

Christian Brinton: A modernist icon

A portrait and a study of the collector

by **Mechella Yezernitskaya**

Christian Brinton (1870–1942) liked to have his portrait painted. The portraits of the collector, critic, and curator by émigré artists in the Philadelphia Museum of Art reveal that the collector did not merely “discover[], acquire[], and salvage[] objects,” as historian James Clifford has described the practice of collecting.¹ Instead, Brinton collected objects through a network of cultural exchange, diplomacy, and gift giving by forging bonds with expatriate artists living in the diaspora in the United States. Brinton’s staunch and steadfast promotion of the careers of émigré artists earned him the epithet “St. Brinton.”² Hence, the colorful portraits of Brinton portray the collector

as a society man, saint, and priest dressed in elegant suits with accessories such as a top hat, gloves, and a cane. Two portraits in particular capture the range of perspectives on the man – Brinton’s portrait surrounded by his cohort of émigré artists from the Russian Empire in David Burliuk’s 1924 *A Critic and His Artist Friends (Portrait of Christian Brinton and Nine Artists)* (Fig. 1) and a full-length portrait of the collector displaying piety at the crossroads of imperial and Soviet Russia in Nikol Schattenstein’s 1932 *Adoration of Moscow (Portrait of Christian Brinton)* (Fig. 2). In fact, these two portraits consolidated Brinton’s reputation not only as a critic, curator, and collector, but also as a benefactor and promoter of Russian and Soviet art. While the portraits pay “tribute” to the collector’s patronage, as art historian Andrew J. Walker notes, they also pay tribute to the inaugural object that Brinton did “discover[], acquire[], and salvage[]” for the collection, namely, a seventeenth-century Russian Orthodox icon.³ In the essay that follows, I examine how the seventeenth-century icon drove not only the unusual iconography of these two portraits of Christian Brinton, but also the collector’s valuation and views of modern Russian art.

Born in West Chester, a suburb outside of Philadelphia, Brinton descended from one of the earliest Quaker families to flee from religious persecution in England and to settle in the colony of Pennsylvania.⁴ Brinton was trained as an actor and received his B.A. from Haverford College in 1882. Due to the family’s suc-

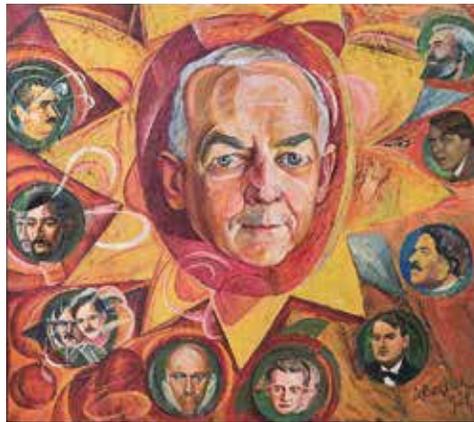


Fig. 1. David Burliuk, *A Critic and his Artist Friends (Portrait of Christian Brinton and Nine Artists)*, 1924. Oil on canvas, 63.5 x 71.1 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Christian Brinton, 1941.

cessful serpentine stone quarry in West Chester, Brinton was able to travel extensively and study throughout Europe. Brinton studied philosophy, aesthetics, and art history at Heidelberg University and Sorbonne University while also pursuing a short-lived career as a theater actor. He continued his studies at Haverford College and received his M.A. in Art History in 1906 and an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters (Litt.D.) in 1914. In the United States, Brinton lived in The Players Club, a private social club for thespians in Gramercy Park in New York City, and he vacationed at what he named the “Quarry House” in West Chester, where he eventually retreated towards the end of his life.⁵ Brinton took up a

post as an editor of the literary criticism magazine *The Critic* and penned hundreds of articles in popular magazines including *The Century*, *Harper’s*, *Scribner’s*, *Vanity Fair*, *L’Art et les Artistes*, and *The International Studio*, as well as numerous essays for exhibition catalogues and monographs.

THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, Brinton gathered a range of objects including paintings, works on paper, and sculptures as well as stage and costume designs, textiles, toys, and folk crafts predominately from Eastern Europe with a selection of works from Central Europe, Scandinavia, and the United States.⁶ The collection brings together objects as varied as a seventeenth-century icon, multicolored peasant crafts, a porcelain figure from the Lomonosov Porcelain Factory, Cubo-futurist paintings, traditional Russian textiles, and sketches of set designs and costumes for the Ballet Russes, all of which came from what the collector emblematically termed the “Slavic Crescent”. According to Brinton, this region encompassed the Baltic States, Yugoslavia, Eastern Europe, and, in particular, Russia “from which varied and complex cultural currents mainly flow.”⁷

According to legend, Brinton first journeyed to the Slavic Crescent sometime in the 1890s and returned to the United States with a small seventeenth-century icon.⁸ Purportedly the first object to form his collection, the *Episodes from the Life of Saint Anne* narrates the life events of Saint Anne and Saint



Fig. 2. Nikol Schattenstein, *Adoration of Moscow (Portrait of Christian Brinton)*, 1932. Oil on canvas, 126.8 x 101.9 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Christian Brinton, 1941.

Joachim, specifically the miraculous birth of the Virgin Mary as indicated in the Cyrillic Church Slavonic inscription that reads, “Birth of Mary” (*Rozhdestvo Presviatoi Bogoroditsy*) on the upper register of the panel (Fig. 3). The veneration, popularity, and cult of Saint Anne, based on the Apocryphal Gospel called the *Protoevangelium of James*, flourished in Russian culture at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is noteworthy that an icon depicting the story of a saint whose life events were constructed would not only commence but also serve to concretize Brinton’s collection of modern Russian art.⁹ How are we to understand the appeal of a centuries-old Russian Orthodox icon and the *vita* of Saint Anne to a modern viewer and collector of modern art? What is the significance and value of the icon in Russian art and culture?

AMONG THE SYMBOLS she represented and the roles she performed such as mother, grandmother, and the founding matriarch of the sacred family, Saint Anne completed the extended family of Christ, embodying the notion of what scholars describe as the “continuity of generations.”¹⁰ Together, these symbolic attributes established Saint Anne as an authority figure for medieval and early modern worshippers, but above all she was inextricably associated with the “idea of genealogy.”¹¹ To a modern viewer and collector such as Brinton, however, the icon itself came to symbolize the genealogical origins of Russian visual and material culture. Brinton’s assessment of the icon’s value did not center upon its religious, ritualistic, or apotropaic qualities but instead upon its aesthetic, historical, and temporal qualities. In other words, the icon’s artistic, historical, and age value, in the art historian and theorist Alois Riegel’s sense of such terms, gave weight to the object’s place in the collection.¹² The icon’s dating to the seventeenth century projected a particular sense of authority and authenticity. As James Clifford observes, “Old objects are endowed with a sense of ‘depth’ by their historically minded collectors. Temporality is reified and salvaged as origin, beauty, and knowledge.”¹³ Such values allowed the object to serve as an artistic, historical, and, eventually, national symbol of Russia.¹⁴ Like the story of Saint Anne, which was constructed by apocryphal scriptures in order to fill the gaps in the biblical narrative of the life story of Christ, Brinton’s deployment of the seventeenth-century icon serves to construct a pseudo-lineage of Russian art and cultural heritage in his collection of modern Russian art.

Saint Anne’s role as a respected authority figure gave further weight to Brinton’s view that art developed along an “evolutionary” rather than “revolutionary” course.¹⁵ Brinton observes, “The development of artistic effort advances normally along definite lines. The various movements overlap one another, and in each will be found that vital potency which proves the formative spirit of the next.”¹⁶ Elsewhere in his text, Brinton writes, “Painting and sculpture are living organisms, which must reflect the aims and aspirations of the time or become sterile and soulless formulae.”¹⁷ Brinton understood modernism as a continu-

ation rather than a rupture of artistic traditions in which styles and movements move forward along a linear and continuous trajectory. This notion of genealogy would become the germ of Brinton’s evolutionary view on modern art, which he espoused throughout numerous articles and exhibition catalogues.

AS THE ICON laid the foundations of the collection, Brinton continued to immerse himself in Russian art and culture even when his interests in promoting international modernism took him far afield. In the summer of 1912, Brinton traveled to Sweden, Denmark, and Norway in preparation for his work on the *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art* under the auspices of the American-Scandinavian Society.¹⁸ Brinton visited various institutions such as Sweden’s open-air museum known as Skansen and the Nordic Museum, which presented historical, ethnic, and national ideas of “Scandinavianism” or “Swedishness” from the Viking era to the present.¹⁹ Brinton’s pan-Scandinavian survey

focused on the aesthetic, ethnic, and what Brinton often termed the “racial” similarities among the three nations while at the same time asserting the distinct aesthetic and national characteristics of each country.

The preservation of Scandinavian artistic and cultural patrimony that Brinton saw in modern-day Sweden was not lost on the collector in his growing appreciation and assessment of Russian art. In the introduction to the catalogue of the *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art*, Brinton writes,

It is in fact only the redoubtable Russians who can today compete with the sturdy Scandinavians in the possession of a spontaneous, unspoiled esthetic patrimony. The reasons for such a situation have in many respects been similar, if not, indeed, identical. As in the case of Russia, the relative geographical remoteness of the Peninsula, the barrier of an unfamiliar speech, and the fact that the pallid fervour of Christianity and the pagan richness of the Renaissance were comparatively late in making appearance on the scene, all tended toward preserving that integrity of expression alike in art, letters, and music which is their most distinctive possession.²⁰

Brinton sings the praises of Scandinavia’s and, by extension, Russia’s unadulterated preservation of their artistic and cultural heritage by virtue of their distance and isolation from the Western world, their foreign languages, their delayed embrace of Christianity via the Byzantine Empire, and their bypassing of the Western Renaissance. This preservation of a so-called “unspoiled esthetic patrimony” was not lost on Brinton when he turned his sights again to Russia in the late 1910s and early 1920s. In the preface to the 1916 book *The Russian School of Painting* by Russian artist and critic Alexandre Benois, Brinton underscores a “typically Slavonic note” that he found to be inherent

“TEMPORALITY IS REIFIED AND SALVAGED AS ORIGIN, BEAUTY, AND KNOWLEDGE.”

in Russian art throughout the ages.²¹ The legacy of the icon, an archetypal “Slavonic” object and the symbol of Russia’s artistic and cultural heritage, would reappear and serve as a vehicle for promulgating the collector’s essentialist views on Russian art in his collection.

Brinton’s subsequent trips to imperial and later Soviet Russia – at least half a dozen between the 1890s and 1932 – reinforced the significance of the icon in artistic traditions beyond the early modern period to the early twentieth century. At the turn of the century, both academic and avant-garde artists, or what Brinton describes as the “ultramodernists”, began to turn to the icon for material and metaphoric inspiration.²² In Brinton’s collection, paintings such as David Burliuik’s *Icon after the Revolution* (c. 1920), Nicolas Vasilieff’s *Modern Icon* (c. 1925), and John Graham’s (né Ivan Dombrowsky) *Study for Ikon of the Modern Age* (1930) form a suite of objects that respond to the icon’s materiality, iconography, and formal qualities such as the use of flattened planes, factured surfaces, and reverse perspective (Figs. 4–6). This renewed interest in the icon beyond its religious value came about when academic and popular consciousness of the icon spurred discussions about the value of objects of cultural heritage in late imperial and early Soviet Russia.²³ The icon, moreover, was channeled in the iconography of several unusual portraits of Christian Brinton by émigré artists from the Russian Empire.

David Burliuik (1882–1967), a Ukrainian artist who emigrated to the United States in 1922, was celebrated as the “militant father of Russian Modernism.”²⁴ Two years later, Burliuik painted *A Critic and His Artist Friends (Portrait of Christian Brinton and Nine Artists)* in 1924 (Fig. 1). Brinton engages the viewer with a direct gaze from the center of a halo from which yellow rays extend to the edges of the canvas. Orbiting around the so-called “patron Saint of all the Russians” are nine circular portraits of émigré artists from the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. Arranged like scenes from the life of a saint, the nine portraits in frontal, profile, and three-quarter views speak to the diaspora community of émigré artists living and working in New York City.²⁵ Moving clockwise, the portraits represent artists Sergei Konenkov, Boris Grigoriev, Abraham Manievich, Sergei Sudeikin, Nicolai Cikovsky, Nicolas Roerich, Alexander Archipenko, Boris Anisfeld, and, finally, Nicholas Vasilieff. The halos, sunburst, and diaphanous swirling motifs encircle Brinton and the artists within a non-descript setting operating in a similar way to that of religious portrait icons, which typically depict an identifiable holy figure set against a background of luminous gold leaf. Unlike the sequential composition that unfolds the linear narrative of the *Episodes of the Life of Saint Anne*, Burliuik’s circular composition with abstracted background displaces the figures from any recognizable time or place. By doing so, the portrait draws the focus to Brinton and his nine artist friends.

In 1925, the apologist of the Slavic Crescent mused, “While America is the lighthouse of my body, Russia is the lighthouse of my soul.”²⁶ During the 1920s, Brinton organized a slate of solo and group exhibitions featuring recent émigré artists in museums and galleries including the Brooklyn Museum, the Grand Central Palace, and Kingore Galleries among other venues.

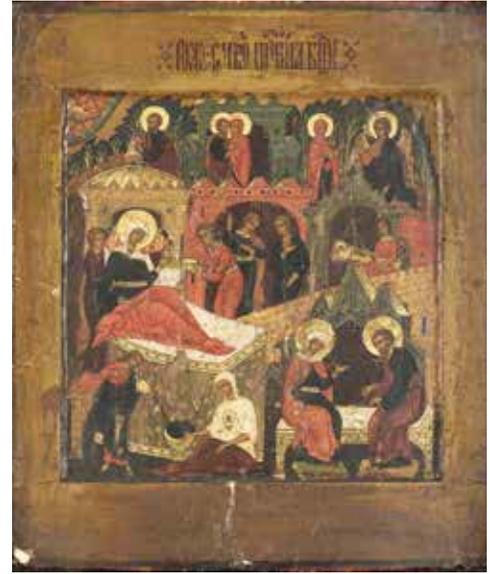


Fig. 3. *Episodes from the Life of Saint Anne*, 17th century. Tempera on panel, 32.1 x 27.3 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Christian Brinton, 1941.

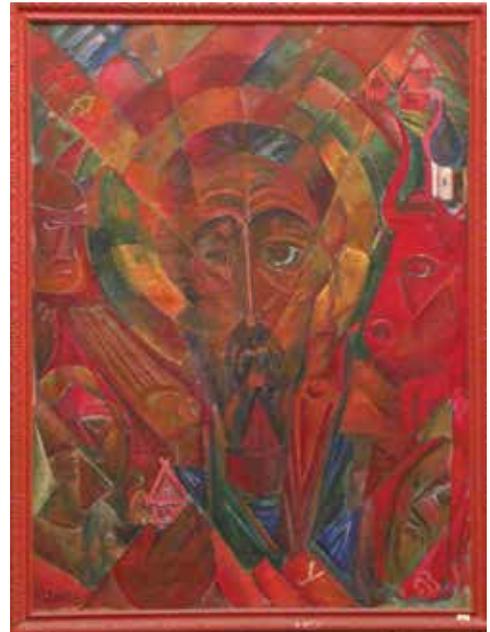


Fig. 4. Nicholas Vasilieff, *Modern Icon*, circa 1925. Oil on canvas, 101.6 x 75.9 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Christian Brinton, 1941.

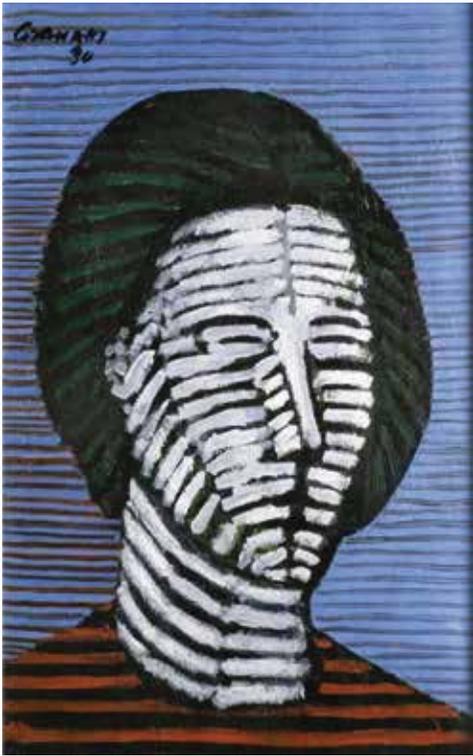


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Fig. 5. John Graham (Ivan Dombrowsky), *Study for "Ikon of the Modern Age,"* 1930. Oil on canvas, 61.3 x 38.1 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Christian Brinton, 1941.

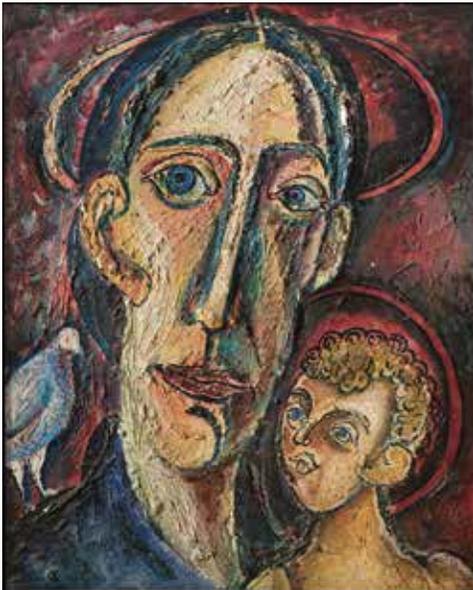


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Fig. 6. David Burliuk, *Icon after the Revolution,* circa 1920. Oil on cardboard, 50.8 x 40.6 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Christian Brinton, 1941.

“BRINTON UNDERSCORES A ‘TYPICALLY SLAVONIC NOTE’ THAT HE FOUND TO BE INHERENT IN RUSSIAN ART THROUGHOUT THE AGES.”

Brinton further promoted the work of artists beyond the émigré community in New York City to include the ultramodernists such as Kazimir Malevich, Aleksandr Rodchenko, Alexandra Exter, and El Lissitzky, among others, through his work with the Société Anonyme, an organization that sponsored exhibitions, publications, and lectures on modern art founded by Katherine Dreier.²⁷ Brinton continued to travel to Russia and was affiliated with a number of Soviet cultural organizations such as the Russian-American Institute and the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (known as VOKS), for which he was involved in negotiating, albeit unsuccessfully, an exhibition on icons in the United States.²⁸

UPON BRINTON'S RETURN from his final trip to the Soviet Union in 1932, the Lithuanian-born artist Nikol Schattenstein (1877–1954), who built a reputation for his portraits of society men and women, painted the collector in the same year in New York City. Unlike Burliuk's portrait of Brinton's disembodied head floating in a sunburst, Schattenstein situates a full-length portrait of the collector in clearly articulated time and space in *Adoration of Moscow (Portrait of Christian Brinton)* (Fig. 2). The portrait once hung in Brinton's bedroom as photographs of the collection's installation in the Quarry House in West Chester reveal (Fig. 7).²⁹ Brinton wears a three-piece suit with a red decoration pinned to his left breast pocket along with a black top hat and a pair of white gloves resting beside a plush red pillow.³⁰ The collector kneels in piety at the metaphorical crossroads of Tsarist and Soviet Russia as represented by the polychromatic sixteenth-century Saint Basil's Cathedral on the left and Vladimir Lenin's tomb on the right, all within Red Square. The imperial coat of arms in the form of a double-headed eagle topped off with two imperial crowns and the communist symbol of the hammer and sickle create a notion of historical continuity. In the upper register of the painting, a fanciful Cyrillic inscription encircled in stylized clouds recalls the inscription in the *Episodes from the Life of Saint Anne* (Fig. 3). While the spelling and style of the inscription imitates the letters of the Old Church Slavonic alphabet, the text does not form coherent words in the liturgical language but instead carries semantic value in Russian. The pseudo-Church Slavonic text reads, “Little Priest” (*Mialen'kiy Pop*), which alludes to Brinton's short stature, but also his notorious persona as a patron saint or priest, a colloquialism—at times derogatory—used to refer to a priest.³¹ The stylistic pseudo-Church Slavonic script together with Brinton's pious pose invokes a modern-day secular, if not sacrilegious, devotional scene in which Moscow's spiritual significance is the subject and object of worship.

In the same vein as Burliuk's appropriation of the iconography of portrait icons, Schattenstein's portrayal of Brinton appropriates devotional images, most notably the theme of the Adoration of the Magi, a scene from the Epiphany in which richly adorned envoys or kings known as the "three wise men" pay homage to the incarnation of the Christ Child. While the specificity of this religious narrative is absent from *Adoration of Moscow*, the secular devotion scene fortifies Brinton's international reputation as a promoter of Russian and Soviet art. In the guise of a holy yet modern figure, Brinton's upturned gaze, praying hands, and kneeling posture perform devotion before Moscow and its legendary status as a potential Third Rome, a concept that gained popularity throughout medieval Muscovy and modern Moscow.³² While Brinton is portrayed in a canonical pose of devotion, Moscow, by extension, reciprocates adoration towards Brinton and, perhaps, bestows the medal that is pinned to the collector's suit jacket in recognition of Brinton's promotion of the capital's artistic and cultural riches.

Like the lives of the saints, Brinton consciously crafted his own *vita*, iconography, and legend by inserting himself within the genealogy of his collection. From the portrait icon to the pious patron, the portraits of Christian Brinton tell us something of not only the actor, but also the narrative of Russian art that the collector constructed. As historian Robert Williams observes, "Christian Brinton acted out his most notable role as promoter of Russian and Soviet art in America."³³ These portraits commemorate the relationships Brinton forged with émigré artists, but above all they commemorate Brinton's role as an actor and as an apologist of the Slavic Crescent. ❌

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references

- 1 James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture," in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. John Elser and Roger Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 94–107, at 97.
- 2 Alfred C. Bossom to Christian Brinton, 27 February 1923, Vol. 4, 1921–1925, Memorabilia of Christian Brinton, 1899–1925, Free Library of Philadelphia.
- 3 See Andrew Walker, "World War II and Modern Russian Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art: The Christian Brinton Collection, 1941–1945," *Archives of American Art Journal* 41, no. 1/4 (2001): 34–42, at 36; See also Walker, "Critic, Curator, Collector: Christian Brinton and the Exhibition of National Modernism in America, 1910–1945" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1999), 1.
- 4 The Brinton family kept meticulous genealogical records, which tell us that they emigrated from Staffordshire County, England, and settled in West Chester, Pennsylvania, in the spring of 1684. See Janetta Wright Schoonover, ed., *The Brinton Genealogy: A History of William Brinton*,



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Fig. 7. Christian Brinton standing beside a portrait of himself titled *Adoration of Moscow (Portrait of Christian Brinton)* by Nikol Schattenstein, photographed by the Philadelphia Record in 1937.

Who Came From England to Chester County, Pennsylvania in 1684, And of His Descendants with Some Records of the English Brintons (Trenton, N.J.: MacCrellish and Quigley, 1924).

- 5 Brinton was listed as an actor by profession in The Players Club, which was founded in 1888 by the Shakespearean actor Edwin Booth. See John William Tebbel, *A Certain Club: One Hundred Years of The Players* (New York: Wieser and Wieser, 1989), 291. The serpentine stone farmhouse was called several names, see Schoonover, *The Brinton Genealogy*, 539.
- 6 For the Philadelphia Museum of Art's acquisition, display, and care of the Christian Brinton Collection, see Walker, "World War II and Modern Russian Art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art," 34–42.
- 7 The "Slavic Crescent" appears in Brinton's 1932 application for a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship to travel to the "Slavic countries" in order to publish a "first-hand" survey of contemporary Slavic painting, sculpture, and graphic and decorative arts: "What I term the 'Slavic Crescent' virtually encloses the Eastern confines of Europe, and has had a more deep-rooted and profound influence upon West European culture than has thus far been recognized, either by scholars or the general public. The Southern tip of this crescent is Yugoslavia, facing the Adriatic and the hell [sic] of 'Italy's boot.' The Northern tip of this crescent curves through the Baltic States and ends, say, at Danzig, though one-time under points, its width at the center is as wide as Russia itself, from which its varied and complex cultural currents mainly flow." Grant Application, 1932, Series 1, Personal Papers, Box 1, The Christian Brinton Collection, Chester County Historical Society.
- 8 In her extensive work on the perception, value, and use of icons throughout Russian history, Wendy R. Salmond observes that a market for icons had flourished in Russia in the years leading up to World War I, and foreigners who journeyed to Russia likely "came across icons for sale in markets or on the street, and they often bought them as souvenirs." Wendy R. Salmond, "How America Discovered Russian Icons: The Soviet Loan Exhibition of 1930–1932," in *Alter Icons: The Russian Icon and Modernity*, ed. Jefferson J.A. Gatrall and Douglas Greenfield (University

- Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 128–143, at 129 and 133. The circumstances of Brinton's discovery and acquisition of the icon remain unclear, and there are varying reports on the year of Brinton's first trip to Russia. According to an article in the *Daily Local News*, the author dates Brinton's trip to 1890, when he accompanied his aunt, Miss Sibylla Brinton, on a trip to Russia. See *Daily Local News*, January 8, 1945. Obituaries, Series 1, Personal Information, Box 1, The Christian Brinton Collection, Chester County Historical Society. Historian Robert C. Williams, however, dates the trip to later in the decade in 1898. See Robert C. Williams, *Russian Art and American Money, 1900–1940* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1980), 83–110, at 86.
- 9 Scholars consider St. Anne to be a “constructed saint”. Pierre Delooz, “Towards a Sociological Study of Canonized Sainthood in the Catholic Church,” in *Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore, and History*, ed. Stephen Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 189–216, at 196.
 - 10 See Kathleen M. Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn, *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Society* (Athens, G.A.: University of Georgia Press, 1991); Virginia Nixon, *Mary's Mother: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Europe* (University Park, P.A.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004); Ton Brandenburg, “St. Anne and Her Family: The Veneration of St. Anne in Connection with Concepts of Marriage and the Family in the Early Modern Period,” in *Saints and She-Devils: Images of Women in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Lène Dresen-Coenders (London: Rubicon, 1987), 101–27.
 - 11 Ashley and Sheingorn, *Interpreting Cultural Symbols*, 49.
 - 12 In the preface to the legislative proposal for the protection of historic monuments in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Riegel classifies these and other values advocating for the preservation of historic monuments. See Alois Riegel, “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin,” trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo, *Oppositions* 25 (Fall 1982): 21–51, at 22. Wendy Salmond further observes that age was a “determining factor in evaluating an icon's value.” See Wendy R. Salmond, “Russian Icons and American Money, 1928–1938,” in *Treasures into Tractors: The Selling of Russia's Cultural Heritage, 1918–1938*, ed. Anne Odom and Wendy R. Salmond (Washington: Hillwood Estate, Museum, & Gardens, 2009), 237–263, at 239.
 - 13 Clifford, “On Collecting Art and Culture,” 99.
 - 14 For a discussion on the significance of the icon and its revaluation throughout Russian history, see Jefferson J. A. Gatrall, “Introduction,” in *Alter Icons: The Russian Icon and Modernity*, 1–25.
 - 15 In the same essay outlining the value of monuments, Riegel argues for a continuous evolution of art: “It is important to realize that every work of art is at once and without exception a historical monument because it represents a specific stage in the development of the visual arts.” Riegel, “The Modern Cult of Monuments,” 22.
 - 16 Christian Brinton, “Evolution Not Revolution in Art,” *The International Studio* 69, no. 194 (April 1913): xxvii–xxxv, at xxviii.
 - 17 Brinton, “Evolution not Revolution in Art,” xxxiii.
 - 18 For the North American reception of the *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art*, see Patricia G. Berman, Øivind Storm Bjerke, Michelle Facos, Thor J. Mednick, and Janet Rauscher, “Wildly, Modestly Modern: The North American Reception of the Scandinavian Exhibition of 1912,” in *Luminous Modernism: Scandinavian Art Comes to America. A Centennial Retrospective 1912–2012*, ed. Patricia G. Berman (New York: The American Scandinavian Foundation, 2012), 12–29.
 - 19 Brinton's travels were featured in *Dagens Nyheter*, a daily newspaper published in Sweden. I would like to thank Johan Hegardt for bringing this source to my attention and Sasha Klugar for her help in translating these articles. For Brinton's travels in Scandinavia, see Walker, “Critic, Curator, Collector,” 58. For Skansen, see Johan Hegardt, “Time Stopped. The Open-air Museum Skansen and Arthur Hazelius,” in *Manufacturing a Past for the Present: Forgery and Authenticity in Medievalist Texts and Objects in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. János M. Bak, Patrick J. Geary, and Gábor Klaniczay (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 287–306, at 287.
 - 20 Christian Brinton, “Introduction,” in Christian Brinton, Karl Madsen, Jens Thiis, and Carl G. Laurin, *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art* (New York: Redfield Brothers, Inc., 1912), 11–26, at 12.
 - 21 Christian Brinton, introduction to *The Russian School of Painting*, by Alexandre Benois, trans. Avrahm Yarmolinsky (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1916), v–viii, at vi.
 - 22 See Christian Brinton, foreword to *The Russian Art Exhibition* by Igor Grabar, trans. Isabel Florence Hapgood (New York: Grand Central Palace, 1924), n.p. For the role of the icon in the Russian and Soviet avant-gardes, see John E. Bowlit, “Orthodoxy and the Avant-Garde: Sacred Images in the Work of Goncharova, Malevich, and Their Contemporaries,” in *Christianity and the Arts in Russia*, ed. William C. Brumfield and Milos M. Velimirovic (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 154–50.
 - 23 Bowlit, “Orthodoxy and the Avant-Garde,” 154–150.
 - 24 Christian Brinton, *Exhibition of Russian Painting and Sculpture: Realism to Surrealism* (Wilmington, D.E.: The Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts, 1932), n.p.
 - 25 Alfred C. Bossom to Christian Brinton, 27 February 1923, Vol. 4, 1921–1925, Memorabilia of Christian Brinton, 1899–1925, Free Library of Philadelphia.
 - 26 Christian Brinton, Diary 1925, Series 1, Personal Papers, Box 1, Diary 1925, The Christian Brinton Collection, Chester County Historical Society.
 - 27 Brinton and Dreier joined efforts to organize the Display of Foreign Art at Philadelphia's sesquicentennial Exposition and the International Exhibition of Modern Art at the Brooklyn Museum, both in 1926. For the promotion of Russian and Soviet art by the Société Anonyme, see Dickran Tashjian, “‘A Big Cosmic Force’ Katherine Dreier and the Russian/Soviet Avant-Garde,” in *Société Anonyme: Modernism for America*, ed. Jennifer R. Gross (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 45–73.
 - 28 The organization is also known as All-Russian Society of cultural Ties. For Brinton's involvement in VOKS, see Salmond, *Russian Icons and American Money, 1928–1938*, 243–244. Brinton's exhibitions and travels generated publicity in both the Soviet and American press. See “Amerikanskiy khudozhestvennyy kritik o kul'ture SSSR,” *Vechnaya Moskva*, July 21, 1925, no. 164, Scrapbook, Vol. 2, 1921–1925, Memorabilia of Christian Brinton, 1899–1925, Free Library of Philadelphia.
 - 29 The portrait was shown in the 16th Annual Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists at the Grand Central Palace. See Clark S. Marlor, *The Society of Independent Artists: The Exhibition Record 1917–1944* (Park Ridge, N.J.: Noyes Press, 1984), 483.
 - 30 While archival records cannot confirm whether or not Brinton received a decoration from the Soviet Union, Brinton did receive a decoration from the King of Sweden, Gustav V, and a diploma naming him the First Class in the Royal Order of Vasa in 1917 for his role as cultural ambassador in promoting Swedish art in the *Exhibition of Contemporary Scandinavian Art* in 1912 at the American Art Galleries and the *Swedish Art Exhibition* in 1916 at the Brooklyn Museum.
 - 31 A Russian transliteration of the inscription, however, would read *Malen'kiy Pop* as opposed to *Mialen'kiy Pop*.
 - 32 For a historical overview of Russia as the Third Rome, see Marshall Poe, “Moscow, the Third Rome: The Origins and Transformations of a ‘Pivotal Moment,’” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 49, no. 3 (2001): 412–429.
 - 33 Williams, *Russian Art and American Money*, 84.