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How to Make a Colony: Reform and Resistance in Russian Turkestan, 1865-1917

Matthew J. Thrasher

Macalester College, matthew.j.thrasher@gmail.com

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How to Make a Colony: Reform and Resistance in Russian Turkestan,
1865-1917

Matthew Thrasher
Advisor Jim von Geldern, Russian Studies Department
Macalester College
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Abstract

This project analyzes the Russian colonization of Turkestan in the second half of the nineteenth century. Specific attention is given to a group of Russian bureaucrats and military personnel who sought to reform the Tsar's administration of the region. By outlining the debate surrounding economic and political reform, as well as the controversy circulating around Russian ethnographic practice, this project discusses the myriad ways in which the local population of Turkestan negotiated new forms of anti-colonial resistance within their rapidly changing social environment.

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Introduction

Previously ruled by different Khans, Emirs, and nomadic herdsmen, the people of Turkestan experienced a massive transformation of their political, social, and economic life in the mid-nineteenth century. While the leader of Bukhara and Khiva remained nominally intact, others in Turkestan suddenly found themselves under the control of a Tsar who ruled them from over two thousand miles north-west of their land, who did not speak a word of their language, and who was not Muslim. At home, former enemies were asked to become “fellow countrymen.” Turkoman raiders were expected to live next to Sart traders; slaves, next to their former masters; and the Kokanese next to the Bukharans. This was possible only if the inhabitants of Turkestan considered themselves “Turkestanis.”

To the Russians, this meant extirpating what they perceived to be the region’s pervasive inter-tribal violence and pre-modern Islamic fanaticism. From a *tabula rasa* they would construct a society of civic-minded Imperial citizens dedicated to the advancement of Russian *grazhdanstvennost’* (civilization). But the removal of Islam would require force, and lots of it. As the Russians learned in the Caucasus, this situation was not ideal. More so, the state treasury was drained. A defeat in the Crimean War had sapped resources, rendering the Empire uneager for a drawn-out campaign in Turkestan. The Russian government conquered Turkestan, but it was unwilling to continue the aggressive into the private sphere: further bloodshed engendered by a prolonged battle against Islam and local culture was not on the Tsar’s agenda. Modernization and colonization of the region would have to happen over time.

But why would an aggressive policy of modernization be attractive in the first place? Turkestan was an arid stretch of land of dubious economic import. Consequently, the territory was at best an afterthought for Russia’s burgeoning bourgeoisie. It was the lucrative western

provinces, not the scattered oases of the Kara Kum, which garnered the attention of Russian entrepreneurs. Turkestan was also isolated. Politically, the Empire was indifferent. While Peter the Great made military forays into Turkestan in an attempt to secure a passage to India, the Russian politicians of the nineteenth century probably did not have this in mind. As the Empire stretched farther and farther south, Turkestan became the site of the “Great Game” between the British and the Russians. But Turkestan was more than just a pawn in the power politics of the two super-powers. It was a colony that the Russians sought to develop and exploit. The “Great Game” argument cannot alone explain the expenditures that went into Turkestan’s incorporation and subsequent development. Additionally, Turkestan was far beyond the peripheries of a “primordial” Russian homeland. The logic of recuperating a lost ethnic territory would not hold in Turkestan. Russophile champions of Russian expansion would have no truck with Turkestan, and Russifying politicians had little to say about the region. They viewed the population as irreparably alien, incapable of adopting Western norms of Russian culture. Separation was a more popular strategy than Russification.

Ambivalent about the private lives of the local population, the Russian Empire struck a series of compromises between the ideals of the Empire and the local conditions it encountered in the region. Life could go on in Turkestan as long as the region was pacific. At times, this required the Empire to retreat on hard-line issues. An Orthodox-Christian state, the Russian Empire permitted the practice of Islam in Turkestan. The territory was colonized, but not to the same extent as the Empire’s more valuable regions. Its colonization was far from a pulverizing of local life in the service of Imperial expansion. It was an attempt to export material wealth with minimal interference from the “savages.” This strategy required pacification. More often than not, pacification meant the deployment of Russian military force, not the development of

compliant Turkestanian citizens via the creation of a civic administration. The Russians did not need to produce consent among the local population; instead, they forced it.

However, one person's trash is another's treasure: if Turkestan was not important enough to require Russification in the nineteenth century, then it is immensely important for academics in the twenty first. Revisiting Turkestan affords contemporary scholars of the Russian Empire the opportunity not only to examine an understudied region of the former Empire, but to re-address questions of conquest and expansion, of theory and practice, and of reform and resistance. By nature of its unimportance, Turkestan has much to teach us. This paper takes as its starting point the assumption that colonial expansion in Turkestan can no longer be ascribed to nation-state narratives or Marxist dialectics. While nation-state theorists argue that state expansion occurs simultaneously with national assimilation, the Marxists attribute state expansion to the bourgeoisie's impetus to safeguard its economic interests. Neither narrative can sufficiently explain the Russian colonization of Turkestan.

Nor can they explain the popular, unorganized, and non-class, non-nationalist resistance to such colonization. The voices of reform-oriented Russian administrators can. By examining the voices of Russian reformers, this paper hopes to reclaim such forms of resistance. Re-thinking resistance under colonization provides new avenues through which to evaluate the agency of the people of Turkestan. Most Turkestanis did not have access to visible forms of institutional opposition, nor did they engage in open violence against the Russian administration. Such modes of resistance are part of the region's history, but they were not the only ways in which local actors sought to subvert the Russian colonial mission. Turkestanis did not have the ability to organize national or class resistance to their Russian colonizers. Despite this, the local population maintained agency by actively shaping their daily encounter with colonization.

Russian reformers give us insight into the ways in which these local actors negotiated such forms of non-visible agency.

However, reform voices appear to do the opposite: they seek to improve the Russian administration of Turkestan, not overthrow it; they seek to reduce the agency of the local population, not enhance it. Reformers were invested in perfecting the colonization of the region. To them, they were liberating the individuals of Turkestan. Under the ideal administration, the region's inhabitants would become liberal citizens, freed from their pre-modern, despotic traditions. This is not liberation in a nationalist or Marxist tradition. Reformers believed in the mission of the Empire, but they disagreed with its implementation. With this in mind, reformers railed against the Russian administration of Turkestan not because they believed in the inviolable cultural or economic autonomy of indigenous people, but because they believed that the operation was just and that it could be improved.

Cast aside at the time of the revolution, these voices defy the dichotomization of politics in the post-1917 world: they were neither against the Tsar nor for the Tsar. Some of the voices in this paper have all but disappeared from critical discourse, but not because the Soviets violently expunged them from the historical record. They had no reason to. Instead, these reformers fell through the cracks, remaining in a gray area that contrasted with a world which became black and white. Studying reformers affords us the opportunity not only to see the pre-Soviet years as something other than a violent struggle between thesis and antithesis, but to rethink the colonial encounter as well. These people wanted to make colonization work not simply because they wanted to increase the wealth of one geopolitical entity over another. Rather, they genuinely believed that they were improving the material lives of the pre-modern Turkestanis – a view which falls into obscurity if we overemphasize their role in expanding global capital.

By bracketing the reformers' role in improving the administration, we can find the ways in which these voices describe the types of non-visible agencies necessary in rethinking the colonial exchange between the Russians and the Turkestanis. If we avoid the moral charge against reform voices, we can see the ways in which the local population was able to adapt to their environment, forging new forms of resistance in a rapidly changing socio-economic order. The attempted implementation of Russian civilization over and against that of local traditions did not result in a loss of self, but, as I will show, often worked in the other direction, providing new avenues for local agents to reassert themselves. Turkestanis did not just raid heedlessly, and they were not essentially opposed to modernization. They were pliant, able to adjust to their social environment in a way that enabled, not undercut, their ability to resist. Reformers shed insight into the surreptitious ways in which the local population of Turkestan regained its agency in light of political subjugation and economic exploitation.

They found problems with the administration. At the root of these problems were non-nationalist, non-class-oriented local actors. Ordinary people were the problem: the professional witnesses who beleaguered the local courts, the merchants who excluded Russian traders, and the Turkestanis who mocked Russian profligacy. These individuals did not operate with a "revolutionary consciousness." They conducted their quotidian affairs, and in so doing, retained impunity from the Russian military. It was not necessary to leap into the extraordinary realm of anti-Imperial combat. To do so would have been dangerous. Instead, resistance could occur in the ordinary realm of pedestrian life. Such action was a strategy for maintaining physical safety while simultaneously contesting Russian colonization of the region.

In addition to rethinking local agency, reform voices also re-cast the actions of the Empire. Their work undoes an assumed uni-directionality in the colonial exchange. By

attempting to modernize local practices, the Russian government did not just develop its hold in the region. In some instances, attempted modernization undercut the power of the Empire. This paper examines these instances from a legal, economic, and ethnographic perspective.

First, the modernization of the Turkestani legal system did not just beget subjugation (Chapter 1). It introduced the use of witness oaths which allowed professional witnesses to undermine the judicial system. Oaths did not create more trustworthy witnesses. Instead, they legitimized the cause of witnesses who would lie for lucre. Despite stringent punishments, such witnesses had no qualms with swearing and breaking oaths. A prevailing myth was established among local judges: individuals who readily swore witness oaths were the least trustworthy. Because of this, honest witnesses refused to sign oaths and refused to participate in legal proceedings. To sign an oath signified one's desire to transgress, not abide by, the law. This greatly hampered the administration of civil justice in Turkestan.

Second, Russian goods in Turkestani marketplaces did not drive out local manufacturers (Chapter 2). Instead, Turkestani merchants competed with Russian goods by conducting business in an environment illegible to their colonizers: urban bazaars. Russian goods did not permeate Turkestani bazaars just because of the coercion of Emirs and Khans. Nor can we impute their failure to propagate just to the Russians' belief that the bazaars were savage, pre-modern institutions that were incapable of dispersing Western goods. Russian manufactures did not catch hold in Turkestan because the Turkestani bazaars contested the Russian understanding of public space: bazaars were not illegible to the Russians because the colonizers were too racist to understand the local trading customs, but because the bazaars undermined the division of private and public space. They were hybrid trading environments that challenged the introduction of

Russian goods, and Turkestani merchants could contest Russian colonization simply by going to work.

And the Russian production of ethnographic knowledge of Turkestanis was not just the steam-engine of Imperial expansion (Chapter 3). This paper focuses on a specific idea of “Asiatics” propagated by Russian ethnographers, administrators, and military personnel. Asiatics, according to such individuals, could relate to authority only through fear and intimidation. In order to cultivate power in Turkestan, they argued, the Russian administration had to “impress” the local population into subjugation. This logic reared its head in the Empire’s bloodiest battle, justifying the indiscriminate killing of thousands of Tekke raiders at Geok Tepe in 1881. Tekke raiders, argued General Skobelev, would not understand a peace treaty; in order to instill defeat into the Tekkes, the Russians had to impress them by slaughtering large numbers of Tekke combatants.

Despite this, the reasoning of the “impression” was not just the handmaiden of brutal colonial expansion. It worked against the Russians as well. While the Empire had to impress the Tekkes by killing them, Russian administrators had to impress the pacific urban population by sporting high-quality clothing, for example. In order to create this impression, these administrators needed additional funds. The impression was more than just a *raison d’être* for slaughter; it was a justification for corruption as well. Local actors knew this: the impression was taken quite seriously by the Empire, but it was a ruse in the eyes of some Turkestanis.

In conclusion, each chapter is an exercise in not only explaining the structural colonization of Turkestan, but the ways in which that structural alteration was accepted, mitigated, and reworked by the local population. Colonization in Turkestan was problematic not

just because the Russian Empire simply did not care enough, but because the local population had a role in actively rejecting the diminution of their autonomy under an Imperial system. This role, as I hope to show, was flexible, existing in a series of permutations which ranged from visible, institutional opposition – as is the case with the local courts (Chapter 1), to the maintenance of a viable public culture that was illegible to Russian traders (Chapter 2), all the way to simply knowing what the Russians did not (Chapter 3).

Chapter 1 focuses on the implementation of a Russian legal system in Turkestan, drawing on the work of N. Likoshin. It seeks to highlight the bevy of problems which the Russians encountered in modernizing the pre-conquest legal institutions of urban Turkestan. Chapter 2 marshals the works of Mikhail Veniukov, Mikhail Valikhanov, Yuri Kazi-Bek, and Nikolai Maev. The chapter highlights the role of the Turkestani marketplace in forging what I refer to as a “surrogate public” – a public culture which was at odds with the implementation of a classic, colonial economy of central production and peripheral consumption. And chapter 3 focuses on General Mikhail Skobelev, Count Konstantin Pahlen, and anthropologist Vladimir Nalivkin. It looks at one of the non-tangible ways in which the Russian Empire sought to solidify its authority in the colony: ethnography. More specifically, the chapter focuses on the production of a body of ethnographic knowledge which asked the Russians to “make an impression” amongst the locals – an “immoral comedy” which the local population, at the expense of the Russians, was able to see through.

Note to the Reader

All transliterations correspond with the guidelines issued by the Library of Congress. Quotes from Russian sources were translated by the author.

Chapter 1

Historical Context

The Empire's New Histories

In order to discuss the goals of the Russian imperial mission in Turkestan, it is necessary to understand the goals and aims of contemporary scholarship on the Empire. In the early 1990s, scholars in both the West and Russia benefited not only from an influx of declassified primary sources, but from an influx of interdisciplinary frameworks borrowed from anthropology, subaltern studies, and postcolonial theory. Such wide-ranging works were unified in their attempt to re-conceptualize the two-hundred year history of the Russian Empire. Post-Soviet scholars had access to sources that would facilitate such an endeavor:

The late perestroika years and the first years of post-Soviet experiments were exhilarating for scholars who were beginning new projects. The archives, libraries, and other repositories of the Soviet Union became accessible beyond the wildest dreams of even the most dedicated researchers.¹

Jane Burbank and David Ransel's description of the post-Soviet archives borders on an ecstasy of information. Scholars with new projects expected new sources. Yet, the summer of "wild dreams" soon turned into a winter of archival discontent.

Willard Sunderland describes the dissipation of enthusiasm in the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union. During the Soviet Union, regional archives in Odessa, Simferopol', Orenburg, and Ufa had been off limits. The documents contained within them were surrounded with an "aura of special significance." Fifteen years after the opening of these archives,

¹ Jane Burbank and David L. Ransel, *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998) xii.

Sunderland found this aura in disrepair. The documents he encountered in the Empire's peripheries were not "appreciably different from [those contained in] archives in the center."²

For instance, material that Sunderland uncovered in Orenburg was familiar. Photocopies of such documents had been available in open archives in St. Petersburg or Moscow during the Soviet era.

Contrary to Burbank, Sunderland casts doubt on the usefulness of regional archives. They proved unable to provide scholars with "obvious documentary evidence that would lead to wholesale reinterpretations [of prerevolutionary Russia]."³ David Schimmelpennick Van der Oye concurs. While "many hoped that radically freer access to the sources would revolutionize Russian history by opening an armory of 'smoking guns,'" such scholars were met with a "reality [...] more mundane."⁴ "The first decade of relative scholarly liberty in Russia," writes Schimmelpennick, "has not magically resolved the major controversies of the past."⁵

In lieu of a *deus ex machina* that would revolutionize Western views of the Empire, scholars developed strategies that would illuminate these regional documents. There were, as Sunderland writes, discrepancies between the regional documents and their metropolitan photocopies:

They [borderland Governors writing to St. Petersburg] created generalizations and discarded vignettes, aimed for clarity and smoothed over contradiction. [...] Many files were initiated and matters investigated at the local level that simply seemed too minor to report to St. Petersburg. Consequently, in a variety of ways the documents one finds in the regional archives – local crime reports, local statistical surveys, local petitions, letters

² William Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field: Colonization and Empire on the Russian Steppe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004) 231.

³ Sunderland 231.

⁴ David Schimmelpennick van der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001) x.

⁵ Van der Oye x.

from the governor edited or never sent – offer greater detail on the day-to-day life of settler and native communities [...].⁶

The regional archives contained a surfeit of information that was not important enough to appear in the metropolitan archives. While they did not find a smoking gun, scholars did find mundane information on daily life. New information dovetailed with the academic pursuits of the post-Soviet scholars who delved into these archives: how did metropolitan plans differ from their regional implementation? What was the daily experience of colonial life in the Russian Empire? And how did colonized populations reject the Russian colonial mission? These questions were not new, but their framing was. Regional archives gave access to the regional perspectives of Russian officials who lived in the Empire's borderlands. Their writings, reports, and opinions now counted for their own sake, not just because they were an extension of metropolitan authority.

New primary documents cannot alone account for the shifts in post-Soviet historiographies on Imperial Russia. Aside from new sources, this scholarship engages with old debates. Part of this project seeks to de-nationalize the discussion of identity in the Russian Empire by emphasizing the role of profession, region, and religious faith in determining group affinities; to understand the Empire's stability as a balancing act between ethnicities, not as the result of the Russification of these ethnicities (Crews 2006); and to closely scrutinize categories of colonizer and colonized in an effort to reveal the multi-directionality of power – flowing not only from colonizer to colonized and Russian to Other, but vice versa as well (Martin 2001; Schimmelpennick van der Oye 2001; Cooper and Stoler 2007).

First, if the nation-state was the conceptual unit of past historiographies, then multi-ethnicity is the buzzword of new historiographies. In order to challenge the nation-state

⁶ Sunderland 232-3.

paradigm, contemporary scholarship has taken two paths: (a) point to the Empire's inability to modernize into a nation-state or (b) question the applicability of the term nation to the Russian case. The former involves underscoring the Empire's unique modernization and draws on the work of modernist theorists of nationalism such as Ernest Gellner (Kappeler 2001; Weeks 1996). The latter takes a post-modern approach, denying the universal applicability of the term nation in favor of the local ways in which the people of the Empire developed a sense of ethnic community (Clowes 1991). Both approaches to the Empire are prevalent throughout the literature on Turkestan. This paper will examine the works of Andreas Kappeler and Theodore Weeks as indicative of the former, and those of Edith Clowes, Jane Burbank, Gregory Freeze, and Valerie Kivelson as indicative of the latter. Turning to Turkestan, I will discuss the works of Virginia Martin and Jeff Sahadeo as indicative of post-modern approach to the Empire. This project is in dialogue with such works.

Andreas Kappeler's multi-ethnic history of the Russian Empire takes the former approach. Kappeler de-nationalizes the Russian Empire by pointing to its unusual modernization. In place of nationalism, Kappeler posits multi-ethnicity. This move allows him to rethink Russification. The Empire did not force Russian culture on its non-Russian population in order to homogenize the state; instead it was a strategy deployed for the stabilization of a multi-ethnic Empire. For instance, the use of Russian was necessary only in the public sphere: it was not a problem that Nicholas II spoke German in his home. The Empire did not need to intervene in the private lives of its population. The goal was not to create individuals who were externally and internally Russian; the Tsar needed only to ensure the loyalty of his non-Russian subjects.

In lieu of national identities and Russification, the Tsar promoted civic identities and multi-ethnic policies. *Grazhdanstvennost'* would bridge the gap between different ethnic

communities, eradicating tribal ties and ushering the Empire's non-Russians into the imperial order. Bearers of *grazhdanstvennost'* would be loyal to the Tsar, not their ethnic leaders. At the same time, they would still maintain their non-Russian identity. The possession of such was no threat to the Empire. Bridging the gap between themselves and others, Russian policy makers, as Dominic Lieven points out, established political connections between metropolitan and peripheral elites, not by attempting to "woo the peasantry or Russify the borderlands."⁷

While Kappeler and Lieven underscore Tsarist policy as a check on the development of a Russian nation-state, Theodore Weeks points to the structure of the state. Kappeler posits the Empire's policies of ethnic pluralism as a check, but Theodore Weeks focuses on the autocracy. Like Kappeler, Weeks is a disciple of Ernest Gellner. To him, the Empire was incapable of generating a group of elites who would re-organize the autocratic state into a liberal democracy based on a nation. Weeks contests that the modernization of tsarist Russia did not "beget nationalism," but rather, maintained the stability of a dynastic, non-nationalist Empire. Following Gellner, the nineteenth-century Russian state apparatus, like its Western European analogues, modernized. This required a standardization of the mode of communication between the periphery and the center. Standardized communication laid the groundwork for the assimilation of the two under a national bureaucracy. Unlike other European nation-states, streamlining the mode of communication did not, in the case of the Russian Empire, come with an expansion of participation in the government. The state remained an autocracy.

To Weeks, Russian nationalism was a force in the Russian Empire. This was a byproduct of the Empire's modernization. However, he argues that nationalism did not beget a state that

⁷ Dominic Lieven, Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001) 229.

would give power to the Russian nation. Instead, it maintained a Tsarist state that was suspicious of the people's ability to rule. Russian Nationalism was not separate from the state, but the state did not wish to organize itself solely around the Russian nation. Because History and God, and not the "inherent sense of nationhood among the people" legitimized the non-democratic tsarist autocracy, the Tsar used nationalism and Russification as a state-protecting strategy just as readily as used multi-ethnic toleration. Weeks claims that it is unfair to speak of a master plan of Russification in the empire's borderlands. He exhorts historians to show how Russia was not France, how it did not assimilate differences between ethnic Russians and others in the formation of a state, but rather, sought by any means necessary to protect an autocratic multi-ethnic state. When the Tsars deployed nationalist rhetoric, it was only as a reaction, not a platform for Russification.

But the structure of the state was not the only obstacle in the formation of nationalism; state policy cultivated non-national identities as well. Kappeler points to the legal categories used by the Empire to classify non-Russian people. For example, the 1822 Statute for *Inorodtsy* (non-Russian ethnic groups) organizes the Empire's *inorodtsy* into hunters, nomads, and sedentary peoples. To the Tsar, lifestyles were more a definitive characteristic of the *inorodtsy* than nationality. To the classified people, other criteria such as language, location, and tribal background were equally important to group identities. Like lifestyles, these categories were permeable. The urban population in Turkestan was poly-lingual, came from multiple tribal backgrounds, and moved throughout different regions. The Empire did not consider the people of Turkestan to be a nation, but neither did the people of Turkestan. Any use of the term nation would be an imposition. Identity was not crystallized in Turkestan. Both the Tsar and the local

population understood group identity as flexible. Loyalty, however, was not. The local population could be who they wanted only in so far as they were pacific.

Regardless of how the Tsar or the local population felt, some scholars have questioned the applicability of the terms nation and state to the Russian case in general. This has included a broader assault on ideas of formal organization, institutionalized politics, and individual autonomy.⁸ Scholars such as Edith Clowes ask simple questions. For example, where is the Russian middle class? Is it the *obshchestvennost*? The *burzhazii*? Or the *intelligentsiia*? If none of these suffice, then where is the Russian public? Where is the group of private individuals who extend their loyalties beyond estate and family in order to engage in a new social order? Where is the legal protection of the right to choose and organize and the right to free expression? Where is the presence of social networks and institutions that facilitate the individual's attempt to navigate a new social identity?⁹

Recent scholarship has attacked the viability of such categories. The Russian Empire did not have this type of a public, but this did not mean that it lacked social organization. Gregory Freeze critiques such “normative interpretations” of “modernization and development” for “restrict[ing] our notions of society and social organization to the confines of formal organizations.”¹⁰ Freeze calls for a history of the Empire that is deinstitutionalized, more attuned to types of informal organization. By bracketing the search for a Russian public that comports with normative interpretations, such scholars have examined the public culture of the Empire.

⁸ Jane Burbank, “Revisioning Imperial Russia.” *Slavic Review*. Vol. 52, No. 3 1993: 559.

⁹ Edith W. Clowes, Samuel D. Kassow, and James L. West, eds. *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991) 1.

¹⁰ Burbank 560.

Reporting on a conference of Slavists in the early 1990s, Jane Burbank summarizes Valerie Kivelson's understanding of the term:

If we persist in using western categories, [...] we may remain attentive to 'fundamental criticism launched against the existing order' as the only evidence of a 'public,' and omit entirely the capacity of Russian society to generate a politics based on consensus, informal institutions and acceptance of existing structures.¹¹

Without viable social institutions or a culture of "fundamental criticism against the existing order," the Russian Empire appears to have operated with a limited public sphere. However, as Freeze and Burbank argue, there is evidence for a public culture that did not manifest itself in the comfortable forms of Western European nation-states.

While such work has rethought public life in the metropolises of St. Petersburg and Moscow, it also affords scholars the opportunity to rethink public life in the Empire's peripheries. Pre-modern societies such as those of Turkestan also lacked the social development necessary to constitute a Western public, but this did not prevent them from forming a public culture that operated in conjunction with an informal social organization. Without political representation in the Empire, they also lacked the possibility for launching fundamental criticism against the regime, but this did not occlude the possibility of resistance. By examining social organization along different lines, we afford ourselves the opportunity to re-conceptualize the daily life of Turkestan under a colonial regime.

But research on metropolitan political culture has not just informed the ways scholars view the Empire's borderlands. Studies of colonization have impacted the ways in which local scholars understand Russianness in the nineteenth century. For example, Michael Stanislavski

¹¹ Burbank 559.

does not ask why the Empire did not nationalize, but who would do the nationalizing in the first place. To him, the category of Russian is unstable. Russians were not an essential ethnic group that colonized Turkestan; in colonizing Turkestan, they defined themselves as such. This could only occur during the colonization of the region; the Russians imagined themselves as an ethnicity in opposition to their colonized Other. Stanislawski argues that this view obtains only if historians eschew the “lachrymose conception of history”: “the tendency of nationalist historians to embrace the special pleading endemic to persecuted groups each scrambling [...] for the top rung on the ladder of Russian/Soviet oppression.”¹² Colonial history, in Stanislawski’s view, is not the story of Russian “demographic and political” domination “of diverse national and ethnic groups,” but of the domination of “Russianness itself” over all players, whether colonizer or colonized, in the colonial arena.¹³

David Ransel furthers this by pointing to the permeability of the term Russian, a pendulum of cultural identity which swings between an openness to external cultural influences and a mythological “native presence” which rejects all things foreign. David Schimmelpennick van der Oye traces this out the with regard to the Russian colonial experience in the Far East. The Russians, writes Schimmelpennick, viewed the people of the East in a variety of ways: objects of conquest; a Mongol specter; or, in the work of the early twentieth-century Russian Eurasianists, an indelible component of their own racial heritage. Dismissing the idea of a Russian master narrative of colonialism, Schimmelpennick, in conjunction with Stanislawski,

¹² Burbank 557.

¹³ Burbank 558.

opens the door for an analysis of the ideas and motivations which not only drove policy decisions in the Russian Far East, but defined what it meant to be Russian in the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁴

The Russians did not have the final say over what it meant to be Russian. Nor did they have the final say over what it meant to be a Turkestanian. Recent scholarship has taken into account the ways in which colonized populations played an active role in this process. Edward Lazzerini and Daniel Brower, in their anthology *Russia's Orient*, draw on the work of Russian semiotician Yurii Lotman in order to challenge the colonizer/colonized binary. To them, the two categories mutually constitute each other. Lazzerini and Brower keep this mutual instability of identity in mind by looking at the ways in which not only the colonizer, in this case the Russian Empire, defined itself in opposition to its colonial possessions, but the ways in which the colonized people defined their colonizers.

But how does this look in Russian Turkestan? Building on these general trends in imperial historiographies, scholars of Russian colonialism have drawn on a wide range of fields in order to give attention to the ways in which local populations exercised agency in the Empire's peripheries. For instance, Virginia Martin draws on legal anthropology in her work on nomadic law in the Russian steppe in order to understand the active role of the Middle Horde in the late nineteenth century:

Through this investigation of *adat* [customary nomadic law] in practice, I seek to understand the active role that Middle Horde Kazakhs played in negotiating the meanings of imperial laws and nomadic customs within their own community, and in creating new meanings to suit their diverse legal and political needs under changing socioeconomic circumstances.¹⁵

¹⁴ Van der Oye 8.

¹⁵ Virginia Martin, Law and Custom in the Steppe: The Kazakhs of the Middle Horde and Russian Colonialism in the Nineteenth Century (Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon, 2001) 3.

In studying *adat*, Martin does not impugn the Russian Empire for eradicating indigenous legal practice, nor does she equate the loss of Kazakh legal custom with a loss of Kazakh selfhood. Martin, like others in the field, rejects narratives of Russification and the “lachrymose conception of history” in order to find spaces in which local populations ameliorate the process of empire building. In so doing, she depicts the Kazakhs as a fluid ethnic group, one able to reconstitute their community under “changing socioeconomic circumstances.” Martin does not define Kazakhs essentially; instead, they are fluid, able to redefine, not lose themselves in the colonial exchange.

Jeff Sahadeo’s work on Turkestan also shows how the local population adapted to colonization. To him, Turkestanis did not just bear the brunt of Russian racism. They actively engaged with such discourse, and were able to re-apply it to their colonizer. For instance, Turkestanis applied the myth of the lazy native to the region’s Russian population. Such logic did not abet the Empire’s expansion. Rather, it enabled local resistance within the region. The predominant stereotype characterized Tashkent’s Russian population as drunk and indolent, the Sart, Hindu, and Jewish merchants as diligent and scrupulous.¹⁶

We have now, after a brief detour, laid the groundwork for a post-Soviet history of Turkestan. While this project does not draw on any sources from regional archives, it does seek to address the metropole’s sources with a regional perspective in mind. The following work interrogates primary sources from Turkestan drawn mainly from archives in St. Petersburg and Moscow. But it does so in order to find the everyday, to plumb the experience of individuals who

¹⁶ Jeff Sahadeo, Russian Colonial Society in Tashkent: 1865-1923 (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007) 73.

lived in Turkestan and implemented the Tsar's policies. This project participates in contemporary trends throughout the scholarship on the Russian Empire by rethinking the imperial era as a multi-ethnic balancing act between non-nationalist minority populations. It does so not by casting doubt on the Empire's ability to modernize as a nation state. Unlike Keppeler and Weeks, this project corresponds with post-modern rejections of modernization narratives. Turkestani society, like its Russian counterpart, did not possess visible social institutions which organized a public critique of Tsarist policy. Instead, they had a public culture.

Russian Intellectual History of Turkestan

Russian Turkestan was a short-lived territorial unit. From its incorporation into the Russian Empire as a governor-generalship in 1865 to its dismantling at the hands of the Bolsheviks in 1917, the space between the Pamirs, Caspian Sea, Kazakh Steppe, and British Afghanistan was explored, catalogued, conquered, and administered by the Russian military. Yet, the people of Turkestan were not passive actors in a pre-ordained colonial drama of the strong and the weak. The Kokanese, Burkharan, and Khivan principalities negotiated political treaties; sought intervention from other colonial powers – the British in India; and resisted imperial authority both with their own military forces – in the wars leading up to the peace treaties of the 1870s and 1880s – and popular uprisings – the cholera riots of 1892 and the draft riots of 1915.

The tension between the Empire and the leaders of Turkestan produced a series of questions which plagued Russian administrators throughout Turkestan's lifespan – from the first Russian military incursions in the Kazakh steppe all the way through the introduction of a civil administration. The Russian imperial project in Turkestan was not a smooth, frictionless machine driven by the economic self-interest of the bourgeoisie. Rather, the decisions that

guided the conquest and subsequent administration of Turkestan were met with complaints, concerns, and critiques from both military and civilian administrators who were involved in implementing Petersburg's policies.

From the beginning of the conquest, Russian administrators found themselves mired in questions of scope: what rationale led the Russian Empire to expand its landholdings over two thousand miles southeast of St. Petersburg? Why did they choose to incorporate some of the most barren lands on the face of the planet into the Empire? And why did they stop expanding in the first place, failing to incorporate Khiva and Bukhara and stopping short of India? Those who were closest to the action were the least patient and the least rational. During the conquest of Turkestan, the calculated expansion of the Tsar clashed with the vainglory of his military commanders. Despite the Tsar's wishes, the accumulation of new territory in Turkestan would not serve the economic and political intentions of the Empire, but rather the personal glory-seeking of his commanders.

Once the military quashed the final outposts of native resistance in the early 1880s, questions of scope became questions of intention: should the Russian Empire curtail the power of their military personnel and introduce a civil administration in the region? Such action, argued some, would facilitate the transmission of civilization to the backwards Khanates and tribes. Or, as military figures countered, the inhabitants of Turkestan were too dangerous to permit such reform. In their view, prolonged military presence was not only pragmatic, it was absolutely necessary. Any move towards a civilizing mission via a civil administration would bring the seeds of pan-Islamic fanaticism to fruition and compromise the security of the region. However, with the establishment of the Transcaspian railroad and the subsequent influx of Russian settlers

in the 1890s, it became clear that military authority alone could not sufficiently administer the region.

The end of the *vintovka* could not maintain order on its own: trade and civil law would now play an important role in pacifying the region. The question was no longer as to whether the Russian government should civilize Turkestan, but how this was to be done. Economic and social concerns supplanted military fears of pan-Islamic fanaticism. How could the Russians make Turkestan prosperous? And could this prosperity lead to peaceful relations with the local population? In the 1860s, the Russian army collected tomes of ethnographic information about the local population – they were concerned with who the local population was. In the 1890s, the Russian civil administrators wanted not only to know who they were, but what they were thinking: why does the local population resist Russian influence? How could the Russian Empire make civilization, in the form of *grazhdanstvennost'*, take hold? Should Russian officials leave local institutions intact, or rework the daily lives of Central Asia and promote participation in modern civil institutions? An older debate was revisited: should the Russians interfere with local customs in order to modernize Turkestan? or were those customs so entrenched that interference would incur anti-Russian sentiment?

By the end of its existence in the early twentieth century, Russian Turkestan went from a terra incognita on the Empire's periphery to a hotspot for the most pressing questions of the day. Here, statist encountered humanist while imperialist encountered nationalist and Marxist. As early as the 1860s, the questions which Russian officials asked abroad began to look like those that they were asking at home in the metropole. In the oft-quoted passage from Dostoevsky's diary, Turkestan was more than an arid stretch of land on the edge of the Empire: "In Europe we were hangers-on and slaves, whereas we shall go to Asia as masters. [...] In Europe we were

Asiatics, whereas in Asia, we, too, are Europeans. Our civilizing mission in Asia will bribe our spirit and drive us thither.”¹⁷ To Dostoevsky, Turkestan was a place where Russia could renew its Slavic national character.

Russians were not just civilizing the Central Asians of Turkestan. More was at stake: the Russians were creating themselves in the process. For example, early twentieth-century intellectuals such as Nikolai Maev and Lev Kostenko saw Turkestan as a test tube for civilization. Here, Russian intellectuals were faced with the challenge of building a modern society from scratch. In their view, it was Turkestan, not Russia, where Alexander II’s Great Reforms could take hold. The colony would radiate *grazhdanstvennost’* not only to Central Asians, but back to Petersburg as well.¹⁸ For a colony of dubious economic utility, Turkestan, in the early twentieth century, took center stage, attracting some of the day’s loftiest ideas of social engineering. By teaching the Turkestanis to be modern, the Russians could, at the same, teach themselves to be Russian.

Conquest of the Steppe

Turkestan’s relevance to the future of the Empire was not initially apparent. Before Dostoevsky, Maev, or Kostenko opined on the regenerative power of the colony, Peter the Great ordered the first military incursion into Turkestan in 1717. He was not searching for a tabula rasa upon which to build a modern society, but a passage to India. Departing from Western Siberia and Astrakhan, his two missions were unsuccessful. From Siberia, Imperial troops advanced the Russian line 800 versts along the banks of the Irtysh River, extending the Russian military presence into what is today northern Kazakhstan. From Astrakhan, the Imperial army suffered

¹⁷ Fyodor Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993) 122-3.

¹⁸ Sahadeo 57-79.

two defeats at the hands of the Khivan Khanate. Unable to extend the borders of the empire toward Persia or India, Peter settled for a small piece of fortified land on the eastern bank of the Caspian Sea.

The establishment of this fortification – modern day Turkmenbashi (Krasnovodsk) – set the precedent for Russian military strategy in Central Asia for the next hundred years. Gradual expansion marshaled by the calculated proliferation of locally situated military forts (*upornye punkty*) replaced Peter's plans for a large-scale invasion conducted from Russian outposts in Astrakhan and Western Siberia. This laid the groundwork for the political absorption of the territory. In 1732 Anna Ioannovna accepted a pledge of loyalty (*pokrovitel'stvo*) from Kirgiz (Kazakh) tribes in the Kazakh steppe and began the construction of a working border (*fakticheskaya granitsa*) between the Urals and the land along the Irtysh River.¹⁹

By the mid 1750s, three powers were vying for control of the Kazakh steppe: Russia, China, and Turkoman (Turkmen) tribes. In 1757, the Chinese government evicted all the Kirghiz residents from China's northwestern territory, Dzungaria (Eastern Turkestan), and built a series of forts along the Chinese-Russian border. At the same time, the Turkomans engaged in a series of cross-border raids, devastating Kirghiz and Russian encampments and compromising Russian sovereignty in the region. While tensions with China would last well into the nineteenth century, relations between the Kirghiz and the Turkomans, according to the Russian government, immediately improved. From 1732 to 1757, the Russians constructed a series of forts in the Kazakh steppe in order to protect their border from Turkoman and Chinese incursions.

¹⁹ "Istoricheskii ocherk: rasprostraneniia russkoi vlasti v Srednei Azii," January 1884 1.

In the government's opinion, these forts not only provided military protection, but served as beacons of civilization as well. The changes in the local population were evident: located next to these forts, the Kirghiz lost their "ability to invade" (due to the proximity of the Russian military). In the Russian imagination, this damaged the structure of their society well.²⁰ Kirgiz *soiuzy* were organized around the prospect of imminent danger and retaliatory raids. With the arrival of the Russian military came security. The Kirgiz now had recourse to an external power, one that would punish those who raided against the Kirgiz. In the Russian narrative of conquest, the local tribes no longer felt threatened, nor did they need to raid against their Turkoman neighbors. And by 1819, the Russians recorded remarkable changes amongst the Kirghiz of the Great Horde in the northern steppe: the tribes had agreed to disarmament, abnegated brutal forms of punishment such as the "whip and the lasso," and, in the spirit of the 1732 oath of *pokrovitel'stvo*, pledged similar forms of allegiance to the Empire (*poddanstva* and *prisiagi*).

In response to these changes, Tsar Alexander I issued the *Ustav o Sibirskikh Kirgizakh* in 1822, the first official document concerning the structural organization of Russian authority in Turkestan. Alexander's edict was a matrix for further policy in Turkestan. The *ustav* subjugated the Kirghiz's external powers – the ability to regulate their borders – to the Governor General of the Omsk oblast, while leaving their internal authority intact. Unable to regulate their borders, the Kirghiz maintained jurisdiction over criminal affairs and religious freedom. The parameters of Russian power over the Kirghiz were vague, but one thing was clear: the Russians would continue to extend the Siberian Line of forts into the steppe.²¹ Faced with pressure from the Kokanese and Chinese in the south, the smaller, less organized Kirghiz tribes began to "willingly submit" themselves to the Russians in "rows" (1855, 1863, 1865), at times requesting the

²⁰ "Istoricheskii ocherk" 2.

²¹ "Istoricheskii ocherk" 3.

construction of more forts (1847). The Russian government obliged the requests of the Kirghiz; it was a “moral necessity” to protect their loyal subjects (*poddannye*).²²

Pressing South

By the mid 1850s, the predominant concern amongst Russian military officials was the unification of the two fort lines and the standardization of policy in the area. The forts that the Russian military constructed in the Kazakh steppe were under the jurisdiction of two different authorities (*nachal'stva*). In the west, Syr-Darya line was under the command of the Orenburg Governor General. In the east, the Western Siberian line was under the command of the Western Siberian Governor General. Communication between the two lines was poor, and both dealt with the local Kirghiz tribes differently. The Orenburg authority, dealing with the Kirghiz of the Middle Horde, maintained hierarchies of power, allowing local elites to retain their positions while permitting them to live in Orenburg, apart from the Kirghiz community. Dealing with the Kirghiz of the Great Horde, the Western Siberian authority abolished local hierarchies and placed new natives at the head of the different Kirghiz communities.

Whereas the Western Siberian system produced “shining results,” the Orenburg system produced the “most disappointing” – looting, robbing, and banditry were prevalent throughout the area. The local “sultans” could not show their face in the territory without a Russian convoy.²³ By presenting a single front under the command of a unified authority, the Russian military hoped to prevent policy disasters like those along the Western Siberian line and increase security within the region. Between the end of the Syr Darya line and the Western Siberia line was a gap through which Turkoman, Bukharan, and Kokanese raiders could move with ease. The

²² “Istoricheskii ocherk” 4.

²³ “Istoricheskii ocherk” 5.

government in St. Petersburg was not enthusiastic about unification. In the eyes of St. Petersburg elites, it would be a costly endeavor, requiring the construction of more forts and the deployment of more troops. It also meant encroaching on the khanates of Khiva, Bukhara, and Kokand. And the Russian government was not eager to repeat the military failures of 1717 and 1839-40. Aside from general apathy with regard to the region's economic prospects, Tsarist officials also pointed to the Crimean War (1853-56). The conflict on the western border had sapped all available military resources. There were scanty reinforcements available for deployment in Turkestan.

In the early 1860s, the situation changed. While the imperial government retained their reservations with regard to military expansion in the region, a group of military generals took matters into their own hands. To them, the time for unification was nigh; the Tsar's emphasis on patience and gradual expansion held little credibility in the minds of military personnel in the lands south of the Kazakh steppe. Thanks to the actions of these military leaders, the years 1864–1881 saw a transformation of the region: the military unified the fort lines, established a presence several miles south of the steppe, and temporarily silenced the Turkoman resistance with the Geok Tepe massacre (1880-1881); and the Tsar created a Governor Generalship of Turkestan, dissolved the khanate of Kokand, and reduced the khanates of Khiva and Bukhara to Russian protectorates. From 1864–1866 alone, the Russian military added four thousand square kilometers and over one million Muslims to the empire.²⁴ Their acquisitions were formalized later with the temporary statute of 1865.

The reasons for such rapid expansion cannot be reduced to the economic pressures of the Russian bourgeoisie or the wounded egos of a group of military generals. However, this is not to say that these factors did not play a part. By the 1850s, Russia had developed a burgeoning

²⁴ "Istoricheskii ocherk" 7.

textile industry centered around the production of yarn. After the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, cotton prices skyrocketed. Russian industrialists petitioned the government to increase the extraction of cotton from Turkestan's Fergana Valley, and, to a limited extent, the government obliged. Cotton exports from the khanates peaked in the 1860s: they comprised 53% of the total exports sent to Russia from Central Asia at this time.²⁵ Yet, these numbers are not sufficient cause to explain the growth of Russian political influence in the area. The government only partially realized the designs on the Fergana Valley which the Russian industrialists advocated. As Seymour Becker argues, such individuals were a minority voice in state politics.²⁶ By the 1880s, Russia received only 5% of its total imports from Asia, and only 3% of its total exports were sent back in return.²⁷

During the conquest, the Russian government reacted to expansion with alarm. The military was given strict orders, in several instances, to halt its march through the territory. Yet, these orders were often times ignored. Pyotr Valuev, the Minister of Internal Affairs in the early 1860s, characterizes the state's sense of dismay upon General Cherniaev's conquest of Tashkent: "General Cherniaev has taken Tashkent," he writes, "and nobody knows why...there is something erotic [*nechto eroticheskoe*] in everything that happens on the distant frontiers of the Empire."²⁸ To some scholars, that "something erotic" was the glory lost during the Crimean War (1853-1856). What Cherniaev and others could not achieve in the Balkans, they could in Central Asia: dazzling victory after dazzling victory marked the mid-nineteenth-century military

²⁵ Seymour Becker, Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968) 21.

²⁶ Becker 23.

²⁷ Milan Hauner, What is Asia to Us?: Russia's Asian Heartland Yesterday and Today (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990) 44.

²⁸ Pyotr Valuev, Dnivnik P.A. Valueva, 2, p. 60f. (20 July 1865).

campaigns in Turkestan. And, as Alton Donnelly argues, the generals did have something to be genuinely proud of. Cherniaev's campaign against Tashkent, he writes, was a masterful display of strategy and skill on behalf of the General. Limited resources and the poor quality of Russian military equipment prevented the Russian military from exercising a material supremacy over the Bukharan troops.²⁹

Back in St. Petersburg, Alexander II and his Minister of War, Gorchakov, walked a fine line between lauding the might of the military and excoriating its pigheadedness: "No matter how brilliant the recent success of our arms, in a political respect they have achieved no satisfaction whatever."³⁰ Yet, attributing the Empire's expansion into Central Asia to a group of unwieldy generals is not satisfactory for modern scholars. To some, this favorite explanation of the central government was a strategy for dissembling the political implications of its actions. Milan Hauner charges individuals such as Gorchakov with fabricating the "myth of adventurous frontiersmen" so as to justify the strategic acquisition of Turkestan.³¹ In light of this view, the Russian conquest in Central Asia was more than an accident. Rather, it was an important piece in the nineteenth-century "Great Game" between the Russian and British Empires. The Tsar, as British administrators in India feared, could have used his holdings in Central Asia as a vantage point for a military invasion into India or as a piece of political leverage against the British Empire.

From Military Action to Politics

²⁹ Alton Donnelly, "The Mobile Steppe Frontier" Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917 Michael Rywkin ed. (London: Mansell, 1988) 214.

³⁰ Quoted in Becker 36.

³¹ Hauner 45.

The first step toward the establishment of a Russian civil administration in Turkestan came with the unification of military lines in 1865 and the creation of the Turkestan Oblast within the Orenburg Governor Generalship in May of that year. General Cherniaev had conquered the major urban centers of Chimkent (September 20, 1864) and Tashkent (August 5, 1865) months before. Yet, the future conquest of Central Asia was reserved for politicians, not military personnel. Treaties between the Tsar and the respective Khans concluded military missions against the three Khanates. These agreements delimited the extent of Russian power in the region to a greater extent than Alexander I's *Ustav o Sibirskikh Kirgizakh*. With the treaties, the Empire sought to check its southward expansion into Turkestan and the actions of its unruly generals. In so doing, the Tsar changed the political climate in the region. Tsarist commands would no longer go unheeded in Turkestan, and trigger-happy generals would no longer conquer without impunity.

Dismissals of military generals evinced the seriousness with which the Empire viewed its treaties. Generals such as Cherniaev had flouted Tsarist orders during the earlier years of conquest, but such activity was not tolerated in a political climate that stressed negotiation over conquest. The Tsar intended to enforce treaty conditions, and Generals who would not comply with his orders were dismissed. Both Cherniaev and his successor met this fate. Cherniaev would not play the Tsar's political games, and, on February 11, 1866, he overstepped his bounds by refusing to remove his troops beyond an agreed-upon point outside of Tashkent. Per the Tsar's orders, Kryzhanovsky immediately relieved Cherniaev of his duties. Purporting a different military strategy, the Tsar appointed D.I. Romanovskii as Cherniaev's replacement. Romanovskii's military strategy was more amenable to tsarist interests in the region. Under his leadership, Russian troops would occupy strategic points outside of Tashkent as opposed to

remaining within the city. From these points, they would gradually weaken the power of the Bukharan Emir and convince their neighbors, Kokand and Khiva, of their peaceful intentions. Such a positioning of Russian forces would be less divisive than Cherniaev's plan of permanently occupying Tashkent. Regardless, Romanovskii, under the orders of Kryzhanovsky, annexed Tashkent in August 1866. Although he acted in accordance with the commands of the Governor-General in Orenburg, Romanovskii was removed from his post for ignoring the Tsar's order to leave Tashkent under Bukharan control.

By keeping the military in check, the Tsar was able to negotiate with the leaders of Central Asia. He did not just brutally subjugate the people to Russian military control. Instead, the leaders of the Khanates maintained control over their internal affairs, despite the military's wishes. The treatment of Tashkent is paradigmatic of this dispute. Negotiating with Muzaffar al-Dar, the Emir of Bukhara (1860-1885), the Tsar ignored Cherniaev's plans for establishing Tashkent as an independent city free both from the authority of the Emir and the Orenburg Governor-General. In Cherniaev's scheme, the city would become a launching point for further military invasions against Tashkent's neighbors, Kokand and Khiva. However, the Tsar rejected the formation of an independent city that would fall solely under the military's jurisdiction. He chose to not create a military state in Turkestan; instead, he returned control over the city to al-Dar. Such a move would save the Empire the cost of maintaining a permanent military force in Tashkent.

The spirit of negotiation continued to trump military aggression in the region, especially in the 1867 peace treaty between the Empire and Bukhara. Konstantin von Kaufman, the head of the newly created Turkestan Governor-Generalship, drafted the new treaty on September 14, 1867 and presented it to the Emir shortly thereafter. Far from reducing Bukhara to a vassal of the

Empire, the treaty resembled a trade compact between two equal powers. Seven of the twelve articles of the treaty delineated the trading rights of Russians in Bukhara. This included the right to establish caravansaries, maintain commercial residences, and reside and purchase property in Bukhara.

While the Empire preferred the use of bilateral treaties to unilateral military coercion, Kaufman and the Tsar maintained that the Bukharans would fulfill conditions that were not stipulated in the written agreement. Such an expectation undermined the legal status of the treaty. Attempting to force the Bukharans to enforce policies that they did not agree to, the Empire's use of negotiation approaches legally codified military force. The Russians assumed that the Bukharan Emir would absorb the cost of protecting Russian caravans in the region and that he would not maintain external political relations with other states. In exchange, the Russian military would not occupy Tashkent. Although the Emir never legally ceded such rights to the Russian government, von Kaufman considered him to have done so. Al-Dar resisted signing the treaty, engaging in intermittent warfare with the Governor-Generalship until he surrendered and signed in 1868.

But the goals of the 1867 treaty never came to fruition. In hopes of amending the shortcomings of the 1867 document, Kaufman drafted a new treaty on September 28, 1873. By doing so, he hoped to foster Russian trade opportunities in Bukhara. In addition to the commercial stipulations set forth in 1867, Russians would now be able to develop industry in Bukhara and own real estate. The Bukharans would extradite all Russian criminals who sought asylum in Bukhara as well as abolish the slave trade. Slavery as a practice, however, would remain intact. In Kaufman's view, the treaty was the last step in abolishing all forms of legal

discrimination against Russian traders in Bukhara. It was signed shortly after von Kaufman drafted it.

Negotiations with Kokand and Khiva were less complex than those with Bukhara. Unlike Bukhara, Kokand and Khiva had few possibilities for trade. Kokand's collapse in 1876 left a power vacuum that alarmed von Kaufman, and Khiva was notorious for harboring Turkoman raiders – a perennial threat to Russians in the region. Treaties with these two Khanates were not economic pacts between two powers, but rather diplomatic tools used by the Russians to ensure security in the region.

Lack of economic possibility left the Khivans with little bargaining power. The Russians had reestablished a trading post in Krasnovodsk in 1869, but, unlike Bukhara or Kokand, Khiva had meager prospects for trade and fewer possibilities for natural-resource extraction. Led by Khan Muhammad Rahim II (1864-1910), Khiva threatened the Russian military presence in Tashkent in the early 1870s. Rahim promulgated anti-Russian views during the Bukharan wars and organized Khivan raiding parties against Russian troops in the area. Given the dearth of economic potential in Khiva, the official solution to the threat of Khivan raiders was subordination, not annexation.

This military strategy exacted a high toll on the Khivan Khanate. While the Bukharans retained nominal sovereignty, the Khivans experienced a complete reduction of their sovereignty. Despite the Tsar's wishes, Russian officials stripped Khiva of its right to external political relations with the peace treaty of August 12, 1873. The Empire humiliated the Khivans: contrary to custom, Rahim was forced to sign the treaty in person, both the royal throne and the majority of the royal archives were shipped to St. Petersburg, and the Russian army levied a

massive 600,000 ruble fine against the Khivans – a fine which the local population could not possibly have paid off.

The Kokanese Khanate did not harbor raiding groups like the Khivans, but its inability to maintain internal order threatened Russian stability in the region. While Kaufman legally subjugated the Khivan Khanate, he dissolved the Khanate of Kokand, turning it into the Fergana Oblast in February 1876. Unlike Khiva, Kokand possessed prospects for future development. Anchored by the fertile Fergana Valley – the largest source of cotton in Central Asia, Kokand had the richest potential for natural-resource extraction in the region. It boasted a larger number of urbanized oases and decreased levels of nomadic tribes and raiding parties. Combined with the prospect of controlling Fergana, internal strife led the Russian military to annex the territory, sans treaty, in July 1875.

Kokand had long been divided between its northern and southern oases, with control of the Khanate vacillating between Muhammad Khudiyar, Muhammad Sultan Khan, and Nassar ad-Din in the years leading up to the annexation. It also maintained a tempestuous relationship with Bukhara, specifically with regard to disputed territories in western Kokand. During the negotiations which cost Cherniaev his job in 1865, the Emir of Bukhara had gone so far as to occupy the southern half of Kokand, temporarily placing Bil Bachi, a Bukharan, in power. The Russian military was suspicious of Kokand's ability to remain both internally cohesive and peaceful.

From Treaties to Civil Administration

With the legal subjugation of the region completed by the mid 1870s, the ground was prepared for a transformation in Russian policy. By the 1880s, Turkestan was no longer just a

military-controlled possession on the Empire's borderlands. The construction of the Trans-Caspian railroad and establishment of a regional political agency evinced a paradigm shift in imperial policy. On November 12, 1885, N.V. Chariakov was appointed the head of the first political agency in Bukhara. His inauguration signaled a new type of authority in Turkestan. While the Governor General had already been present in the region for over twenty years, he had enjoyed the powers of the Russian military. Chariakov's powers were not military, but civil. He oversaw the construction of the trans-Caspian railroad, supervised the Russian civilian settlements in Turkestan, issued visas, wrote reports, entertained international visitors, and censored public material printed in the region. The message was clear: the Empire was no longer concerned with defending themselves from the local population; instead, it was ready to integrate them.

In addition to creating a government bureaucracy in Turkestan, the Tsar crafted a new public image for Turkestan abroad. As Daniel Brower writes, the Empire engaged in an advertising campaign that saw Turkestan take center stage at the 1900 Paris World's Fair. A large part of Russia's booth was focused on their newest colonial possession. Cotton from the Fergana valley, dazzling portraits, and representatives from Turkestan were all on hand. With the introduction of a railroad and civil administration, the region could command the limelight in Paris as the "jewel in the crown of the Russian tsar."³²

The Empire's impressive show in Paris had tangible effects back home. Instead of disregarding or fearing Islamic practice, the Russian administration drafted policies that directly affected religious practice. Islam had not disappeared as a cultural force in Turkestan. In 1908,

³² Daniel Brower, Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003) 85.

the Tsar acknowledged this by appointing Said Ghani-bay to the post of general agent for Muslim Turkestani pilgrims. The government could not end pilgrimages to Mecca, but they could regulate and facilitate them. Ghani-bay chartered shifts and over saw public health as scores of the region's Islamic population carried out the Hajj. Such an appointment was a shift towards cooperation and integration – the Hajj was targeted as a practice that could be modernized and regulated, not wiped out.

However, older debates did not disappear with the completion of the railroad. Neither did the military. Anti-Islamic stalwarts reared their heads during the 1902 and 1911 debates over the Turkestan Temporary Statute. In those years, the Tsar held conferences regarding the creation of a permanent statute for Turkestan. They were the first in nearly fifty years. The questions were the same: are the people of Turkestan prepared for full civil society? or is the maintenance of military authority necessary in protecting Russian interests from a potential pan-Islamic threat? Turkestanis enjoyed privileges that were unheard of in the Empire's other possessions: they were not taxed and they were not conscripted. Military personnel sought to maintain their authority in the region but at the same time lobbied for conscription; civil administrators wanted the end of the Governor Generalship – an artifact they viewed as temporary – in favor of a solely civil authority in the region. Such an arrangement would facilitate the taxation of the local population. Despite such dialogues, the Temporary Statute remained in effect until the Bolshevik Revolution.

Chapter 2

Likoshin and the Law in Turkestan

The Russians targeted certain local practices as obstacles to *grazhdanstennost'*. Prevalent among these was the use of Islamic religious law, Shari'a. While work has already been done on the Russian makeover of nomadic law in the Kazakh Steppe, this chapter will examine the struggle between the courts of the Russian Empire and the Islamic courts of the Protectorates.³³ South of the Kirghiz steppe, the Russians encountered an impasse. The Empire had both abolished slavery and rescued the individual from the tyranny of the Emir's whimsy, but it did not cancel the practice of Islamic law. In the Russian imagination, Shari'a was akin to Islam itself. It could not be actively extirpated; instead, by modernizing the political, legal, and economic conditions of Turkestan, the Empire could ensure Shari'a's gradual effacement. Eradicating the courts would alienate the Islamic population from the Russian cause. Working through them would win the loyalty of the local population while at the same time shepherding it into modernity. Because of this, Turkestani Shar'ia courts retained their legal authority over the Muslim population. Unlike the French in Algeria or the British in India, the Russians did not reduce Turkestani courts to the status of moral authorities.³⁴ On the contrary, these courts continued to pass legal judgment.

But the Russians also practiced law in Turkestan. In addition to maintaining jurisdiction over Russian subjects in the region, the Turkestan Governor General sat at the head of the local court of appeals. This bifurcation of legal authority produced sticky questions: was a Russian citizen within the Protectorates subject to Islamic law? And what if the individual broke a law

³³ Martin.

³⁴ Abbas Amanat and Frank Griffel eds., Shar'ia: Islamic Law in the Contemporary Context (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007) 8.

that did not exist in the Russian legal code? Under whose jurisdiction fell the countless nomadic tribes which lived outside the borders of the protectorate, but who were not fully integrated into the Empire? Could these tribes be relied on to practice a form of customary, non-Islamic law (*adat*) which satisfied the juridical inclinations of the Tsar? And what about extradition? Could the Russian Empire rely on the Khans to extradite Russian criminals who sought asylum within the borders of the Protectorates? Outside of criminal court, civil questions abounded as well: could an Islamic court strip a Russian citizen of property held within the borders of the Protectorate? Who should handle lawsuits brought between Russians and Muslim Turkestanis? Could an Islamic court sanction marriage between a Russian and a Muslim? And could the local courts legally protect the right of inheritance? – a crucial component in establishing capitalism.

These questions were the topic of frequent debate amongst reformers throughout the late nineteenth century. At the same time, they evinced a mistrust between the Russian administration and the local purveyors of Islamic law. By calling into question jurisdiction borders, extradition processes, and the civil capabilities of the Islamic courts, the Russians were asking higher-level questions: could the local courts be trusted with laying the groundwork for civilization? Could they protect the development of private property? Capital? The right of the individual over and against the despotic Emir? The Russians were not sure. Yet, they made an attempt: the local courts of the Khanates, existing before the Russian conquest of the region, were given sole control over legal matters regarding Turkestanis within the Russian protectorates.

Such bifurcation of legal authority in the region created problems for nineteenth-century legal reformers. This chapter focuses on the proposals of N.C. Likoshin, a Russian administrator in Turkestan who worked with the local courts. In his 1916 work, *Pol' zhini v Turkestan*, Likoshin lambasts the Russian administration for its inability to fully modernize the local

Turkestan courts. Having worked only in Tashkent, Likoshin's experience of Islamic law was limited to the courts of the urbanized oases. However, he does not hesitate to generalize. His account is sweeping, providing a scathing analysis of what he believed to be the shortcomings of Islamic law in general.

His biases are akin to those of other European commentators on Islamic law. Likoshin, like Max Weber, diametrically opposes Islamic law to its Western equivalent: Western legal theory values impartiality and the use of either established precedent (common law) or a civil code (civil law); Islamic law is non-standardized and arbitrary. While Russian law would spread *grazhdanstvennost'* throughout Turkestan, Shari'a propagated its antithesis: darkness and deception.³⁵ Knut Vikor points to a favorite image among commentators such as Likoshin and Weber: the solitary *kadi*, an Islamic judge, who sits under a tree, dispensing justice at his fancy with regard only for expediency and convenience, not for rationality.³⁶ But there is more to Likoshin's analysis than blatant racism. His report reveals a mechanism of local resistance. On the one hand impugning Turkestan courts as an obstacle in the development of *grazhdanstvennost'*, Likoshin also shows how the courts were a weapon in the hands of a group of local actors who subverted the Russian colonial project.

To begin with, Likoshin did not find the courts to be worthless vestiges of an antediluvian society. The Russian administration of Turkestan could, and should, in his opinion, revamp the traditional function of the courts. While the Russians did not seek to convert the local population to Orthodox Christianity – a policy which failed in the Caucasus – it did attempt to convert them

³⁵ N.C. Likoshin, *Pol' zhizni v Turkestan* (Komissioner voenno-uchebnykh zavedenii: Saint Petersburg, 1916) 96.

³⁶ Knut S. Vikor, *Between God and the Sultan: a History of Islamic Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 8.

to an idea of secular law, a concept which does not exist in Islamic society. This process was never completed, leaving in its place a series of local traditional courts under the authority of a modern legal administration. While the bifurcation of authority befuddled Russian commentators, the half-modernization of local courts left Turkestani judges in a precarious position. Some courts continued to rule on non-secular cases, whereas others did not; some acted as civil courts, whereas others continued to act as religious institutions. On the one hand, local, and on the other, responsible to the Governor General, the local courts maintained traditional practices while at the same time reconciling such practices with the Empire's standards for justice. This is the role the Empire had cut out for them: the local courts were to remain religious while becoming civic at the same time; they would be both Islamic and Russian.

As I will show, the Russian Governor Generalship applied several changes to the courts that challenged their ability to operate as Islamic institutions. It introduced the use of public elections in judge selection, decreased the funding to Islamic education, required witness oaths, altered the requirements for the position of judge, sought a systemization of Shar'ia interpretation, worked towards judicial impartiality, and established an appeals process. These modifications were meant to transform courts from the handmaidens of despotism into the watchdogs of a modern civilization. Pretending to preserve the traditional function of the courts, the above-described transformations radically restructured local legal practice. The Governor Generalship required the local courts to adapt structural alterations that challenged their ability to function as Islamic courts. For instance, both the systemization of Shar'ia and the use of witness oaths are contrary to Shar'ia practice – such changes required Turkestani judges to practice an unfamiliar form of legal interpretation.

However, such modifications did not dismantle the practice of traditional law in Turkestan; instead, it opened up venues through which local actors could thwart Empire-building in the region. Reform did not always move the courts in a more modern direction. In other words, Russian modernization did not beget Turkestani acquiescence. Some reforms, especially the introduction of witness oaths, moved the courts farther away from the status of a modern legal institution. The courts did not resist the civilizing mission because they were intractable, unable to be brought into modernity; on the contrary, their gradual modernization provided avenues through which the courts could become resistant. By attempting to erase the practice of Islamic law, the Russians did not just attempt to Russify the population and cement their authority in the region. Instead, they provided ways for local actors to re-orientate anti-colonial resistance in a rapidly changing socio-political order. This can be seen if we move beyond nation-state paradigms of imperial historiography.

Pre-Conquest Courts

On one hand, Likoshin's analysis appears only to reinforce the above-described binary between Western and Islamic courts. His portrait of pre-conquest Islamic courts is uncompromising in this regard. In his description, the positions of the *kadi* and the *rais*, enforcers of religious practice, dominated local legal institutions before the arrival of the Russians. The former oversaw the criminal and civil affairs of the local population while retaining the power of life and death over the people of the Khanate. Handpicked by the Emir, the *kadi* was expected to comply with his wishes, to rule in favor of his allies and to rule against his enemies. Because of this, the qualifications for becoming a *kadi* were lax. Aside from

graduating from a *madrassa*, eligible individuals needed only to have no criminal background and be "open, healthy, of a mature age, and Muslim."³⁷

Likoshin's understanding of the pre-conquest *kadi* does not perfectly coincide with Weber's *kadi* under the tree. He understood that the *kadi* could not simply form their opinions out of thin air. Instead, they would have to root their opinion via a well-founded *riwayat*, an interpretation of Shari'a.³⁸ An explicit appeal to any other external authority – for instance, an order of the Emir – would strip the opinion of its validity and oftentimes endanger the *kadi*.³⁹ What emerged from this was a class of legal professionals dedicated to toeing the line between pleasing the Emir and pleasing the religious authorities, between ruling in terms of political correctness – i.e. appeasing their political leader – and in terms of religious correctness – i.e. drawing all of their opinions from Shar'ia. Likoshin's final conclusion was not far from Weber's. He still understood the *kadi* as a subjective purveyor of justice. They were just cleverer than Weber imagined, able to root their whimsical decisions in obscure readings of Shar'ia. While the *kadi* presented clear challenges to legal reformers, they were, at the very least, something akin to the Russian concept of a modern judge. By focusing solely on criminal and civil cases, the *kadi* were an incipient form of a legal authority that ruled only on the public affairs of those within their jurisdiction.

The function of the *rais*, on the other hand, was unfamiliar to the Russian administration. Like the *kadi*, the *rais* retained punitive power over their jurisdiction; but unlike the *kadi*, the *rais* served as the adjudicator of an individual's private life – a sphere beyond the jurisdiction of the *kadi*. They were not judges; instead they were religious authorities. Their jurisdiction was the

³⁷ Likoshin 53.

³⁸ Likoshin 55.

³⁹ Likoshin 55.

community of believers, and their punitive power was reserved for transgressors of the moral code as described in the Qur'an and the *hadith*. The *rais* punished individuals for falling out of accordance with Islamic custom – for skipping prayer or for unbecoming public behavior, for example. There was no room for the *rais* in the new Russian order. Once again, the Russian administration did not proselytize the people of Turkestan; instead, they attempted to establish a state apparatus that would not aggressively expunge the practice of Islam, but rather, one which would quietly dismantle it by divorcing Islam from state support. The enforcement of Islamic custom was still permitted, but religious leaders would no longer have recourse to legal institutions; nor would the state buttress their rulings by punishing religious miscreants. All such authority would remain within the religious community, and no punitive damages were to be assessed for violation of such custom.

Russian Modernization Efforts

The strategy was simple: the Russians would reform the *kadi* and dismantle the *rais*. What emerged from this was a network of *narodnye sudy* – courts that adjudicated the civil and criminal affairs of urban Turkestanis. Court rulings were still based on Shar'ia, but the passages concerning religious deviancy would no longer obtain. Additionally, rulings based on Shar'ia would have to conform to standards in the Empire's criminal code. While the courts were allowed to maintain their traditional function, they would have to apply Shar'ia as if they were applying Imperial law. The matrix for these courts was the *kadi*, not the *rais*: the enforcement of religious practice on behalf of a civil institution did not comport with either the Russian goals of de-Islamization nor, on another level, the legal norms of the Empire. However, the neat division of duties which Likoshin imagined between the *rais* and the *kadi* underwent modification as well.

This initial division existed only in the imagination of Russian administrators. As supposed heirs of the *kadi*, the judges of the *narodnye sudy* were, in theory, meant to eschew the religio-punitive function of the *rais*. But, as Likoshin demonstrates, this oftentimes did not occur:

I can speak of an instance, when in front of a *narodnyi sud* appeared a young female Sart, accused by a witness of sitting, with an open face, in the company of a few young people – none of whom were her relatives. They allowed rude behavior and did not obligate the Muslim woman to cover her face before the men. The *narodnyi sud*, in the Kotsri region where this occurred, sentenced the woman to a half-year of imprisonment, operating only under the awareness of the necessity to strictly punish every deviation from custom, saving social morality.⁴⁰

To Likoshin, the Sart woman violated nothing in the Russian criminal code:

The law presented to the *narodnyi sud* correctly punishes locals for 'crimes and offenses,' that is, for such activities, which [the courts] consider crimes by our European code; in the given instance the female Sart underwent strict punishment for an act which, by our laws, can in no way be considered a crime.⁴¹

It was, as Likoshin shows, difficult for all the *kadi* to make the transition from Islamic law – a tradition which does not distinguish between secular and civil law – to the European criminal code.

However, it wasn't just that the Islamic courts had no conception of civil law. The switch was not just conceptually difficult; it was logistically challenging as well. By asking the *narodnye sudy* to rule otherwise, the Russians were asking them to eschew years of rigorous training and preparation:

Under the title Shar'ia is the clear scientific goal of Muslim rights, based on the religious-moral position of the Qur'an and widely worked out by numerous law students, dedicating all of their strength to the interpretation of the different harmonies of judicial

⁴⁰ Likoshin 76.

⁴¹ Likoshin 76.

positions with all the subtle, partial, situational casuistry. [...] An intelligent reading of the legal books requires of the judge a wide knowledge of Arabic [...].⁴²

Likoshin understood the difficulty involved in interpreting Shar'ia law. To him, it was a set of skills that required a high degree of social capital. To ask the judges to rethink years of training was no small task. Furthermore, the Russians were asking the *narodnye sudy* to ignore the patronage of the Muslim Khans:

Before, the Islamic science, established mainly on the study of Arabic, was located under the aegis of the Muslim government which spent significant money on "talabilm" (literally seekers of knowledge), that is, teachers and students. Under the influence of the higher spiritual authority and the scientists, clearly occupying a position with the court, the Muslim lords considered always the best means for the glorification of their name – education of the "*waqf*."⁴³

Educated under the fiscal tutelage of the Emir, the judges of the *narodnye sudy* were, in Likoshin's description, equipped with a refined eye for the minutiae of Shar'ia passages and a sense of obligation to the Emir. This became a problem in the years of the Russian administration. In order to create civil judges, the Russians could not simply ask them to rule as though they were applying civil law. As we have seen, religious law was still very much a part of how the *narodnye sudy* perceived the role of a legal authority. Instead, the Russian administration had to circumvent the problem at its fountainhead, diminishing the link between Shar'ia and state financing. Fiscal support of Shar'ia education would have to be cut.

And the Russians achieved this by redirecting the *waqf*, a crucial source of income for Islamic legal education: "After the assimilation of Turkestan to Russia," writes Likoshin, "a meaningful part of the *waqf* fell into the hands of private individuals who already did not take so

⁴² Likoshin 82.

⁴³ Likoshin 77.

close to heart the prosperity of the students and the patronage of [Islamic] educational affairs."⁴⁴ The "stipends of the students of higher education (the *madrasa*) in Tashkent and other cities in Turkestan," writes Likoshin, "were decreased to a negligible size of three to four people per year."⁴⁵ As we have seen above, it was not the supposed "necessity" of practicing civil law under the new order which decreased the size of the *madaris* throughout Turkestan; rather, the rapidly decreasing pecuniary allotments for such study seemed to play a larger role. "To live on such means," writes Likoshin, "during the growing of the price of products of primary necessity, became unthinkable [...], and so the number of those wishing to study the Muslim sciences [Shar'ia] systematically decreased with every year."⁴⁶ The study of Islamic law was no longer economically sustainable in the new colonial marketplace; like the practice of Islam itself, Shar'ia law would evaporate in the new world order.

But the practice of circumventing Shar'ia education could only be aimed at future generations. The problems of the present – the surfeit of practitioners of Shar'ia law, themselves products of the Emir's use of the *waqf* – remained unaddressed. In 1892, Governor General G.G. Vrevskii addressed these concerns with his edict, *Polozhenie ob upravlenii Turkestanskogo Kraia*. Aside from furthering the implementation of civil law, Vrevskii struck at the local idea of a judge by re-establishing the *narodnye sudy* on the basis of popular elections. The people, not the Emir, the Khan, or even the Russian Governor General, would choose their judges. After the election, the Governor General would select the judge from amongst the top two candidates. This was a striking innovation in the old court system. No longer subjected to the whimsies of the Emir, the judges were now responsible, in theory, before the people. This arrangement struck a

⁴⁴ Likoshin 68.

⁴⁵ Likoshin 68.

⁴⁶ Likoshin 68.

compromise between Russian military personnel and the growing number of advocates for a civil government in Turkestan. Observers on the right demanded either the unmediated appointment of a "trustworthy native" – a puppet judge for the Russian administration – or, going further, the complete dismantlement of what was otherwise viewed as a senescent vestige of Turkestan's pre-modern heritage. Observers on the left demanded the unmitigated authority of the local population to elect their judges and the revoking of the Governor General's ability to choose a judge from amongst the top two candidates.

While the introduction of local elections was certainly the most contested feature of Vrevskii's decree, there were other, less debated caveats. First, the requirements necessary to become a judge were standardized. Under Vrevskii's administration, it was not enough to leave qualifications up to subjective inferences. (No one, for instance, would be judging whether a candidate was "open, healthy, of a mature age, and Muslim"). Qualified candidates could not have been arrested for more than seven days or fined more than thirty rubles; they could not have been convicted of a crime; and, instead of being "of a mature age," the candidates were required to be at least twenty five years old. Despite the promise of the new legal order, it appears as if the criteria for judges did not change at all – age and criminal record, in other words, still factored prominently in the process. Yet, while the differences between the old and new qualifications were slim, Likoshin still believed them to be more than just a matter of mere semantics: the introduction of new objective criteria, he writes, would greatly expand the potential applicant pool. No longer could the Emir decide on a candidate who would simply fall in line; instead, a standardized set of criteria would be the only touchstone against which potential judges could be measured.

In addition to establishing clear methods for the selection of judges, Vrevskii also standardized the appeals process. The *S'ezd Narodnykh Sudei*, or appeals court, was composed of judges who were elected by and from the ranks of the local *narodnye sudy*. At the head of the *S'ezd Narodnykh Sudei* was the *Predstavitel'*, the most powerful judge in Turkestan.⁴⁷ Like the election process, there remained an additional echelon of authority. The *uezdnyi nachal'nik*, head of the Turkestan civil administration, oversaw the decisions of the *S'ezd Narodnykh Sudei*, reserving the right to overrule their decisions – a power no longer enjoyed by the local Khans. Likoshin is unclear as to how this process worked: would there have to be an appeal to the *uezdnyi nachal'nik* or could he just intervene when he saw fit? Either way, the *uezdnyi nachal'nik* rarely intervened in such affairs.

To Likoshin, the new hierarchy was more important than the dynamic between the *S'ezd Narodnykh Sudei* and the *uezdnyi nachal'nik*. Sandwiched between their constituents and the Russian administration, the *narodnye sudy* were accountable to those above in addition to those below. This reshaped the *kadi*'s pre-conquest accountabilities. A new sense of accountability coupled with the gradual eradication of fiscal support for the study of Shar'ia, would, according to Likoshin, transform the courts into emblems of the Empire's ability to modernize Turkestani society. Furthermore, these courts would be more than just emblems of progress: by battering Shar'ia into correspondence with the European criminal code, they were to ensure progress.

But this new sense of accountability could only spread so far. Aside from the above-described failure to eradicate the final vestiges of Shar'ia law, the Russian Empire also failed to introduce the cornerstones of modern legal practice into the operating procedures of the local courts. If cases such as that of the young Sart woman were unavoidable, then the courts which

⁴⁷ Likoshin 92.

made such rulings could, at the very least, be forced to make their rulings in such a way that would placate the concerns of the Russian administration. It was not just a problem that the courts continued to punish religious offenses. How they punished these offenses was also an issue.

To begin with, the administration expected local judges to pass unbiased decisions. Vrevskii had already created the conditions for such impartiality in 1891. Local courts were now under the umbrella of the *uezdnye nachal'nik*, not the Emir. Because of this, Vrevskii believed that the courts should have been able to rule without the Emir's interests in mind. However, as Likoshin describes, loyalties to the Emir re-emerged as class loyalties:

The definition of the measures of punishment in the practice of the people's courts still depends on the social position of the accused. Operating with interpretations of Shar'ia, the *kadi*, for the same offense, should sentence a high-ranking local to a punishment implausible for his crime, and a middle-class local to public suggestion, and a lowly slave to the most severe punishment.⁴⁸

They also re-emerged as the personal loyalties of the specific judge: "the judge of the *narodnyi sud* negligibly raised his moral development over the masses, and by his birth and life is tightly connected precisely with those locals whom he is obligated to judge."⁴⁹ While the unpermitted enforcement of Shar'ia may have been of concern to an earlier generation of reformers, it was the *sub''ektivnye vzgliad* that was problematic for the early twentieth-century reformers.⁵⁰ The courts, once subjected to the whimsies of the Emir, were now subject to the whimsies of the individual judge.

⁴⁸ Likoshin 77.

⁴⁹ Likoshin 77.

⁵⁰ Likoshin 77.

And the judges, writes Likoshin, had no difficulty rooting their capricious subjective view in an objective interpretation of Shar'ia. If the judges were allowed to use Shar'ia law, then they could, at the very least, interpret pre-modern law in a way that placated Russian legal experts. Once again, if the courts were to be traditional in content, but modern in form, then the very law that they practiced would have to follow suit. This required a systemization of Shar'ia interpretation. Due to the "absence of any sort of systematic judicial interpretation of the Muslim code," judges use the "books of Shar'ia," writes Likoshin, "to accommodate any possible interpretation. And the style of the law, he adds, facilitates such:

In Islamic legal literature appeared, with the passing of time, a countless plurality of partial, extensive interpretations on each separate question of correctness, and authors, of so called "*patva*" (or "*fetva*," as they say in Turkey) were resigned to allowing for each ... so that in the given composition it would be possible to find an answer to any question.⁵¹

Given the malleability of the text, the path to such interpretations seemed to lie solely in the mind of the interpreter:

In order to write one book [of Shar'ia] about multiple subjects at the same time, it was necessary to go into such detail of judicial casuistry and to give to a great extent a detailed selection of all possible cases, so that in the case entered inventions, not found in the life of the affected people [plaintiff or defendant], and the path to such was lost, so only the experienced hand of a jurist could find in the book that page which should be taken as the basis of the decision on the given case.⁵²

While Likoshin impugns the judges of the *narodnye sudy* for ruling in favor of either the wealthy or their personal acquaintances, he excoriates the practice of Shar'ia for allowing such judges to base their rulings on whatever passage they so please. The demonized "subjective view" of the judges stems not only from the personal and class biases of the judges themselves, but from the

⁵¹ Likoshin 82.

⁵² Likoshin 82.

very means by which they approach Shar'ia. Thus, if the practice of Sharia could not be removed, its interpretation could, at the very least, undergo standardization. There was, in fact, precedent for such. Likoshin cites the work of Islamic judges working in Turkey.⁵³ These individuals, he attests, did not pick out isolated passages that fulfilled their fancies. Instead, they understood Shar'ia passages in relation to each other, plumbing out a more rounded understanding of the text's meaning. This was, to Likoshin, a crucial step towards standardization.

While the Russian Governor General believed to have already established the conditions for objective adjudications of criminal and civil affairs, their fulfillment lied beyond the realm of administrative reform – it was an ephemeral *chuvstvo* of the people:

The development of justice [*spravedlivost'*] must be observed in every condition in order to define, by internal conviction, means of punishment that are uniform for every instance, and can with confidence say, that not one of the *narodnye sudy* is in any condition to conduct all of his decisions on criminal affairs by one or the other system of punishment.⁵⁴

Likoshin, however, did believe that the “internal conviction” of *spravedlivost'* amongst the courts could be produced. This meant more than just exhorting the local judges to ignore their class interests and cite Shar'ia systematically. Placing the local courts under the Governor General was not enough: the local population would need to re-conceptualize the role of judge, lawyer, and witness. These positions, in the new Russian order, were to become independent of one another: the state would finance lawyers and judges while witnesses would become autonomous, objective observers.

⁵³ Likoshin 83.

⁵⁴ Likoshin 76.

Having reduced the system of patronage between the state and Shar'ia, the Russian Empire would now need to rework the micro system of court patronage: the fiscal inter-dependency of the judges and the lawyers (and the lawyers and their clients) could no longer remain intact. More specifically, the Russian Empire, in Likoshin's view, had to curtail the role of the greedy *posredniki*, lawyers who mediated between the people and the courts. The *posredniki*, writes Likoshin, profited wildly at the expense of their clients, especially when the cases were settled out of court:

Such instances are straight profit for the *vakila*: after securing a written statement from both sides of "peaceful process" [i.e. pre-court settlement], the *posredniki* decide the case so that it will profit them, and that the client will receive, in the majority of cases, only the most insignificant part of the *iskovaia summa* [settlement], the remaining money divided by the court peacemakers amongst themselves. The client leaves after the settlement [*primirenie*], happy that he received anything from the mercenary and greedy *posredniki*.⁵⁵

Consequently, "the general opinion," he adds, "was disapproving of such agents [*posredniki*] in the *narodnye sudy*," and "requests from the population for their removal from the offices of the *narodnye sudy* are often heard."⁵⁶

Yet, these protests went unheeded, but not only for the sake of maintaining corruption. Lawyers and their accompanying fees played an important role in differentiating amongst legal claims: not just anyone could appear before a *narodnyi sud*, nor did every case deserve the courts' valuable time. Hiring a *posrednik* indicated a client's commitment to their case. By requiring such, the *narodnye sudy* were able to weed out petty and specious claims. However, on the other hand, corrupt *posredniki* maintained their position for more pernicious reasons:

⁵⁵ Likoshin 81.

⁵⁶ Likoshin 81.

The *poverennye* [approved agents] do not complain about their profits: they search for clients and convince the locals to bring forth criminal and civil charges, promising their indubitable victory. Because of this, the *narodnye sudy*, lacking allocated funds and receiving money from those affected [the defendant or the plaintiff], is premised on a connection with the agents, an established general interest: the *poverennye* give work to the *narodnyi sud* and increase their profits, and the judges leniently look on the spurned actions of the *vakili* – by the expression “hands clean hands” [*ruka moet ruku*].⁵⁷

In the *narodnye sudy*, lawyers, clerks, and judges all worked to keep each other employed. Over against the people, the courts were, in Likoshin’s description, a closed circuit which supplanted universal, unbiased justice with the search for profit and personal benefit: lawyers picked clients who would pay the judges and their legal advisors. Cases, in Likoshin’s description, were not brought before the court by virtue of their criminal or civil wrongdoing; in other words, justice lay in the hands of an elite group of legal professionals who could, at their own will, choose cases which would benefit the financial standing of the court.

Professional Witnesses

Not everyone who “cleaned hands” was a legal professional. Affronting the Empire’s legal sensibilities, individuals managed to work in the *narodnye sudy* as professional witnesses. Untrained in the interpretation of Shar’ia, these individuals were outsiders, corrupting the legal system not because they retained the residual influences of the Emir, but because they sought to make a living. In doing so, they broke the closed circuits of the Emir’s legal professionals, working with plaintiffs and defendants in order to produce the evidence necessary for civil and criminal prosecutions.

This had a disastrous effect on the courts by undermining the practice of witness oaths. As I will discuss later, the introduction of witness oaths reworked Shar’ia conceptions of the role

⁵⁷ Likoshin 82.

of the witness. All individuals who testified in local courts had to swear an oath. In the hands of the professional witnesses, the oath – a solemn obligation to tell the truth – transformed into a business deal: he who swore an oath promised not to tell the truth, but to tell a truth, one desired by their employer. According to Likoshin, these individuals, known as *mutagami*, struck fear in the heart of local Turkestanis:

Accordingly, there is no shortage of swindlers [*durnye liudi*] amongst the locals, because in each society they meet “*mutagami*,” that is, people who lied under oath for any case. The populace despises such people, and, at the same time, fears them. And this fear is completely justified: you need to decide only once in your lifetime to cross the boundary between a lie and the truth in order for the next opportunity to do so to prevent no moral qualms.⁵⁸

If an individual lied once under oath, then, it would be no great difficulty for them to do it again. And, given the above-described relationship between judges and lawyer, an individual who upset a *mutagami* would surely secure themselves an appearance before a *narodnyi sud*: the lawyer would simply have to convince the *mutagami* that his case would win; the judges, always seeking money for their courts, would be more than happy to oblige.

However, this arrangement not only benefited those local swindlers; it had adverse effects on that group of honest locals who did not lie under oath. To be sure, the *narodnye sudy* did not tolerate lying under oath. They were, after all, supposed to operate as a modern legal institution. The courts levied punishments against those convicted of lying under oath, and they assiduously distinguished between truth and lies:

The moral operation [of the courts] changed greatly for the worst. One verbal, certified, known fact given by testimony became not enough. It required the application of pressure

⁵⁸ Likoshin 78.

on the person who testified before the court. This was done in order to hear from him only one clean truth.⁵⁹

With morality decreasing – i.e. the *mutagami* increasing, the courts applied “clear pressure” on all their witnesses in an attempt to verify witnesses’ claims.

In other words, simply swearing an oath of honesty would no longer suffice. Individuals who testified before the court not only had to swear to tell the truth; they had to act like they were telling the truth. These individuals did not only fear the wrath of a *mutagami*; they feared the testifying before a *narodnyi sud* in general:

People who lied under oath, professionals and profaners of the use of oaths, made it so that each local not only fears having relations with their compatriots who loosely understand the taking of oaths [*mutagami*], but fears taking an oath before the court himself, even for a just cause. Each disciplined person fears taking an oath in defense of their action or criminal investigation so that they will not give rise to the suspicion that he loosely understands the oath and that he, in exclusive circumstances, is capable of bending his soul [lying].⁶⁰

As Likoshin laments, individuals who are afraid of appearing too eager to swear an oath – a sure sign of eagerness to lie under oath, will often lose their case: “during the conducting of a case by the *narodnyi sud*, such individual, fearing the oath, risks either being asked to swear an oath himself or stand by as a shameless liar, having taken a false oath, wins the case.”⁶¹ The result was a catastrophic loss of faith in the ability of the *narodnyi sud* to rule justly in civil and criminal affairs.

The incomplete modernization of the court furthered this dilemma. Pressured by the Empire to actively ensure witness veracity, local courts manipulated the understanding of witness oaths in classical Shar’ia. In Shar’ia, witnesses are not required to swear an oath before

⁵⁹ Likoshin 75.

⁶⁰ Likoshin 79.

⁶¹ Likoshin 79.

they testify in court – this process is later reserved for plaintiffs or defendants. In arguing their case, a plaintiff or defendant may introduce three types of evidence: confession, testimony, and oaths. All are oral – there is no physical evidence. If a defendant does not confess to the crime, then the plaintiff introduces witnesses who testify. If testimonies clash, judges can either take both into consideration, throw out witness evidence that they decide is untrue, or ignore both testimonies. After dealing with competing evidence, the judge has, in effect, re-worked the case in such a way that favors the testimony of the plaintiff or the defendant. In order to corroborate the new situation, the judge issues an oath to the party who appears in the right. This oath is binding. As Knut Vikor writes, “an oath is under normal circumstances not ‘evidence’ at all, but rather the result of the judge’s evaluation of the case on the basis of witnesses presented.”⁶²

But local courts in Turkestan did not maintain the traditional role of the witness. Local courts did not allow witness testimony that was not truthful. Under Shar’ia, such testimony would have been thrown out as immoral – it was not akin to breaking an oath.⁶³ The judge would decide whichever party was in the right and only then introduce the oath. Oaths were not evidence that would support judicial rulings; instead, they were the result of judicial rulings – presented only after the judge had determined who was in the right.

Individuals who were accustomed to testifying under half-knowledge or incomplete information were now not welcomed in the local courts. Their testimony was no longer just discordant with what the judge considered the facts of the case; instead, it was illegal. While lawyers and liars ran a closed circle, “cleaning each other’s hands,” the honest local, as Likoshin describes, fell victim to the *narodnye sudy*. The courts were caught in between, on the one hand,

⁶² Vikor 178.

⁶³ Vikor 178.

plagued by partiality and corruption, but on the other, actively seeking to safeguard one crucial principle of the modern court, the inviolability of a witness oath – a gesture that would supposedly transform the court from its pre-modern days of Emir-based nepotism to an era of accountability before the people. But because the courts prosecuted those who lied under oaths and aggressively sought to verify a witnesses' testimony beyond asking them to swear an oath, the honest local, afraid of donning the unscrupulous ease of the liar-under-oath, was unwilling to testify before the court in general. Consequently, the courts suffered at the hands of those “shameless liars” who were willing to risk material gain against the potential of criminal punishment.

What emerges is a strange picture of the *narodnyi sud*'s journey into modernity: while protecting the integrity of the legal oath the court, in a counterintuitive fashion, remained, if not strengthened its role as a pre-modern institution – i.e., the court continued to benefit a claue of corrupt *posredniki* and *mutagami* as opposed to propagating the European criminal code and the guarantee of private property. The Russians had spent a great deal of time and energy only to end up where they had started: they had abolished state funding for Shar'ia; taken measures to ensure the use of the European criminal law in the new *narodnye sudy*; and established the judges, via the implementation of popular elections, as servants of the people. Yet, the courts remained, to use Likoshin's language, in the pockets of despotism, co-opted by the self-interested *posredniki* and *mutagami*.

At first, the Russians appeared to curtail local legal practice in Turkestan. Shar'ia continued, but it would be a Shar'ia that comported with the European Criminal Code, provided standardized interpretations that existed beyond the opinion of the local judge, and issued witness oaths that would verify testimony. The role of the judge was diminished: no longer could

the judge arrive at their own interpretation of Shar'ia; systematization required that the opinions of others play a larger role. No longer could the judge discard witness testimony at odds with the facts of the case; such individuals had to be punished. In addition to curtailing local practice, the Russians cut the courts' fiscal ties with the Emir. But by doing such, the Russians did not just produce the acquiescence of the Turkestanis, nor did they only produce open resistance to Russian custom. Instead, they provided avenues through which Turkestanis could resist Empire building in Turkestan. The *mutagami* were not intractable, unable to integrate into the modern court system, nor did their integration require a surrendering. They were pliable, harnessing the changes in local legal institutions in order to both subvert the Russian mission in Turkestan and procure material gain for themselves. Their resistance was part of their daily lives – they were just trying to make a living.

Chapter 3

Of a Closer Texture: Trade and the Development of Civilization in Turkestan

As you must know, a piece of timber is a rude block at first, but becomes seemly and serviceable as this arm-chair, under the skillful hands of the joiner. I and my people are the block, the deputy is the joiner. Were it not for him and the Padishah [governor-general], we should always remain blocks – Sultan Ali to Mikhail Valikhanov.⁶⁴

Despite the bloody lesson we taught them on December 28, the Tekkes successfully snuck by the ravine along our fortified rivulet unnoticed. The Tekkes begin raiding extremely quickly and quietly, and then immediately, as one, open fire. The majority of them attack barefooted, with their sleeves rolled up and their *khalaty* on backwards. All the while, despite the absence of a structure, there exists a known organization.⁶⁵

Like the use of Russian law, the development of a colonial economy was intended to bring the promises of civilization to Turkestan. To Mikhail Veniukov, Mikhail Valikhanov, and N. Likoshin, the process of civilizing the local population required the establishment of a permanent Russian-Turkestanian trade that would exchange finished Russian goods for Turkestanian raw materials (cotton and leather). In their opinion, such a trade would not only introduce the fruits of Russian industrial production into the hearth of every Turkestanian, it would modernize both the local society and the Turkestanian individual. According to Sultan Ali, the head of the Dulat Kirghiz in Altai, Turkestanians would transform from blocks to furniture, from pre-modern savages to imperial citizens.

Although trade was an important tool in civilizing and pacifying the region, it was not, contrary to the work of some early Soviet historians, a reason for occupying Turkestan in the

⁶⁴ Ch. Ch. Valikhanov and M. Veniukov, The Russians in Central Asia (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Pub, 2006) 244.

⁶⁵ A. Maslov, Zavoevanie Akhal'-Teke: ocherki iz posledni ekspeditsi Skobeleva (1880-1881) (Saint Petersburg: Izdanie A.S. Suvorina, 1882) 59.

first place. Hesitant in its expansion, the Russian state was able to keep the expansionist desires of the *kupechestvo* at bay. Tsarist interests of security and patience superseded any private economic interests in the region. However, with the conclusion of the military conquest and the signing of the peace treaties in the late 1870s, Turkestan became an incubator for a nascent mercantile relationship between the center and the periphery – a relationship which was never fully realized. Insufficient Russian capital, low-quality cotton, astronomical transportation costs, and the actions of local Emirs and traders played a role in either rejecting the churning wheels of capitalist expansion and its handmaiden, the Empire's civilizing mission.

Still, there were individuals who were able to make a fortune in Turkestan. These merchants, according to military journalist A. Kvitka, did not rely on the tutelage of the Russian Empire. Rather, they accumulated wealth on their own accord by learning the language, making connections, and observing the customs of other Turkestani merchants. Contact with the local population was difficult. Local Sarts, Jews, and Hindus dominated trade in the region, and very few Russians were able to successfully penetrate the bazaars of Tashkent and Samarkand. This impregnability was a point of contention for the Russian government, and several trade agreements were drafted in order to ameliorate the situation. Some commentators attribute the opacity of Turkestan markets to explicit coercion and the relative impunity enjoyed by the Khans with regard to treaty abrogation. Yet, the goal of this chapter is to highlight the specific kinds of cultural knowledge which were necessary in order to operate in a Turkestan bazaar – knowledge which may have been off limits to Russian merchants. In other words, individuals did not only need to know, as Maslov asserts, the right people; they also needed to know what these people wanted and how they wanted it.

The preferences of the local population and the culture of the bazaar mattered. The signing of trade agreements could not account for this alone. Turkestan was not a savage place that could be brought into civilization via the top-down introduction of Russian goods. Rather, goods had to be created for these people and sold in their market places – a process which required collaboration and compromise. In order for this to occur, the Russian administration had to believe that such collaboration and compromise was possible, that the Turkestanis were not savages, but potential consumers, that their market places were not hotbeds of despotic economic practice, but local public spheres. This chapter shows how the work of anthropologist and city planner Nikolai Maev and journalist Yuri Kazi Bek completed this work by re-examining Turkestanis individuals and market spaces. In Turkestan, they found a surrogate public, not bazaars run by swindling Jews and Sarts; pseudo-private individuals, not religious fanatics; and employees, not slaves. Such views capture a spirit of collaboration that the administration did not have.

By taking into consideration the work of these authors, this chapter looks at the ways in which the bazaars of Turkestan were modern on their own terms. Turkestanis did not have a full-fledged public sphere, but they did have the bazaars. By viewing these spaces as just pre-modern, the Russians precluded their ability to trade in them; by looking just for the visible structures of a public, the Russians were unable to find a localized public in Turkestan. Because of this, they did not take the contours of the bazaar into consideration when creating their colonial economy. The bazaars, in the Russian imagination, would trade Russian goods because they were superior and modern. No further dialogue between the Empire and the local marketplaces was necessary.

Reading the failure of the Turkestanis colonial economy in this light challenges an alternative view on the situation: the poor economic development of Turkestan was the result of

a failed synthesis between two discordant world views. Such a reading of the lack of Russian goods in Turkestani markets points to the inability of Russian administrators and merchants to abide by Islamic economic practice. For instance, Russians did not understand Islamic economic tenets such as the prohibition on interest or the aversion to unequal wealth distribution.

However, this view anachronistically posits contemporary developments in Islamic thought onto mid-nineteenth century Turkestan. As Timur Kuran argues, the above-described examples of Islamic economic practice were products of the twentieth century, not a social practice contained in Islamic texts and practiced throughout history: “when Muslim Arabs, Turks, Slavs, Iranians, Central Asians, or Indians of the early twentieth century expressed economic demands, they usually did so without invoking exclusively Islamic concepts or using identifiably Islamic terminology.”⁶⁶ When Turkestanis excluded Russians from the bazaars, it was because they eschewed foreign interference, not because they believed that Christian Russians had violated Islamic economic practices. Such a view maintains an essential divide between Western and Islamic societies, between the Russians and the Turkestanis. The Russian economic project failed in Turkestan not because the administration broke a primordial rule of Islam, nor did it fail just because the Khans broke treaty conditions or the local merchants swindled and cheated the Russians; instead, the project failed because the administration underestimated the capacity of the Turkestani and bazaar to function as modern consumers and a modern marketplace.

To begin with, trade was not a new idea in Turkestan, and the Russians were not the first to exchange goods with the Khanates. Hindu, Chinese, Persian, and British merchants had

⁶⁶ Timur Kuran, Islam and Mammon: The Economic Predicaments of Islamism (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004) x.

frequented the markets before the establishment of the Turkestan Governor-Generalship. There was also a strong presence of local Sart merchants in urbanized areas such as Samarkand and Tashkent. One could even extend this logic back further into history, pointing to the rich tradition of trade enjoyed by Central Asians during the millennia when the Silk Road flourished. This golden age of the Central Asian Khanates is what Russian military officer Ch. Ch. Valikhanov had in mind when he contrasted Russian trade with the trade of time immemorial. To him, the dawning of Russian colonial power in the region signified the dawning of the historic period for the Khanates. The Russians had brought order, providing entrepôts for the Khans to trade their raw materials in Western Europe and Russia on a scale previously unimaginable.

In exchange, the Khanates received Russian goods that would drastically alter the quality of life of every Turkestanian. Leather, iron (cast and wrought), steel, copper sheets, needles, and cloth – all manufactured in Russia – appeared on the markets of Turkestan in the mid to late nineteenth century.⁶⁷ While iron, steel, and copper were necessary for the construction of Turkestan's infrastructure, consumer goods, such as furniture, for example, were to produce a more profound transformation amongst the Turkestanians. As journalist Yuri Kazi Bek writes, the Turkestanians were not just impressed with the ease and comfort of the Russian lifestyle, they hoped to procure such luxuries for themselves:

With the arrival of the Russians appeared the wish of the local [Turkestanian] officials to live a European lifestyle. So they began to build more comfortable homes and furnish them to a lavish extent – in short, they clearly appreciated the comfort with which the Russians surrounded themselves.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Valikhanov 43.

⁶⁸ Yuri Kazi Bek, “Narodnyi sud v Fergan” *Vokrug Sveta* (No. 41. 1895. 654-55) 655.

As N. Likoshin elaborates, the old order of life could not satisfy such desires of the Turkestanis for a European lifestyle. This would also change with the introduction of trade:

The life of the locals, after the integration of the region into Russia, changed drastically in many respects. [...] In the new order of the Muslim's life, he experienced a novel jolt of reanimation and relative urgency. 'Haste is the tail of the devil' – each Muslim, having memorized this moral principle from childhood, has now come to forget this ancient law of the oneiric East and to hurry – so as to earn more money. The locals quickly realized that the new life required the expenditure of more energy than ever.⁶⁹

Likoshin hoped that the new-found avarice of the average Turkestani would prompt these individuals into fervidly consuming Russian goods while simultaneously effacing the lingering vestiges of those "ancient" Muslim "laws" ('Haste is the tail of the devil'). The existence of these Muslim adages not only fueled the flames of pan-Islamic fears amongst the Russian military. Reformers, such as Likoshin, believed these sayings to undermine the possibility for inoculating the population with a cupidity for consumption.

By introducing the aspiration for profit, the Russians did not just seek to negate these timeless proverbs. Islam too would deliquesce with the introduction of the new order. The two were supposedly antithetical:

[The locals] lost the long-standing, peaceful organization of daily life around the five daily prayers. [The locals] began to complain about wastes of time – but sometimes would arbitrarily skip the daily prayer in order to attend to more pressing matters, or even outright forget to pray.⁷⁰

As trade unfurled in Turkestan, the "more pressing matters" of work would replace the idle time spent in prayer. In the new order, people would be too busy to remember to attend prayers. The mutual commerce between the Russians and the Turkestanis would not coerce the local population into civilization, nor would it require the Russians to intervene in the conduct of local

⁶⁹ Likoshin 12.

⁷⁰ Likoshin 12.

affairs. Rather, the Turkestanis would seek out Russian civilization themselves. In other words, the Russians sought to weaken the hold of Islam in the region surreptitiously:

Current elders may be inclined to accuse the Russians, having arrived in this region, of somehow weakening the piety of the locals; but it is impossible to assent to this opinion, because the Russians in no way interfered in religious affairs. If the piety of the locals was at all weakened, then it was no fault of the Russians, but rather of the aspiration for profit.⁷¹

Keeping in line with von Kaufman's policy of *ignorirovaniia*, the advent of trade, as characterized above by Kazi Bek and Likoshin, served as the mechanism par excellence for the inauguration of *grazhdanstvennost'* in Turkestan. With this in mind, Mikhail Veniukov, a military geographer, wrote with confidence in 1877 that "we, of course, should consider the development of Central Asian trade as one of the best conduits of Russian influence and civilization in Turan and its neighboring countries."⁷²

Official sources corroborated Veniukov's hypothesis. According to an official circular letter distributed in January 1884, trade boomed in Turkestan. The pacification of the region occurred in lockstep. Written by an unnamed member of the Tsar's cabinet, the circular letter was sent to all military administrators who were assigned to work in Turkestan. In an effort to better inform the administrators of local history, the document includes a crash-course in the military conquest of the region stemming from the invasions of Peter the Great in the early eighteenth century through the mid 1880s. The text is dry reading designed for the edification of future bureaucrats in Turkestan.

⁷¹ Likoshin 12.

⁷² Mikhail Veniukov, *Rossija i vostok*. (Saint Petersburg: 1877) 150.

Yet, the document's conquest tale mirrors the narrative sketched out by the above-quoted individuals. According to the circular, the presence of military forts in the Kazakh steppe not only provided security from further raids. The forts also traded with the nearby Kirghiz:

The forts formed trading centers for the exchange of raw products of the Kirghiz steppe and some products [*izdelie*] of Central Asian industry [*promyshlennosti*] for the products [*produkty*] of Russian production [*promsyshlenosti*]. The returns of a few of these points – for example, Orenburg, Troitsek, Petropavlovsk, and Semipalatinsk – reached highly respectable sizes and approached a few million rubles.⁷³

While only a few forts turned a profit, the idea that a strong trading relationship produced a salubrious effect resonates throughout the above-quoted passage. As described earlier, the presence of the forts pacified the Kirghiz by abolishing the terms upon which their communities had been built. If the forts achieved this by bringing security, then they did the same by bringing trade. The former negated the threat of an enemy, the latter negated what the Russians perceived to an Islamic malaise and laziness.

However, trade was a strategy of pacification deployed after the forts were built – not an anterior motive for expansion which guided the Russian incursion into the region. Historians of the Soviet era spoke to the contrary. P.G. Galuzo's 1930 work, *Turkestan – Koloniia*, while not necessarily palatable to the political climate of the 1930s (Galuzo's work rarely cites Lenin or Stalin), is an exemplary Marxist analysis of the colonial relationship between the Russian Empire and Turkestan. Galuzo divides the history of the region into three phases: (1) deprivation of indigenous independence, (2) economic subordination to Russia, and (3) national liberation movements. The Russian Empire, Galuzo writes, saw Turkestan with "meaningful interest, as a colony, an object of exploitation."⁷⁴ It was no accident that the Tsar happened upon Central Asia.

⁷³ Istoricheskii Ocherk 2.

⁷⁴ P.G Galuzo, *Turkestan-Koloniia* (Tashkent: 1935) 15.

The lack of communication between the center and the periphery, the glory-seeking of a few bullheaded generals, and the power politics between Russia and England are not, in Galuzo's formulation, legitimate explanations for the conquest. Rather, they attempt to conceal the Tsar's meaningful interest in Turkestan.

While the above-quoted circular finds a few forts which demonstrated "respectable returns" in their commerce with the Kirghiz, Galuzo finds several. From 1827-1837, he calculates the value of trade with Turkestan at 10.53 million rubles. By 1840-1850, that number had reached 15.73 million.⁷⁵ These figures are measly when compared with the value imported from the Empire's more profitable possessions. However, the value of trade within the region grew 36.4% in this period. "Such growth of the economic connection to the borderland," Galuzo writes, produced a parallel growth in the "demand to seize the border and establish the monopoly of the Russian *kupechestvo*."⁷⁶

The treaties signed with the Khanates in the 1880s codified this demand. In Galuzo's argument, the treaties ensured that Russian merchants would no longer be excluded from the bazaars as *chuzhestrantsy*. Instead, the Empire became the *khoziain* of the Khanates, enjoying not only equal rights with the local Muslim population, but superior rights. These included the right to live in the Khanates, to own land in cities such as Tashkent and Samarkand, and to take legal complaints directly to the Russian ambassador.⁷⁷ By the end of the nineteenth century, the *kupechestvo*, Galuzo argues, had established a mercantile relationship between Russia and Turkestan. The Russian imperial power quashed the local cottage industries, relegating Turkestan to a site of extraction. Raw material (cotton from the Fergana Valley) was taken from

⁷⁵ Galuzo 15.

⁷⁶ Galuzo 16.

⁷⁷ Galuzo 17.

the periphery where Russian industrialists produced finished goods which were then shipped back to Turkestan. And Russian goods made from Turkestani raw material enjoyed a monopoly unchallenged by either the remaining indigenous producers or the near-by British.

But not everyone saw the relationship between Turkestan and Russia as a paradigmatic exchange between a colonial metropole and its periphery. Others, such as the above-quoted Mikhail Veniukov, saw things differently. Veniukov openly challenged Galuzo's narrative, specifically with regard to the Russian fort at Krasnovodsk and the Khanate of Khiva:

Attempts at commercial relations between Krasnovodsk and Khiva (which they often declare as a success of some economic importance) in reality are so modest, that the only thing we can conclude about them is the current non-existence of such trade and the unlikelihood of its expansion in the future.⁷⁸

A believer in the ability of trade to conduct civilization, Veniukov agreed with the author of the circular letter. Trade, in his opinion, would work to both develop and pacify Turkestan.

However, as Veniukov argues, trade was unable to flourish in the region. While the circular letter points to forts in the Kirghiz steppe as success stories, Veniukov, turning to the Khanate of Khiva, castigates the veiled "they" – a likely reference to public officials – for declaring success where there was none to be found. One cannot, he asserts, speak of "a success of some economic importance" with regard to Khiva and Krasnovodsk.

Veniukov is not satisfied with imputing the lack of trade to local conditions. Rather, he proposes larger concerns with the trading enterprise throughout the region as a whole. The Russians, he writes, could sign all the trade agreements with Bukhara (1868 and 1873) and Khiva (1873) they wanted, but

⁷⁸ Veniukov 152.

No agreement or enforcement system has to this day produced particularly significant effects. Of course, one of the most important reasons for this is the insufficiency of Russian capital; but furthermore, the competition with the Sarts plays no small role. Long accustomed to the demands of Central Asians, the Sarts have old connections everywhere as well as residences in the steppe where trading roads cross. But more so, the length of these roads and necessity of camel-back transport sharply raises the price of goods and often makes them un-purchasable for the poorer residents of Central Asia.⁷⁹

The two reasons Veniukov outlines – the monopoly of the local Sarts and the negative effects of the terrain on transportation prices – play out in other accounts of Russian trade in the region as well.

While Veniukov viewed the Sarts as beguilers who consistently thwarted Russian merchants, his contemporary, Mikhail Valikhanov viewed them as potential consumers. Transportation, for Valikhanov, was also a serious issue, but it could be solved only by producing a demand for European goods within the local population. Unlike Kazi Bek, Valikhanov did not believe such a demand to exist. The Sarts, to Valikhanov, were not expert traders with “old ties” and advantageous knowledge. Rather, they were “savages” who did not appreciate the benefits of Russian copper, leather, or fabrics, for example. Instead of exporting their cotton to Russia, the local population attempted to manufacture fabrics and textiles by themselves in Turkestan. In order for the locals to procure necessary goods, they would trade these products with their neighbors – the Chinese or the Persians. The Russians, then, needed to convince the local population, specifically the Bukharans, to sell their raw materials to the Russians as opposed to manufacturing them themselves. But first, they would need to teach the Sarts to desire Russian goods.

⁷⁹ Veniukov 154.

Without a demand for Russian goods, the value of exploiting Turkestan's natural resources was dubious. Transporting this material to Russia was far more strenuous and costly than simply manufacturing it in Turkestan. According to Valikhanov's calculations, a standard export volume of 32,000 tons of cotton required over 100,000 camels to transport. All of these camels required enough food and water (a rare commodity in the Turkestani deserts) to make the two and a half month trek from Bukhara to Orenburg (the nearest stop on the trans-Siberian railway). Furthermore, the path to Orenburg was impassable during certain seasons, limiting camel trips to one per year.⁸⁰ Carrying only hard currency back from Orenburg, the camels would return to Turkestan with empty backs. Without a functioning railroad, the use of camels was the only feasible option for transporting such large quantities of cotton, and the route to Orenburg was the only route safe enough to use.

A lack of quality control in Bukhara exacerbated the transportation issue. Because there was no textile plant in Turkestan, cotton would often arrive in Orenburg that was unfit for production. It had not been subjected to the scrutiny of a Russian inspector. The transportation of intractable cotton cost the Empire dearly. While Veniukov excoriates the use of camels and petitions for the construction of a functioning railway, Valikhanov sets forth a series of proposals which sought to either improve the use of the current caravan routes or, perhaps more radically, to obviate the entire question of transportation in the first place. By building a full-scale textile factory near Bukhara, Valikhanov argued, the Russians could instruct the local population in proper cotton-growing techniques and easily reject unworkable material at little or no cost to the

⁸⁰ Valikhanov 476.

Tsar.⁸¹ This would allow the government to recuperate any potential losses incurred from the transportation of low-quality cotton to Orenburg.

However, Valikhanov's other proposal did not require a vast expenditure on behalf of the government. The camels, he argued, should not be sent from Orenburg to Bukhara with empty backs, but with Russian goods instead.⁸² But before this could happen, the Russians would need to "create a demand for Russian goods" in Central Asia. Writing in 1860, Valikhanov's work both predates and significantly challenges the work of Kazi Bek and Likoshin as well as Galuzo's narrative of imperial expansion. While Kazi Bek and Likoshin saw Turkestanis who were eager to extravagantly furnish their homes and supplant their ancient obligation to pray with the newfound exigencies of a life spent in pursuit of profit, Valikhanov saw the Bukharans, a group which Valikhanov considered the most civilized of all Turkestanis, as barbarous, unwilling to accept Russian textiles.⁸³ The Bukharans did not accept Russian goods because they preferred their homespun products; rather, in Valikhanov's argument, they were not ready to accept the superiority of the Russian product.

But this was not just the fault of the local population. The problem for Valikhanov was that the Russians' claim to a superior quality of product was spurious. British goods were not only ubiquitous in Turkestan markets; they were of a higher quality. Here, Valikhanov diverges from the narrative sketched out by Galuzo. Whereas Galuzo believed that Russian goods enjoyed a monopoly in Turkestan, Valikhanov demurs. The Russians had to send their goods to Turkestan, he argued, because it was the only place in the world "in which there still exists a

⁸¹ Valikhanov 475.

⁸² Valikhanov 477.

⁸³ Valikhanov 466.

demand for Russian manufactures.”⁸⁴ In markets where Russian goods competed against their Western-European counterparts, the Western-European goods, writes Valikhanov, were unequivocally preferred. Of a higher quality and more affordable, goods from Great Britain, for example, dominated Russian goods in places such as Persia and China, forcing the Russians to sell their natural resources, not their manufactured products, in these regions.⁸⁵ Turkestan was a place where a robust demand could exist; the Russians just needed to ensure its development.

In order to realize Valikhanov’s proposal – that transportation costs be diminished by sending camels back to Bukhara with Russian goods; the Russian government needed to undertake the complex process of creating Turkestanis who would prefer their goods. If the Turkestanis described by Kazi Bek or Likoshin were ever to come into existence, the government would first have to convince them that the Russian product was one worthy of their consumption. The Russians could not do this by creating consumers from the top down. Rather, they had to rely on public tastes which already existed. They did not create Turkestanis; instead, they had to, in Valikhanov’s thought, create for Turkestanis. While this process could have been traced out with regard to any number of commodities, Valikhanov refers specifically to fabric. The fabrics which Russia exported to Bukhara, in his view, should have been “of a closer texture.”⁸⁶ The Bukharans preferred durable, not frangible, fabrics.⁸⁷ If the Russians were to compete with local manufacturers as well as with highly desirable British goods from India, the preferences of the local population would have to be taken into consideration.

⁸⁴ Valikhanov 469.

⁸⁵ Valikhanov 468.

⁸⁶ Valikhanov 472.

⁸⁷ Valikhanov 472.

What emerges from this is a picture of exploitation which appears more dialogic than dialectic. Military journalist A. Kvitka, operating in Turkestan during the time of the Geok Teke massacre (1881), captures the spirit of trade via his portrait of Gromov, a Russian millionaire who made his fortune in Turkestan:

Gromov [...] currently earns millions. Knowing the language, morals, and customs of all the tribes of Central Asia, he deals in general trading transactions which, without strength, would be unknown in this borderland. [...] The main reason of his success in every enterprise is the huge credibility he enjoys in Central Asia thanks to his strict accordance to the customs of the local traders. [...] Everyone knows him, fears him, and believes his word more than the drafts and receipts of other merchants.⁸⁸

Even the Russian military knew of Gromov's prestige in the region. General Mikhail Skobelev, upon preparing for battle at Geok Teke, petitioned Gromov, not the Governor General for additional camels.⁸⁹ Gromov was an exceptional case. Few Russian or Turkestani merchants knew each other's language. At the bazaar, he writes, "one cannot simply observe speechlessly, but must enter into conversation with people who do not understand a word of Russian, agree over a price, exchange Russian money for Asiatic money, and agree upon the exchange rate."⁹⁰ This process was difficult. However, Kvitka's portrait of Gromov is an important intervention. Earlier, Veniukov bemoaned the subversive potential of the Sarts and their economically advantageous ancient connections. Valikhanov, in a similar way, impugned the local population, referring to them as savage for refusing to send their cotton to Orenburg. Kvitka, on the other hand, venerated the merchant Gromov not simply because he accepted the customs of the local traders, but because he became quite wealthy in doing so. Gromov is the merchant who understood Valikhanov's principle of the fabric of the closer texture. While he did not explicitly

⁸⁸ A. Kvitka, "Poezdka v Akhal'-Teke." *Russkie Vedomosti* (No. 6. Pt. I, II. 1883) 584.

⁸⁹ Kvitka 584.

⁹⁰ Likoshin 9.

engage in the selling of fabrics, he did build his wealth by elaborating on the pre-existent conditions of local values and norms. He created a palimpsest; he did not simply impose a dominant mode of life onto the people of Turkestan.

There is much at stake in Kvitka's image of Gromov. While the Russian government protected the rights of Russian merchants in a series of trade agreements between themselves and the Khanates, these rights, in the markets and bazaars of urban centers such as Tashkent and Samarkand had little bearing. Some scholars attribute this solely to coercion: the Khans intentionally restricted Russian landholdings, evicted Russian tenants, and used convoluted Shar'ia law to strip Russians of the opportunity to trade in Turkestan. There is another story here: perhaps, as Likoshin suggests, the Russians and the Turkestanis were speaking a different language. If, as Valikhanov suggests, the Russians viewed the locals as simply too savage to appreciate Russian-manufactured products, then they were missing something. The locals had preferences which could be met. Doing so would usher them into a colonial arrangement. More so, the Russians did not only need to understand the local preference for goods, but the ways in which the Turkestanis understood the place where these products were exchanged: the bazaars. This public space was not just a site of savagery and swindling; instead, it was a surrogate for a visible public sphere. It was a space which, like the tastes of the local population, had contours which the Russians needed to understand in order to develop trade.

First, to Mikhail Valikhanov and Likoshin, pre-conquest Turkestan was not only the land without a history (Valikhanov) or a conception of profit (Likoshin). It was also a land without a sense of property. To Valikhanov, land in Turkestan was held by clans from time immemorial,

passed from generation to generation by means of inheritance.⁹¹ The Khan could seize the land of any individual at his own whim or fancy. Arbitrariness governed the division of power between the pseudo-landholders and the despotic Khan. And there was no sense of cultivation or entitlement. The land was guaranteed to the individual not by an investment of labor, but by kinship networks and the caprices of the Khan. Turkestani society was distinct from what the Russians imagined to be its European counterpart – a society based on rationality and the flourishing of private property as guaranteed by a series of compacts between citizens and their political leaders.

However, as Jeff Sahadeo argues, this was an ideal type which the Russians themselves never reached. Turkestan, he writes, was a place where Russian intellectuals sought to construct this European community in a peripheral territory which was free from both the strictures of the tsarist autocracy and the “violent history of European nation state building.”⁹² Sahadeo charts out the ways in which the Russian intellectuals realized these ends and forged a Habermasian public sphere in Tashkent: the introduction of civic newspapers (*Russkii Invalid*), the opening of K.V. Struve’s private meteorological tower, the 1869 grand opening of the public hall, the 1876 establishment of the Turkestan Hunting Society, and the 1877 charter of the city Duma (completely controlled by von Kaufman). In these spaces, men gathered as the active public of Tashkent. Here, they engaged in political discussions, trade, and the fine arts.⁹³ To Sahadeo, the “associational life [of Tashkent] flourished in the 1880s and 1890s.”⁹⁴ Even the Emir of Bukhara, he writes, participated in this dynamic outburst of civic life by “donat[ing] funds to select

⁹¹ Valikhanov 45.

⁹² Sahadeo 57.

⁹³ Sahadeo 60.

⁹⁴ Sahadeo 67.

societies.”⁹⁵ This “dynamic intellectual society” would preach toleration and knowledge, not the blind xenophobia of the military. However, this “dynamic intellectual society” was mainly for Russians. What then, for a public sphere amongst the Turkestanis?

Nikolai Maev, in his 1876 work *Aziatskii Tashkent*, charts out the Turkestani character of the local public sphere. If, as A. Maslov asserts in the opening epigraph of this chapter, there was no visible structure of Tekke raids, but a latent, “known” organization, then Maev, writing five years earlier, extends this logic further, applying it to a sense of proprietorship in Tashkent society. Unlike contemporary commentator Jeff Sahadeo, Maev does not search for the visible structures of an organized, predominately Russian society. Rather, he looks at the ways in which the local population negotiated a public culture on their own terms. He initiates this conversation by discussing the practice of land irrigation in pre-conquest Tashkent:

Of course, any conducting of water [for irrigation purposes], especially in arid Central Asia, is combined with labor, and so, in Tashkent, during the time of the Kokanese ownership, the earth belonged to him who irrigated it and made it fertile. Those lands were called *ikh'yai-alvat* [ихъяи-алватъ] and should have been divided from the village lands by a popular vote.⁹⁶ (Maev 270)

The irrigation of land was no small task in Turkestan, especially for the lands which lied outside of the main oases. To Maev, work and labor played a central role in determining the ownership of a particular tract; with the dissipation of labor came the dissipation of the individual's claim to the land:

But as soon as the owner stopped working it [the land], it again was considered, like all vacant lands, state land. State land is sometimes contested by an individual on the

⁹⁵ Sahadeo 68.

⁹⁶ Nikolai Maev, *Materialny dlia Ctatistiki Turkestanskovo Kraia* (Saint Petersburg: Izdanie Turkestanskovo Statistikoï Kompaniia, 1876) 270.

grounds of eternal hereditary ownership, but is returned again on those conditions, that whoever contested the lands must work them.

Lands given to an individual from the state, Maev explains, were referred to as *milkovii* lands and considered a gift on behalf of the emir.⁹⁷ Such charitable acts were

Reinforced by the seal of the Emir, a copy of which was saved in the state treasury. Furthermore, the received *milk* should have evidence of legal ownership via the seal of the *kadi-kelyana* [the main court – N.M.]. *Milkovii* lands lie fully under the command of the owner and can be sold, given in inheritance or as a gift, or even be returned to the *vakuf*.⁹⁸

Protected by documentation stored in the state treasury, the development of private property seemed well on its way in pre-conquest Tashkent.

Land, as Maev describes it, was not held from time memorial by miserly clan-heads.

Anyone had the ability to petition the Emir for state lands. Neither class, ethnicity, nor political allegiances factored into the Emir's decision. One only had to prove one's ability to work:

General city lands, during the Kokanese ownership, were divided yearly between all the inhabitants who wished to become landholders. In order to do this, every spring, the *aksakali* [village heads] would notify the locals to send their *kashi* (oxen [...], workers, and extra hand tools) to an arranged place so as to participate in the cleaning of the main canal and to connect their desired piece of land to the irrigation grooves. After doing this for several hours, those who sent two or three *kashi* received two or three pieces of land, respectively. Thus, everyone received land, as long as they were in the condition to work it.⁹⁹

While *Milkovie* lands were protected with the "seal of the Emir" in the state treasure, they were not private property.

For example, Maev does not outline a clear set of criteria by which to judge the "cultivation" of a land. More likely than not, such a criteria was all together nonexistent. Without

⁹⁷ Maev 271.

⁹⁸ Maev 271.

⁹⁹ Maev 271.

a legal system to ensure the permanent occupation of land (once it had been worked and certified with the "seal of the Emir"), the Emir could easily take the land back into the holdings of the state, referring to it as "undeveloped" and its proprietor as "unfit for the proper cultivation" of the tract. While the *kadi-kelyana*, in Maev's view, helped further the claim of an individual to land, its function, other commentators disagreed. N.C. Likoshin, an outspoken critic of the local courts, laments the inability of the courts to protect the development of private property and capital. The *kadi*, to Likoshin, did not print certificates which placed land "fully under the command of the owner." Rather, they served to strip individuals of their property in full accordance with the whims of the Khans and Emirs.

Building on Maev's above observations, the local population of Tashkent viewed its relationship to land in a way that existed outside the idea of private property. Far from a despotic community which held land from time immemorial, the locals of Tashkent, as Maev describes them, already understood ownership as something akin to invested labor. A sense of labor was already present in Tashkent. The Russians did not, as Likoshin imagines, introduce the aspiration for wealth in Turkestan. Furthermore, there was already a space where these individual Turkestanis could gather: the bazaar. Not a hunting society or a public hall by any means, the bazaar was not a place where private, European individuals gathered as a public. As Maev elaborates, it was a place where pseudo-private individuals – individuals equipped with the seeds of private property (ownership as labor) – gathered in a pseudo-public (i.e. non-secular) place:

And here we are at a large bazaar, where any Asiatic may spend their entire life without leaving. Here [an Asiatic] can dress, put on his shoes, clean himself in a bath, drink tea in any tea house, snack on *shurpi* or *polau*, spend the night listening to a singer or in contemplation of the dances of the *bacha*, etc. [...] Often you will see an open shop, the

owner of which sits elsewhere near another Sart, leaving his shop unattended, not closed up and not checking to make sure that no one walks into it.¹⁰⁰

In Maev's portrait of the Tashkent bazaars, the people who trade and work there are not miserly Sarts, Jews, or Hindus who swindle the unknowing market-goers. They are people who are willing to leave their shop open to talk to a fellow merchant, ostensibly unconcerned with their shops. More so, they are individuals who mediate their most private moments within a public place. They never leave the bazaar. The market, in Maev's portrait, is not fully a workplace, nor is it fully a home.

Furthermore, Yuri Kazi Bek complicates the image of the bazaar by recasting the *bacha* – a child prostitute who worked to coax market goers into a merchant's shop – as a rational, calculating employee, not as a slave or a symbol of oriental despotism. In his article "Bacha, Sartskii Pliasun," Kazi Bek describes the influence of a *bacha* on a shop owner's income:

Everyone tried to court and please the *bacha*. [...] It is unthinkable for any Sart club (tea-khan) to not have a *bacha*. The merchant-owner, not having a *bacha*, can safely close his shop in full confidence that no one – not even the poorest slave – will come to his shop. The presence of the *bacha* makes the Sarts courageous and generous: so, for example, one *kuvgan* (cup of tea) costs three kopecks, but if a *bacha* is there, then the Sart will pay 10, 20, or 30 kopecks (a lot of money for a Sart) so as to gain his favor.¹⁰¹

Because all shop owners “tried to court and please the *bacha*,” the *bacha* possessed a great deal of influence in the bazaar, and competition for the best *bachas* was fierce. Kazi Bek describes the story of a shop owner who wooed a fellow merchant’s favorite *bacha* over to his side of the road – “you can hear many similar stories, only with different variants,” asserts Kazi Bek, “in Fergana”:

¹⁰⁰ Maev 295.

¹⁰¹ Yuri Kazi Bek, “Bacha, Sartskii Pliacun”” *Vokrug Sveta* (No. 40. 1895) 638.

One owner of a tea-house had a beautiful *bacha*, thanks to which his shop was always full of people; the owner stopped only to count money and thank fate for bringing him such a treasure. Clearly, he cared for him like the apple of his eye and tried to fulfill his every wish. But on the other side of the street appeared another shop, the owner of which began to pander to the beautiful *bacha*, promising him more lucrative conditions. They quickly agreed, and, not saying a word to his former owner, the *bacha* switched over to a new one, bringing with him all the visitors who requested new trade. The old owner howled like a wolf, started to beg the *bacha* to return, supplicated him on his knees, crawled, and proposed even better conditions for him, but nothing helped: the *bacha* stood on his own – he was simply tired of being in one place. Then, having been driven to the most extreme despair, the old owner killed the *bacha* there in the tea house.¹⁰²

Not tied to one owner by an ancient custom, the *bacha*, in Kazi Bek's formulation, is able to choose his place of employment, to weigh salary options, and to grow weary of working in one place. However, it cannot be denied that this was an unacceptable course of action. The *bacha* is brutally beaten by his former owner at the end of Kazi Bek's story. Like Maev's understanding of Tashkent property, the *bacha* is a non-visible employee. Not just a child a prostitute or an eyesore in the Russian civilizing landscape, the *bacha* functioned as a seedling of the more familiar types of a European society. He was a nascent form of the employee.

Finally, commentators like Maev and Kazi Bek show the ways in which the local population was able to conduct their quotidian affairs while simultaneously rejecting the establishment of a colonial economy. The goal of this chapter is not to unearth the ways in which the Russian government could have perfected the development of trade. Individuals who provided alternative views of Turkestan society, such as Maev and Kazi Bek, did not do so simply to provide the government with the knowledge to rule. It is important that their views of Turkestan were not popular. Instead, their documents open up avenues for analysis unavailable to Veniukov and Valikhanov. They show the unknown, non-visible ways in which the local population conducted their daily affairs – in this case, the trading of goods. A society lacking a

¹⁰² Kazi Bek 638-639.

visible structure, they persisted in maintaining an organization, negotiating ideas of public and private lives on their own terms, as seen in the bazaar.

Yet, the military generals seemed to maintain the fears of a pan-Islamic uprising, furthering the belief that the society's ancient laws prevented them both from obtaining profit and from living peacefully under Russian rule. With this view in the foreground of Turkestan policy in the late nineteenth century, why would the Russians believe the preferences of the local population to be legitimate? Why would they need an understanding of the culture of the marketplace? These spaces served as the seeds of a society that was anything but fanatic and violent; a society that was invisible to the Russian military.

Chapter 4

Making an Impression

As shown in the previous chapter, trade played an important role in transforming Turkestan into a “colony.” While the economic question may have been easily decided – everyone wanted to make Turkestan profitable – but poorly implemented, the adjoining political question was never resolved: should the Russians rule Turkestan with a civil administration? or should they maintain a military autocracy? Should the Russians cultivate an elite class of local cadres? or should they extirpate the last vestiges of native rule and appoint Russian officials to conduct the daily affairs of the Turkestanis?

Such questions were highly divisive throughout Turkestan’s brief fifty-year lifespan, pitting hotheaded military generals against reform-minded civilian administrators. However, an overemphasis on schisms and rifts elides the more mundane similarity between these ostensibly antithetical camps: the shared idea that the Russians should, at the very least, make a good impression amongst the Turkestanis. But what was a good impression? Did it mean that the average Russian citizen should lead by example, exhibiting the care and diligence emblematic of a life under the new order? Or, did it mean that the Russians should impress the Turkestanis, bedaubing themselves in a panoply of imperial majesty complete with the pomp and splendor afforded by the comforts of new Russian goods? Or, even further, did it mean that the lessons of order had to be “impressed” into the very bosom of every Turkestani via the brutal infliction of bodily horror which characterized the slaughter of civilians at the Geok Teke massacre? Turning to the actual settlers, did it mean that the Russians even had to be nice? moral? or tolerant? Or, on the other hand, was discrimination and violence permissible as long as the settlers continued to “impress” their local neighbors with an aura of Russian wealth and might? Such questions

bridged the gap between the military and civil administrators as both groups gave credence to the idea of the right impression.

As I will show, this idea was based on an ethnographic knowledge of the Turkestanis. According to administrators, it was a crucial component in cementing Russian rule in the region. In the Russian imagination, the logic went as follows: because Turkestanis were foreign to ideas of profit and commercial cooperation, they were unable to respond to modes of economic pacification. Sergei Witte's strategy of the *penetration pacifique* would not hold in Turkestan. The pre-modern Turkestanis could not be lulled into the colonial market through the gradual construction of a civil society; instead, they had to be impressed.

This impression, already existing in a myriad of forms, reared its head during two distinct periods of Turkestan's history: the initial conquest of the area and later, during the years of the Governor Generalship. According to the controversial logic of General Mikhail Skobelev, the idea of a peace treaty was completely foreign to the Turkestanis. Warfare could only conclude in the region with a most sanguine impression: the killing of thousands of Turkestanis – a military methodology which, Skobelev believed, colluded with Turkestani ideas of warfare and respect.

This idea is troubling: if anyone could claim to purport an anthropocentric approach to the conquest of Turkestan, then it was Mikhail Skobelev. An avid believer in a distinctly "Asiatic" approach to warfare, Skobelev envisioned the conquest of Turkestan as one which built upon the traditions of the local population regarding combat and capitulation, not one which deployed Russo-centric ideas of mercy and peace accords. However, insidious overtones lace Skobelev's ethnography: or, can we really accept Skobelev's opinion of the impression as a legitimate piece of knowledge when taking into consideration the overt trajectory of such

knowledge? – i.e. the subjugation and slaughter of Turkestanis at the hands of the Russian military. From the outset, it seems as if the impression is doomed to be an apology for Empire, a pernicious lie which gave license to a bloody military conquest and the continued presence of military personnel in the region.

Yet, there is another side of the story, one which plays out during the administration, not conquest, of Turkestan. Some early twentieth-century commentators on Turkestan, amongst them Count Konstantin Konstanovich Pahlen, elaborated on Skobelev's ideas of the impression: if the Turkestanis, they argued, respond only to Russian military might, then they, in the years following the conquest, will respond only to rulers who continue to produce a sense of grandeur. Decadent clothing, champagne, lofty military titles – in Turkestan, the elegance of colonial life in the 1890s supplanted the gory military assaults of the previous decade. The blood of the military's impression became the flashy commodities of the administration's impressiveness.

Like the impression, the cultivation of impressiveness amongst Russian officials was thought to build on local traditions. In the Russian imagination, Turkestani leaders ensured loyalty amongst their subjects by inspiring awe. Khans and Emirs achieved this by deploying symbols and rituals, not by developing a constituency of consenting citizens via the construction of a civil society. As discussed in the previous chapter, the development of a fully modern society in Turkestan was unsuccessful. In light of this, Russian administrators maintained authority by building on the supposedly pre-modern ways in which the Turkestanis were imagined to relate to their leaders. They developed their impressiveness by parading the products of Russian manufacturers: symbols which sought to maintain the peace brought about by the initial impression of the Geok Teke massacre.

While the idea of making an impression justified the expansion of Empire, the necessity of producing impressiveness promoted widespread administrative corruption. The idea was both beneficial and detrimental to Russian interests in the region. Corruption was a serious force in Turkestan, inspiring Count Konstantin Pahlen's official review of the region in 1910. Pahlen, like fellow commentator A.K. Dobrosmyslov, issued a vituperative account of Russian administrative practice in Turkestan. Both critics tarnished the reputation of several corrupt administrators, and Pahlen even had the authority to dismiss several Russian officials from their posts. In Turkestan, they found individuals who took the need for impressiveness as a license for corruption and unabashed self-indulgence. Such administrators sought to impress the local population by improving their material standing as well – a recipe for omnipresent corruption.

Accounts issued by Pahlen and Dobrosmyslov did not just result in the firing of unscrupulous officials; it also prompted a rethinking of the logic upon which administrative corruption was founded: the need to cultivate impressiveness amongst Turkestanis. This was a move people such as Pahlen were not ready to make. Whereas he excoriated the administrative corruption, he also extolled the idea of impressiveness upon which this very corruption was based. It was not until anthropologist Vladimir Nalivkin's 1913 work *Tuzemtsy ran'she i teper'* that Russian thinkers begin to challenge the necessity for forging an impression. Whereas the Peace Society protested Skobelev's actions as inhumane, Nalivkin, turning to the bevy of profligate administrators, challenged their self-indulgence not only on moral grounds, but on the basis of false information. The local population, he attested, not only did not need to be impressed, they also saw Russian attempts to do so as an immoral comedy.

The same knowledge which was effective in concluding the conquest of Geok Teke, according to Nalivkin, proved ineffective in administering the territory. To Nalivkin, it is not just

that corruption hinders the efficacy of the Russian bureaucracy; more so, it is this problem of an immoral comedy, one which the Russians brazenly enacted in front of the Turkestanis. The idea of the impression, then, not only hurt the Russian administration by legitimizing corruption, it did so by producing a means for local resistance as well. Turkestanis were not just victims of Imperial ethnographies, they transformed these ethnographic perceptions of their culture into avenues for anti-colonial activity. In so doing they produced a counter-ethnography on Russians. Nalivkin's critique of Skobelev, and, as we will see, Pahlen, opens up a space in which local perceptions of the Russian population prove detrimental to the development of the Russian colonial mission in the region; where the ethnographic rumors and conjectures of pre-modern societies counter the institutionalized ethnographic research of modernized states; and where the colonizer can look back on the colonized.

If one were to read just Skobelev, the score would be easy to settle: the idea of impressing the Asians, a practice in outdated forms of cultural essentialism, leads directly to the unmitigated slaughter of retreating Tekkes. But the point of this chapter is neither to prove nor to disprove ethnographies, nor is the goal to invalidate those which dovetail with brutal repression while lauding those which tout its opposite – peaceful, civil integration. By drawing on Nalivkin's work, this chapter asserts the equality between the ethnographies of the colonizer and those of the colonized: Russian knowledge of Turkestanis does not just beget Empire, and Turkestani knowledge of Russians can thwart empire.

First, the Empire viewed ethnography as integral to the success of the colonization of Turkestan. Having had little contact with the region before the mid-nineteenth century, the Russian Empire sought to familiarize itself with the physical terrain and its inhabitants. Von Kaufman pioneered these efforts. As Governor General, he surrounded himself with an

entourage of anthropologists, scientists, and artists who sought to organize the terra incognita that was Russian Turkestan. Von Kaufman commissioned the most comprehensive study of Turkestani life of his time in the *Turkestanskii Al'бом*. Published in the 1850s and 60s, the *Turkestanskii Al'бом* was a Russian encyclopedia of Turkestan, comprised of articles on the region's archaeology, ethnography, economic practices, and military history. The *Al'бом* contained a wide range of genres, including academic papers, photographs, architectural blueprints, paintings, and maps. Artists, such as Vasilii Vereschagin, photographers, such as N.N. Nekhoroshev, and orientalists, such as A.L. Kuhn, were all involved in the project. The illumination of the terra incognita was a trans-disciplinary task.

The information presented in works such as the *Turkestanskii Al'бом* maintained a connection to state power. Because Turkestan was a military colony, individuals who worked in the territory had to apply for military clearance. Many of the professionals who were able to travel in Turkestan were either already a part of the military or were there on the military's ticket. And the knowledge they produced was meant to help the Russian army. Ethnographical information would ensure the smooth operation of the state by allowing Russian administrators to base their policies on solid knowledge of the local population. For instance, Von Kaufman's notorious policy of *ignorirovaniia* with regard to Islam drew on such mid-nineteenth century ethnographies. Other policies, such as taxation and border-delimitation also relied on this information.

A.P. Fedchenko characterizes the spirit of the age: a master of several disciplines, he approached human subjects like the physical environment. Having worked in the region as an orologist, geologist, climatologist, botanist, and zoologist, Fedchenko turned to the different ethnicities of Turkestan with the same goal of scientific exactitude in mind. He used phrenology

to distinguish between the different ethnicities of Turkestan. Much was at stake in his work: were the Sarts a distinct race? Were the Tajiks distinct from the Uzbeks? By answering questions such as these, Fedchenko was complicit in aiding state formation in Turkestan. With knowledge of ethnic differences, the Russians could ensure that they would not enact policies that would inspire inter-ethnic warfare in Turkestan. Knowledge, to the state, engendered peaceful inter-tribal relations.

Not all ethnographies of Turkestan were conducted with such exactitude in mind, and not all saw publication in journals such as the *Turkestanskii Al'bom*. Unprofessional ethnographies spread throughout the Russian military. Despite their unofficial nature, these ethnographies were just as pernicious in their depiction of Turkestanis. Such ethnographies were also connected to imperial expansion. General Mikhail Skobelev's amateurish concept of "making an impression" had as strong an impact on Russian military strength as Fedchenko's meticulous phrenologies.

His campaign against the Tekkes in 1880 demonstrates this. In late December 1880, Russian forces successfully stormed the last in a line of Turkoman (Turkmen) forts, Geok Tepe, thereby concluding both the month-long military operation in the Akhal Teke as well as the twenty-five year conquest of Russian Turkestan. Marked by wanton cruelty by the Russian troops, the battle levied a heavy toll against the Turkomans. While over twelve thousand died during the battle, another eight thousand died in retreat. Head General Mikhail Skobelev, upon hearing of the Tekke retreat, ordered a division of Cossacks to pursue and slaughter them. The ensuing attack was abhorrent in its indiscriminate slaughter of women and men, non-combatants and combatants. Skobelev was notoriously unapologetic for the attack, flouting the charges of his detractors publicly – here, in an interview with a British journalist:

Do you know Mr. Marvin, but you must not publish this, or I shall be called a barbarian by the Peace Society – that I hold it as a principle in Asia that the duration of peace is in direct proportion to the slaughter you inflict upon the enemy. The harder you hit them the longer they will be quiet afterwards. We killed nearly 20,000 Turcoman at Geok Tepe. The survivors will not soon forget the lesson.¹⁰³

Having openly challenged the Russian military in Akhal Teke, the Tekkes did not simply deserve to be killed. In Skobelev's mind, they needed it.

Peace, in his above-quoted formulation, would come to the Tekkes only via the killing of their population. Skobelev would later come to characterize this as Asiatic warfare. Having lead troops in both the Balkans and Central Asia, Skobelev drew on his experience in order to establish different codes of military conduct for battle against Europeans and Asians. Trenches, calculation, temerity, and rationality should govern military strategy against Europeans; swiftness, courage, bravery, honor, and cruelty should govern military strategy against Asians.

At Geok Teke, Skobelev called on his principle of Asiatic warfare to justify military tactics that defied pragmatics. The killing of fleeing Tekkes required the further endangerment of Russian troops and was not necessary in concluding the battle. At other times, Asiatic warfare vindicated tactics that were viable otherwise: for instance, the use of dynamite. Having approached the outer wall of the Geok Teke fortress, Skobelev determined that the Russian military would have to fell the wall in order to open the fortress to a Russian attack. The Russian military possessed the technology to do so, and the decision on Skobelev's part was not malicious like the decision to pursue and kill the eight thousand Tekkes. Yet, he persisted in explaining the use of dynamite via the rationale of Asiatic warfare. The dynamite would have

¹⁰³ Ol'ga Alekseevna Novikova, Skobelev and the Slavonic Cause (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1883) 213.

significance beyond the wall; it would leave a resonating impression amongst the Tekkes. Present at Geok Teke, military journalist A. Maslov quotes Skobelev on his decision to use dynamite on the Teke fortress. The general “could only imagine the impression that the explosion would leave on the savage defenders of the fortress.”¹⁰⁴

However, Asiatic warfare was not just a strategy for humiliated military generals to recover the glory that they had lost in Europe during the Crimean War. For instance, Mikhail Cherniaev, appealed to “Asian” codes of respect and reverence in an effort to maintain military control over the region. This oftentimes overruled the perceived concessions and power politics of the Tsar. The tension between those in Petersburg and those in Turkestan has already been discussed above, but the point here is that those who were closer – in this case, Cherniaev – bolstered their credibility by appealing to local customs. Fifteen years before the Geok Teke massacre, Orenburg Governor General Kryzhanovsky relieved Cherniaev of his duties. In February 1866, Cherniaev had refused to remove his troops from Bukhara. In so doing, he violated a promised treaty condition and interfered with negotiations between Tsarist officials and the Bukharan Emir. Retreating, in Cherniaev’s view, would evince weakness in the eyes of the Bukharans – a weakness which, in effect, would ultimately jeopardize stability in the region.

An excuse for slaughter and a permanent military occupation of the region, the impression of Skobelev and Cherniaev hearkened to Asian codes of honor which lent their opinions credence in the face of supposedly Russo-centric Tsarist administrators who preached prudence and peace in Central Asia – concepts which, in the military’s imagination, belonged more in the drawing rooms of European polite society than on the battlefields of Turkestan.

¹⁰⁴ Maslov 115.

In order to rule the Asians Russian military generals believed that it was important to brutally punish the local population on the battlefield and to maintain a military presence in the region. Removing the military in favor of a civil administration would only exacerbate Russian-Turkestan relations. The right impression begins to sound like oppression, and may even begin to liken the conquest of Turkestan to the Empire's military expeditions in Europe as well. The Poles, for instance, received a similar treatment. But the logic of the impression had a distinct fate in Turkestan. Skobelev's idea of impressing the Asians as well as Cherniaev's respect did not remain in the hands of the military, nor did it flow unidirectionally. The Russian military did not just fabricate a myth of Asian society in order to rationalize a brutal military autocracy which circumscribed the autonomy of Turkestanis. The idea traveled into the hands of corrupt administrators as well. There, the idea of creating an impression did not bolster, but damaged the Russian image in the region. While the military used the idea of the impression to brutally curtail all local dissent, the administration's deployment of the ethnography engendered unrest amongst the population.

Count Konstantin Konstantinovich Pahlen gave a first-hand account of this corruption. A member of an aristocratic German family, Pahlen was part of the Tsar's inner circle. In 1908, Nicholas II commissioned him to investigate allegations of fraud levied against Russian administrators in Turkestan. Once there, Pahlen not only uncovered pandemic corruption, he prosecuted offenders as well, relieving several officers of their duty. These cases were recorded in a report issued by Pahlen in 1910; however, it is the Count's memoirs which capture the sense of betrayal which Pahlen felt – what he perceived to be the seedy undermining of an otherwise worthy cause.

Pahlen characterizes the Russian expansion into Turkestan as the triumph of European culture over Asiatic despotism. The “great prestige,” writes Pahlen, “enjoyed by all Russians over Asia at the end of the nineteenth century”¹⁰⁵ was undoubtedly a result of that land’s transformation into “something akin to Paradise.”¹⁰⁶ Here, freedom triumphed over slavery; democratic elections, particularly of the judiciary, over rule-by-tradition; the reform of taxation over the tyranny of the Emir’s money-grubbing taxmen; ethical justice over prejudiced adjudications; work over sloth; and the right of the individual to recognition over the indistinguishable masses of nomadic tribes.¹⁰⁷ However, the land “akin to Paradise” was administered by individuals who did not exemplify all of Pahlen’s above-listed qualities.

A.K. Dobrosmyslov, in his 1912 work, *Tashkent v proshlom*, calls these individuals out by name: Andrei Ivanovich Gomzan (officer from August 1856-67) was completely ignorant of all legal affairs and was heavily involved in the prostitution business; Kablukov, who was forced to resign because of his brother’s tax evasions in St. Petersburg, drank too much, was lazy, and was personally involved in “*temnye dela*”; and Colonel Ivan Gust, whose exact details remain unnamed, was sent to Siberia for embezzlement.¹⁰⁸ Dobrosmyslov does not stop with the officers. He castigates government departments as well: the officers involved in licensing private land purchases solicited bribes from local engineers for building materials;¹⁰⁹ workers in the post office skimmed off the top, requiring additional fees for their services;¹¹⁰ and the customs agency, established in 1890, maintained noticeable gaps in their supervision, allowing the

¹⁰⁵ Konstanin Konstantinovich Pahlen, Mission to Turkestan, Being the Memoirs of Count K.K. Pahlen, 1908-1909 (London: Oxford University Press, 1964) 14, 17.

¹⁰⁶ Pahlen 16.

¹⁰⁷ Pahlen 16, 75.

¹⁰⁸ A.K. Dobrosmyslov, “Pravitelstvennaya i obshchestvenniya uchrezhdeniya.” Tashkent v proshlom i nastoyashm: istoricheskii ocherkii (vol. 4 Tashkent, 1912) 446.

¹⁰⁹ Dobrosmyslov 454.

¹¹⁰ Dobrosmyslov 466.

transportation of contraband in and out of the protectorates.¹¹¹ And if officers were not corrupt, then they were inept. Dobrosmyslov criticizes the military personnel for being ignorant: the land, forest, and irrigation committees were run by untrained military men, not experts in those respective fields.¹¹² Aside from special training, the general education of such military men was also suspect. Dobrosmyslov claims that many were alcoholics who not only lacked a college education, but a high school education as well.¹¹³

Clearly underprepared, in Dobrosmyslov's account, and traitors of the cause, according to Pahlen, the men in charge of Turkestan in the years following the conquest were not, however, without any knowledge of the region. While Dobrosmyslov impugns them for lacking specialized knowledge of what they were administering, he elides the fact that these men, thanks to thinkers like Skobelev or Pahlen, knew exactly how to administer the region. They may not have known much about what they were administering, but they knew how to conduct business. Such officers knew that it was necessary to operate with an aura of impressiveness. Although corruption and tax evasion undermined the sheen of a moral and rational Russian bureaucratic apparatus in Turkestan, these methods provided their purveyors with an equally impressive sheen – Pahlen's sense of "great prestige." It was a prestige which the locals, in the imagination of these administrators, could respond to in a way that they could not respond to ideas of unprejudiced justice, work, or European culture. Impressiveness was more akin to the ways in which the locals understood their rulers; it was not a top-down implication on local ideas of how life was to be conducted.

¹¹¹ Dobrosmyslov 469.

¹¹² Dobrosmyslov 470.

¹¹³ Dobrosmyslov 477.

Impressiveness was not just a false ethnography which solely benefited the corrupt Russian administrators in the region. Turkestani leaders benefited as well. Faced with protests from British officers in India, the Turkestan Governor General consistently engaged in the diminution and aggrandizement of various local leaders in an attempt to either put pressure on or decrease hostility with their colonial neighbors. If the Russian government, in British eyes, evinced expansionist aspirations, then the Governor General – with orders from St. Petersburg – would downplay Russian control in the region by increasing levels of local autonomy. This was done by decreasing the visibility of the Governor General and increasing the visibility, rank, and prominence of the local rulers. Conversely, if the Russian government felt the urge to test the British, or if the military simply felt the need to assert itself – usually in the face of a perceived pan-Islamic threat, then it would demote the local leaders and reinstate the authority of the Governor General. Pahlen discusses this in a passage on the Emir of Bukhara in 1908:

A very able diplomat, the Emir frequently visited St. Petersburg, where he was received at court by the Emperor with all the honours due to the ruler of an independent state. A judicious distribution of diamonds, decorations, and other bounties generally resulted in some form of material advantage to Bukhara. At first the Emir had been placated by decorations, but when he had collected all the stars that Russia could bestow upon him, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to resort to other marks of distinction. A start was made by progressively adding to the grandeur of his title. General Kaufman, when dealing with the Emir, had addressed him as ‘Sir,’ (*Vashe Stepenstvo*); after one of the Emir’s journeys to the capital this was raised to ‘Honourable Sir’, and subsequently to ‘Count,’ ‘Excellency’, ‘High Excellency’ and finally to ‘Highness’. In the eyes of the natives he now ranked higher than the Governor. [...] The local population of Turkestan no longer had any doubts but that he outranked the Governor-General in Tashkent and could do as he pleased in Bukhara. ¹¹⁴

But the Emir, having lost his ability to control his state's external affairs, was certainly not the

¹¹⁴ Pahlen 72.

"ruler of an independent state." Accruing all the trappings of such a ruler, the Emir recuperated his lost authority symbolically: the Emir, in the Russian imagination, at the very least appeared to be a sovereign. And, adorned by all the diamonds, titles, and grandeur that the Russians could muster, the Emir, in the eyes of the local population, may as well have been the leader of an independent state.

While the shuffling between the Governor General and the Emir had very little pragmatic effect – the Governor General never actually relinquished his control over the region – the symbolic implications were, in the Russian imagination, palpable. In the eyes of civil administrators, the construction of this authoritative halo was the only way to ensure authority:

In the eyes of the people, our current civil officers (we are not yet discussing the Generalship) – combat officers, accidentally, and only by necessity, transformed into administrators who then procured relatively wide power – presented themselves as the direct deputies of the *bek* or the *khalim* of the Khanate era – rulers who were surrounded in a halo of grand authority power and before the people. And this halo, in the course of a few years, served those civil officers quite well: the population, for centuries accustomed to or, more likely, trained by the Khanate government to respect only crude force, were afraid of the civil administration.¹¹⁵

In addition to painting halos around local leaders, Russian civil and military administrators donned these halos themselves, but to different effects. If St. Petersburg benefited by ordering the development of the Emir's halo, then the aura of authority which local administrators created damaged the Empire's civilizing mission in Turkestan.

While local leaders accrued military titles, local administrators accrued wealth. The Emir wore the interminably increasing garments of higher and higher military ranks, but the mid-ranking Russian administrators, themselves unable to acquire such titles as "High Excellency" or

¹¹⁵ V.P. Nalivkin, Tuzemtsi: ran'she i teper (Izdanie A.L. Kirsnera: Tashkent, 1913) 66.

“Honourable Sir,” created their halo from material glamour. This material construction of authoritative halos produced resistance amongst the local population. Nalivkin shows this in his analysis of *perezhitki* – individuals who survived the Russian conquest of Turkestan. Having lost the military struggle, these *perezhitki* could continue to resist colonization by eschewing their decadent possessions:

At the same time, those locals who were gradually brought under the auspices of Russian law, having looked around amidst the new order and new conditions of life that had been all but nonexistent in the earlier chaos, gradually began to purge their lives of all unnecessary rubbish – things which, by their very essence, had already transformed into something harmful and inimical, corrupting the body of the *perezhitki*. These people began to simplify their lives by removing all expensive things, discarding items decorated with silver, golden harnesses, velvet gloves; items which represented a pomposity that supported and encouraged the Emirs of the Khanates.¹¹⁶

The *perezhitki* do not reject their “new order and new conditions of life.” Instead of continuing the fight against the Russians, they settle into their new lives. By throwing out “unnecessary rubbish,” Nalivkin’s *perezhitki* do not throw out the Russian Imperial order. Instead, they discard the “pomposity that supported and encouraged the Emirs of the Khanates.” The military struggle against the Empire has concluded, and the local population appears to have acquiesced, jettisoning the last remnants of Emirate power – the “silver, gold harnesses, and velvet gloves” that supported the regime.

However, the local population is not rejecting the Emir; instead, they are rejecting the type of authority which the Russian administration sought to build upon: pomposity. The *perezhitki* do not continue the military struggle against the Empire, but they do undermine the basis of the Empire’s power: the idea that leaders must impress their subjects. Far from passive objects of imperial ethnographies, the local population of Turkestan was not just measured by

¹¹⁶ Nalivkin 94.

Fedchenko or impressed by Skobelev. Nor did they produce a counter ethnography of themselves which attempted to counter the works of Fedchenko or Skobelev. Instead of arguing that they did not relate to their rulers via impressiveness, a portion of the local population threw away their expensive commodities. They were not interested in re-defining themselves in the face of Russian ethnographies; nor were they interested in invalidating those ethnographies. Instead, they permitted the Russians to maintain their views on Turkestani society. By doing so, they created the conditions for a local counter-ethnography, one which saw the Russians as an immoral, farcical society that swam in its own graft. They allowed themselves to resist, to turn the ethnographic gaze back on the Russians.

In constructing their halos, Russian civil administrators created a means through which the local population could clandestinely reject the Empire's civilizing mission. To Nalivkin, corrupt administrators had created an impenetrable wall between themselves and the local population. Russian administrators could not see what stood on the other side:

We, concerned only with our personal interests and failing to observe the facts of local life, continued above all to assert that it was necessary to produce an impression on the half-civilized Asians in order to successfully rule them. We believed this could be done by surrounding ourselves in shiny, fancy things, thereby, to our own fiscal advantage, creating a wall around ourselves: the locals recognized our actions quite well for the "immoral comedy" and "ridiculous farce" that they were. [...] They saw how we swam in our filth like fish in water.¹¹⁷

On one level, Nalivkin impugns such administrators for "failing to observe the facts of local life." While the Russians were creating impressiveness, the local population was disposing of their extravagant possessions. This was a fact of local life that was at odds with the administrators' desire to protect personal interests. By extirpating these personal interests from

¹¹⁷ Nalivkin 95.

ethnography, the Empire could produce a clear-eyed vision of the local people that would allow the smooth operation of the regime.

However, Nalivkin's account is not just an attempt to re-establish state policy along accurate ethnographic information. He is not only interested in correcting what he believes to be a common misconception among Russian administrators and military personnel. His work shows the effects of this misconception. The Russians had not built a wall around themselves because they had cut themselves off from the local population. Instead, they had constructed a wall by failing to view the detrimental effects of their impression ethnography on the Empire's operations in the region. While the wall between the Russians and the local population was impregnable to Russian eyes, the local population could, and did, see through it.

On the other side of this wall stood the emptiness of Russian authority in the region. Russian authority attempted to harness symbols of modernity – flashy commodities, for instance – in order to root the regime's legitimacy in a realm beyond Turkestan. The regime was thought to operate with an impressive aura. As Nalivkin writes, this was not the case. Local eyes did not stop on the Russians. The population of Turkestan did not just find the Russians to be farcical actors in an immoral comedy of corruption and gaudy materialism. They found Russian authority itself to be unfounded: “Such actions [the creation of pomp] encouraged the higher local authorities, imagining and asserting, often with very unmerciful goals, that the prestige of the Russian power in the region can be held only on external appearance, on pomp.”¹¹⁸ In Nalivkin's description, Russian authority did not just use pomp; it became pomp.

¹¹⁸ Nalivkin 66-67.

And the Russians did not believe this. But how could they? They could not see their authority based solely on pomp. Turkestan was a series of substantive achievements for the regime. New goods, courts, and the end of slavery, for instance, guaranteed the legitimacy of the Russian regime. Pomp was an important tool in solidifying these achievements. As discussed above, by cultivating a sense of impressiveness, Russian administrators thought they were developing a sense of authority amongst the local population. Subjects of brutal ethnographies by Skobelev and Fedchenko, the people of Turkestan turned the logic of the impression back on itself. They did not re-create themselves with self-ethnographies; instead, they allowed the Russians to continue to act along the lines of the impression. In so doing, the locals were able to produce an ethnographic impression of the Russians: an immoral people. Such an ethnography could only happen if they allowed the Russians to continue in their ways. It did not take the form of a *Turkestanskii Al'bom* and was not conducted scientifically by someone such as Fedchenko. It was a rumor spread among the local population that counted as knowledge of the Russian colonists.

Conclusion

This project has shown how the Russian Empire attempted to colonize Turkestan through the eyes of administrative reformers. In the process, we have arrived at a picture of local resistance which looks nothing like traditional forms of anti-colonial activity. This is not to say that such forms of resistance did not occur in Turkestan – they were just not pertinent to the goals of this project. Instead of the cholera riots, this project focuses on local infiltration of the Russian judicial system; instead of organized raids, this project focuses on a local public culture that eschewed Russian manufactures; and, instead of anti-draft protests, this project focuses on local forms of knowledge that challenged Russian authority in the region. The goal of this project was to show how the Turkestanis both reacted to Russians and acted against them – how the local population actively integrated changes in the socio-economic environment into their daily lives and, in so doing, maintained anti-colonial agency.

Such a view of local agency has its shortcomings. This project spends little time delving into anthropological details of the people of Turkestan; very little is said about the practice of Islam; and almost no documents written by Turkestanis are taken into consideration. How, then, can there be a study of local resistance without an emphasis on local custom, religion, or perspective? First, I do not have access to sources written by members of the local population on the Russian Empire. And even I did, I would do not read in any of the languages of Turkestan. All such accounts would have to have been written in Russian. However, this does not render the project futile. Faced with such a dearth, this project reads its Russian primary sources against the grain. In search of a local voice, this project reconstitutes it from the reports and ethnographies of Russian administrators.

Without Turkestanis who wrote against the changes in local court structures, I have found professional witnesses who infiltrated the new courts and corrupted them; without Turkestanis who wrote against the exploitation of the region's natural resources, I have found a surrogate public sphere that maintained the supremacy of local manufactures over against their Russian counterparts; and, without Turkestanis who rebuked Russians for producing false knowledge of the region's inhabitants, I have found local forms of knowledge which worked in conjunction with such knowledge in order to turn it against its purveyors. In so doing, this project paints a picture of a colonized population that was not intractable, unable to be brought into modernity. The local population was able to adapt to the new colonial order. As this project argues, such adaptation does not constitute acquiescence or a loss of selfhood. Instead, it was a necessary precursor for the projection of anti-colonial agency.

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