia and postwar Yugoslavia.⁸⁴ The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, built on Avala Mountain in 1938, is still dedicated to those who fell in '1912–1918', as are many other Serbian war monuments.⁸⁵ In Belgrade, large ceremonies were held at war monuments on November 11, and participants emphasized the connection of Yugoslavs to allies and friends.⁸⁶ A news reporter in the daily *Politika* thus described the Belgrade Monument of Gratitude to France, dedicated on 11 November 1930, as a 'great manifestation of French–Yugoslav friendship'.⁸⁷ A foreign traveler noted how international recognition, Serbian dynastic legitimacy, Yugoslav unity and war memory were all linked in official commemorative practice:

Foreign statesmen and delegations come regularly and frequently to Belgrade, and practically all of them lay a wreath on the Avala memorial, and then go on to Oplenac to pay homage there to the makers of Yugoslavia, the Kings Peter I, known as the Liberator, and Alexander I, known as the Unifier.⁸⁸

83 *Vozrozhdenie* (19 January 1936), 5.

84 V. Drapac, 'The Memory of War and the History of the First Yugoslavia', *War and Society*, 23, special number (September 2005), 39–40.

85 For examples, see V. Subotić, et al., *Memorijali oslobodilackih ratova Srbije*, I, 2 (Belgrade 2006), 102, 132–5, 165–6, 172–82.

86 These include a victory monument by Ivan Meštrović (1928), one to French allies (1930) and another to Belgrade defenders (1931) as well as the Russian emigre monument discussed here.

87 *Politika* (12 November 1930), 1. On the role of monuments in Franco–Yugoslav relations, see S. Sretenovic, 'French Cultural Diplomacy in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians in the 1920s', *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'histoire*, 16, 1 (February 2009), 37–8.

88 L. Fielding Edwards, *A Wayfarer in Yugoslavia* (New York, NY 1939), 235–6. Andrew Wachtel argues that the Avala memorial was a failed attempt to create a synthetic cultural Yugoslavism in which 'a Serbian king' demonstrated 'his Yugoslav feeling' by commissioning a 'Croatian sculptor'

Philoslavism was as important for the Russian war memorial in Yugoslavia as in Czechoslovakia. In the 1920s, the Yugoslav government recruited emigres with skills in military and administrative matters to take positions in the new state's bureaucracy, and it invited Russian agricultural workers to farm local land. Serbia was an attractive home for emigres who valued the shared religion, similar language and long-standing pre-war ties to the prerevolutionary Russian state, and the emigre community in Yugoslavia was second only to France in Europe for its size.⁸⁹ Professions of Slavic unity, in fact, often turned into three-way celebrations of Czech, Serb and Russian friendship. At Jaroměř-Josefov in Czechoslovakia (a former POW camp), a monument was erected to Russian and Serbian dead, while Serbian remains were laid alongside Russian ones at the memorial church in Prague; both were supported with significant funding from the Yugoslav Ministry of Religion.⁹⁰ Plans for a memorial complex at a former POW camp near the Croatian city Osijek in the late 1930s included a proposed Orthodox memorial church to be decorated with busts of Alexander I and Peter I of Serbia and Nicholas II of Russia.⁹¹ The assertion of a memory of Slavic solidarity in wartime was one way to link the Slavic populations of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Russia in the present.

As in Berlin, the memorial in Belgrade emerged from a competition between rival groups for influence in the emigre military community. It was largely the result of the organizing skill of Mikhail F. Skorodumov, a figure on the radical right who sought to mobilize a more aggressive opposition to the Bolsheviks in Yugoslavia. Skorodumov and his associates considered the ROVS organization in Belgrade to be riddled with Soviet agents, and they adopted a strategy of open confrontation with the local ROVS leadership.⁹² After his expulsion from ROVS, Skorodumov formed a rival veterans' organization, the Russian People's Militia, and followed a public relations strategy to undermine ROVS in the eyes of the emigres and Yugoslav public. As part of this strategy, he helped arrange for the transportation of remains of Russian soldiers to Belgrade and the construction of the monument. The public relations intent of this activity was confirmed after a scandal over Soviet agents inside ROVS, during which a Skorodumov associate

(Meštrović). See A.B. Wachtel, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia* (Stanford, CA 1998), 109–16. For more, see A. Ignjatović, 'From Constructed Memory to Imagined National Tradition: The Tomb of the Unknown Yugoslav Soldier (1934–1938)', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 88, 4 (October 2010), 624–51.

89 On the emigration in Yugoslavia, see A. Arsen'ev, et al., *Russkaia emigratsiia v Jugoslavii* (Moscow 1996); V.D. Kozlitsin, *Russkaia i ukrainskaia emigratsiia v Jugoslavii 1919–1945* (Khar'kov 1996); T. Milenković and M. Pavlović, *Beloemigracija u Jugoslaviji 1918–1941*, 2 volumes (Belgrade 2006); Miroslav Jovanović, *Ruska emigracija na Balkanu (1920–1940)* (Belgrade 2006); J. Babović, 'Political, Social, and Personal: The Encounters of the Russian Emigration in Yugoslavia, 1921–1941', *Serbian Studies*, 21, 1 (2007), 1–36.

90 Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), fond 69, fasc. 117.

91 AJ, fond 74, fasc. 98.

92 Skorodumov was a supporter of Kirill Vladimirovich (d. 1938) as the heir to the Romanov throne, from whom he received the title of general. He published a series of political polemics and personal attacks against ROVS and other organizations in the right-wing emigre newspaper *Tsarskii vestnik*. One ROVS member called him a 'psychopath'. Bakhmeteff Archive, Pronin Collection.

admitted to ROVS investigators that it was in part a tactic to reach the Serb public in competition with ROVS: 'Komorosvkii [an accused Soviet agent] led a campaign against a highly patriotic initiative – the construction of a monument to Russian warriors undertaken by Skorodumov'.⁹³ He portrayed the construction of the monument as a victory for his group in Serbian public opinion:

the delicate work of General Barbovich [leader of the ROVS Balkan section], unable to personally outdo this idea, was to choose the path of tactless opposition. But he could not stop completion of the construction and certainly lowered the prestige of ROVS, especially in Serbian eyes.

The Belgrade memorial was designed to communicate a shared experience to Yugoslavs as well as to Russian emigres. Skorodumov clearly intended it to unify both emigres and Serbs, as he later recalled: 'It might have seemed that this would be in the interests of all Russian emigrants, the pretext to unify and to create a common Yugoslav–Russian manifestation in honor of a national Russia'.⁹⁴ Specifically, he claimed to want the memorial to help turn Serbian public opinion against formal recognition of the Soviet state by Yugoslavia. 'In order to stop the developing sympathy of the Serbs to the Soviets (*Sovdeprii*) and return them to tsarist Russia', he wrote, 'I undertook the construction of a monument in Serbia to Russian warriors and the transfer of the remains of Russian officers and soldiers who died for the salvation of Serbia from the Salonika front to Belgrade'.⁹⁵ The Serbian politicians Dobra and Nikola Bogdanović helped organize construction, and many individuals and institutions from around Yugoslavia contributed to the building fund, including the administrations of the kings Alexander I and Peter II, which helped finance the project with sums of 5000 and 10,000 dinars.⁹⁶ The crowds of Serbian, emigre and foreign dignitaries at monument ceremonies represented that unity in the newspaper but also made it real in physical space.

Yugoslav royal authorities had reasons to support the monument but perhaps feared to be associated with the divisive figure of Skorodumov. The Russian Union of Writers in Yugoslavia, a group with a liberal reputation, warned in 1934 that Skorodumov's pretention to act in the name of the Russian community could damage the reputation of the emigres in the Yugoslav public.⁹⁷ This concern reached the highest office when V.N. Shtrandman, the former Russian ambassador, de facto liaison between the emigre community and the Yugoslav government, and

93 Bakhmeteff Archive, ROVS Papers, box 171.

94 M.F. Skorodumov, *Za Rossiui* (Los Angeles, CA 1966), 19.

95 *Ibid.*, 19.

96 AJ, fond 74, fasc. 98. In 1934 the emigre newspaper *Tsarskii vestnik* mentioned donations of between 50 and 100 dinars from various Serbian sources, including individual, companies and public officials. The city of Belgrade gave 10,000 dinars, the National Bank 10,000 and the Serbian National Assembly another 2000. *Tsarskii vestnik*, 30 September 1934, 3. Other donors are listed in *Tsarskii vestnik* (24 March 1935), 3; (30 June 1935), 2–3; (28 July 1935), 3; (11 August 1935), 3; (3 November 1935), 3.

97 *Poslednie novosti* (30 September 1934), 2.

frequent target of Skorodumov's public criticism, wrote to the Marshall of the Court to lobby against the presence of a royal official at ceremonies scheduled to honor Nicholas II and Russian soldiers at the monument in August 1938. 'Last year a representative of His Majesty the King was not present at this sad occasion', Shtrandman wrote in a memo labeled 'confidential'.⁹⁸ 'Since General Skorodumov does *not deserve* any trust', he emphasized, 'I think that this is also not the time to show High Grace if General Skorodumov were to turn to the royal court to ask for it from the highest place'. Although royal representatives had attended monument ceremonies in previous years, they may have taken Shtrandman's advice, for no representative of the king was listed among the Yugoslav religious and military dignitaries at the monument in 1938.⁹⁹

Public disputes around the Belgrade memorial show that war monuments in the emigration were expected to bring people together through non-partisan, non-imperial design. Liberals, leftists and mainstream conservative emigres criticized its political origins, a sign that successful war monuments needed to have broad and politically neutral support to unify emigres. In 1934 the left-wing, some military groups, Sokol organizations and schoolchildren were missing from monument ceremonies.¹⁰⁰ In 1936 a commentator in *Vozrozhdenie*, a newspaper sympathetic to ROVS, argued that the memorial's main flaw was its partisan nature: 'Unfortunately, the initiative for the erection of the memorial did not come from a special general emigrant committee but from a small group of persons of narrow-party character'.¹⁰¹ Skorodumov disputed this characterization and criticized other 'lies' told about the monument, including an overestimation of its height by 10 meters and misrepresentation of the Russian soldier figure, a non-com, as an officer.¹⁰² Whether intentional or not, the writer in *Vozrozhdenie* had presented the monument as more 'imperial Russian' in its size, social representations and politics than Skorodumov desired. In fact, its depiction of a heroic figure, imperial crest and dedication to the last tsar and imposing height do suggest an imperial aesthetic (although the allegorical figure and styling have a distinctive interwar cast). The maintenance of imperial social hierarchy was made obvious when official ceremonies were cast as remembrance for 'those who perished in the war, beginning with Emperor Nicholas II'.¹⁰³ Skorodumov later admitted that the memorial had failed to unify emigres as he had intended.¹⁰⁴

The circumstance of the First World War as an international site of memory shaped the public expression of Russian war memory. In Soviet official media, the First World War served to demonstrate the separation of the revolutionary regime from the bourgeois European world.¹⁰⁵ Russian emigres, by contrast, used war

98 AJ, fond 74, fasc. 202.

99 *Politika* (8 August 1938), 6.

100 *Tsarskii vestnik* (26 August 1934), 2. A year later the 'opposition' was still absent. *Tsarskii vestnik* (4 August 1935), 3.

101 *Vozrozhdenie* (19 January 1936), 5.

102 *Tsarskii vestnik* (2 February 1936), 2.

103 *Tsarskii vestnik* (26 April 1936), 2.

104 Skorodumov, *Za Rossiia*, 19.

105 Cohen, 'Oh, That!', 78–9.

memorials as a passport that signified their right to belong to a common European experience, and elites in countries like France, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia integrated Russia's war, through the emigres, into national commemorative practices. Russian First World War monuments thus exist because emigres and their European friends once believed such objects were a useful way to reduce a sense of individual and collective bereavement that went far beyond war-related grief to include manifold disruptions in personal, political and public life that people faced in the tumultuous 1920s and 1930s. Even in the 1970s, an anti-communist emigre who stood before the Belgrade monument felt that its presence brought him both closer to Russia and further from the Soviet Union:

I believe that this experience in Belgrade kind of helped me to begin thinking that probably I might one day revisit my homeland Russia. To me it remains Russia, not the Soviet Union, which is actually the communist conspiracy based on the territory of Russia.¹⁰⁶

His surprise that Soviet soldiers and Yugoslav communists did not demolish the memorial in 1945 reminds us that such emigre monuments could only exist with the support of Russians and the sufferance of local audiences. Indeed, without the international features of First World War remembrance, there may not have been Russian monuments to the war anywhere at all.

Biographical Note

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106 A. Albov, *Recollections of Pre-Revolutionary Russia, the Russian Revolution and Civil War, the Balkans in the 1930s, and Service in the Vlasov Army in World War II* (Berkeley, CA 1986), 536.