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Books that link worlds: travel guides, the development of transportation infrastructure, and the emergence of the tourism industry in imperial Russia, nineteenth–early twentieth centuries

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ABSTRACT

Russian guidebooks evolved to become more practical and utilitarian at the end of the nineteenth century, several decades later than in Western Europe. By analysing an extensive number of Russian travel guides, we explore the network of actors who engaged in this transformation. We approach travel guides as complex artefacts that combine social interaction and market logistics integrating elements from the past and present, from different geographical locations, and from the various professional activities of authors, publishers, and entrepreneurs who strove to inform increasingly diverse consumers. Approaching travel guides collectively as a boundary object helps to shed light on the commercialisation of travel and the emergence of the tourism industry in the Russian Empire, developments set in motion not only by the work arrangements of governmental bodies but also, and more significantly, by public and commercial initiatives.

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Introduction

Readers who bought the first edition of the Black Sea Guide might have done so after reading this advertisement:

Yalta. Hot off the press – a book every steamship passenger needs: a practical Black Sea guide providing maps of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, compiled and published by Grigorii Moskvich. Price: 30 kopecks. Containing: Brief essays about the Black Sea Navy and the ROPT (Russian Society of Shipping and Trade) fleet. A comprehensive description of all ROPT passenger ships cruising the waters of Crimea and the Caucasus. A brief description of all ports from Batumi to Odessa. A brief description of the shoreline, hills and lighthouses visible from the steamers. A brief essay about New Athos (in Abkhazia). Departures and arrivals of ROPT steamers; passenger rules and tariffs. Train schedules for 1894: Transcaucasian (Batumi-Poti); Vladikavkazkaia (Novorossiisk); Dzhankoi-Feodosia; Lozovaia-Sevastopol’ and South-Western Railways. Cab tariffs in every port.1

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Released in 1894 by Grigorii Moskvich, publisher, bookseller and native of Yalta on the Black Sea coast, the elegant red handbook promised practical, up-to-date information for travellers who visited the region by sea. Many ads dealt with travel and transportation, as well as the entrepreneurial activities of different firms and the products they offered. In his Black Sea guide, Moskvich provided different sorts of information that could prove useful to passengers and tourists. This practical travel guide was one among dozens of popular publications for travellers in Russia that appeared in the late nineteenth century. Intensive growth in the guidebook publishing market reflected new trends in economic development and a noticeable rise in mobility flows; it marked a new stage in the formation of the travel industry in the Russian Empire.

Only after the Napoleonic Wars did the Russian public begin to discover the human and natural environment of their own country. Before that, Russian elite travelled for pleasure in Europe, and on business at home. Along with timetables, passenger tickets, cheap souvenirs, and hotel and restaurant price lists, guidebooks were to become essential accoutrements of travel in Russia by the end of the nineteenth century. Business travellers, vacationers, and eventually tourists bought guidebooks, which became much in demand. They acquired practical dimensions over time, evolving into popular publications for a broader audience, an indispensable attribute of the new practices. Travel guides proved to be highly sensitive to the economic, technological and social changes taking place during the nineteenth century. Moreover, these books reflected the interests of diverse social and professional groups that interacted with each other with regard to both the creation and the use of such publications. Responding to travellers’ demands, publishers increased guidebook circulation, cooperating with entrepreneurs to stay profitable while keeping prices low for their readers. Entrepreneurs, in turn, began to consider guidebooks to be an effective advertising space for services and commodities. The growing market for practical guides was directly linked to the development of transportation services and to the emergence of the tourism industry in Russia. Focusing on Russian guidebooks as an informational space and also as a commodity, this article explores links between the processes of the commercialisation of travel, the development of transportation technologies and infrastructure, and the emergence of the tourism industry in late imperial Russia.

Little is known about the number of travellers, vacationers, tourists and resort visitors, or about the dynamics of mobility in imperial Russia. Since transportation was offered by private companies as well as state-owned enterprises, the body of statistical data about passengers transported is neither regular nor systematic. Fragmentary data significantly impedes study of the mobility landscape. However, an outline of general trends can be made that sheds light on major changes taking place and developing rapidly after the mid-nineteenth century. While passengers who used stagecoach services in the 1830–1850s counted in the tens of thousands annually, numbers travelling with big shipping companies (like ROPT), which came into existence in the 1850–1860s, rose to hundreds of thousands of passengers. After the railroad network was constructed and began to operate in the early twentieth century, millions of passengers travelled by rail annually. For instance, in 1912, 231.38 million passengers were transported by rail in Russia, 22.4 million of them on first- and second-class tickets. Few travelled long distances. Nevertheless, by 1913, over a hundred thousand visitors had journeyed to the mud and mineral baths located in provinces far from St. Petersburg and Moscow. All those people travelling at this time required reliable information, instruction, advice, and help in order to organise
and complete their journey successfully. Becoming a mass social practice, travel, vacation, and tourism combined to form an effective social laboratory of modernity.\(^2\)

The publication of travel guides was sensitive to broad stages in the formation of the Russian travel industry. To reconstruct the general spread of this cultural and entrepreneurial practice, we compiled a database of travel guides devoted to different regions of the Russian Empire, and published in the Russian language during the ‘long’ nineteenth century (1801–1917). This database contains about 400 original titles (re-issues were not included). We limited the scope of our search to route guides (and/or regional guides), as this type of guidebook more vividly mirrored the rise of new mobility regimes and their relationship to the development of transportation services. Our analysis of the travel guide database generated a graph showing trends in publication across the long nineteenth century (Figure 1). The first guide was issued in 1801; however, until 1850, only 3–4 guides were released every ten years (14 guides overall in that period). During the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of published guides grew more than 13 times: the period from 1850 until the late 1890s saw the release of 185 original travel guides. During the 17 years from 1900 to 1917, 208 new guides were published.

Correlations between the development of transportation technologies in Russia and the regional spread of guidebooks are additionally traceable through analysis of their spatial focus. Whereas in the first half of the nineteenth century, guides were mostly concerned with big cities such as St. Petersburg and Moscow (as well as their immediate vicinities and the roads connecting them), other destinations drew attention later on, often in connection with improved transportation. In the 1850s, for example, there was increased interest in travelling the Volga River region due to the formation of steamship companies that carried passengers as well as cargo on regular routes. The growing popularity of the Crimean peninsula on the Black Sea coast from the 1860s was similarly related to a boom in steamship companies, as well as to the construction and gradual utilisation of railroad lines for passenger service in the 1870s. Finland and the Baltic provinces attracted attention in the 1870s after railways began to operate. Spurred by construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, travel guides devoted to eastern Russia – Siberia, the Urals, and the Far East – proliferated in the late 1890s.

As Shelley Baranowski observed in 2007, the fields of tourism history and transportation history ‘can profitably intersect …’. Focusing on such issues as the crucial role of mobility in leisure travel, both of them can expand their research agendas.\(^3\) Furthermore, the point of interaction between transportation and tourism history is ‘the recognition that tourism blends production and consumption. In addition to the meanings that are embedded in the tourist “gaze” there are the labour, technology, and business sophistication that enable it’.\(^4\) Since the publication of Baranowski’s essay, an interdisciplinary


\(^4\)On scholarship concerning the relationship between the history of tourism and consumerism, tourism and vacations as consumer goods, see Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough, \textit{Introduction to Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer
The subfield mediating between transport and mobility history and travel and tourism history has developed.\(^5\)

The nineteenth century also saw intensive building of transport infrastructure in Russia. The construction of broken-stone (macadam) roads and the organisation of stagecoach transportation in the 1820s, the beginning of steamboat traffic on densely interconnected waterways in the 1830s, and the building of railways in the 1840s, which resulted in the emergence of a vast railroad network by the end of the nineteenth century, enabled the transportation of people and goods on a regular basis with reduced travel times. The introduction of a differentiated system of railway travel fares in 1894 noticeably increased the number of passengers.\(^6\)

In exploring the development of Russian transportation networks, historians have focused primarily on governmental policies and technical and economical issues. In exploring transportation networks as a unit of analysis, historians of technology have paid little attention to ‘infrastructural work’ – the set of organisational techniques (technological, governmental, and managerial) underlying the creation and operation of

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those systems. Only recently have researchers started to study links between the history of transportation and the history of mobility, focusing on passengers as users of transportation services. 7 Though the formation of leisure culture in Russia in the late nineteenth–early twentieth centuries is well understood, 8 researchers concentrating on the history of Russian tourism did not explore deeply how the emergence of new travel and tourism practices and the development of transportation technologies intertwined and influenced each other. In this article, we fill this gap and show that travel guides as a multifaceted source can give useful insights into the development of the travel industry.

In recent years, intensive research has significantly increased our understanding of the role of guidebooks in the making of the tourism industry and the formation of consumer culture, in the social and economic development of regions, as well as in placing identity formation in historical perspective. 9 Analysing guidebooks published in Russia as an integral part of the body of travel literature and the general historical and geographical description of particular regions, a number of scholars focused on their role as a phenomenon of mass culture, closely connected to the social and economic development of particular regions of the Russian Empire.10 Russian guidebook narratives are used for the analysis of Russian landscape as a cultural construction and the emergence of new aesthetic norms to accommodate its perception. 11

In this article, we argue that travel guides were not only a cultural phenomenon that helped to construct perceptions of space and to differentiate identities, they were also complex artefacts that combine social interaction and marketing logistics, integrating elements from the present and the past, and from the diverse professional activities of their authors, publishers, and other contributors. Analysing the function of travel guides within the context of the emerging and burgeoning tourism industry, of which they were a part, we frame them as a kind of boundary object that enabled different communities to intersect and communicate with each other, and to articulate their goals. 12 The making and using of travel guides as a boundary object could be viewed as ‘infrastructural

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work’ crucial for establishing connections between communities. As we show elsewhere, travel guides played an important role in the process of making the act of travelling an essential part of social practice. Rapid changes in transportation modes and relative distances demanded a new type of traveller better equipped with knowledge of local conditions. She/he needed assistance in overcoming travel uncertainties and anxieties. Compared to Western Europe, the Russian Empire, especially distant provinces, was not safe. Travellers urgently needed reliable information on schedules, accommodations and other practical issues. Positive and attractive images provided by guidebook authors, and the emotions they evoked, facilitated domestication of these remote areas.

In this article, we focus on the production of travel guides as part of the process of making travellers. Unfortunately, our sources do not permit direct estimates of how travellers used guidebooks or what they thought about them. Readers appear in our study only implicitly, as constructed and addressed by authors. Guidebook authors sometimes asked readers to send them feedback and probably revised their guides with this information. But because no archives of authors, publishing houses or tourist companies remain in Russia after 1917 (unlike in Europe where such collections are quite common), we cannot recover the process of communication between guidebook authors and users.

In addition to describing authors and publishers who pursued individual goals by working on travel guides, we also focus on transportation companies that frequently commissioned their own guides (or placed advertisements in those produced by other publishers), on various entrepreneurs, and also on local public and governmental institutions interested in regional promotion.

Travel guides through communities of practice

Authors, publishers and entrepreneurs

Authors and publishers were a varied group. We identified more than 200 different Russian travel guide writers and compilers, whose diverse social and professional backgrounds strongly influenced book content. At the dawn of this genre in Russia, authors were mainly well-educated civil or military bureaucrats; for many, publishing a travel guidebook was their first and last literary experience. Authors pursued different goals in writing their travel guides. This genre developed slowly between 1800 and the 1850s at the intersection of different trends in travel and academic literature. Many early guides looked more like a travellers’ opinion column than a practical manual for tourists. To some extent, early Russian guidebooks were still stylistically close to other forms of literary travelogue, with general essays on landscape and the nature of travel. However, even the first guidebook, published in 1801 for travel between Moscow and St. Petersburg, had the pedantic elements of an authoritative tutor, advising where to go and what to do in every new station on the way. One such tip suggested where to climb to find a ‘Switzerland landscape’.


14Ivan Glushkov, Ruchnoy dorozhnik dlia upotreblenia v puti mezhdu imperatorskimi vserossiiskimi stolitsami, daisushchii o gorodakh, po onomu lezhashchikh izvestii istoricheskie, geograficheskie, politicheskie, s opisianiem obyvatel’skikh obriadov, odezhd, narechii i vidov luchshikh mest (St. Petersburg, 1801), 56.
hotels, roadside restaurants and transportation services, this information was smoothly fitted into the general narrative, and apparently assigned a secondary role. Authors often did not create original texts, but selected and compiled information from widely diverse sources and pieced it together into a single narrative. They did not make a secret of this, but usually referenced the publications they drew upon. Compiling different essays and other practical materials under his own name, the publisher provided general editorial direction and highlighted key points in a special foreword, thanking contributors for their participation and help.

The goal of some authors was to provide a detailed description of a particular region. These guides looked like comprehensive reference books rather than practical sources for the traveller. Their style affected objectivity and thoroughness, with regular quotes from influential experts. In some cases, bibliography and footnotes could fill up to two-thirds of a page’s space, and references often occupied up to one-third of the entire publication. Readers of the ‘Illustrated Travel Guide to the Kama River and the Rivers Vyshera and Kolva’ were probably astonished to find that pictures of the rivers and their attractions were missing from a publication with more than 130 pages describing in detail the region’s natural environment and population.

By the end of the nineteenth century, gradual diversification among authors testified to the growth of this type of publishing. Those who now relied on creating guidebooks and travel literature as their main source of income symbolised the expanding horizons in this entrepreneurial field. For example, Mikhail Stozh in Irkutsk was a railway employee, publisher, and entrepreneur who compiled numerous cheap guidebooks (with different titles but similar content) on Siberia and the Russian Far East and who also produced postcards and collections of poetry on Siberia and Baikal Lake. By the early 1900s, he had his own publishing house. Other entrepreneurial guidebook authors combined publishing with links to hotels and other hospitality businesses in their region, proudly declaring this connection in their books. At the same time, guidebook authors included writers and journalists. Maria Sosnogorova, for example, penned essays about Crimea and her travel guide went through numerous reprints. Other authors were local officials. Pyotr Neidgardt, secretary of the statistical committee of the St. Petersburg Governorate, wrote the first Russian travel guide for the Volga River. Scholars and other experts such as Vladimir

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15For more detailed analysis of the early published Russian travel guidebooks, see Bekasova, ‘The Making of Passengers’, 209–12.
16Illiustrirovannyi putevoditel’ po reke Kame i po reke Vyshere s Kolvoi (Perm’, 1911).
18Nikolai Fedotov published in the 1880–1910s a number of travel guidebooks on the Grand Duchy of Finland, in which he included information on houses that could be rented, and photos of himself in the background of his vacation area. For example, see Nikolai Fedotov, Putevoditel’ po dachnym mestnostiam, vodolechenym zavedeniiam i morskim kupaniam v okrestnostmiakh St.Peterburga i po zheleznym dorogam: finlandskim i Baltiiskoi. S ukazaniem tsen i razmerov dach (St. Petersburg, 1889); Nikolai Fedotov, Illiustrirovannyi putevoditel’ po dachnym, vodolechenym i zhitvopisnym mestnostiam Finlandii (St. Petersburg, 1905).
19Maria Sosnogorova was the pen name of Maria Slavich (1820–1891), who lived on the Crimean seashore in the 1830–1890s. Her comprehensive guidebooks (some of them co-authored) and other publications on Crimea got positive reviews. See Aleksandr Nepomniashchii, Zapiski puteshestvennikov i putevoditelei, 155. See also one of the guidebooks she published: Maria Sosnogorova, Putevoditel’ po Krymu dlia puteshestvennikov (Odessa, 1871).
20Pyotr Neidgardt, Putevoditel’ po Volge (St. Petersburg, 1862).
Dmitriev, a physician and an active member of Yalta’s division of the Crimean-Caucasian Alpine Club, also produced guides.\textsuperscript{21}

By the late nineteenth century, authors and compilers were paying much less attention to educational objectives, and focusing more on the practical aspects of their texts. Travel guides increasingly published information sections about different hotels and transportation services, as well as addresses of public agencies and drugstores. Excerpts from official documents, service regulations pertaining to treatment at mineral water resorts, information concerning river transportation and a range of related material began to feature prominently in travel guides. Together with the growth of transportation systems and travel infrastructure, changes in guidebook narratives derived from the increased influence of European analogues. For example, in 1908, bookseller and publisher Grigorii Moskvich renamed his publishing house the ‘Russian Baedeker’ (at the beginning of the First World War, the company reverted to its former name).\textsuperscript{22} Besides direct reference to Karl Baedeker’s name and using the same format of his books with their notable red covers, the structure of Moskvich’s publishing house mirrored to some extent that of his famous European role model. His travel guides to different Russian regions and cities (14 titles, more than 200 re-issues with an overall print run of more than 800,000 copies) were released regularly, updated and reissued from 1888 to 1917.\textsuperscript{23} In addition, he produced other reference materials for travellers including brochures, postcards, plans and maps. As a publisher and author, Moskvich gained enormous popularity by putting the business of travel guide publishing on a professional basis, carefully thinking out a strategy for his venture and relentlessly working to improve and enlarge it. With contacts and acquaintances among booksellers and publishers, he expanded the distribution network for his publications geographically. Travel guides and other printed matter released by Moskvich were sold not only in cities on the Black Sea, but also in book stores in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Kharkov and Kiev, as well as at railway stations and hotels in Crimea and the Caucasus. This wide distribution network can be seen in his own advertisements and brochures.\textsuperscript{24} Seeking profit from developing his own tourist business in the Caucasus, Moskvich published a guide to the Vladikavkaz Railway.\textsuperscript{25} The construction of rail lines to the Caucasus from the 1870s to 1900 was extremely important for integrating this area into the Russian transportation network, and contributed to the development of regional tourism.\textsuperscript{26} In advertising this private railroad company and emphasising its ‘civilising role’ in the Caucasus, Moskvich published

\textsuperscript{21}Vladimir Dmitriev, Poezdka v nagornuiu chast’ Kryma, gigienicheskoe znachenie ekskursii i ocherk deiatel’nosti ialtinskogo otdelenia Krymskogo gornogo kluba za dva mesiatsa ego sushchestvovaniia (Yalta, 1891).

\textsuperscript{22}About Grigorii Moskvich and his guidebook publishing enterprise, see Aleksandr Nepomniashchii, Zapiski puteshestvennikov i putevoditel’ (St. Petersburg, 1903); Grigorii Moskvich, Illustrirovannyi prakticheskiy putevoditel’ po Kavkazu, 4e izdanie (Odessa, 1899), prilozheniia.

\textsuperscript{23}Grigorii Moskvich, Vladikavkazkaia zheleznaia doroga. Illustrirovannyi prakticheskiy putevoditel’ na 1915 god (Petrograd, 1915).


\textsuperscript{25}The railroad line from Rostov upon Don to Vladikavkaz was constructed in the 1870s and began operation in 1875. Railroad line to Novorossiisk, port city on the Black Sea coast, was constructed in the 1880s and the line which connected Piatigorsk, Kislovodsk and Zheleznovodsk mineral water spa resorts with railroad network in the region appeared only in the 1890s. On the railroad network construction in the Caucasus, see Irina Babich, ‘Ekonomicheskoe razvitie regiona v 19–20 veke’, in Severnyi Kavkaz v sostave Rossiskoi imperii (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2007), 229–49.
detailed information about the rail network, its stage of development, the services offered to passengers, other practical information, as well as numerous photos and several maps. Moreover, he designed a practical scheme to help travellers use and coordinate timetables from the different railroad lines serving that region. Moskvich’s entrepreneurial activity was far above average in the late Russian Empire. Although other Russian guidebook publishers in the early nineteenth century made connections in the travel, tourism and transportation industries, none was as active and successful as Moskvich.

Competing authors used different ploys to lure readers. In particular, commercial pressures helped to influence the titles of different publications. In the late nineteenth–early twentieth centuries, titles of popular publications became efficient instruments for securing readers attention. Authors began to use the word ‘practical’ in titles, emphasising their convenience and usefulness as important travel accessories.27

Simultaneously, descriptions and advertisements from different elements of the tourist infrastructure (e.g. hotels, restaurants, cab services, etc.) began to occupy large portions of guidebooks or even generated specialised publications.28 Yet, tourist services often lagged behind the heightened level of information. They could not keep up with increasing numbers of travellers and their demands. Sometimes authors openly deplored declining quality; writing about hotels in Tsarskoe Selo, close to St.Petersburg, Zabolotskii confessed that ‘there are now no decent hotels for visitors at all’.29

Guidebook publishers actively engaged with entrepreneurs by inviting them to publish advertisements. Restrictions on publishing commercial ads in newspapers and journals were abolished in 1863. By the end of the nineteenth century, advertising had become an indispensable element in the diverse varieties of printed materials in Russia.30 Many Russian guides reserved dozens of pages for advertisements not always related to the region featured in the publication. Thus, the commercial component of travel guides began to show ever more clearly in these numerous advertisements.

Placing a commercial ad in a travel guide obviously cost money: fees were intended to cover printing costs and to yield some profit. Resourceful travel guide writers placed price lists for advertising slots within the text of their books. Travel guide author and compiler Nicolai Lender (a pen name of publicist and journalist Nikolai Reihel’t) announced in his ‘General Travel Guide’ that one page of advertising would cost 50 roubles, ½ page – 25 roubles, ¼ page – 15 roubles, and placement before the text would incur a surcharge of 10, 4 or 3 roubles.31 It should be noted that the travel guide itself cost 60 kopecks. Publishers especially keen on luring advertisers would often set lower prices for ‘advertising slots’ inside their travel guides. Advertising that occupied several dozen pages, or up to one-third of a publication, showed growing activity on the part of entrepreneurs, who eagerly used information opportunities afforded by travel guide publishers to advertise

27For example, see: Illiustrirovannyi prakticheskii putevoditel’ po Volge (Odessa, 1902); Illiustrirovannyi prakticheskii putevoditel’ po Yalte i okrestnostiam (Odessa, 1897); Illiustrirovannyi prakticheskii putevoditel’ po Kavkazu. 2-e izdanie (Odessa, 1897).
29I.P. Zabolotskii, Putevoditel’ po Tsarskoselskoi doroge (St. Petersburg, 1882), 225.
their products and services. It also showed that publishers and representatives from the business community were interested in, and interacted intensively with each other. ‘Travel Guide for the Great Siberian Railroad’, which went through its 12th reprint in 1914, had 84 pages of advertising before the text itself (even before the title page). One ad announced a V.R. Maksimov’s heirs’ plant in Rostov upon Don, which manufactured rope and wire, and another a wool blanket producer in Belostok, despite the fact that these towns in western regions of the Russian Empire were rather far from the Trans-Siberian Railway.32

Moskvich also printed many advertisements for different goods and services. Annually re-issuing his most popular guides, and constantly updating information for new editions, he actively engaged with entrepreneurs developing businesses in different regions. Not by accident were goods or services offered by companies advertised on pages describing locations where they could be found. For example, he suggested to tourists in Inkerman, near Sevastopol’, that while travellers usually set out on a tour of the famous Bratskoe cemetery, … we recommend to people who are interested in the production of oysters to visit the oyster fishery before all … This fishery is expertly managed by Mr. Schtol, and the business is run and operated most rationally. It cultivates the best imported sorts of oysters and lobsters.33

In some cases, powerful entrepreneurs demanded placement of their ads in particular guidebooks, and would pressure publishers to change the book’s format to accommodate their wishes. This occurred with a guidebook on the Southern region of Russia issued in 1896.34 Naturally, it contained information about cities located in that region, as well as rules of conduct for railway passengers, train and steamboat ticket tariffs and timetables. However, it also contained ads about the city of Tula in the central Russian provinces. In his introduction to the guidebook, compiler I. A. Feferboym, an owner of the reference bureau in Nikolaev, explained to his readers that, since publishing ads promoted the development of commerce and industry, he deemed it necessary to satisfy this unusual request from Tula’s entrepreneurs.

Authors, compilers and travel guide publishers were a heterogeneous community of practice. In publishing their guides, they pursued different goals, competing among themselves for readers’ attention. Interested in the commercial success of their publications, they actively cooperated with entrepreneurs and representatives of transportation companies, filling up pages with the practical information and ads that were in great demand with the new travelling public.

**Transportation enterprises**

Transportation companies became actively involved in the production of travel guides in the second half of the nineteenth century. Many guides served as advertisements to lure travellers to a specific region. By describing tourist attractions and special features of a

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32Aleksandr Dmitriev-Mamonov, *Putevoditel po Velikoi Sibirskoi zheleznoi doroge* (St. Petersburg, 1914). The first edition of this travel guide was awarded a silver medal at the World Fair in Paris in 1900. Aleksandr Dmitriev-Mamonov was a vice-governor in Tomsk and Tobolsk provinces and in the Akмолinsk area in 1876–1898. He had a fancy for history (mostly for the history of Siberia) and was a member of several learned societies.

33Grigori Moskvich, *Iliustrirovannyi putevoditel’ po Krymu. 3 izdanie* (Odessa, 1894), 111.

region or route, authors enhanced the value of the locale in readers’ minds. It was not uncommon for a publication’s foreword to constitute little more than an advertisement for a particular area.

Sunny nights and polar lights. The original beauty of tundra, the sounds of the waterfalls and the wide expanse of the ocean attract man’s inquisitive mind, awaken his energy, invigorate his soul as the wholesome but harsh climate of the Arkhangelsk Governorate restores and buoys up the traveller’s physical strength in the best way possible, thus, the author of this travel guide discovered allure in the inhospitable. Such picturesque descriptions were followed by advertising of the transport company that made travelling there possible: ‘When the railroad from Vologda to Arkhangelsk was built and the Arkhangelsk-Murman Steamship Company bought new and speedy steamers equipped with electric lighting, reaching Arkhangelsk and cruising the White Sea coast became a fast-paced, easy and convenient promenade’. Because the Arkhangelsk-Murman Steamship Company, being the largest in the whole region (which roughly equated to the size of France in terms of area), was obviously interested in attracting more passengers and developing tourism in the region, it published the guidebooks and company information appeared frequently on their pages. Guidebook author, Dmitrii Ostrovskii, was no less interested in developing tourism in Arkhangelsk, as he was also vice-governor of the region.

Especially prominent were steamship companies cruising the Volga; there were approximately ten of them by the early twentieth century. Regular steamship navigation on the river began in 1843 when Russian merchants M.P. Kirillov and D.M. Polezhaev founded the Volga Steamship Company. Other joint-stock companies came into existence several years later (the ‘Mercury’ company in 1849, and the ‘Samolet’ company in 1853). At first, they were mostly cargo carriage operations. Passenger service aboard steamships only opened in 1859, but gradually Volga cruises gained popularity. Passengers cruised the river for different reasons: some wanted to take a rest from big city bustle and to relax, some went on pilgrimage, some went for medical treatment, some went in pursuit of gainful employment, and others were on business trips. By the end of the nineteenth century, competition among different transport companies for potential client attention became intense, and pages of travel guides were one arena of competition.

The development of transport infrastructure in Russia also stimulated the rise of Orthodox pilgrimage in the nineteenth century as many highly frequented Orthodox churches and monasteries were located at some distance from urban areas. Growth did not happen overnight, emerging with time as an element of the developing travel industry. Along with general and practical information about the region, guidebook authors included descriptions of the most famous sites. The texts which contained the information on the most visited monasteries were published in the late nineteenth century. The structure and content of these books mirrored general patterns of other travel guides. Numerous guidebooks on Solovetskii monastery serve as a good example of this trend. Founded in the

35Dmitry Ostrovskii, Putevoditel’ po Severu Rossii (Arkhangelsk, Beloe more, Solovetskii monastyr’, Murmanskii bereg, Novaiya Zemlya, Pechera) (St. Petersburg, 1899).
36Ostrovskii, Putevoditel’ po Severu Rossii, Preface [I].
37For example, see: Dmitry Ostrovskii, Putevoditel’ po Severu Rossii: Putevoditel’ po zheleznoi doroge ot Moskvy do stantsii Kriukovoi, v Voskresensk i po Novomu Ierusalimu (Moscow, 1853).
fifteenth century on remote islands in the middle of the White Sea, it went on to establish itself as one of the richest and most influential Orthodox monasteries in Russia during the course of the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{38} Having played an influential role in Russian history, this monastery became an attractive destination for pilgrims, especially after its involvement in successfully repelling British ships during the Crimean War in 1854, an action that stimulated great public interest among religious as well as secular travellers.\textsuperscript{39} As a result, the number of pilgrims increased markedly, from around a thousand per year at the beginning of the nineteenth century to more than 20,000 in the early 1900s.\textsuperscript{40} To meet pilgrims’ requirements, the monastery established several hotels and purchased several steamships in order to provide regular transportation for visitors. Thus, the monastery was the main organiser and the owner of travel infrastructure on the Solovetskii islands and this included the publication of guidebooks. Issued in the Synodal typography in 1914, ‘The Guidebook on Solovetskie ostrova’, was written as a straightforward ‘touristic’ guidebook. Instead of deep spiritual descriptions of the holy lands of the monastery, the guide opened with practical information for all travellers such as how to get to the Solovetskii archipelago and where to stay on the islands.\textsuperscript{41} Readers could also find information concerning where to eat and how much to pay, where the ceremonies took place and how they were organised, what sightseeing was available on the islands, and even what kind of souvenirs one might purchase. Thus, the boundaries between ‘tourist’ and ‘pilgrim’ behaviour patterns overlapped to a greater extent than might be expected.

Descriptions of the activities of different shipping companies often took up a lot of space. By agreement with authors, companies placed general information about their services, photographs of first-, second- and third-class decks, price lists for tickets and restaurant dining, and passenger rules. Guides also included superior offers: announcements about discounts and special travel arrangements. Not infrequently, authors expressed their own opinions about service quality and openly recommended some companies, while criticising others. One writer of a detailed description of all travel options for the Volga River confessed: ‘The best steamships cruising from Nizhny Novgorod to Rybinsk belong to the Zarubin company whereas another company’s steamship is not worth the tourist’s attention because although a schedule for this ship does exist, relying on it would be very chancy.’\textsuperscript{42} This information may have influenced travellers’ choices as the author, Georgii Demianov, a local official and journalist living in Nizhny Novgorod, reprinted the book annually at least ten times.

Shipping companies not only provided travel guide authors with necessary information about themselves and their services, they also became publishers. The ‘Samolet’ Company released one of the first Volga travel guides in 1862.\textsuperscript{43} The year 1897 saw the release of ‘Volga Travel Guide’, published by the ‘Volga’ Steamship Company, one of the biggest


\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., 49.

\textsuperscript{41}Putevoditel’ po Solovetskym ostrovam. 3-e izdanie (Moscow, 1914).

\textsuperscript{42}Georgii Dem’ianov, Illustrirovannyi putesvoditel’ po Volge (ot Tveri do Astrakhani) (Nizhnii Novgorod, 1898).

\textsuperscript{43}Sergei Krasheninnikov, \textit{Volga ot Tveri do Astrakhani} (St. Petersburg, 1862).
cargo and passenger carriers working the entire river. This guide was reprinted annually until 1909 and was evidently distributed free of charge. ‘Caucasus and Mercury’ Steamship Company (‘Kavkaz i Merkurii’), another big company operating on the Volga river and Caspian Sea, published guidebooks annually about the Volga river which contained information concerning passenger steamships and their captains, the level of service offered to customers and voyage routes. Such guides focused primarily on the needs of wealthy passengers who belonged to polite society, and were accustomed to comfort, luxury, and fine cuisine. Founded at the end of the 1850s, the ROPT operated on the Black Sea and considered passenger service an important source of revenue. In the 1860s, ROPT ships carried from 200,000 to 300,000 passengers annually; fourth-class passengers constituted the majority of their business. In 1897, almost half of the ROPT fleet (47 vessels) accepted passengers and two cruise ships were designed for tourist travel. Among national and international lines, one of the most profitable was the Holy Land. Although they usually bought cheap tickets, pilgrims travelled in sufficient numbers to generate revenue. After 1909, the company began to organise discounted excursions for groups of twenty or more. Schoolteachers, students and children could travel at reduced rates. The content of ROPT’s regularly published guidebooks vividly demonstrated that advertising services and maintaining a dialogue with customers were high priorities for company officials. Included in their publications were dozens of letters of thanks for the high level of services provided to discount group customers from different educational institutions and amateur societies. Moreover, ROPT offered its guidebooks to travellers on its steamships for free and never forgot to mention this in its numerous books and brochures. The company actively responded to the needs of travellers and contributed materially to the formation of the travel industry in the Russian Empire.

Shipping companies were not the only ones actively involved in producing guidebooks. Interested in promoting transportation by railroad, the Russian Ministry of Communications ordered guidebooks on railroad lines that contained descriptions of network infrastructure, history and function, as well as maps, plans of cities, timetables, ads and numerous illustrations. Among illustrations were photographs of steam locomotives, passenger trains, and interiors of first- and second-class passenger cars. The guidebook to the South-Western State Railroad Network was compiled by an engineer and railway official named P.N. Andreev who researched economic development in the region and prepared the guide at the request of the head of that railroad.

Another railroad guidebook on the route from St. Petersburg to the Caucasus via Moscow was a joint venture of railroad officials Konstantin Bykov and Grigori Moskvich. The men planned a series of guides on different railroad lines, but only the first was published. This guide was short and cheap: 20 kopecks. Since it was supposed to be the first in

44 Putevoditel’ po Volge (Moscow, 1897).
45 Parokhodnoe obshchestvo ‘Kavkaz i Merkurii’ in 1912 (St. Petersburg, 1912). It was reprinted annually: in 1913, 1914, and 1915.
46 Gleb Aleksushin, Parokhodnoe obshchestvo ‘Kavkaz i Merkurii’ Avtoreferat na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni kandidata istoricheskikh nauk (Samara, 1995).
48 McReynolds, Russia at Play, 165–6.
49 For example, see: Ekskursii po Krymu, Kavkazu, i zagranitsei (Odessa, 1911), 40–55.
50 Illustrirovannyi putevoditel’ po lugo-Zapadnym kazennym dorogam (Kiev, 1899).
a series, it opened with an advertising essay addressed to travellers planning to spend one or two months at the mineral water resorts in the Caucasus and to also tour the mountains in the area. The authors advised travellers where to buy railway tickets in St. Petersburg, what clothes and other things would be useful to take, and how to pack their luggage.

The two Russian capitals were a long way from the Caucasus and the Crimean peninsula. Travel itself took time and those who went on holiday tried to visit as many places of interest as possible. In meeting this need, transportation companies and publishers offering guidebooks on large areas like the Black Sea region, also included information on coastal areas and mountain ranges in the Crimea and the Caucasus, and sometimes in the Near East as well.\textsuperscript{51} To expand passenger trade and persuade tourists to travel long distances from St. Petersburg and Moscow in order to vacation on the Black Sea coast and at mineral spa resorts in the Caucasus, transportation companies (both private and state-owned) published posters, along with guidebooks, to advertise their services. One such poster advertised the opening of direct transportation from the two capitals to the mineral spa resorts, Piatigorsk and Kislovodsk, and to the port of Novorossiisk via railroad and steamboat starting from 14 May 1914 (Figure 2). Its lively, colourful images appealed to first- and second-class railway passengers, but the poster also contained practical information about destinations, how to purchase tickets, departure times, dining cars, and services offered by the Caucasus and Mercury Steamship Company for passengers who combined travel by rail and ship. Publishing guidebooks with many photographs and issuing posters with attractive images of railroad and river routes, and pictures of new transportation infrastructure, contributed to a proliferation of images of the Volga River and the Caucasus in popular urban culture. This promoted the idea that those areas could be easily and comfortably reached via modern transportation facilities.

Thus, transportation company representatives were another community interested in engaging with consumers via travel guides. They closely cooperated with authors and publishers to place information about their services in such publications. Travel guides formed a nexus at which the desire of transportation companies to promote themselves, the need for authors to publish, find readers, and make money, and the goal of readers to attain practical information intersected. The constantly increasing number of pages devoted to the transportation services of competing companies attests to an intensified commodification of travel and, as a result, an expanded market for mobility in Russia by the end of the nineteenth century.

\textbf{Local institutions}

Local public institutions also articulated their interests through travel guides. The nineteenth century in Russia was a time of great transformations in the public sphere, and of dramatic social change. During that period, and linked to the discovery of Russia’s vast human and natural environment, many people started to actively dedicate their lives to understanding and promoting local regions. Bureaucrats, scientists, ethnographers and journalists discovered little-known aspects of their city or region and wrote about

\textsuperscript{51}For example, see: Rossiiskoe transportnoe i strakhovoe obschestvo. Spravochnye svedeniia ob obschestve i putevoditel’ po Krymu i Kavkazu (Odessa, 1912); Grigori Karant, Po Chernomu moriu: Krym, Kavkaz (Odessa, 1902); Illustrirovannyi putevoditel’ po Krymu, Kavkazu i Blizhнемu Vostoku. Russkoie obschestvo parokhodstva i torgovli na 1900 god (Odessa, 1900); N. Raisov, Novoishii illustrirovannyi putevoditel’ po Krymu i Kavkasu na 1897/8 god (Odessa, 1897).
them in scientific, historical or literary journals, collected statistics, or organised societies and clubs of like-minded people. Guidebook publishing and generating excursions for visitors were additional tools for regional promotion.

The Black Sea region serves as a vivid example of the close cooperation of different actors in creating travel guides to promote and develop tourism. Of the 400 original Russian guidebooks in our database, 104 were devoted to different parts of the Black Sea area. Only 20 guides were published before the 1880s, whereas numbers of annually revised guidebooks burgeoned following construction of the railroad network linking Russia’s heartland and southern regions, and after improvements in steamship navigation made travelling to the Black Sea cheaper and easier for a wide range of visitors. The Black Sea coast became increasingly popular as a leisure destination during the period 1880–1900, thanks to the intensive development of transportation.

On the one hand, there were different types of tourism in the region: mineral water spa resorts and mountainous areas in the Caucasus, excursions along the Black Sea shore, Crimea waterside towns and manors. On the other hand, analysis of these travel

Figure 2. Poster advertising the opening of direct railroad and steamboat transportation via the Volga River from the two capitals, St. Petersburg and Moscow, to the mineral spa resorts of the Caucasus and the city of Novorossiisk on the Black Sea coast, on 14 May 1914.

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53The rail line from Lazovaia near Kharkov to the port city of Sevastopol on the Black Sea was constructed by a private company and began to operate in the mid-1870s. Soon it was purchased by the state and connected to other lines. Named the ‘Southern railroads’, this rail network was managed as one entity after 1906. The rail line connecting Rostov-on-Don and Vladikavkaz began to function at the same time, in the late 1870s.
guides demonstrates that the list of tourist sights and their descriptions, practical information, and the general character of narratives were rather similar. Moreover, many guidebooks contained information about the entire Black Sea region, which was one way to reach a broader audience.

The growing attraction of this area among the Russian nobility, which included the Crimean peninsula and the Caucasus, can be traced to the end of the Napoleonic Wars, although visits to the region became customary following the Crimean War (1853–1856) and the Caucasian War (1817–1864). After the royal family bought Livadiia, an estate by the Black Sea close to Yalta, family members began spending time there as did members of Russian aristocracy close to the imperial Court.

The popularity of the Black Sea region also grew because of the emergence of new social practices such as the rise of alpine tourism and the emergence of health resorts in the Russian Empire. Along with transportation companies, various local organisations – such as the Directorate of the Caucasian Mineral Water Resorts, and mountaineering clubs – contributed to the Black Sea region’s growing appeal. In addition, popularised achievements in science and medicine played a significant role. Medical and scientific advice about the salubrious qualities of the local climate and mineral water springs was increasingly heeded. Other factors at play were the development of the service industry, as well as the gradual institutionalisation of tourism and the business of sightseeing tours in the region. The end of the nineteenth century saw the rise of tourism societies and mountaineering clubs, which put together tours along various routes lasting up to 40 days.

In Russia, the first Alpine club was founded in Tiflis (Tbilisi) in 1878, about 15 years later than in Switzerland and Austria. More alpine clubs came into being, and the Crimean Alpine Club (1890) later reorganised as the Crimean-Caucasian Alpine Club. With a wide network of affiliates across the country at the beginning of the twentieth century, this club was apparently thriving. Its members developed leisure trips to different parts of the area and opened new tour routes. Therefore, they played an enormous role in the development of regional tourism infrastructure, with travel guides forming an integral element of their activity. While the first excursions in the 1870s and 1880s were mainly part of an educational process, and participants were students or members of local clubs, after the Crimean peninsula and Caucasus region were connected with the Russian heartland by railroad, the number and diversity of travellers increased markedly. For example, the first excursions of the Yalta branch of the Crimean Alpine Club in the early 1890s were arranged for only a dozen of its members. However, by the mid-1890s, the club organised 181 excursions for more than 1400 tourists, and in 1912,
participation was estimated at 15,229 a year.\textsuperscript{58} Besides a broad variety of natural and historical sites, excursions included religious attractions such as monasteries.\textsuperscript{59}

The Crimean-Caucasian Alpine Club issued its own travel guides, advertising itself as an indispensable assistant to travellers. Here is how the club explained the rationale for its publication of the guide: ‘Wishing to help travellers on the Caucasus, whose numbers are growing every year, the club issues a tour map and a travel guide to the region’s mountains.’\textsuperscript{60} These guides were filled with practical information with authors doing their utmost to help travellers with every part of their journey. For instance, a chapter about the route up Mount Elbrus advised on the best weather conditions for the venture and contained contact information for guides and porters. In addition to detailed maps, the publication listed the most traveller-friendly books and handbooks and even advised on the choice of accessories for the trip and the stores in which to buy them. In St. Petersburg, for instance, the best place to purchase ‘condensed milk in zinc capsules, canned meat and fish’ was ‘Trillia and Gebraux (previously Delmas) store at 42 the Moika River Embankment’, and ‘the best package for personal belongings is packs in the form of bags’ – they also were available in St. Petersburg, near ‘Nissen (14 Morskaya Street), at 20 roubles a piece, and you could also buy gloves and a cane there’.\textsuperscript{61}

By analysing places where these travel guides were published, we can trace the degree of involvement of local organisations in distributing the publications. Less than a third of them (26 issues) were released in Moscow or St. Petersburg; the rest were issued in the Black Sea region. Travel guides for mineral water resorts were basically printed in the shop of the Directorate of the Mineral Water Resorts in Piatigorsk and as a result of the efforts of a senior manager of the group in St. Petersburg. Branches of regional mountaineering clubs produced many publications about the Black Sea coast.

The main narrative strategy of local institutional advertising was highlighting the vital importance of the information they supplied. Information about the rules governing medical care and services offered was the mainstay of all travel guides devoted to the mineral water resorts. Because of the specific nature of this type of tourism and its connection to health issues, authors made sure that the information they provided was backed by influential expert opinions. This explains why travel guides often contained medical advice from physicians. Indeed, in many cases, travel guides were penned by practising medical doctors. For example, Semyon Smirnov, a doctor and also the director of the company, published one of the first travel guides devoted to the Caucasian Mineral Water Resorts. Information about the mineral springs and their properties was the lynchpin of his book. But the writer also knew visitors’ needs and as such, this particular travel guide not only publicised the mineral water cure, but also advertised Piatigorsk as a city, noting many interesting sights, located in a beautiful setting. A supplement to the guide contained information about hotels, places to relax and restaurants, which made the publication a practical and easy-to-use accessory for people coming to Piatigorsk for medical treatment and rest.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{58}Dolzhenko, \textit{Istoriia turizma}, 29–30.
\textsuperscript{60}Vladimir Merkulov, \textit{Putevoditel’ po goram Kavkaza. Opisanie peshekhodnykh i verkhovykh ekskursii} (St. Petersburg, 1904), 1.
\textsuperscript{61}Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{62}Semyon Smirnov, \textit{Putevoditel’ k Kavkazskim mineral’nym vodam} (Piatigorsk, 1867), 78.
Local clubs and societies were not the only regional actors promoting the travel industry in the area. Individual provincial activists occasionally tried to contribute to the development of travel and thereby gain profit from it. One of the most active was Grigorii Moskvich. When Moskvich set up his publishing enterprise in 1888, he seemed to have carefully planned his future publishing strategy. In his ‘Note from the Publisher’ foreword to one of his travel guides, he set forth what he considered to be of vital importance, ‘the visiting card’ of the first and subsequent editions of his guides: their practical and informational character. ‘The visitor to Crimea – whether a tourist, a scholar or a patient – first of all needs to know the road that will take him from one destination to another, a place where to put up, what sights to look at, where to find what, etc. – in short, this visitor needs to have readily available a reference book whose instructions would deliver him, as far as possible, from unproductive waste of time and money’.63 Moskvich then proceeded to explain that, although ‘prioritizing practical instructions, this travel guide, however, is not of informational nature only’, because it included descriptions of places and historical essays as well. Besides, each new reissue contained maps and plans with destinations and routes featured in the text.

What Moskvich wrote in the foreword was reaffirmed on every page of his publication. The author appears to have been continuously ‘keeping in mind’ the reader’s problems, to have been putting himself in the shoes of someone who just set foot on the square near the railway station or on the pier in an unfamiliar town. Thus, chapters devoted to particular sites or cities started, not with general descriptions, but with answers to questions most vital for travellers: where to stay, where to have a meal, and how to reach a particular destination more quickly, easily and cheaply. The author strove to supply the most current information about things that were forever changing: various services, prices, new travel routes, changes in schedules or ownership of lodgings and hotels. This ‘interactive’ technique became a regular ploy for Moskvich, who reissued his travel guides many times.

Moskvich not only produced travel guides but also organised ‘package tours’. Having established a network of travel agencies with a main office in Piatigorsk, he arranged group tours on the Volga and in the Caucasus after 1912. He struck deals with steamship and railway companies for discounts on tickets for passengers travelling in groups and placed photos in his travel guides of ‘the Moskvich railway car’, as well as photographs of first- and second-class compartments. Automobiles were purchased to drive tourists across mountainous areas of the Caucasus. Tourists themselves were in the care of drivers, escorts and tour guides.64

The analysis of diverse guidebooks on the Black Sea region shows how different communities of practice used the pages of travel guides to seek customers, but they also collaborated with each other. A travel guide published by the administration of a mineral water resort featured a carrier’s advertisement, or a travel guide issued by a mountaineering club featured an ad for particular stores. The ultimate goal of these communities of practice was to attract consumer attention to the information. Working together, they turned travel guides into a boundary object, where different social worlds – authors, publishers, entrepreneurs – intersected and engaged in cooperative activities.

63Grigori Moskvich, Putevoditel’ po Krymu (Odessa, 1888), III.
Conclusion

Analysis of Russian guidebooks shows that there was a diverse range of publications from the beginning of the nineteenth century right up to the Russian Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. The dynamics of travel guide publication in different regions of the Russian empire reflected the uneven economic and social development in those areas. As the case study of the Black Sea region demonstrates, different actors were involved in promoting travel and tourism, attracting different types of visitors, and producing travel guides. Competing with each other, these different actors nevertheless came together in order to aid in the relatively rapid transformation of the region as a tourist space adapted to travellers’ needs. Similar processes were taking place in Europe. Travel guides published during the same period owed their diversity to the fact that, as boundary objects, they were located at the intersection of interests belonging to different actors: authors and publishers, entrepreneurs and industrialists, transportation companies and local institutions. Each of these communities pursued individual goals in creating and using travel guides. As a narrative and material object, each guide was the result of interactions between different communities of practice. Various actors had their own interest in the development of the tourism industry and in trying to attract a reader’s attention.

Focusing on a set of cooperative work arrangements (a type of ‘infrastructural work’ in the process of making travel guides) on different communities of practices, and on authors, publishers and entrepreneurs, we investigated how actors with different styles of communication participated in creating new practices. As each community, with its different attitudes and goals, changed through the nineteenth century, the artefact they collectively produced – the travel guide – changed its contents, ideological motives and larger meaning. These communities created a composite mosaic of informational space in the guidebook, where descriptions of tourist sights accompanied detailed information about transport company history, structure, and services provided, as well as timetables, rules of conduct for passengers, and other useful information for travellers.

By the very end of the nineteenth century, several decades later than in Europe, Russian guidebooks became more practical and utilitarian. Authors and publishers supplied their guides with plans, maps, and photographs. The increasing number of informational entries about competing transport companies and the services they provided give evidence that travel was becoming a commercial product, a purchasable commodity. As a boundary object, travel guides were a source for tourist information, on the one hand, and a source for information on the totality of goods and services, on the other. Though Russian guidebooks were published in fewer numbers than Murray’s and Baedeker’s guides, their mass publication was related to the development of a market economy and the expansion of consumption. Guidebook authors addressed their narratives to readers from different income groups and provided information that was helpful for consuming time and space effectively.

What could a handbook titled ‘Practical travel guidebook’ be used for? Potential readers, business travellers, vacationers, tourists, and customers, to whom the informational bricolage of travel guides was addressed, were active individual agents who for their own reasons bought travel handbooks. Business travellers, tourists and vacationers, who travelled individually in the first- and second-class or less expensively in groups were a diverse community and often used the products of the emerging tourist industry for their
own ends. For the anxious traveller, guidebooks helped to master the fears that arose from the uncertainties of travel and enabled them to control the unknown with practical information. Some users communicated with travel guide authors and publishers. Among them were those who cooperated more intensively in the preparation of new editions by updating practical data. Thus, readers could also participate in the making of new practices. Their activities are difficult to trace; however, readers and users formed a silent, but important social world, interrelated with other defined communities through the pages of the guidebooks.

Travel guide authors and publishers made money and gained popularity, entrepreneurs used the advertising space to promote their goods and services, readers benefitted from diverse information about places of interest and practical travel issues. Understanding Russian travel guides as a boundary object helps to shed light on the process of the commercialisation of travel and the emergence of the tourism industry. These processes were set in motion not only by the work arrangements of governmental bodies but also, and more significantly, by public and commercial initiatives. In particular, joint-stock companies and private businesses began to actively offer transportation services and organise the transportation of cargo and passengers across the vast territory of the Russian empire from the 1820s, whereas state institutions developed an interest and started to participate in this activity only several decades later. The development of the hotel industry and, later, of the tourism services sector evolved under similar circumstances. The formation of the tourism industry was a long process. As our study of the body of Russian travel guides reveals, the commodification of travel was shaped by the development of transportation, recreational, and tourist service sectors, and it resulted in the making of new social practices. They emerged over several decades in the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Those processes laid the foundation for the creation of the tourism industry, which would reach its maturity during the Soviet period.

At the early stage of its development, this system was shaped by the activities of civic organisations, such as mountaineering clubs and other voluntary associations and societies, transportation companies, as well as amateur entrepreneurs like Grigorii Moskvich, Mikhail Stozh, Nikolai Lender, and Nikolai Fedotov. In different spheres, these men acted as publishers who sold books, authors who wrote them, and entrepreneurs who set up travel tours and promoted recreational business. Further analyses of their professional strategies would illuminate grassroots public and business initiatives in developing new areas such as travel guide publishing, travel and leisure practices, and organised ‘package tours’.

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